

# St. James Lutheran Early Childhood Parent Handbook

800 Cincinnati Street Lafayette, Indiana 47901

765-742-6464

[www.mysjls.org](http://www.mysjls.org)



**ST. JAMES**  
LUTHERAN  
— SCHOOL —

Early Childhood

Adopted 8/2025

Welcome to St. James Lutheran Early Childhood Program!

Dear Parents,

We are grateful that you have chosen to partner with St. James to educate and care for your child(ren). We recognize that parents are the child's first teachers, and we will strive to provide the best possible environment for your child(ren) to grow and develop.

Our Early Childhood program is a Registered Ministry with oversight by the St. James Lutheran Board of Christian Education and the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, and meets State and County requirements and regulations for health, safety, nutrition and programming. St. James has an open-door policy for all families and welcome parents to stop in at any time during normal business hours.

In Christ Jesus,

St. James Early Childhood Team

### **Our Mission**

To joyfully share the gospel of God's kingdom and prepare children for a life of learning and service to Christ Jesus and their neighbor by nurturing their faith and developing their skills and acumen.

### **Our Ministry**

The purpose of St. James Lutheran Early Childhood is to serve as a Classical Education ministry of our Lutheran congregation to make known the love of Christ to the young students and equip them to become disciples of the kingdom of God (Eph 2:10). We partner with parents as they fulfill their vocation to nurture their child by providing a quality Lutheran education. We work together to support our students and foster their growth spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially.

**Spiritual** - Knowing, through faith, they are created in God's image as His forgiven and redeemed children through their baptism (Mark 16:16), aiding their growth in faith as they learn about our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Intellectual** - By understanding and learning about God's world through meaning-laden play (Rom 12:2).

**Physical** - Learning to discipline their bodies through regular exercise and proper nutrition (Rom. 12:1).

**Social** - Learning to live together as God intended and being good stewards of His creation (Luke 6:31).

**Emotional** - Maturing in their knowledge and understanding of each person as their neighbor in love and respect (1 John 3:1).

## **Our Philosophy**

All children are a gift from God (Ps. 127:3) and are unique individuals called to flourish in His kingdom and within their family (Ps. 92:12-13). Our classrooms and teaching practices reflect our belief that Jesus Christ graciously determines all we say and do. A developmentally appropriate Christian environment provides children with a place to learn and grow.

Our childhood education program addresses the whole child by focusing on a student's creative, physical, social/emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth. We value an environment that recognizes each child's varied abilities, interests, needs, and learning styles.

Young children learn best through hands-on meaningful play which cultivates curiosity, discovery, and problem-solving. The classrooms offer opportunities for guided, teacher-directed, and self-directed play. Our teachers encourage and support students to make positive choices and practice decision-making skills so they succeed in a complex, ever-changing world as life-long learners. Parents are the child's first teachers. Children learn best when parents are involved in their child's education. Our teachers partner with parents to enhance their child's academic and spiritual growth, so they may become rooted in Christ. (Col. 2:7)

## **Accreditation**

We are accredited by the National Lutheran Schools Association (NLSA). Like most accreditation processes, NLSA has established a set of rigorous national standards that demonstrate school quality and continuous improvement. An accredited school must comply with required standards by completing an exhaustive self-study. Even after a school has been accredited, school leaders must organize and implement a school improvement process that provides for on-going improvement. The standards-based procedure involves a comprehensive self-study followed by an on-site visit for recommendation of accreditation. The St. James Lutheran Early Childhood program scored over 92% on its most recent accreditation. NLSA is recognized by the State of Indiana as a partner in accreditation.

## Administration

St. James Lutheran Early Childhood program is a ministry of St. James Lutheran Church. It is operated under the direction of the Voter's Assembly, Senior Pastor, Board of Christian Education, and Early Childhood Director.

The Board of Christian Education establishes policy, and delegates to the Early Childhood Director the execution and administration of the policy. Questions and concerns regarding early childhood policy or administration of program operations are to be directed to the Early Childhood Director.

Any policy or procedure not specifically listed in this handbook shall be left to the discretion of the Early Childhood Director. This handbook is subject to change without notice by the early childhood program's governing body.

As a Classical Christian school and church, we practice Matthew 18 to resolve conflicts.

*15 "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18 Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed[f] in heaven. 19 Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." Matthew 18:15-20.*

**Early Childhood Director:** Caren Bunch, 765-423-1616, [ecdirector@stjameslaf.org](mailto:ecdirector@stjameslaf.org)

**Board of Christian Education:** Chair - Jacob Griffin, [boce@stjameslaf.org](mailto:boce@stjameslaf.org)

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. John J. Bombaro, [seniorpastor@stjameslaf.org](mailto:seniorpastor@stjameslaf.org)

## St. James Lutheran Church and Worship Opportunities

Jesus is the center of everything we do at St. James. We believe the Christian home is strengthened by worship as well as the study of God's word. We encourage faithful attendance at the church of your choice. If you do not have a church home, we invite you to worship and fellowship with us to enrich your faith and experience at St. James.

We offer masses on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 PM and Sunday at 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM, and all school masses, 1 time per month on a scheduled Friday. Sunday School for adults and children is held between Sunday services. If you would like more information about these or additional programs and weekly Bible studies, please call our church office at 765-423-1616 or visit our website, [www.stjameslaf.org](http://www.stjameslaf.org).

### **His Vision for Us**

Our community will know St. James as a vibrant place and an anchor of caring people who are centered in Christ.

### **The Mission of St. James Lutheran Church**

Equipping for service, teaching God's biblical truth, sharing the gospel of Christ.

### **We Value**

*Lutheran Doctrine* - we adhere to the teachings of the Holy Bible and the Lutheran Confessions

*Faith Development* - we engage in lifelong learning to strengthen our walk with Jesus

*Relationships* - God's grace compels us to love and care for one another

*Joyful Response* - we live each aspect of our lives in joyful response to the salvation we have through Jesus Christ

*Community* - We seek to be a beacon of light to those beyond our walls

*Excellence* - We believe God deserves our best in all we do

### **WHAT WE BELIEVE AND TEACH**

1. Human beings were created holy by God but lost this holiness through disobedience. We are still disobedient as evidenced by our inability to keep the Ten Commandments perfectly.
2. God loves us in spite of our disobedience. He loves us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to take the punishment that we deserve because of our disobedience.
3. Jesus Christ, true God and Man, lived a holy and perfect life on earth, suffered and died on the cross for our salvation, and rose again to prove His victory over sin and death for the forgiveness of all people and to bring God's kingdom on Earth.
4. Full and free forgiveness is offered to everyone. Those who believe and are baptized in Jesus as their Savior face life with a new joy and a greater confidence.
5. The Holy Spirit wants to impart this belief in everyone through the power of God's Holy Word and the sacraments.

6. The Church is composed of all those baptized into Christ Jesus and who rely on Him for forgiveness and eternal life and follow His teachings through life in His holy church.
7. Christ will come again visibly at the end of time as the righteous Judge of the world, rise from the dead, and give to believers in Christ eternal life.

