

# **St. William Preschool**

## **Preschool Parent Handbook**

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**[www.saintwilliam.com](http://www.saintwilliam.com)**

**Director: Andrea Ray**

## **WELCOME!**

Welcome to St. William Preschool! Our program was created to help foster a love of learning based on a developmentally appropriate curriculum that focuses on students' intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual growth. Our students will learn to be critical thinkers and observers of the world around them through active hands-on learning.

We are committed to embark on an amazing partnership with families to educate your child in a loving, caring, faith-based atmosphere.

Thank you for sharing your child with us,  
Andrea Ray, Preschool Director

### ***\*RIGHT TO AMEND***

*School administration retains the right to amend this handbook. Parents will be notified of changes.*

## **Mission**

### **Program Philosophy**

Our preschool philosophy is based on developmentally appropriate practices that meet the needs of each individual child. We encourage learning through meaningful play and hands-on experiences in a child-centered, teacher guided environment. The faculty and staff of St. William believes that each child has unique talents, abilities and gifts given by God. We promote independence, kindness, caring and a sense of community by teaching the whole child. The educational philosophy of the St. William preschool program is to help each child grow intellectually, physically, socially and spiritually. Our experienced teachers plan lessons that are designed to meet each child's individual needs. We believe in working collaboratively with parents and recognize that family partnerships are an essential component of the learning process.

## **Goals**

Our preschool goals are to:

- Provide learning opportunities in developmentally appropriate ways, giving opportunities for parents and children to make choices and decisions concerning learning, and using a curriculum that is aligned with the Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards.
- Foster a peaceful culture of anti-bias education that promotes equality, equity and inclusion for all children and families.
- Prepare our students to be independent learners that will be successful and well prepared for kindergarten.
- Develop strong oral language, listening, and early literacy skills through stories, music, art, songs, and finger play.
- Incorporate a variety of instructional approaches to support all students' learning types.
- Provide multi-leveled materials and activities to actively engage students.
- Support and promote positive relationships with peers and adults.
- Empower children to be aware of their abilities, goodness, dignity, talents and gifts to serve God and the broader community.
- Overall program goals for the program are established annually through an annual program review process.

This handbook includes preschool specific information and is a supplement to the St. William Parent Handbook.

## **Licensing Information**

Our program is licensed to operate by the Ohio Department of Education. This license and most recent licensing inspection report is posted outside of the classrooms and in the director's office.

The program's complete licensing record, including compliance reports are on file and available upon request at the school.

In the event that you have complaints or concerns that may not be addressed to your satisfaction by the program director and school principal, you may contact the Ohio Department of Education Office of Early Learning and School Readiness / Licensing Office (614) 466-0224.

## **Enrollment and Registration**

St. William School is a Catholic parish elementary school, operated, supported, and directed as part of this parish sponsored educational program, pursuant to the policies of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

Children are not required to be Catholic to attend our program. However, Catholic values and doctrine are at the core of our teachings.

No student will be excluded from St. William School solely because of race, color, national/ethnic origin or ancestry.

Enrollment applications are accepted at any time, but may be placed on a waiting list if the program is fully enrolled.

All decisions regarding enrollment are made on an individual basis by the preschool director and/or the school principal in order to determine that our program is the right fit for your child and that we can appropriately accommodate their needs.

St. William Preschool may refuse admission or terminate enrollment if false or incomplete information has been provided. The director and principal reserves the right to remove a child from the program at their discretion.

## **Registration**

The registration process includes a parent interview. The following documents will be needed:

- Proof of birth (and guardianship if applicable) (Sept 30 is the cut-off date)
- Proof of residence
- Current immunization record
- Family Information
- Current medical examination (within 30 days of enrollment)
- Eligibility for Publicly Funded Child Care if applicable
- Eligibility for Cincinnati Preschool Promise Tuition Reimbursement or
- Applicable Tuition Agreements

Additionally, the school requires:

- Certificate of Baptism (if applicable)

Preschool children are students of St. William School. All student records are maintained and released according to school records policies and we comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## **Preschool Schedule and Hours of Operation**

Our program operates on a full school day schedule 8:00-3:00, Monday through Friday and aligns with the Archdiocese school year calendar. Students may begin arriving at 7:30 AM.

