

Parent



Handbook

## Table of Contents

Objectives	2
Communication	3
Enrollment	4
Registration & Tuition	4
Mandated Reporting	5
Fundraising	5
Transportation/Arrival/Pickup	5
Non-discrimination Policy	6
School Closing/Calendar	6
Discipline Policy	6
Health Regulations	7
What to Wear	8
Work/Play Activities	9
Daily Schedule	10
Nutrition & Snacks	10
Birthdays	10
Department of Human Services	11

### MISSION STATEMENT:

Our purpose is to follow the command of our Lord to go and make disciples of all people by offering a preschool program which shall minister to the spiritual, social and emotional, physical, as well as the intellectual needs of young children and their families in the community.

### PHILOSOPHY:

The Tri-Parish Catholic Community of St. Joseph, St. Leo, and St. Martin Churches believe that Jesus has called us to further serve him through the creation of Noah's Ark Preschool. We join with families and the community in sharing the responsibility of developing the spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth of God's littlest lambs - our children. We are committed to providing a safe, loving and caring environment where teaching as Jesus did can occur and where recognizing the differences in each child can and will allow growing with faith and learning to happen.

### OBJECTIVES

- I. SPIRITUAL: To teach each child, through the use of God's Word that:
  - A. God loves each child and wants to make each child His own through Jesus Christ.
  - B. God wants each child to respond to that love by loving Him and all people.
  - C. Our response should be:
    1. a regular prayer life
    2. regular and faithful church attendance with your children at the church of your choice
    3. setting an example by leading a God-pleasing life, and
    4. using and developing our talents and gifts to serve God and help others.
- II. SOCIAL
  - A. Help the child feel secure and comfortable as part of the Christian Family.
  - B. Help the child reflect Christ's love through developing habits of self control, fair play, courtesy, and respect for the property of others.
  - C. Help the child recognize and appreciate that each person is God's unique and special creation.
- III. EMOTIONAL: To develop each child's emotional well being by strengthening his/her personal relationship with Jesus by providing experiences to see Jesus in others and build stronger ties with family, school, church and community.

- IV. INTELLECTUAL: To strive to integrate Christian truths and principles in all areas of learning including language, math, art, social studies, science, music, and physical science so that our intellectual and spiritual lives are one.
- V. PHYSICAL: To develop each child's physical well being, recognizing his/her body as a temple of the Holy Spirit, as well as providing adequate space, equipment, and opportunity for the development of large muscle and motor skills.

### COMMUNICATION

If you have a note for the teachers, please put it in your child's school bag. A folder bag with your child's name on it will be given at the start of the session for notes, tuition payments, etc. We check the school bags daily and ask you to do the same. Any message can also be conveyed personally or by phone.

Any announcements or notices to parents will be posted in the hallway outside the classroom. There will be regular newsletters that will be sent home with the children concerning school activities. Newsletters will also be available on the parish website.

### SESSIONS

Preschool (4 & 5 year olds) Monday/Wednesday/Friday	Classes will meet: 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Preschool (3 & young 4 year olds) Tuesday/Thursday	Classes will meet: 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Each class session will never exceed the maximum of 20 children.

### PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Families will be given the opportunity to meet the teachers and visit the classroom before the school term begins. During the school year there will be an additional conference day for the 4 and 5 year olds. Parent Teacher conferences will include a written review of each child's intellectual physical, social and emotional development. Parents or guardians may schedule a conference with the teachers at any time if a question or concern arises. They may also schedule a meeting with the Pastor, who is the supervisor of the program, to discuss any issues they have not been able to resolve with the teacher.

### PARENT REVIEW OF OUR PROGRAM

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with their child's school. Parents or guardians are welcome to visit the classroom at any time. Guests may contact the teacher to arrange for a special visit. Families are encouraged to participate in special programs held throughout the year. Rea-

sonable requests for review of the curriculum will be granted.

## ENROLLMENT

Children who are 3 by September 1<sup>st</sup> and young 4 year olds are eligible to attend our 3 and young 4 year old program.

Children who are 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup> and 5 year olds are eligible to attend our 4 and 5 year old program.

All students must be toilet trained.

Noah's Ark Preschool is owned and operated by the Tri-Parish Catholic Community of St. Joseph, St. Leo, and St. Martin Churches for the Christian education of children regardless of race, religion or economic conditions.