## **STATEMENT OF BELIEF**

The congregation, St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church, is part of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS or Synod). The LCMS is a mission-oriented and Bible-based denomination that confesses the historic, orthodox Christian faith in the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, a faith built on “the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:20). With the universal on holy and catholic and apostolic, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod teaches and responds to the love of the Triune God who created all that exists; became man to suffer, die and rise again for the world’s redemption; and brings people to faith and new life through His Word and Sacraments. The three persons of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – are coequal and coeternal, one God.

We believe without reservation that the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament are the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice. In addition, the Synod accepts without reservation the writings contained in the *Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*.

Believing in the authority of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions are a correct interpretation and presentation of Biblical doctrine, our congregations agree to conform all their teaching and practice to the Scriptures and the Confessions.

## **OUR PASTORS**

For spiritual guidance or counsel our pastors wish to be helpful to members and non-members alike. They are also available to offer assistance in times of illness or hospitalization and as a source of information about what it means to be a Christian. Contact the church office at 765-423-1616.

### **Senior Pastor**

Rev. John J. Bombaro, Ph.D  
765-423-1616  
seniorpastor@stjameslaf.org

### **Assistant Pastor**

Rev. Pastor Barcott  
765-423-1616

## **Early Childhood Staff & Rooms**

### **Director**

Mrs. Caren Bunch

[ecdirector@stjameslaf.org](mailto:ecdirector@stjameslaf.org)

765-423-1616

### **St. Stephen - Nursery**

Ms. Katie Jo Warner

[kwarners@stjameslaf.org](mailto:kwarners@stjameslaf.org)

### **St. Matthew - Toddler 2 (PS2)**

Ms. Tonya Lucies

[tlucies@stjameslaf.org](mailto:tlucies@stjameslaf.org)

### **St. Luke - Toddler 1**

Ms. Laura Lake

[llake@stjameslaf.org](mailto:llake@stjameslaf.org)

### **Indigo Room - PS 3**

Mrs. Ashley Rosa

[arosa@stjameslaf.org](mailto:arosa@stjameslaf.org)

### **St. Joseph - PS3 and PK**

Mrs. Liz Hunter

[lhunter@stjameslaf.org](mailto:lhunter@stjameslaf.org)

### **St. Peter - PK**

Mrs. Rachel McKinsey

[rmckinsey@stjameslaf.org](mailto:rmckinsey@stjameslaf.org)

## **Arrival & Dismissal**

All Early Childhood students must be signed in by the adult dropping off for school. A “QR” code may be scanned for contactless sign in / out. After scanning, parents will be prompted to enter their unique 4 digit ID, this ID may be changed on your parent profile within the Brightwheel app. Anyone dropping off or picking up must have their unique 4 digit PIN number. Parents may add those they wish to the Brightwheel system.

A student will not be dismissed to anyone except a parent/guardian or someone designated by the parents to take the child home. If it becomes necessary for someone other than the designated person to pick up the child, the parent/guardian must notify the school office through a written note or phone call. Photo ID will be checked before releasing the child. Older siblings may not sign in / out their younger siblings. Parents may add authorized caregivers to pick up their child on Brightwheel.

If a Court Order exists preventing an individual from having contact with a child, St. James will comply with the Order and keep a copy of the Court Order on file. Please make sure the School Office has all current court orders and guardianships on file. If an intoxicated or impaired person insists on removing children from St. James, we will immediately call the Lafayette Police and make a report to Child Protective Services.

Pickup is expected to be prompt. Preschool classes are dismissed at 12:15 PM. Any preschooler who is picked up after 12:20 PM will be charged the daily preschool rate. Full day preschool/childcare is offered until 4:30 PM. Late pick up after 4:35 from Child Care will result in an extended care fee of \$5.00 per day.

Sign up for Early Childhood extended care is available from 4:30-5:15 PM.

## **Assessments**

Childhood assessment is a process of gathering information about a child, reviewing the information, and then using the information to plan educational activities that are at a level the child can understand and is able to learn from. Assessment is a critical part of a high-quality, classical early childhood program. St. James uses a variety of ways to assess the children of our program; observations, portfolios, milestone assessment and the LCMS Indiana district assessment tool.

We offer formal parent-teacher conferences twice a year: once in the fall and again in the spring. However, parents and teachers can request a conference at any time to address a concern.



## **Attendance**

If a child is absent for any reason, please notify us via the Brightwheel app.

If your child will arrive after 8:30 AM, then contact the school office to order a hot lunch if needed. Hot lunch must be ordered by 8:30 AM or a child may be offered an alternative hot lunch.

## **Baptism Birthdays**

Baptism birthdays will be celebrated the first week of each month. Those children with summer baptism birthdays will be celebrated during August or May.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are a wonderful, special occasion and will be celebrated in each classroom by the teacher. Each teacher will have a classroom procedure and activities that will make the birthday child feel special. Those children having summer birthdays, or when school is not in session will still have their “special day” for celebration, which will be scheduled by their teacher. **Sweet treats (i.e., cupcakes, donuts, cookies) may not be offered in by parents**. Birthday party invitations will not be sent home in backpacks or handed out in class unless every child is invited. You may contact your child’s teacher for contact information of classmates.

## **Brightwheel**

All children must be signed in and out daily using Brightwheel, by parents, guardians, or authorized caregivers. This is a requirement by law and documentation we use for emergencies, court cases, and voucher verification.

Our early childhood program uses Brightwheel for the following:

- Daily sheets for nursery & toddler rooms
- Medication log
- Messaging
- Reminders
- Pictures of activities
- Incident reporting

## **Bullying and Prevention**

Bullies range in age from 3 to 103, and both boys and girls can be bullies. Bullying behavior marks power over another person. It is unwanted and repeated. It can occur on the playground, in the classroom, in the restroom, in the locker room, or online. Contrary to popular belief, bullies usually have average grades, high

self-esteem, and friends. They do, however, seem to lack compassion for others. School bullies look for easy targets in other students who might be shy, bigger or smaller than other students, have special needs, or are new to the school.

Parents and teachers do well to take children's claims seriously that someone is bothering them. Bullying behavior can be stopped when the proper people are informed. Parents and teachers must insist on being told whenever an incident occurs so they may address the situation.

We are commanded by God to “love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39). That is a strong commandment, and it is not easy to follow. Parents can encourage their children to pray for students around them, especially for the child who is a bully. Parents can also encourage their children to seek help from those around them. Victims can also make sure they tell an adult, assert themselves by telling the bully to stop, and then walk away from the situation. Communication is key to stopping bullying behavior. Throughout this process, we want to apply Law and Gospel, moving towards repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. We have a great Savior. He himself was bullied. He endured torment, torture, and finally death to earn forgiveness for all sins, including the sins of bullies, who themselves can be trained toward more godly behaviors.

Please read the Classroom Management section for our approach to discipline.