The schedule includes a balance of quiet and active play, throughout the day which meets the intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of each child, including indoor and outdoor activities

There are staff professional days scheduled for teachers when children will have no school. Check the parent newsletter emailed weekly for specific dates and times.

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

Arrival begins at 7:30 AM at the preschool door (church alley). Parents will enter from West 8th Street, behind the church and pull up to the preschool doors. Our preschool staff will be at the door waiting for your child. Parents will be asked to unbuckle your child from their car seat. Parents must sign their child in each morning.

Arrivals cannot be accepted after 8:15am (unless with a doctor's note).

Teachers will begin to dismiss children at the preschool doors (church alley) at 2:30 PM. Dismissal will begin when a staff member is standing at the door. Staff will call the names of the children in the order that your vehicle pulls up to the door. Parents are responsible for putting their child in a car seat before pulling away.

All students who have not been picked up will be taken to the main office at 3:00 PM. If someone has not picked up your child by 3:30, the resource officer or child protective services will be called.

## **Release of Students**

The safety of the children is our top priority. Your child will only be released to persons listed on the release form on file. If there is any change to the usual arrangements, it must be communicated to the director and/or teacher in writing so the file can be updated and/or faculty can be notified.

## **Ohio Car Seat Laws**

“Parents and caregivers are required by Ohio law to obey the following safety practices: Infants and young children must ride in a child safety seat until they are 4 years old AND weigh at least 40 pounds. Every child ages 4-8 who is no longer in a car seat must use a booster seat until she reaches 4'9” tall.”

## **Child Custody**

The preschool director and faculty need to be made aware of the custody of the children in our care. Divorced or separated parents must provide a court-certified copy of the custody agreement to the director. Any other type of temporary custody arrangement must also provide this information to the director. Non-custodial parents have the right to information regarding a student's progress unless a current court order states otherwise.

## **Attendance/Absences**

Important habits regarding school attendance begin in preschool. It is important that children come to school every day, unless they are sick. The teacher keeps daily attendance records. Five absences within the period of one month without a doctor's note may result in forfeiting your child's space.

Parents are asked to call the preschool director (513-471-2989 ext 2123) or the main office if your child will be absent by 8:30.

Following an absence, a written note signed by the parent stating the date and reason for absence as required by law. A physician's note is required following a contagious disease or after 3 or more days of consecutive absence.

Only scheduled medical and dental appointments and funerals are considered excused absences. Other emergency absences may be determined by the director/principal.

If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease at home, the school must be notified.

If it is necessary for your child to leave before the regular dismissal (medical/dental appointments only), please send a note to the teacher in the morning.

It is important that your child arrives on time each morning and picked up on time. Failure to comply with timely pickup may result in withdrawal from our program.

- In accordance with the Cincinnati Promise Attendance Policy, “if a child is absent more than 25% scheduled days in a month, the child will be flagged for attendance...  
The child will be placed on an Attendance Watch List:
- First time on the Attendance Watch List: No action taken.
- Second time on the Attendance Watch List: A letter will be sent to the family (with copy to the provider) stressing the importance of regular attendance and noting the possibility for future prorated payments if the pattern continues.
- Third time on the Attendance Watch List: CPP will prorate the TA payment in the month the child is flagged for poor attendance the third time and in any future month when the child misses more than 25% of days scheduled for the remainder of the year.

CPP will consider appeals in extreme cases.”

### **Withdrawal**

If a child withdraws before the end of the school year, the staff will support the transition to another program. The education of every child is a partnership between the parents and the school. In rare cases of the need for a temporary withdrawal, the program cannot guarantee an opening at the time or return.