Members of the Tri-Parish Catholic Community of St. Joseph, St. Leo, and St. Martin Churches and returning students will have the first opportunity to register. After a two week registration period, returning students will be registered. Following that, all other children will be received on a first come, first serve basis.

Registration will consist of completion of the forms found in the Registration Packet and payment of the Registration Fee. Noah's Ark Preschool reserves the right to terminate the service of the school when the behavior of a child is extremely detrimental to the learning atmosphere of the total group. If we encounter any problems, parents will first be contacted for a conference.

It is assumed that the child will be in school for the full year unless exceptional circumstances arise. If a child misses 2 straight weeks and you have not contacted us, the spot will be filled if there is a waiting list

## REGISTRATION AND TUITION

A nonrefundable Registration Fee of \$30 is due at the time of registration. Tuition is \$95/month for the Preschool class (4 & 5 year olds) and \$75/month for the Preschool classes (3 & young 4 year olds). If more than one child from a family is enrolled, there will be a \$10 discount on your family's tuition total. Please make checks payable to Noah's Ark Preschool. If payment of tuition is a hardship for you, please contact us to make arrangements. We depend on tuition payments and the support of the Tri-Parish Catholic Community of St. Joseph, St. Leo, and St. Martin Churches to continue operation of our Preschool and provide your child with materials and supplies. **Tuition is due the first day of each month. If arrangements are not made and tuition is not paid by the first day of the next month, your child will not be allowed to attend preschool until tuition is paid. Any tuition not paid within two months will result in a forfeit of your child's spot.**

## MANDATED REPORTING

All staff at Noah's Ark Preschool are mandated reporters of any abuse that may occur to a child/adult participating in the preschool programs. Please refer to separate handout for more information regarding reporting guidelines.

## FUNDRAISING

Each family of Noah's Ark Preschool is asked to actively participate in fundraising activities. Noah's Ark Preschool will organize various fundraising events throughout the school year. Parent commitment and assistance with these fundraisers helps keep preschool tuition costs stable and as reasonable as possible. If parents/guardians are unable to participate in fundraising we are asking for a \$100.00 donation per family per year.

## TRANSPORTATION

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their own children. Only authorized adults will be permitted to pick up your children from school. If your child is riding the Pipestone County Transit, please contact the Preschool and put this information on their registration form. You must also contact the Taxi Service Pipestone County Transit (825-3113).

## ARRIVING AT SCHOOL

If parents arrive before 7:50 a.m. they should wait patiently outside. NEVER ALLOW THE CHILD TO WALK INTO THE PRESCHOOL ALONE. A TEACHER/AIDE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR ARRIVAL. We are not staffed to receive a child before 7:50a.m. The cooperation of parents in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Please bring your child to the southwest door (on Hiawatha Avenue) and accompany your child into school so that the teachers are aware of the student's arrival. When picking up children, please wait in the hall until dismissal. Hiawatha Avenue is a busy street, so we ask that you do not let your child proceed to your vehicle unattended.

## LATE PICK UP

We ask that you be prompt in picking up your child at the end of class. A late fee of \$5.00 will be assessed for every minute that a parent is late picking up his/her child. This fee will be used to compensate the teacher/aide for having to stay late. The cooperation of parents in this matter is greatly appreciated.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a part of the learning program. A parental consent form will be signed at the beginning of the year for all field trips. A note will be sent home prior to any trips with all details of our field trip.

## RESEARCH

If the preschool participates in research (such as contest or survey), experimental procedure or public relations activity, written permission would be obtained for each child prior to participation.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Noah's Ark Preschool admits students of any race, color, or 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, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and athletic or other school-administered programs.

## SCHOOL CLOSING

Weather related school closings will be announced on KLOH AM 1050 radio. If the public school is two hours late, we will also be late and will run 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. We will follow the Pipestone Area School Schedule for all late starts or closings. If the public school dismisses early for weather related reasons, Noah's Ark will close at the same time. Please make sure arrangements to pick up your children are as close to that time as possible. Parents should always use their own discretion.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Preschool follows Behavior Guidance Policies and Procedures mandated by the State of Minnesota.