### **Classroom Transitions**

Please note when your child moves to a new class to verify classroom protocol with your child's new teacher. Each teacher has set up an environment that is best suited for the age and development of the children they teach. Feel free to communicate any needs or concerns prior to the class change. We work hard to be a team with our families.

### **Choir**

The PK students are part of the Lambs Choir along with Kindergarten students. The Lamb's Choir will sing on Sunday during worship 1 to 2 times each semester. This is a wonderful opportunity for your child to offer praise to God through his/her singing and to be a worship leader for St. James. The congregation takes great delight in your child sharing in part of the Holy Mass.

Both classrooms also sing monthly for our “Koinania Ordo” Wednesday morning mass. The members who attend this service take great delight in having your children sing of God's praises for them.

## Classroom Management Plan: Restorative Practices

At St. James, we use Restorative Practices from Early Childhood-8th Grade. Parents are encouraged to learn more about Restorative Practices for Early Childhood by going to the following website, <https://mybrightwheel.com/blog/restorative-practices-in-the-classroom>. Behavioral guidance will be given in a measure appropriate to the child's level of maturity. Discipline will always be in the context of Christian love. To help children learn how to process and handle their feelings and emotions appropriately and grow from their experiences, they need to feel safe and have the support of their teachers and peers. St. James uses restorative practices and disciplinary interventions to understand the root cause of the wrongdoing, understand the needs, feelings, and responsibilities of all impacted individuals, explore ways to bring healing to the community, and provide support to create positive behavioral changes. Some examples of these practices in the classroom include:

- Building a positive classroom community by promoting empathy, respect, and inclusivity. Encourage children to understand and appreciate each other's differences and work collaboratively.
- Developing a shared language that children can use to communicate their feelings and needs. Encourage children to use "I" statements and to listen actively to each other.
- Teaching problem-solving skills, such as identifying problems, brainstorming solutions, and evaluating outcomes. Encourage children to work together to find solutions to conflicts.
- Using restorative questions to encourage children to reflect on their behavior and its impact on others. For example, *"What happened?"*, *"How did it make you feel?"* and *"What can you do to make things right?"*.
- Practicing restorative conversations by encouraging children to have conversations with each other to resolve conflicts. Provide guidance and support as needed, and model restorative conversations when appropriate.
- Using restorative consequences instead of punitive measures when conflicts arise. For example, encourage children to make amends, apologize, and find ways to repair any harm caused.

If these methods are not effective, we may ask children to go to a quiet area until they are ready to join the group. Usually, this gives children a chance to calm and regain control. In cases of consistent or more severe misbehavior, parents will be contacted so that we may work out an agreeable course of action together. Any child who does not respond to restorative practices will have parents called to come and retrieve their child for the remainder of the day. Children will not be permitted to interfere with the learning process or safety of our staff or other children.

## **Class Placement**

Class placement is made by the school administration, based upon the needs of the individual student, as well as a placement that is in the best interest of all students in the particular grade/program.

## **Class Schedule Example**

Each class will post their schedule on the bulletin board outside of their classroom. Indigo will be just inside of their classroom.

## **What Our Day Looks Like**

7:30 AM	Arrival and Morning Routine
8:15 AM	Circle Time
8:30 AM	Restroom, Hand washing, Prayer, Snack
8:50 AM	Mystery Letter and Sharing Time
9:00 AM	Religion
9:25 AM	Recess / Large Motor Time
10:00 AM	Zoo-phonics and Science
10:15 AM	Centers and Small Group Work
11:30 AM	Restroom and Handwashing
11:40 AM	Lunch
12:30 PM	Dismissal
12:40 PM	Rest Time
1:45 PM	Restroom and Handwashing
2:00 PM	Prayer and Snack
2:30 PM	Recess / Large Motor, Playground
3:30 PM	Restroom and Handwashing
3:45 PM	Silly Songs and Dance Time
4:00 PM	Table Activities, Centers, Small Group Activity
4:30 PM	Dismissal

Specials include art, music, pe, and library

## **Communication**

Communication between Parent & Teacher is vital to the success of your student. We want to be an active partner with you during your child's time at St. James. Therefore, we make every effort to communicate with families in a variety of ways about your child (ren) and the activities of the school and church. Your child's teacher will provide you with information about how to best contact them. Teachers will respond to emails and phone messages within 48 hours.

Please keep in mind that pick-up and drop-off times are difficult for lengthy conversation, as teachers must attend to the safety and supervision of all of their students. Email is a convenient form of communication for minor questions but should not take the place of scheduling an appointment for concerns of a more serious nature. All of the staff of St. James are happy to schedule a time to visit with parents.

We will communicate in a variety of ways:

- Classroom Information Board - specific to each classroom
- Brightwheel messaging - reminders of school vacation days, school closing, messages from parent to teacher, teacher to parent, parent to admin, and admin to parent.
- Email - reminders of events & sign ups, sharing important information
- Brightwheel Newsletters
- Paper Note Home
- St. James Website, [www.mysjls.org](http://www.mysjls.org) - Harmony school information system, events for church & school, volunteer opportunities
- Parent - Teacher Conferences
- Parent - Teacher League (PTL) - school events, fundraisers, school information

## **Confidentiality**

It is our policy to keep all family and children information and records confidential. We will not share information with anyone. Any information we attain is solely used for educating and caring for you and your child.

## **Cubbies & Extra Clothes**

Cubbies are provided in the hallways/classrooms for coats and personal belongings. Your child needs to bring the following items to school:

- A full set of extra clothes appropriate to the current season clearly labeled with your child's name. Please place it in a gallon size Ziploc bag.
- A family photo for the classroom wall.

- All items need to be small enough to fit in the cubbies.

We recommend that you send children in clothing which is comfortable and appropriate for play. In warm weather, please do not send children in flip-flops or slip-on sandals without an ankle strap. Children need sturdy shoes for negotiating stairs, running and climbing on the playground. We suggest keeping a stocking cap, scarf and mittens in your child's cubby for cold days. Please check your child's locker daily for newsletters, notes, art work, etc.

## **Cumulative Records**

Cumulative records are maintained for each child. Teachers are responsible for maintaining a portfolio for each student, which contains assessments, behavior notations, family records, and examples of classroom work. These records are confidential.

## **Curriculum**

In keeping with the purpose of the St. James Lutheran Early Childhood program, the classical - based curriculum we use includes, Nursery - Prekindergarten, is *One in Christ/Enduring Faith*, which is published by Concordia Publishing House. Christian Formation is not a separate subject each day, but instead, is woven through the fabric of each day. As part of our day, we do include "Jesus time."

Instead of breaking the day into a series of separate subjects, our teachers plan an integrated curriculum in which various subjects blend together into one activity (e.g. social studies, math and science are taught simultaneously in a lesson on the rain forest). We provide an environment rich in experiences which enables children to become self-sufficient and to make choices that fulfill their developmental needs. Our focus is on the capacities and interests of children at various age levels, encouraging observation and curiosity of the world God has given us, preparing them to be servants of the Lord and His people.

