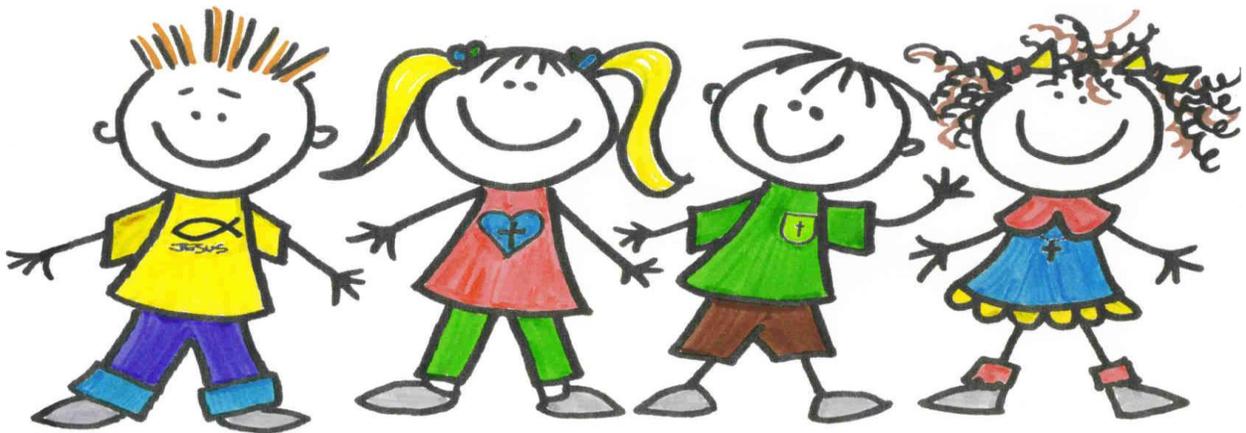


ST. MARY
OF THE
ASSUMPTION
PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK



St. Mary of the Assumption School
8540 Mentor Ave.
Mentor, Ohio 44060 | 440.255.9781
www.stmarymentorschool.org

Our Mission



Working together to build an
educated,
dedicated,
loving
and
caring

faith community preparing for the
challenge of life in a global society.

Hand in Hand, Together, We Are One in Christ

Goals for Catholic Schools

Diocese of Cleveland

A Catholic Preschool program strives to provide a creative learning environment for the young child. Interaction with other children and adults, in an atmosphere of Christian love and concern, promotes the healthy development of each child. In partnership with the church, parish community, and the family, a Catholic Preschool provides a Catholic Christian education through which gospel values are presented, lived and fostered.

To communicate the gospel message of Jesus;

To provide opportunities to build and experience a faith community;

To orient students to the responsibility and experience of service because of their membership in the Christian community;

To provide students with the opportunity for growth in prayer;

To provide instruction in religious truths and values in such a way that they become an integrated part of the school program;

To develop a faculty and staff who by their presence and teaching express an integrated approach to learning and living in their lives.

Diocese of Cleveland

PHILOSOPHY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

SOURCES: We believe that a philosophy of Catholic education begins with faith that God, through creation, gifted us with life, became one of us in His son, Jesus; and, in the Person of His Spirit, awaits our response to His unconditional overture of love. Jesus remains with the community He formed, witnessing and sharing the Good News in every age and with all people ever yearning for a return of love, whether by a sincere response to conscience or by membership in His church. It is from this perspective that the educational ministry of the Catholic community flows.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION: We believe that education which is Catholic begins, with life, in the heart of the family. Parents, the primary educators, see and nourish values which are deeply human, deeply spiritual. Affirmed, treasured, and supported by the living witness of Christian faith communities, the child continues a lifelong response to God's love in growing and excelling through responsible involvement in the academic, cultural, and civic concerns of daily life.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: We believe that the Catholic school is sensitive to the mandate of Jesus, *"Love one another as I have loved you,"* as the goal toward which all Catholic education leads. The school community, in sharing this vision within an atmosphere designed to celebrate and practice love of God and neighbor, is the most effective means available to the Church for the education of youth. This vision motivates students to grow academically, culturally, and socially. Among the values prized in the Catholic school are self-worth, self-discipline in the search for the moral way of life, and appreciation for our American heritage. With deep concern for their brothers and sisters, young people in the Catholic day schools and parish schools of religion form their personal response in truth, justice, and love of God, their maker.

Components of Our Curriculum

The St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Programs are designed to suit the developmental needs of young children, promoting their spiritual, emotional, social, physical, and intellectual growth.