Our program will release records with written parent permission in circumstances of transfer.

### **Staff and Ratios**

The preschool director, under direction of the principal, has assigned responsibilities for meeting the Ohio Preschool Licensing Requirements. The preschool staff member/child ratios (1:10/1:12) are maintained at all times. All children enrolled will be supervised at all times by a teacher or qualified substitute.

## **Fees**

Tuition rates are set annually, and there are several options for payment:

- Parents must apply for Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC) through Hamilton County Job and Family Services
- If the family is not eligible for PFCC, an application can be made to Cincinnati Preschool Promise for tuition reimbursement (for City Residents only)
- School Tuition Rates apply for families not eligible

All fees and tuition must be paid in full as designated on the fee/tuition contract schedule.

Tuition payments are made to the preschool director weekly (every Monday) or monthly (the first Monday of each month).

There is no grace period for fees.

Currently, co-payments are suspended, but generally non-payment of co-pays will result in withdrawal.

Parents must sign in/out using the JFS tablet provided in the preschool foyer to sign their children in and out daily.

## **Toilet Training**

All students enrolled in our preschool program must be fully potty trained. Children are required to use the restroom independently and without adult assistance. We understand that accidents occur and it is a natural step towards independence.

**Children wearing “pull ups” are not considered toilet trained.** Please dress your child in clothing that he/she can take off without assistance. We suggest finding uniform options that have elastic waistbands. Please remember to have a full change of seasonably appropriate clothes in your child’s cubby at all times.

**Accident Procedure:** Parents will be notified of bathroom accidents on the day it occurs. Any child that has 3 or more accidents in two weeks time (10 school days) will be asked to stay home to work on toilet training. The director, teacher and parents will collaborate on an appropriate time for the child to return to school when the child is ready.

## **Daily Schedule**

The daily schedule is posted and provided at the time of enrollment.

## **Dress Code**

Uniforms are required for preschoolers. Polo shirts (white, light blue or navy blue) are to be worn daily. Uniform shorts/pants skirts (khaki or navy blue) are expected to be worn daily. However, any child friendly bottoms (elastic waist without buttons and zippers) are necessary for independence and will be accepted.

Preschoolers are asked to wear gym shoes only. Gym shoes with velcro closures are recommended for independence.

Preschoolers are busy exploring the world around them. We ask that you provide 2 extra changes of clothing. Extra clothes should be weather appropriate and include a shirt, shorts/pants, underwear and socks.

Soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag - check your child's backpack daily.

In colder months, a coat, hat and gloves are necessary. Please label all clothing, especially hats, gloves and sweaters.

## **Curriculum/Assessment**

The St. William Preschool program uses the Project Ready! (Joyful Discoveries) curriculum; aligned with the Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards to provide high quality instruction. Our curriculum includes activities and opportunities that support social, emotional, cognitive and physical development; built upon the knowledge, strength and life experiences that children bring to school. We use Stories of God's Love which aligns with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Graded Courses of Study for religion.

We value parents as equal partners in the learning process. Lesson Plans are available for review in the classroom. Curriculum updates are sent throughout the week via weekly newsletters.

Assessments are both formal and informal. The program uses Preschool Early Learning Indicators as our ongoing assessment. Progress Reports are held 3 times a year and assessment information is shared with parents at that time or upon request.

## **Developmental Screening**

Every child receives a developmental screening within the first 60 days of the school year. The teacher will review your child's health and developmental screening information and the results are shared with you. We urge all parents to take advantage of annual health screening available annually through their healthcare provider during well-child visits. We can provide you with additional information to access early and periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment (EPSDT) through Ohio Medicaid *HealthChek*.

In cases of a suspected health or disability, we will assist you in seeking any additional health or educational services through the Cincinnati Public Schools (or your school district of residence) in accordance with IDEA. Please feel free to ask us questions!