We also use Zoo-phonics in Toddler - Prekindergarten, <https://zoo-phonics.com>. Zoo-phonics is a method developed to help children become strong readers and spellers by using a "phono" (hearing), "oral" (speaking), "visual" (seeing), "kinesthetic" (moving), "tactile" (touching) - whole brain approach.

As part of our transition to Classical Curriculum, we have adopted Memoria Press Early Childhood and Junior Kindergarten Curriculum in Toddler 2(PS2) - Prekindergarten. This curriculum will build foundations of listening and retelling stories, recitation of prayers, and singing songs. Infant and toddlers will learn songs and nursery rhymes appropriate to their age.

## **Donations**

We gladly accept donations. If you have something specific to donate please see the director to arrange. If a classroom is doing a special project they will often hang a sign, or send a message via Brightwheel. Donation suggestions: tissues, glue sticks, magazines, old cellphones, dress up clothes, purses, jewelry, etc.

## **Dress Code**

Clothing should be simple, modest, washable, and easy for your child to get on and off for the restroom.

We encourage shoes that are safe and appropriate for the playground and stairs, closed toed tennis shoes are most appropriate for running and playing. Flip flops and cowboy boots are strongly discouraged as they are not safe in the school environment. A pair of rain boots, to be left at school, for wet, muddy playground days are also encouraged.

Shorts are to be worn under skirts and dresses.

A season appropriate change of clothing is to be kept at school at all times, this will include the following items: tops, bottoms, socks, underwear. Please place items in a large Ziploc bag which has the child's name.

## **Emergency Plans**

In the case of a serious illness, injury, or death of a caregiver or child, the Early Childhood Director will notify families in the early childhood program via Brightwheel, email or phone call.

## **Enrollment**

Enrollment eligibility for a program/class at St. James Lutheran School and Early Childhood is based upon a child's age and/or developmental level. St. James enrolls children from age 6 weeks through those children attending eighth grade. The age of eligibility for children to enroll in each class at St. James is based upon the child's age on August 1 of the current school year. For example, to enroll in the Preschool 2 class, a child must be 2 years of age on or before August 1st of the upcoming school year. Early enrollment (children younger than the age requirement for a specific program) will not be accepted. Children may be older than the stated age for a given program, due to parent/teacher assessment of developmental level and program appropriateness. Children entering Preschool 3 and above must be potty trained, and

can use the restroom by themselves (no pull-ups)

Application and enrollment information for the next school year is made available in early February.

Students may be declined admission if, based on the assessment and/or observation, it is determined that St. James will not be able to meet the student's individual needs for any reason, or if the students' needs would result in compromising the education of other students. As class sizes are limited, a waiting list is maintained for eligible students once a class is full.

The order of enrollment acceptance, for those students who are determined to be eligible, will be as follows:

1. Current students of St. James Lutheran School and Early Childhood
2. Siblings of current students of St. James Lutheran School K-8
3. Children of members of St. James Lutheran Church
4. Children of members of LCMS sister churches: Grace Lutheran Church, Redeemer Lutheran Church, University Lutheran Church, and other LCMS churches
5. Former students, and siblings of former students of St. James Lutheran School and Early Childhood
6. All other students, according to the enrollment policy of St. James Lutheran School and Early Childhood

St. James Lutheran School and Early Childhood admits students of any race, color, religious preference, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious preference or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, or other school-administered programs.

## **Facility Safety**

We have a daily "Health and Safety" checklist to be completed by the Lead teacher each morning before our program is open for the day. This checklist will be provided upon request and may be found in each classroom. Each room is cleaned and sanitized throughout the day and at the end of each day.

## **Financial**

Admissions Application Fee - an application fee of \$75 is due upon submitting an application to be considered for Admissions to St. James.

FACTS Tuition Payment Plan Fee - upon acceptance to St. James, a family will be asked to complete the enrollment process and a payment plan. FACTS administers the



payment plan and charges a fee for each new payment plan dependent upon number of payments.

#### Preschool Tuition and Child Care Fees

Tuition is per student and varies depending upon the program(s) chosen.

Financial Aid - Limited financial aid is available for early childhood families. A Grant & Aid financial aid application must be submitted through FACTS. The cost for the application is \$45. All supporting documentation must be uploaded with the Grant & Aid application.

#### Ways to Make Your Child's Education Affordable

- Church Partner Scholarship - application to LCMS congregation of which you are a member
- Helping Hands - application to St James Financial Aid committee
- St. James Financial Aid - a needs based scholarship
- Raise Right program sponsored by the Parent Teacher League (PTL) - purchase Raise Right (gift)cards for area merchants and receive a portion of the proceeds to help cover tuition/fees
- CCDF - state funded, income based grant through the state of Indiana

During the year, special circumstances may occur that make it impossible to meet all financial obligations on a timely basis. Should an emergency arise, it is necessary to meet with Director or a pastor to discuss intentions to meet these obligations.

At the end of the first semester all school fees and child care fees must be current in order to return to school for the second semester. If arrears occur in the second semester, then fees must be current/zeroed out for the beginning of next school year (first semester). If necessary, a written special payment plan may be agreed upon in lieu of bringing the accounts up to date. If the plan is not followed the parents will be notified following the first missed payment of the agreed upon plan that the children may not attend.

Tuition and Child Care fees are still incurred during a child's absence from school due to illness or a vacation that does not coincide with St. James' school calendar and cancellation of school due to inclement weather.

### **Food Policy**

#### Lunch Program.

Two snacks and lunch are served each day.

A child- friendly, well-balanced lunch is provided (for purchase) by St. James school. If your child brings a cold lunch you may purchase milk for \$0.50. Lunch may be

paid through your child's Harmony account (PS 3 & PK), payments for Nursery-PS2 lunches may be given to your child's teacher. Group prayer is said before each meal, polite table manners and good eating habits are encouraged.

According to state guidelines and our NLSA accreditation requirements the following food items are not served to children under four years old. This includes food sent from home for snack or lunch:

- Hot dogs (whole or sliced in rounds)
- Whole grapes
- Nuts
- Popcorn
- Raw peas
- Hard pretzels
- Spoons of peanut butter
- Chunks of raw carrot

Grapes and hot dogs from home should be cut into quarters.

#### Lunches brought from home

- Any lunch brought from home must be a true cold lunch. Staff cannot heat a child's lunch in the microwave.
- Lunch boxes must be labeled with the child's name and date
- Lunch boxes must be placed in the refrigerator, opened
- Prohibited foods mentioned above are not allowed to be served in cold lunches

#### Safe Transportation of Food Responsibility

Food must be brought to the facility in clean, insulated, sanitizable containers, which keeps cold food at 41°F or below and hot food at 135°F or above. Containers must be clearly labeled with the child's name and date of preparation.

Upon receiving the food from a parent, the facility shall verify the temperature of the food. When potentially hazardous food temperature is not correct, the facility will not accept the food.