Religion Readiness is an integral part of the Catholic Preschool Program. It is the preparation time for more formal instruction which will come in the years ahead. During the early childhood years, a child is developing good decision-making skills and forming good habits. He/she is developing a positive self-image in relationship to a loving God. The basis for a deep love of God comes from the examples set by family, school, and the parish community. A child learns to love God through the warm atmosphere of love and acceptance in the preschool environment, where the child learns about God's wonderful world. Classroom prayer and paraliturgies, appropriate to the child's developmental level, prepare him/her to participate in the celebrations of the Church. Prayers at this age should be prayers of praise and thanksgiving.

Language is the development of communication skills that enable a child to share his/her world with others. These skills include listening, speaking, and thinking. Transferring thoughts into words is the primary skill upon which future language development is based. An awareness of the five senses will stimulate a child's curiosity as to the different ways his/her body receives information about life around him/her. Visual discrimination and memory, and auditory discrimination and memory are important readiness skills that can be taught through play-based hands-on learning activities.

Personal-Social Development is the primary goal for the young child entering preschool. A positive self-concept is essential to successful learning. The more a child understands himself/herself, the better equipped he/she is to relate to other children and adults. Basic social interactions between two children, the teacher and a child, and as a member of a group, provide ways in which the child establishes autonomy and learns skills to help him/her relate to his/her world.

Personal development includes knowing name and age, address, phone number, birthdate, caring for own self-help needs, separating from parent with relative ease, caring for own belongings, and respecting others.

Social development includes cooperative play, sharing, following directions, initiating conversations and play situations with peers, entering into group activities, developing a positive relationship with teachers, and caring about others.

Math & Science Readiness involves acquiring knowledge which comes from the understanding of color, shapes, quantitative concepts, such as size differences, basic counting skills, learned through fun and practical application, and the classifying and ordering of objects. These concepts are taught through manipulative play experiences.

Social Studies & Multicultural Awareness is promoted through positive social development. This includes awareness on the part of the child of the similarities and differences in family lifestyles, cultures, and customs.

Art at the preschool level is a joyful, creative experience full of self-expression. Creative art activities will come from use of manipulatives that develop fine motor skills.

Music is a channel for creative expression in two ways: the manner in which sounds are communicated by the music-maker and the emotional and physical response that sound evokes from the listener. Singing, listening to music, using rhythm instruments, dancing, and other activities are ways of developing a love and appreciation for music.

Motor Skills are a vital part of the young child's development and are crucial to the learning skills he/she will need in the future. The preschool child learns with his/her body. These motor skills are not to be overlooked in favor of cognitive skills.

- **Gross Motor:** body coordination, arm-eye coordination, balance
- **Fine Motor:** hand-eye coordination, dexterity and strength of small muscles, natural hand preference.

State Requirements

St. Mary of the Assumption School is licensed by The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to operate a preschool program. The preschool program will operate in accordance with Rules for Preschool Programs 3301-37 Ohio Department of Education. The State of Ohio Department of Education License to Operate and Compliance Report are posted in the classroom. Report concerns to 614.466.0224 or 877.644.6338.

The state of Ohio requires an annual visit to your child's pediatrician.

Child Medical Statement

The state of Ohio requires each child to have an annual well check/physical examination performed by a physician.

Illness and Medication and Communicable Disease

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms should not be sent to school **or** if noticed during school hours, shall be isolated immediately and discharged to the parent:

- Diarrhea—more than one loose stool in a twenty-four hour period
- Severe coughing—causing a child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis
- Temperature—one of 100°F taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other symptoms
- Untreated infected skin patch(es)
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck
- Child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

While isolated, the child shall be observed for the following symptoms as well as those listed above: unusual spots or rashes; sore throat or difficulty swallowing; elevated temperature; vomiting; or evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.

Medication Policy

Our medication policy ensures your child will receive the proper dose of any and all medication. The medication will be administered by the school nurse or staff. Each time medication is administered, a written record or log including dosage, date, and time will be made. That record or log will be kept on file for one year. Medication will be stored in a locked storage location, except medication requiring refrigeration, which will be kept in a refrigerator that is not accessible to children. Medication brought to the school must be in the original bottle with the child's name, dosage amount, and physician's dosage instructions and expiration date on the label. Appropriate forms will need to be completed for medication to be administered. Each medication must have its own form from the doctor.

Child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Injury Policy

Should your child receive an injury during the hours of the preschool program, the parents will be contacted. In the event of a serious injury, the staff is trained to call 9-1-1 immediately and obtain instruction from the medical staff.