Children's development and skill levels are assessed periodically and provide information for planning instruction. Progress Reports are provided to parents three times during the year.

## **Transition Plans**

Transition plans are created to assist students as they transition either from Preschool into Kindergarten or from one school building to another. Transition plans are tailored to meet individual needs. These will be signed by the teacher, director, and parent and will be kept in the child's education file.

## **Rest Time**

Children are expected to rest daily after lunch and outdoor play. Our program will provide a quiet space for your child to rest or nap.

Each child has an assigned cot. Families must provide a small pillow, blanket and a soft toy to make naptime cozier. These items stay at school and will be sent home regularly on Fridays to be laundered. We ask that they return to school the following Monday.

We do make provisions for non-nappers after we have made efforts to help the children relax and sleep. Children that fall asleep during naptime will be awakened after 11/2 hours.

## **Personal Belongings (Cubbies)**

Our classroom is filled with instructional materials to meet your child's needs. Please do not send toys and other items from home. Children have more fun when they are not concerned about personal items being lost or broken.

Each child has a cubbie, a place to store their work, notes to parents and extra clothing. Please label coats, sweaters, hats, gloves etc.

It is important to check your child's backpack daily for notes, work and important information.

## **Nutrition**

At St. William preschool, healthy habits are important and this includes snacks and lunches. Our program provides breakfast, lunch and a midday snack for children enrolled.

The menus selected meet the standards in accordance with US Department of Agriculture meal patterns ( [www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks)).

The noon meal is served to every child present between 11:00 and 1:30, inclusively.

Your child may pack a healthy, well balanced lunch. Please include items that can be opened with independence. Hot lunch is also available.

A source of vitamin C is served daily, and a source of vitamin A at least 3 times per week. Milk is vitamin D fortified. Snack is served in the afternoon and includes items from 2 food groups.

All menus and hot lunch order forms are shared monthly via the Knightly News. If your child is on a special diet, a written statement from a physician must be on file.

The Ohio State Licensing Department requires lunches be of certain nutritional value. They should include items from each food group. Drinks must be 100% juice or milk. Please do not send your child to school with water flavoring packets, soda or sugary drinks.

Required food groups for preschool lunches:

- 1 serving each of fruit or vegetable or 2 servings from one group ( $\frac{3}{4}$  cup)
- 1 serving of meat or cheese (2 oz. total)
- 1 serving of grains and breads (1 serving = 1 slice of bread, 4-6 crackers, etc)
- 1 serving of dairy (1 cup of milk, 1 oz of cheese or yogurt)

## **Outdoor Play**

The children will have outdoor play time each day, weather permitting. Please dress your child according to the weather.

## **Birthdays/Special occasions**

Birthdays are an important milestone for our preschool students and we want to honor that. Special arrangements may be made in advance with the preschool director at least one week in advance.

Summer birthdays will be celebrated in May.

## **Health**

Each child must be examined by a licensed physician prior to enrollment. All children must have a current medical exam on file and no later than 30 days after enrollment. The physician report is only good for one year from date on form and may need to be re-evaluated if expiration occurs prior to the end of the school year.

We will ask about follow up treatments for any identified medical needs.

**FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE UPDATED ANNUAL MEDICAL EXAM WILL RESULT IN SUSPENSION FROM OUR PROGRAM UNTIL IT IS PROVIDED.**

Preschool staff members are trained in the signs and symptoms of communicable disease as well as hand washing and disinfecting procedures, which are posted in the classroom.

For the protection of staff and children, we screen each child as they enter the classroom daily and follow the Ohio Department of Health "Child Day Care Communicable Disease Chart", which is posted in the classroom.