Upon accepting the food, the facility shall maintain correct food temperatures until served.

As a parent, you agree to take full responsibility for the safety of your child's food during preparation, storage, and transportation to the facility.

#### Snacks

We strive to serve healthy snacks to your children. Children need good nutrition to grow, learn, and be the best they can be. The following are **examples** of food items served for snack:

- String cheese
- Yogurt, topped with fruit
- Fruit cups packed in juice
- Cups of unsweetened applesauce
- Cottage cheese with cut fruit
- Whole wheat pita triangles with hummus
- Apple slices with sunflower butter
- Sliced or chopped veggies such as cucumbers or peppers and ranch dressing

## GRIEVANCE GUIDELINES

The most effective means toward conflict resolution is to initiate honest and open communication. It is the responsibility of the Headmistress, Administrator, or Designee to help facilitate this process and bring about reconciliation.

The purpose of the Grievance Guidelines is to build and sustain the love which God commands us to have toward our neighbor and to improve our school. Ephesians 4: 25-27, 31-32, is especially significant for this purpose:

*Therefore, putting away lying, each one speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry, and do not sin, do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil..... Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you.*

Likewise, these guidelines will help us keep James 3: 11-12:

*Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?*

We expect all matters of concern to follow the general outline of Matthew 18: 15-17:

*Moreover, if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church.*

Matthew 18 directs us first to the person with whom we have the concern. If a parent is concerned about an academic, classroom, or other matter at SJLS, he or she is to initiate honest and open communication. In most cases the concern is quickly resolved and a stronger relationship is formed.

If unresolved, the grieved party may ask for intervention and support from the next level of authority. Every effort will be made to bring about communication between the parties involved leading to resolution and Christian reconciliation (Matthew 5: 23-24).

The order of authority in any concern is:

- i. First and foremost, to the person with whom we have a concern as noted above.
- ii. Otherwise, the following order should be observed:
  1. Teacher
  2. Headmistress, Administrator, or Designee
  3. the Pastor and Board of Christian Education

It is the responsibility of the Headmistress, Administrator, or Designee and Senior Pastor to help facilitate this process and bring about reconciliation.

## **Harmony**

All school children, PS 3 - 8th grade, have an account in Harmony. Harmony is our school information system (SIS). You may gain access to Harmony through our website under the school tab. Each family will have their own unique log in to access their family account. In Harmony, school lunches for children may be paid, attendance is recorded, online registration for each school year is completed, student records are kept, etc

## **Health and Wellness - Additional Supplement to SJS Health and Wellness Policy**

### **Abuse & Neglect Reporting Policy**

Suspected child abuse or neglect will be reported to the proper authority whether the suspected abuse took place while a child was in the care of the child care, or whether

the suspected abuse took place elsewhere. Confidentiality of all information will be maintained. Our staff are trained yearly in recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect.

### *Accident and Injury*

Each teacher has basic first aid supplies in the classroom to treat children. In the event of an accident, the teacher shall attempt to contact the parent as well as inform the director. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact listed will be contacted. In any situation, except for minor cuts and bruises, school personnel will contact the parents so that parents are aware of the accident and can take further action if appropriate. Personnel will file a written report of the accident in Harmony (PS 2 - PK students) or Brightwheel (Nursery - Toddlers).

If necessary, an ambulance or paramedics will be called. Until a parent, physician, or paramedic arrives, the Director or a lead teacher will be in charge and make all decisions concerning the care of the child. It is to your child's benefit to keep us updated with all current emergency contacts, phone numbers, and medical information. All staff are trained in first aid, and there will always be a minimum of one staff person trained in CPR on the premises.

### *Allergy Management and Prevention*

All children with allergies must have a completed Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan submitted prior to the first day of school. All teachers and staff will be made aware of students with allergies. Teachers and staff are trained how to use an Epi-pen and recognize the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis. Teachers carry an emergency "go bag" containing a first aid kit, emergency contact forms, Epi-pens, etc in case of an emergency.

Students with severe allergies are asked to provide a supply of appropriate snacks to be kept in a covered container, labeled with the students name, for their use only.

We are required to serve milk for all meals. Children will be served milk unless a Dr.'s note is on file stating the child is allergic to milk, parents will furnish an alternative to milk.

### *Communicable Disease Policy*

St. James' decisions involving persons who have communicable diseases shall be based on current and well-informed medical judgments concerning the disease, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has a communicable disease, and a careful weighing of the

identified risks and the available alternative for responding to an employee with a communicable disease.

Communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, measles, influenza, viral hepatitis-A (infectious hepatitis), viral hepatitis-B (serum hepatitis), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV infection), AIDS, AIDS-Related Complex (ARC), leprosy, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and tuberculosis. St. James may choose to broaden this definition within its best interest and in accordance with the information received through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

St. James will not discriminate against any job applicant or employee based on the individual having a communicable disease. Applicants and employees shall not be denied access to the workplace solely on the grounds that they have a communicable disease. St. James reserves the right to exclude a person with a communicable disease from the workplace facilities, programs and functions if the organization finds that, based on a medical determination, such restriction is necessary for the welfare of the person who has the communicable disease and/or the welfare of others within the workplace.

St. James will comply with all applicable statutes and regulations that protect the privacy of persons who have a communicable disease. Every effort will be made to ensure procedurally sufficient safeguards to maintain the personal confidence about persons who have communicable diseases.

If a child shows symptoms or potential symptoms of a communicable disease, parents will be notified immediately and will make arrangements to have the child picked up. The child will remain in the sick room or office until parents or other guardians arrive.

\*Please note: The best way to limit the spread of disease is good handwashing.

### Head Lice

Head Lice Protocol Best practices regarding the management of pediculosis should not disrupt the education process. Children found with live head lice will be referred to parents for treatment. Research data does not support school exclusion for nits. Because no disease process is associated with head lice, schools do not exclude students when nits remain after appropriate lice treatment. However, further monitoring for signs of re-infestation is proper. The school's goals are to contain the infestation, provide pertinent health information for treatment and prevention, prevent overexposure to potentially hazardous chemicals, and minimize school absences. (Position Statement of the National Association of School Nurses) With this

information in mind, the following is the protocol for St. James Lutheran School health services:

- A trained staff member will assess a student referred to the School Office for possible head lice.
- If live bugs are present, the office will call the parent and send the student home for treatment. The school office will provide information to the parent on treatment and prevention.
- If nits are present, the office will notify the parent to treat the child after school hours, and the school office will send information home with the child on treatment and prevention.
- The student and parent should report to the school office the following morning for the trained staff member to clear the student to return to class.
- If live lice are present, the school office will call the parent to pick up the child and treat them at home.
- If nits only remain, the student may return to class, and the parent will continue nit removal after school hours.
- The classroom teachers will monitor for further signs of re-infestation for several weeks after treatment.
- Non-compliant Parents may be asked to remove all nits to prevent this chronic condition from continuing.

Please see the following article on the CDC website for further information.