Open Door Policy

The St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool has an open door policy. We welcome parents to visit our classrooms. A criminal background check and Virtus training will need to be completed prior to an extended visit in the classroom, as required by the Diocese of Cleveland. All visitors to the school must register at the front office and receive a visitor's badge. The staff is to notify the office or administration if they notice a visitor is not wearing a visitor's badge.

Parent Participation/Volunteers

Throughout the year, our school PTU offers many volunteer programs and activities for our parents to participate in to support our school.

Below are some other ways for you to participate in our school program:

- Attend parent/teacher conferences.
- Praise and display the papers your child brings home. Remember, a lot of effort has gone into this work.
- If you have a special talent, such as music, art, creative dramatics, etc., please let the teacher know so that you may share this with the children. All visiting requirements must be met before entering the classroom. (See Open Door Policy)
- Read the classroom weekly newsletter/monthly calendar.
- Attend school Open Houses. They are designed to allow you to explore your child's classroom and tour the school's facilities.

Policies and Procedures

St. Mary of the Assumption School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational and admissions policies. Furthermore, it is the policy of St. Mary of the Assumption School and the St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool Programs not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or employment as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972.

The preschool will not abuse or neglect children and will protect children from abuse and neglect while in the preschool program.

Rules apply to everyone on the preschool premises.

Admission Procedures

St. Mary of the Assumption Preschool programs include and meet the diverse needs of our families and community.

Prior to admission, a tour of classrooms and an introduction to our staff will be available. Each family will be provided with a link to a website that contains an application packet consisting of information that the parents are required to fill out and return. **All information must be completed in full prior to admission to St. Mary of the Assumption Preschool.** St. Mary of the Assumption Preschool will not accept a child whose packet or forms have been returned incomplete.

In addition, as required by the state of Ohio, parents are required to provide up-to-date medical or immunization information for their child. Parents will be provided a new medical and/or immunization form prior to their child's paperwork expiration date. Parents of children who are not immunized must complete an approved form.

Withdrawal Procedures

A parent wishing to withdraw their child from the St. Mary of the Assumption Preschool must provide written notification to the director.

Group Size & Teacher/Child Ratio

Age of Child	Teacher/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
3 years	1:12	24
4-5 years	1:14	25

Entrance Age

Children must be **three years of age* by September 30th** of the year in which they are entering the St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool Program. Children must be **four years of age by September 30th** of the year in which they are entering the St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Pre-K Program.

***3 year olds must be potty-trained before the first day of school.**

Special Needs Children

The early education teacher of young children has the unique opportunity to observe the individual learning styles of each child as he/she enters the school experience. It may become apparent to the teacher that some children have needs which require special intervention. The teacher will act as a referral source for further evaluation.

Safety Policy

All policies and rules in the St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool Parent/Student Handbook are in effect with the preschool program. In addition to these policies, the following rules will be followed to provide the safest environment for your child:

- No child will be left alone or unsupervised
- Children will be escorted into the school by a parent/guardian or teacher
- A telephone is located in the classroom
- Fire drills are conducted monthly and lockdown drills are practiced
- Procedures are posted in each room along with primary and secondary routes
- Staff members will immediately notify the principal and the Department of Children Services at 1-800-4-A-CHILD with suspicions of child abuse or neglect
- Teacher has copies of medical and emergency transportation forms at all times
- Staff members are certified in emergency procedures and first aid

Emergency Plans

In case of an accident or medical emergency, the school nurse or teacher will notify the parents. The authorized persons, other than the parents, will be contacted in the event that the parents cannot be reached. The emergency squad will be called when necessary, and transportation to the hospital will always be done by the local emergency squad. The child's medical and emergency medical treatment release form will accompany the child, as well as a member of the staff. The staff member will stay with the child until released to a parent or guardian. **Please update contact information in RenWeb immediately, and let the school office know, when changes occur.**

Snow Days

St. Mary of the Assumption School is closed when the Mentor school district is closed. Information regarding delayed openings and school cancellations can be found on news stations 3, 5, and 8. The phone number listed on your original registration form has been listed as the contact number for snow days/emergencies/notifications. **Any additional contact numbers will need to be updated by you on the Instant Alert school website:** www.InstantAlert.Honeywell.com.

Photographs

Photographs and videos of children participating in the programs may be taken from time to time. Photography, videos, and social media materials including your child are without compensation. (See policy agreement.)

Outdoor Play Space & Equipment

Children will have the opportunity to play outside at various times. All play areas will be maintained, safe, and free from all hazards. Children remain within sight and hearing of a staff member at all times.

Absences

If your child unexpectedly will not be attending due to illness or an unforeseen occurrence, call the phone number on the front of this handbook and leave a message on a voicemail. It is **vital** that you keep us informed about your child when he/she will not be attending.