The following precautions are taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease: The parents are notified immediately if the child has been observed with the following symptoms and isolated until discharged to the parent:

- Temperature of 100 Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method
- Diarrhea/Vomiting
- Rapid or difficulty breathing
- Severe coughing

- Redness of the eye or eyelid, hock and purulent (pus) eye discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain
- Unusually dark urine or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation
- Pain that interferes with normal activity
- Untreated infected skin patches and unusual spots or rashes
- Yellowish skin or eyes

Children who exhibit symptoms of communicable disease are isolated immediately, away from the classroom, under adult supervision and made comfortable on a cot. A staff person will remain with the child until the parent arrives.

The director/school nurse reserves the right to decide when a child is not well enough to be at school.

Children are readmitted if they have no fever or symptoms of communicable disease for at least 24 hours (with no fever reducing medication) or with a physician's statement saying that the child poses no risk to others.

If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, you will be notified by the school staff by phone/posted notice.

### **Administration of Medication**

In addition to following the school's health policies, a written health plan is required for any child needing regular medication administration, having allergies, or on a modified diet while attending our program. The health plan will cover any necessary staff training to keep the child safe at school and will include specific instructions regarding treatment in case of emergency.

Please notify staff IMMEDIATELY if your child is taking any medication.

Our school nurse administers medication with the appropriate permissions on file. Medications must be provided in original containers with physicians' statements. All medications are stored at school in a locked container.

## **Emergency Information**

Preschool staff members are trained in CPR, first aid and communicable diseases. Our staff will keep their certifications current.

Staff will observe the child upon arrival for signs of communicable diseases. Children who become ill during school hours will be isolated and parents will be contacted immediately.

The Ohio Department of Health dental first-aid chart and communicable disease chart is posted in each classroom and in the Director's office.

Proper ratios of staff to children are maintained at all times.

Each classroom has a first aid kit that is stocked with supplies. Emergency bags are regularly maintained in case of an emergency exit.

In case of a minor incident/accident, first aid will be administered, documented and family will be notified.

Incident/accident reports will be completed and provided to the family members at any time and incident/accident occurs on the day of the occurrence.

All emergency telephone numbers are posted in each classroom, all common areas and in the Director's office.

Medical and admission records are located in a locked file cabinet in the Director's office.

Emergency medical authorizations must be signed by the parent/guardian and on file in the nurse's office. A copy will be on site in the Director's office by the first day of school. In the event of an emergency, this form will be sent to the hospital with the child for treatment.

The Principal and each staff member of St. Williams are required under 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the Hamilton County Department of Children's Services (241-KIDS)

Fire drills are conducted regularly and records are on file in the office.

Smoking and the use of spray aerosols are prohibited while children are present.

During all hours of operation, there is at least one staff member available who is trained in first aid, communicable disease and child abuse recognition and prevention.

A fire emergency, weather alert and evacuation plan are posted in the classroom.

Adult materials and belongings are stored out of the reach of children.

The program does not participate in swimming activities.

### **School Closings & Delays**

In the event that school would be closed because of inclement weather, please observe the following:

Listen to the radio or television

St. William School will follow Cincinnati Public School District for closings or delays.

### **Communication**

Communication between home and school is very important. Parents will receive regular newsletters that include important dates and information.

Please check your child's backpack daily.

### **Classroom Roster**

Rosters of names and telephone numbers of families in the program are available upon request. The roster will NOT include the name and phone number of any parent who requests this not be shared.

### **Volunteer Guidelines**

Volunteers must agree to follow building procedures; no smoking, snacking, leave discipline to the staff, and document my activities on the volunteer time sheet.

Volunteers are never left alone with children and work under the supervision of a staff member.

Parent volunteers must be SAFE Parish trained in accordance with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Contact the parish office for more information.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parents have unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation to contact their child, evaluate the care provided by the program, the premises, or for other purposes approved by the principal. Upon entering the premises, the parent shall report directly to the main office.

Parents will need to follow our protocol as stated in the Decree on Child Protection through the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Parents will need to be Safe Parish trained and keep their training up to date in order to volunteer in the classrooms.

We value parent contributions to the program:

1. We design transition plans as you enter and exit our program
2. We meet with you to set developmental and educational goals for your child.