At Noah's Ark, each child is provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior. Teacher will role model quiet tone of voices, and reinforce to children the knowledge of inside hurts and outside hurts when interacting with other children. Discipline procedures are developmentally appropriate to each child's age, for example: redirection or distraction to another interest area in the room and to work with other children, talking to the child, pointing out what was not acceptable and why. These alternatives are implemented first, before a last resort, removal from a group.

If unacceptable behavior persists, staff will record it in the students file and work on appropriate methods to address the behavior. Behavior documented will be shared with parents on a daily basis, when possible. Suggestions and questions will be addressed on a daily basis by both the teacher and parents. Those staff persons who work directly with the child will be made aware of behavior of the child and feedback from the parents on a daily basis. If behavior continues and is extremely detrimental to the learning atmosphere of the total group, and parents and staff methods have not been effective, Noah's Ark Preschool reserves the right to terminate the service of the school.

A more detailed copy of these policies may be obtained upon request.

## PROGRAM LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Noah's Ark Preschool is a licensed program through the Minnesota Department of Human Services. The curriculum and program will be examined and approved biannually by the Department of Human Services.

## CALENDAR

The calendar for the school year will follow the public school system.

## HEALTH REGULATION

All health policies for the school will be approved by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. These policies may be seen by any parent upon request. The teacher and aide have current first aid and CPR training. Emergency numbers and procedures are posted in the classroom and all other aspects of the facility have been reviewed and approved for use in accordance with our license.

Each child's health is important to us. We make every attempt to maintain high sanitation standards and emphasize health habits and cleanliness routines.

Each student is required to have a health care summary on file within 30 days of enrollment and must have an immunization record on file at the time of enrollment.

**Out of consideration for the teachers and the other children, we request that you keep your child home if she/he is not feeling well. A child who is ill does not feel like participating in preschool activities and requires increased monitoring from the staff. If a child becomes ill, is feverish, or vomiting at school, you will be called. The child will be separated from the other students as much as possible until you arrive. After an illness, please do not send your child to school until she/he has been free of fever or vomiting for 24 hours. If your child is suspected of having highly infectious diseases such as pink eye, chicken pox, impetigo, strep throat, hand, foot and mouth disease, or head lice, you will be called.**

If you become aware that your child has an infectious disease, please contact the preschool teacher within 24 hours. The preschool will notify parents of other children.

The lack of any symptoms or a doctor's/nurse's note indicating that the child is no longer contagious will be necessary for return to the classroom. If your child is sick, please do not send them back to school unless they can participate in all classroom activities, including going outside.

Please inform the teacher if your child is currently taking any medications. Antihistamines, decongestants, and antibiotics can alter a child's behavior.



If your child has a life threatening condition, please leave detailed written instructions signed by your doctor. Only prescription medication or medication that has been recommended by a physician in writing may be administered. If you want the staff to administer medication to your child, you must fill out a medication permission slip. Medication bottles must show the child's name, dosage, frequency of administration, physician's name and date. Medication brought to preschool must be in its original container.

Please contact the Preschool if your child will not be attending class either because of illness or other reason. You may leave a message with the church office.

### ANIMAL POLICY

Animals will not be kept at the center with the exception of fish in the aquarium. Pets may be brought in throughout the year for special occasions. Please notify the preschool if your child has a pet allergy.

### WHAT TO WEAR

**While learning and having fun, sometimes we get messing.** When dressing your child for school, please consider the variety of activities that we have. We use washable paints and markers, but clothes still may come home with hard-to-remove spots. We play in the sand, grass and snow. We play in the dirt as we plant and harvest our garden. Clothes should be comfortable and washable with fasteners which children can manipulate. Cowboy boots and other shoes with slippery soles are not safe on play equipment or in active group play. *Can your child run in the shoes that they are wearing?* We strongly discourage flip flops and high platform sandals and prefer tennis shoes or flat shoes with straps on the back of them, as we do running activities and play on the playground every day. We cannot be held responsible for injuries to open toes or feet. *On days when your child wears winter boots, please send shoes also.*

During the first week of school send a change of clothes which can be left at school (include underwear and socks). Please label all outer clothing. We will keep a small supply of emergency clothing, but children usually prefer to wear something of their own.