Vacation

All programs follow scheduled vacations on the St. Mary of the Assumption school calendar. In the event that your child will be missing class sessions due to a “family vacation,” written notification must be given to the teacher.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent home twice a year before conference times. Necessary updates are sent home throughout the school year.

Conferences

Pre-K conferences are held twice a year—a scheduled conference in the fall, and an optional conference in the spring. Sign up procedures will be presented closer to dates. Three-year-old preschool conferences are available throughout the year as needed.

Birthday Treats

There are more students at St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool with severe allergies to peanuts and/or tree nuts. Because of the seriousness of this allergy, we are asking you to refrain from sending food items to school for birthdays or celebrations. If you choose to send in favors, we ask that it contain **non-food** items. **Favors, therefore, are optional.**

Snacks

A self-serve snack will be provided every class session. Snacks are peanut and tree nut free.

Dress Code

Please send children to school wearing comfortable clothes. The clothes should be outfits in which your child can paint, go outside, and play. Also, we ask that the clothes should stay away from characters that portray violent messages. Princesses, Doc McStuffins, Star Wars characters, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, etc. are acceptable.

Field Trips

Only the Pre-K classes will attend field trips. Parent drivers will be needed. Guest speakers will visit both the preschool and Pre-K classes.

Tuition

Please contact the school office at 440. 255.9781.

Drop Off & Pick Up Policy

Drop Off Policy for Morning & Afternoon Classes

Students may arrive at school no earlier than 5 minutes before class time. Please enter from Mentor Avenue **ONLY** (please do not enter through Acacia Drive), and a teacher will be standing

at Door “D” to greet your child. You do not need to park. Simply pull up to the door, assist your child out of the car, and allow the teacher to escort your child into the building. Please do not move your car from the drop off line until the car in front of you has moved. Teachers will be greeting at the drop off door 5 minutes before class time. If you will be arriving late, please escort your child into the building through the school’s main office entrance.

Pick Up Policy for Morning Class Only: No Parking. Stay in Line.

Please enter from Acacia Drive **ONLY** (do not enter through Mentor Avenue) by 10:50 a.m. and a teacher will be standing at Door “D” to dismiss your child. You will need to drive to the back parking lot and follow the fence line around the back of the parking lot and line up around the perimeter of the school. Pull up to the preschool door to pick up your child. **Please do not move your car from the drop off line until the car in front of you has moved.** After the first cars exit, the next group of cars may pull up. On certain days, there may be two classes dismissing at the same time. Be sure that all names given permission to pick up your child are listed on your registration form and that your pick up tag is clearly displayed in your front window. All unfamiliar people will be asked for identification, and their names must be on the registration form.

Pick Up Policy for Afternoon Class Only

Please enter from Mentor Avenue **ONLY** (please do not enter through Acacia Drive) and join the all-school pick up line no earlier than 2:15 p.m. Pick up will take place in the back parking lot in front of Door “H”. You will need to park in the middle of the parking lot as directed by the traffic duty teacher. When you see the doors at Door “H” open, please exit your car and proceed toward the door to pick up your child. A teacher will be directing when and where you will be able to cross in between the line of cars that has formed to pick up for the elementary school. After returning to your car in the parking lot, follow all directions given by the designated director of the exiting traffic. Be sure that all names given permission to pick up your child are listed on your registration form and that your pick up tag is clearly displayed in your front window. All unfamiliar people will be asked for identification, and their names must be on the registration form.

Discipline

St. Mary of the Assumption School and the St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool Programs believe that all children should experience success. Preschool staff members are in charge of the discipline for each child or group of children. We strive for a classroom setting that provides children with opportunities to explore their environment within consistent, age-appropriate limits. In this atmosphere, most behavioral issues are prevented. However, if behavioral issues occur, our philosophy is to help children learn human values, problem solving skills, and to take responsibility for their own choices. By using the following progressive guidance techniques, we strive to minimize inappropriate behavior while creating a positive environment for all of our children.

Classroom Management

Our teachers and aides will manage individual classrooms by modeling and reinforcing appropriate behavior, maintaining consistent supervision, setting reasonable expectations for children's behavior based on their developmental levels and individual differences, becoming familiar with an individual child's needs, and providing interesting, challenging, age appropriate things to do.

Ignoring

Some negative behavior is produced by a child to get attention. It can be stopped when it does not get the attention desired. We will utilize this technique unless a safety issue is involved.

Redirection/Distraction

We will offer alternatives to children engaged in undesirable behavior by offering a different toy, suggesting a new activity, engaging the child in an activity with a teacher or another child, or by suggesting independent play.