We welcome and encourage parent involvement both at home and at school:

1. Volunteering, helping with the annual program survey/review
2. Giving suggestions for lesson plans and creating individualized plans
3. Participating in three progress report conferences annually
4. Participating in school and program parent education events
5. Completing our program survey annually
6. Joining the PTO

If you need assistance with a problem or a complaint, discuss with the teacher first for resolution.

## **Behavior Management**

The goal of our behavior management plan is to teach children self-discipline and respect for the feelings and property of others. Appropriate behavior is taught by setting clear, simple rules explaining what we want them to do, rather than focusing on what they should not do. The teacher will carefully choose appropriate guidance techniques and help children take steps toward responsible self-direction when they are ready.

The child's feelings about her/himself are extremely important. The teacher fosters the self-esteem of children through communication in an open and loving manner. Reasonable ground rules necessary for the safety and protection of others are explained to the children. Our behavior management does not allow the teacher to issue threats, humiliate or label the child as "bad". When it is appropriate, children will be redirected from a negative situation.

When ground rules are broken, they are clearly and firmly restated to the child, emphasizing the reasons for the rule.

Children who have conflicts with one another will be encouraged to verbalize their anger or concern. The teacher will encourage the children to talk about how the situation makes them feel.

The role of the teacher in these situations is to be the facilitator to positive problem solving and to explain the need to take responsibility for one's behavior.

The early childhood classroom environment is designed to reduce the possibility of conflicts between children. Ample supplies of materials and equipment are available in each classroom. Children are encouraged to be independent and manage their own behaviors, allowing children to develop initiative and practice problem-solving techniques. We believe all young children are capable of learning self-control as a sign of respect for self and others.

For children with consistent challenging behaviors:

- The teacher will schedule a parent meeting
- Both parent and teacher will create a plan that will be used at both home and school
- If an extreme behavioral issue occurs, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately.
- If the behavior does not change, there will be a parent, teacher and principal meeting.
- If after the meeting occurs and reasonable strategies of various guidance techniques have been used, the child does not show improvement, we may refer the child and parent to qualified agencies or to seek professional consultation.
- As a final option, the principal may request removal of the child from the program.

In accordance with 3301-37-10 OAC, the following procedures will be in effect for all persons on the premises;

- No cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or unusual punishment such as, but not limited to punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting will not be permitted
- Discipline will not be delegated to another child
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short time, such as a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- No child will be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, box or cubicle.

- Discipline will not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, sleep or for toileting accidents.
- No child will be submitted to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family or other verbal abuse
- Techniques of discipline will not humiliate shame or frighten a child.
- Discipline will not include withholding of food or drink.
- Separation, when used as discipline, will be brief in duration appropriate to the child's age and development ability and the child will be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated area.
- No child will be abused or neglected, and the program shall protect every child from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

Staff will respond to children in positive ways and while in our care, children are not humiliated, shamed, frightened, or subjected to physical or verbal abuse by staff, parents or other adults. You may request a conference with our staff at any time.

## Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the St. William Preschool Parent Handbook. While I understand that the Parent Handbook is neither a contract nor a legal document, I recognize that it is my responsibility to read and understand the policies, provisions, and procedures contained in the Parent Handbook.

I certify that I consent to and will follow all policies and procedures of the school, including everything contained in the St. William Preschool Parent Handbook.

In addition, I understand that the contents of the Parent Handbook are subject to change. I acknowledge that the Parent Handbook will be revised in accordance with the rules or regulations of state, federal, and accrediting entities, best practices for child care service providers, or at the discretion of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and/or St. William School. I recognize that any such revisions will supersede, modify, or eliminate the current contents of the Parent Handbook.

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to stay informed of any procedure revisions to the Parent Handbook.

Moreover, I recognize that it is my responsibility to contact the Preschool Director for any questions I might have about the contents of the Parent Handbook now and in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guardian Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date