Please remember that we try to spend some time outside every day, even in wet and winter weather. Our policy on going outside during the winter is that the teacher can determine what their class will do, provided the wind chill is not below 20 degrees and windy and snowy conditions would not be hazardous to children. We usually go outside unless it is extremely cold, windy or wet. Frequently children move from house to car without going outside, so it is easy to forget jackets, hats, mittens or boots in the winter. In the fall and spring, temperatures change quickly, so you may want to send a light sweater or jacket along if your child

wears a heavy coat in the morning.

Each child should have a school bag or backpack that they bring with them each day.

## WORK/PLAY ACTIVITIES

Art: crayons, paints, clay and a variety of other materials will be available for projects and pictures. By developing creative expression through experimentation, discovery, the experience itself, the child develops an appreciation of arts and crafts at an early age. They learn about basic colors, and shapes, through painting, coloring, cutting, gluing, play-doh, and sand/water play. Children learn to control the medium and satisfaction comes with learning the creation of something that is uniquely their own.

Manipulatives: puzzles, blocks, felt objects, beans, beads and other educational materials. Young children need opportunities to practice with things to put in, take out, match, fit, connect and disconnect to develop their fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination.

Dramatics: puppets, finger plays, pretending, costumes, Sociodramatic play helps a child to progress from solitary role-playing, to sharing and understanding rules and limits. Though housekeeping, dress up, blocks, field trips and snack, the child begins to feel secure in her/himself, family and community.

Science: the study of God's creation, care of plants and pets, good food and good nutrition. The more a child knows and understands about their body and world, the more independent and confident they can become. Learning about seasons, weather, bodies, senses, health and nutrition build the foundation for fun and active learning about the world around us.

Music: singing, rhythm, listening, using simple instruments, musical games.

Religious: Bible stories, songs and prayers.

Health and Safety: learning simple safety rules, good health practice, learning about people who keep us safe.

Language: story telling, poetry, stories, speaking, sharing. Children learn vocabulary and the rhythm of speech through listening to their own peers and other languages as they are spoken and sung in many forms. Classroom libraries, story telling, self expression (puppets, telephones), games, alphabet letter, calendar, recognition (name, address, phone number,) expression through show and tell are only a few of the means of communication which are vital to both personal and academic success. Introduction to the Spanish language and American Sign Language will also be a part of their curriculum.

Readiness for learning: language and communication, number readiness, identification of numbers and letters.

Movement: indoor and outdoor equipment for the development of large motor skills, coordination in running, swinging, balancing and throwing. Children need opportunities to develop their bodies and coordination by running, jumping, climbing, lifting, pushing and pulling. Physiological readiness precedes other learning.

Mathematics: working with patterns, basic shapes and counting, incorporating Spanish words and numbers for basic mathematical skills. 4/5 year olds will work with money recognition and counting as well.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

The daily schedule may vary from day to day depending on the children's needs, weather and the type of activities planned. Many of our activities are so closely integrated that it is difficult to break down each activity to an exact amount of minutes per day. An average days' schedule will include Welcome and free play, morning prayer, circle time (calendar, weather, stories) gym/outdoor play (Large motor), bathroom break, snack, hands-on activities and crafts (fine motor), learning centers and good-byes.

## NUTRITION AND SNACKS

A healthy snack will be provided each day once during the 3 hour session. If a child has any food allergies, the preschool must be notified in writing, which should include symptoms, remedies and precautions to be taken. If a child needs a special diet the preschool must receive a statement from a doctor describing the need.

Children are asked to take turns bringing a *nutritious snack* for the class. Some possible suggestions are: crackers, yogurt, string cheese, pudding cups, Teddy Grahams, raisins, bread with cheese or peanut butter, fruit, muffins, granola bars, vegetables or cereal. Snack time not only fuels the children for more fun, it is also an opportunity to have conversation and to practice table manners. Each child is asked to provide snacks during the school year. A snack calendar will be sent home monthly. Please note the days your child's name appears. The school will provide beverage and paper products for snacks brought in. You will be notified if there is a student with food allergies. We ask that all snacks be purchased.

## BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are very special to preschoolers. We will be observing birthdays during the school year. Summer birthdays will also be observed during the school year. "Happy Birthday" will be sung to each child. We ask that any birthday invitations for parties outside of the school be sent to the

children's home. Please do not pass out invitations in school unless all of the children are invited.

### DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

If you would like to contact the Department of Human Services Division of Licensing, please call 1-651-296-3971.



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