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/schools.html>

### Hospitalization

If your child is hospitalized for an illness, we require a doctor's note stating the reason for hospitalization and if the child is well enough to return to child care.

### Illness

Protocol for Sending a Student Home Due to Illness and/or Readmission This protocol reflects IC 20-8.1-7-8. Additionally this protocol is to be used in conjunction with the Indiana State Department of Health Communicable Disease Reference Guide for School Personnel. According to IC 20-8.1-7-8 Section 8 (a): If a child is ill, has a communicable disease, or is infested with parasites, the School Principal may send the child home with a note to the child's parent or guardian.

The following symptoms may warrant a student being sent home from school:

- Fever – greater than or equal to 100° F

- Uncontrolled Cough
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting
- Pain
- Rash with or without fever
- Drainage from eyes and/or nose
- Difficulty breathing

Criteria to determine if a student may be readmitted include:

- Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
- Free of vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours and able to tolerate his/her normal diet.
- If the illness is communicable and requires medication intervention, the student has been on the medication for 24 hours before returning to school.
- It is apparent to the Administrator that the student is no longer ill, no longer has a communicable disease or is no longer infested with parasites.
- The student is able to participate in normal school activities without fatigue, pain, headache, fever or relapse of symptoms.
- If the physician writes a note verifying the student is no longer ill or that the illness is not communicable through normal school activities, the student may be readmitted.

### *Illness Outbreak*

In the event of a serious illness outbreak (including but not limited to H1N1 flu), we will make every effort to remain open. We encourage frequent hand-washing and sanitizing, as well as coughing and sneezing into elbows. Aides from other rooms and substitutes will be called in if regularly scheduled staff become ill and cannot work. Children and adults must be free of a fever for 24 hours without the use of medication before returning.

If we cannot maintain safe child-ratios, we will close for a temporary time. Families of children attending the Day Care, State Licensing Agency, and County Health Department will be notified in case of an emergency closure. We will follow guidelines and recommendations of the County Health Department for reopening.

### *Immunizations*

Indiana state law requires that each child have a current immunization record, including dates immunizations were given, signed by a physician, on file. Immunization forms are due the first week of school and updated forms are due



when a child receives new immunizations during the school year. Prior to enrollment and no earlier than twelve (12) months prior to enrollment, each child must have written verification of a physical examination by a physician or a nurse practitioner.

#### Medications - storing & dispensing

Medicine can be given only if authorized in writing by a parent or guardian and a note is on file from the child's pediatrician which notes dosage and times to administer. If the medicine does not contain a pharmacy label, it must also be authorized in writing by the child's physician. Creams, ointments, and other topical products may be applied on children if authorized by a physician. The exception to this authorization is the use of A & D ointment. These guidelines are regulations of the State of Indiana. Medicine is administered by the Director or designated staff person. All medicines are stored out of reach of children.

#### Medical Treatment Policy

1. Any medication (prescription and over-the-counter medication) must be in a labeled bottle and, if prescription medication, in a prescription bottle with the doctor's name and the name of the pharmacy. The label must include the name and strength of the medication as well as directions on administering and storing the medication. Note: We cannot accept prescriptions that are expired.
2. Staff will not administer any medication without a signed parent permission form and in the case of a prescription, authorization from the child's physician.
3. A medication log must be kept regarding the dispensing of medication to children. The medication log needs to contain the following information: The child's name (first and last) The name of the medication The dosage given The date and time given The full name of the staff person who administered the medication. St. James uses Brightwheel for our medication log, parents will receive notification when medication is given to their child.
4. If a parent has requested that a medication be given (assuming all required documentation is on file) and it was not administered, the child's caregiver must write the reason on the medication log.
5. Medication logs are to be kept for a minimum of one year.
6. All medications are to be stored in the original container and kept in a locked cabinet.
7. Medications requiring refrigeration must be stored in a tightly lidded, washable container marked "medication" in a refrigerator.
8. When a medication is no longer needed, it should be returned to the parent or

destroyed.

9. Child care staff who administer care to children requiring special medical procedures must be trained in the specific procedure and guided in writing by the prescribing health care provider.

The Emergency Contact and Treatment Information and Authorization form must be filled out for each child. This form provides space to inform the teachers and the office as to prescription medications to be given, permission for such medication to be dispensed, and provides a list of emergency contacts. This form also gives permission for emergency medical treatment should the need arise.

All medications, prescription or non-prescription must be given to the teacher by the parent. All medication will be kept in a locked space designated for this purpose. Any medication, prescription or non-prescription must come in the original container, and be accompanied by a form indicating the dosage and time it should be dispensed. If you notify your pharmacist, he or she will be able to split the dosage in two marked bottles (one for school, and one for home). This is for the safety of all children.

**Any diaper cream, other than A & D ointment, must be accompanied by a doctor's note with directions for usage.**

All medications given are logged in to Brightwheel and kept on record.

#### *Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, Drugs and FireArms Policy*

The use of tobacco in any form, the use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the premises for staff, parents and volunteers.

Any staff member, parent or volunteer who is inebriated, intoxicated or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances will be required to leave the premises immediately.

Children will not be released to any individual who is deemed to be inebriated, intoxicated or otherwise impaired.

Staff are subject to periodic random drug screenings. Failure of staff to maintain sobriety while providing child care will result in termination.

No guns or other lethal weapons will be allowed on the premises. Parents required to carry firearms as a function of their job are exempt from this policy.

#### *CPR & First Aid Certification*

The early childhood director and staff maintain current CPR & First Aid Certification. There shall be certified staff present at all times of operation.

### **Helpful Hints**

- Visit the school with your child prior to them attending. Make sure you have all the enrollment paperwork completed, have created your family account in FACTS, downloaded the Brightwheel app and entered additional caregivers for your child.
- If you have a Preschool 3 and older child you must create your family Harmony account and complete all online registration paperwork before attending.
- Bring everything they will need for the day, especially something of comfort for nap time.
- If you are experiencing separation issues, please inform the teacher that you will need assistance. It is sometimes difficult for us to measure when you are ready to leave. Please remember it is easier for both you and your child to say good-bye and leave without hesitating or returning to the room. If the children cry the staff are trained in how to ease the fears and comfort them. It usually only takes a few minutes. You are always able to call and see how they are after you leave. Adjustment periods are normal but they can be smooth if parents support the child with a positive, firm and consistent approach.

### **Hours of Operation**

St. James Lutheran Early Childhood Center opens at 7:30 am, and closes at 4:30 PM. Monday through Friday, except on days the school is closed. You may sign up for EC extended care from 4:30 - 5:15 PM for an additional fee.

Your tuition is based on 180 days including 3 virtual days. Please remember our staffing is based on the arrival/departure times you list on your Enrollment form. If these times need to change you must have prior approval to ensure we have proper staff coverage.

### **Items/Toys from Home**

All toys, games, etc used in the program are carefully selected to implement teaching objectives. You are asked to not send toys to school except for a specific class activity such as "Show & Tell". The school assumes no responsibility for the loss or damage of toys. Items from home become a distraction including toys, money, candy, or jewelry for the child who brings it and the child who would like to borrow it.