Verbal Intervention

The teacher explains to the child the inappropriate behavior and shows him/her the appropriate way to handle the situation.

Logical Consequences

The teacher helps the child understand the logical consequences of his/her actions by removing an object, activity, etc. that is causing the problem.

“Take a Break” or “Step Away”

The child is separated from the group to give him/her time to relax and calm down, and to enable him/her not to be influenced by peers. This is meant to be a positive time to think about appropriate, or “good” choices.

When “taking a break” or “stepping away,” the break shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child’s age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of the preschool teachers and aides in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.

Guidelines for Persistent Inappropriate Behavior

Persistent inappropriate behavior is any inappropriate behavior which continues after the progressive guidance steps have been used; any behavior which threatens the health or safety of other children or staff; or a continuous inability to conform to the rules and guidelines of the St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool Programs. We will use the following procedures:

- We will observe and record the child’s inappropriate behavior.
- We will document what we have done to try to change the behavior.
- If inappropriate behavior continues, parents will be asked to participate in an immediate parent/teacher conference. Children old enough to understand this process will be invited to attend. A specific action plan to address the behavior will be developed at this conference. The action plan will outline all steps the staff will take to try to change the behavior, all steps the parents will take, and all steps toward disenrollment if the behavior persists.
- The program director/principal may suggest outside resources to parents and will work with any outside resource for further guidance in responding to the child’s behavior.
- If the inappropriate behavior continues, parents will be asked to keep the child home for a day or two.
- If the inappropriate behavior persists after the child is kept home, the St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool Programs will request the parents do disenroll.

Guidelines for Immediate Disenrollment

Certain behaviors may cause a significant risk of harm to the health and safety of other children and staff. For example, a physical assault which results in serious bodily injury, an attempted physical assault which, if completed, would result in serious bodily injury, setting or attempting to set fires, bringing weapons to school, substantial damage to real or personal property, etc.

Other Forms of Discipline

Our policy **does NOT** permit the use of the following forms of discipline:

- Cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- Delegating discipline to any other child.
- Physical restraints shall not be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- Placing a child in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, box, or similar cubicle.
- Profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about him/herself or his/her family, or other verbal abuse.
- Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care.
- Discipline will not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- The preschool staff will not abuse or neglect children while in the preschool program.
- Rules apply to everyone on the premises.

Progressive Guidance Action Plan

Child's Name _____ Date _____

We have been experiencing the following behavioral issues with your child:

We have been using and will continue to use the following positive guidance techniques to try to change this behavior:

We would appreciate your suggestions on ways in which you can help us change this behavior.

On the next incident of inappropriate behavior, as described above, we will immediately call you and ask you to pick up your child from the school. We will also ask you to keep your child home the following day so that you may work with your child regarding this behavior. We will use this procedure for _____ more incidents. On the _____ incident, we will request that you disenroll.

Your cooperation with this plan is appreciated so that we may provide a healthy and safe environment for all our children and staff.

Teacher/Staff/Principal or Director Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Please be advised that if you choose not to sign, the Progressive Guidance Action Plan will still be implemented.

Policy Agreement

Please sign each statement and return to your child's teacher.

Child's Name _____

I have read the "St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool Programs" handbook, and I agree to the conditions stated within.

- Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

I have read and understand "The Progressive Guidance Action Plan" found in the handbook.

- Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Media Release and Consent Form

I recognize the value of audio-visual and digital technologies in providing my child with an effective education and hereby grant permission for my child and/or his/her schoolwork projects to be photographed or recorded as part of an educational program produced by the school or a coalition of schools.

I grant permission for the photographs or recorded work to be used in media presentations that are made available to other educational institutions or through a cable television station or network. I further grant permission for photographs to be used in print media (i.e. newspapers, magazines, brochures), social media or on the school website, including RenWeb. I understand that my child's image, work product, school and grade may be revealed in the presentation(s), but that no other information about my child or his/her schoolwork will be revealed without prior consent.

Media Release and Consent (please check one):

_____ Yes, I grant permission. _____ No, I do **not** grant permission.

- Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

We at St. Mary of the Assumption Wee Learn Preschool will prepare a roster of names, addresses, and phone numbers. We will make this available to parents upon request. We will only distribute the roster of your child's class this year upon request. We will ensure that this roster will not go to anyone who is not a parent of your child's class. Please remember that rosters may be used for birthday parties, Christmas parties, or to arrange play dates.

Parent Roster Statement (please check one):

_____ I would like my name and phone number included on the parent roster.

_____ I would **not** like to be included on the parent roster.

- Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____