## **Late Start Days**

### *2 Hour delay schedule*

No AM snack served

9:30 AM       Arrival

10:00 AM       Class Begins

11:45 AM       Lunch

12:15 PM       ½ day Dismissal

## **Library**

Children in Preschool 3's - Prekindergarten will visit our library once each week. Each child picks out a book to take home and share with their family. If a book is not returned, the child will not be able to check out another book until the previous book is returned. In the event a library book is lost the family's FACTS account will be charged \$20.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

St. James Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin with all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admission policies, athletics, or other school administered programs.

## **Outdoor Play**

Children love our large outdoor play area. This fenced, shady playground has play centers with slides, swings, climbers, sandbox, music wall, chalk board. By State regulations we are required to go outside for fresh air each day, but we do not take children outside if the weather is excessively cold or windy, below 25 degrees. Please ensure your child is dressed for the weather. In the winter and bad weather, the children play in the classroom, hallway, or gym. The Child Care Weather Watch chart is our guideline and may be found at, <https://www.c-uphd.org/documents/wellness/weatherwatch.pdf>.

## **Parent's Notice**

I understand that this daycare ministry is not licensed under the laws of Indiana. However, I understand that this daycare ministry complies with the State rules concerning sanitation and fire safety for the primary use of the structure in which it is conducted. I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the nutritional and health needs of my child are met while my child is at the daycare ministry.

This notice does not absolve a day care ministry from liability for injury to a child

while the child is at the daycare ministry if the cause of the injury is negligence or intentional wrongdoing on the part of the day care ministry or an employee of the day care ministry.

### **Parent Orientation**

Parent orientation is held before the beginning of the new school year and contains important information for your family to have a successful experience at St. James. If you are unable to attend, please make arrangements to come in for an orientation with the director. If you enroll during the school year, the director will go through orientation information with you.

### **Parent Teacher League (PTL)**

St. James Lutheran School Parent Teacher League meets on a regular basis. All parents are encouraged to be active in this organization. The purpose and function of the PTL is to provide educational opportunities for parents, to support the school through fundraisers for school supplies and equipment, and to improve teacher appreciation and communication between the parent and teacher.

### **Progressive Discipline Plan (Used in conjunction with Restorative Practices)**

#### Parent Notification:

If we feel the situation warrants it, the parent(s) will be notified by a note or verbal communication (face-to-face, phone conference) on the day of the behavior problem.

#### Progressive Discipline Procedures:

We take a team approach to addressing behavioral problems. The teachers, director and parents work together to find the best solution to behavioral problems that may arise.

When a child is having behavioral difficulties at school the following procedures, listed in increasing severity, may be used to remedy the situation.\*

#### **1. Conference with regard to behavior problems:**

The parent(s) will be requested to have a conference with the teacher if the following occurs:

- 1) the child repeatedly refuses to follow the classroom rules, or
- 2) the child becomes physically or verbally violent and is threatening the other children or teacher. The director will be made aware of any behavior problems in the classroom that are problematic to the operation of the class. If the parent(s) and the teacher need further assistance, the director will meet with the parent(s) and teacher.

## **2. Referrals:**

If the child's behavior continues to be problematic, it will be recommended that the parent(s) seek outside help. The director will provide a list of referral sources.

## **3. Probation:**

The child will be placed on probation for an indeterminate time period until help is secured and/or the parent(s), teacher and director agree that the behavior has been corrected and the child may return to school.

## **4. Dismissal:**

The child will be dismissed from school: 1) if the child's behavior is continually disruptive and/or threatening to the well-being of others or 2) if the parents have not displayed documentation of securing help for the child when requested by the school.

### **Note:**

- The director will be informed of any problems with children enrolled in the center. The director will observe any child exhibiting behavioral problems.
- The director will be involved with the teacher and parent(s) from the beginning of conferences.
- The director and teacher will keep records of all events revolving around the child.

\*These same steps will be followed if there are indications of other special needs.

## **Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

St. James Lutheran School is concerned with the physical and mental well-being of the children who attend our school and will cooperate in the identification and reporting of cases of child abuse and neglect in accordance with Indiana law.

Each staff member employed by St. James Lutheran Church and School shall be responsible for immediately reporting every case in which the staff member has reason to believe that a child has been a victim of child abuse or neglect. The staff member will call the child protective services or law enforcement agency to report the alleged child abuse and neglect and notify the early childhood director. Information concerning child abuse or neglect is confidential information and is not to be shared with anyone other than the administration or reporting agency.

Indiana law provides that any person who makes or causes to be made a report that a child is victim of child abuse or neglect is immune from any civil or criminal liability in connection with this report unless that person acted maliciously or in bad faith.

## **Rest Time**

All children Toddler 1 - PK are expected to take part in a daily quiet time after lunch.

Each child can bring a small pillow, blanket and cot, which will be sent home each week to be laundered and sanitized. Children sleep on the same cot each day. They may bring ONE soft toy for use during rest time. A white noise or quiet music is used during rest time. Children are encouraged to sleep, or at least rest quietly. Those who do not fall asleep after a period of time may be allowed to look at books or engage in a quiet activity. After a quiet time, PK students who do not fall asleep will be allowed to participate in out of room learning activities when available.

### **Safe Sleep Policy**

Providing your infant with a safe environment in which to grow and learn is of extreme importance to us. To that end, our child care facility has implemented policies and procedures to create a safe sleep environment for your infant.

We follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Safety Commission for safe sleep environments to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is “the sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age, which remains unexplained after a thorough case investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the clinical history.”

Our written policy is as follows:

- All infants will be placed on their backs in safety-approved cribs unless an alternate sleep position is needed for a medical reason and a written note from the infant’s health professional is provided.
- Infants will not sleep on waterbeds, sofas, soft mattresses or other soft surfaces.
- Soft materials such as pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys and loose bedding will not be placed in infants’ sleep environments.
- Infants will not share a safety-approved crib with other children.
- Infants will remain lightly clothed and comfortable while sleeping.
- Supervised “tummy time” will be observed while the infant is awake.
- No smoking will be allowed in infants’ environment.
- Infants will not be swaddled, but can use a home provided approved sleep sack.
- Infants who use a pacifier will not have the pacifier attached to a clip or stuffy.

Since the start of the 1994 national campaign that provided guidelines for parents, health professionals and other caregivers to place infants on their backs to sleep, the number of infants dying of SIDS has decreased by 42%.

Again, safety of your infant is paramount to us. By signing the handbook agreement below, you, as the parent, understand and comply with the policies of the child care facility which your child will be attending.



## **School Pictures**

Individual school pictures and class composites are completed in the Fall. Individual school pictures are completed again in the Spring. Parents are under no obligation to purchase the pictures.

## **School Safety**

St. James is a secure facility. We have a security system which requires a key fob for entry into our facility. As part of the church and school security plan, surveillance cameras are located at key areas of the building. They do not record audio and the footage may only be reviewed by specifically designated people for security reasons. In order to receive a key fob, one needs to pass a criminal background check. Fobs are provided to persons who pick up after 3:15 PM

### *Disaster and Evacuation Plan*

The St. James Lutheran School crisis plan has been developed to address emergency situations such as natural disasters or security issues on campus. Copies of the crisis plan are available in every classroom, school and church office, gym and music room. We will conduct regular fire, timely tornado, and emergency drills throughout the school year. A map of the building and the exits are posted in each room. St. James will follow instructions from the Lafayette Police Department in the case of a lockdown. Noone will be admitted or dismissed until the all clear is received from the Lafayette Police Department. An emergency action plan for the school is in the principal's office and is regularly reviewed and updated as needed.

### *Seclusion and Restraint Plan Policy*

St. James Lutheran School believes a safe and healthy environment should be provided in which all children can learn, develop, and participate in instructional programs that promote high levels of academic achievement. As an Indiana-accredited non-public school, state law requires that our school has a Seclusion and Restraint Plan. The purpose of the plan is to ensure all students and staff are safe in the school, and that students who may have a behavior crisis are free from inappropriate use of seclusion or restraint. Parents can access a full copy of our school's plan by request in the school office.

## **School Supplies**

Some basic school supplies will be provided by the school. Teachers will provide families with any additional supply request or wish list items.

## **Special Events**

We have several special events during the year: Pumpkin Patch, Happy Birthday Jesus Party, Donuts with Disciples, Muffins with Missionaries, Grandparents Day, Spring Concert, Early Childhood Roundup, and PreK Promotion. These special events are noted on the school calendar you receive at the beginning of school and also on our website calendar.

## **Staff**

An effective program cannot be carried out without qualified staff. The Director and lead teachers have degrees/certifications and experience working with young children. Early Childhood aides and other staff have a minimum of a high school diploma plus training and/or experience in preschool and early childhood education.

Each year the staff continues their education by attending a minimum of twenty hours of training through early childhood conferences, in-service training, webinars, etc. All staff who work with children are trained in First Aid, CPR, Universal Precautions and Safe Sleep.

Applicants are screened carefully during the hiring process. References, education, and previous work experiences are verified. A national criminal history check is done through the FBI with results forwarded to the State of Indiana for employment approval.

## **Suggestions & Criticisms**

Your suggestions and constructive criticism are most welcome at any time. We are not and never will be infallible but we do care about your children and the education and care we provide them. You can help us by letting us know what you like and do not like as we are always striving to make our program better. A program evaluation will also be available each year in April or May. Thank you for taking time to help us improve and to let staff know they are appreciated.

## **Toilet Training**

We assist families with potty training to ensure all children have success. We ask that when your child shows an interest to please communicate your desire to begin potty training with your child's teacher. We want to partner with you in this training and expect families to work on at home also. We have found using regular underwear and not pull ups shortens the length of time to toilet train. Please send multiple changes of clothing for your child when beginning this process.

Some indicators your child may be ready:

- Your child can pull his or her pants on and off with little or no assistance.

- Your child tells you when he or she is wet or has had a bowel movement.
- Your child can sit without support for five to ten minutes.
- Your child can follow simple directions. This may include the staff saying things like “Sit on the potty.” Or “Wipe your bottom.”

We do not reward with candy treats. If you feel a more intensive reward system is necessary, please discuss it with your child’s teacher. Remember that learning to use the toilet is a process that requires many skills and can take time and patience.

Children attending Preschool 3 and Pre Kindergarten classes are expected to be fully potty-trained.

### **Transportation**

St. James Early Childhood program does not transport students to and from the program site or for any off site field trips.

## Tuition and Fees

Our school year is 36 weeks or 180 days including 3 virtual days.

### *Virtual Days*

Virtual days are added to the calendar to provide for staff development time within the school year. Each child will be provided a packet of activities to complete during the school day.

Early Childhood Hours 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Early Childhood After School Care Available 4:30 - 5:15

\$5/day, \$20/week, or \$720/year

	Nursery	Toddler 1	Toddler 2s (PS2)	PreSchool 3/PreK
Option 1	MondayFriday 7:30 - 4:30 Full Time Only \$9800	MondayFriday 7:30 - 4:30 Full Time Only \$9500	Half Day 7:30 - 12:15 with choice of M, W, F or T & Th \$4200	Half Days 7:30 - 12:15 AND Choice of 3 days \$3900
Option 2			4 or 5 half days 7:30 - 12:15 or Full Day 7:30 - 4:30 with choice of M, W, F or T & Th \$6800	4 or 5 half days 7:30 - 12:15 or 3 Full Days And Choice of Days \$6600
Option 3			4 or 5 Days Full Time 7:30 - 4:30 \$9500	4 or 5 Days Full Time 7:30 - 4:30 \$8805

Family Enrollment Fee - *Charged per family by FACTS* \$50

Grant & Aid Application Fee - *Charged per family by FACTS* \$45

PTL Dues - *Charged per student in FACTS* \$25

## Volunteers and Special Visitors

Parents and grandparents are urged to share knowledge and talents with the children. Those whose occupations coincide with aspects of community service the children can relate to or add enrichment to the current lessons are particularly valuable. For

example, artists, dentists, doctors, firefighters, musicians, police officers, veterinarians, bakers, chefs, florists, nurses, mail carriers, engineers, farmers, etc. Please let us know if you would like to share your work or a talent with the children. We would be happy to schedule a visit anytime.

Guest readers are also encouraged. If you or a grandparent has time to come and read books to the children, please talk with the director or a teacher. We would love to have you be part of our class!

Volunteers are also welcomed and encouraged. There are specific times volunteers are needed only for a day or part of a day. We also look for volunteers to serve on a regular basis, such as the class library helper. If you would like to be involved please speak with a teacher or the director.

**All volunteers and visitors must have a valid background check completed by the office.** This is done at no charge and the form is available in the directors office and school office. All parents and visitors must check in at the church or school office to sign in and receive a visitor's badge to be worn during school hours while visiting our campus.

Parents are encouraged and welcomed to stop by at any time and visit a classroom. Please check in at the school office before proceeding to the classroom.

For additional information please refer to our volunteer handbook.

### **Weather Related or Emergency Closing and Delays**

Parents will be contacted about delayed openings or cancellations through the use of WLF I – TV 18, our website ([www.mysjls.org](http://www.mysjls.org)), Facebook, and Brightwheel. Parents are encouraged to keep their contact numbers and emails up-to-date in our Harmony SIS and Brightwheel. Emails and/or texts will also be sent via Brightwheel and Harmony.

### **Withdrawal**

In the event a family must withdraw from St. James Lutheran Early Childhood Center a 2 week notice is required. Please send the director an email or stop by the office to complete a withdrawal request. Preschool tuition, child care fees, and hot lunch fees will be prorated through the last date of enrollment, payment of all financial obligations is required by the withdrawal date.