

St. Mark Preschool Parent and Child Handbook

A Place Where Little Lion Cubs

Learn, Play and Grow...

Together!



**St. Mark Elementary School
15724 Montrose Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44111**

**ST. MARK PRESCHOOL
PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK
15724 Montrose Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44111**

PLEASE SIGN THIS FORM AND RETURN.

I have read and discussed with my child/children the Student Policies and other necessary information found in the Pre-K Parent and Student Handbook. We will follow the guidelines and abide by the policies stated in this handbook.

Date Signed: _____

PARENT

PARENT

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MISSION

St. Mark School's administration, faculty, and staff will work together to:

- Create a climate of learning in which each individual child can progress and mature spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and physically, at his or her own rate while integrating faith into daily life
- Create an instructional program where methods and materials are

developed to meet the needs of the individual student

- Model and develop service and leadership
- Continue the tradition of academic excellence

The focus of our preschool program is the belief that children learn best through play! We believe in an early childhood program that provides developmentally appropriate educational experiences. Our program is designed to provide a stimulating learning environment that supports the social, emotional, spiritual, cognitive and physical needs of our children. In this engaging environment, children learn through play experiences that encourage active participation in learning. The teacher's role is to guide and support our children in developmentally appropriate play and social skills. Our goal is to help children grow up confident in their faith, be respectful of others, and be Kindergarten ready. The staff recognizes the significant relationship among teachers, students, parents, and families and encourages continuous collaboration in a climate of mutual respect, cooperation and shared responsibility.

The following guidelines comply with the Preschool Regulations according to the Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Education, and the Diocese of Cleveland.

- One preschool staff member per 14 preschool children.
- An educational aide is present to assist the classroom teacher.
- A hand sanitizing station is provided at the school entrance. Additionally, students will wash their hands regularly throughout the day, including, but not limited to the following times: before snack and meal time, after playing outside, after using the restroom, and before dismissal. Teachers will assist students with proper handwashing procedures.
- Signage is in place throughout the building, reminding students of the importance of washing hands. Daily reminders will occur.
- The classrooms will be cleaned daily including common areas, such as banisters, door handles, and bathrooms.
- Rest mats will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Students will be taken outside as weather permits.
- Students may bring water bottles to school.
- Students will eat snacks and lunch in their classroom or outside.
- Visitors are not permitted in the school building, unless an appointment has been made in advance.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The St. Mark Preschool program serves families of children ages 4-5 in our community who are seeking educational, social, and spiritual enrichment through play. The preschool curriculum follows the curriculum provided by the Diocese of Cleveland. It is a combination of Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards, developmentally structured activities, and appropriate individual interventions following each child's needs.

The following are some developmentally appropriate activities that children participate in daily in our classrooms:

- **Literacy development** helps children build an understanding of language and literature. It includes listening, speaking, reading and writing activities. These activities help build skills in areas such as communication, vocabulary, letter recognition and comprehension. Story time is designed to help preschoolers develop an appreciation and enjoyment of literature.
- **Math activities** include hands-on and real life experiences. These activities also help youngsters develop an awareness of numbers, patterns, and shapes.
 - **Manipulative activities** help students improve visual perception, hand-eye coordination, problem solving and social skills.
- **Circle time** is a group gathering during which the day's plans and ideas are shared. Circle activities are designed to stimulate thinking, enrich social skills and expand attention span.
- **Art activities** help preschoolers creatively express their thoughts and feelings. It also helps reinforce fine motor skills and concept development in areas such as colors, shapes and size relationships.
- **Fine motor activities** help improve small muscle development and hand eye coordination. Some common items that can be used in developing these skills include puzzles, laces, pegboards and crayons.
- **Gross motor activities** give children the opportunity to use their muscles as well as their imaginations as they engage in fun, healthy exercises such as running, jumping and climbing.
- **Block play** gives children experience with many different concepts such as shape and size discrimination, spatial relationships, number skills, balance and organization. Cooperative play skills, problem solving and creativity are also promoted in block play.
- **Music activities** promote listening skills, creative expression and social skills.

In music children can explore sound, volume, tempo and rhythm.

The Pre-K program meets for three hours for children staying half-days, from 8:00am until 11:00am, and for six and a half hours for children staying full-days, from 8:00am until 2:30pm, five days per week.

OUR STAFF

The St. Mark preschool team is made up of a classroom teacher, the director of the program, and a classroom aide. The director, Mrs. Amy Melvin-Marko, serves as the coordinator of the preschool and is also the lead teacher. Mrs. Virginia Greuloch and Mrs. Julie Hill are the classroom aides.

STAFF TRAINING

All staff and faculty must meet the current State Teacher Certification requirements. Also required is certification in *The Virtus Program, Called To Protect Program*, a background check and fingerprinting. Credentials will be on file in the principal's office.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND PARENT CONFERENCES

We will provide progress reports during Parent Conferences in late October or early November and March (as needed) on classroom and social goals following the elementary school calendar each school year. Progress will be reported through data collection taken on individual student goals. Data will be collected through many means such as observation, checklists, charting, anecdotal records, and work samples. Such records will be reported using the progress report form and presented to parents.

CURRICULUM

The preschool curriculum follows the curriculum provided by the Diocese of Cleveland. It is a combination of Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards, developmentally structured activities, and appropriate individual interventions following each child's needs.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Parents are asked to supply the following:

- 2 boxes 24-count Crayola crayons
- 1 pack Crayola bold-tipped markers (Classic colors)
- 12 glue sticks
- 1 bottle school glue
- 1 set Crayola 8-ct watercolor paint
- 1-inch 3-ring binder (for student portfolios)
- 1 package of baby wipes (for hands and faces)
- 2 containers disinfectant wipes (Clorox, Lysol, etc. for surfaces)
- 2 boxes of tissues
- 2 rolls of paper towels
- Box of Ziploc baggies
 - Girls: Gallon-sized
 - Boys: Sandwich- or quart-sized
- Backpack (standard size)
- KinderMat rest mat-**1 inch thick** (Full-day students only; available on Amazon, Walmart.com, and Kindermats.com)
- Extra set of clothes (to be kept in the classroom for accidents/messes)

Please label all of your child's personal belongings. Some supplies (crayons, markers, glue sticks) may need to be replenished throughout the year.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibility for the education of the children belongs to parents. This responsibility is shared with the school as a matter of practical necessity. The greatest single factor in building a child's intellectual, cultural, moral and spiritual attitude is the **EXAMPLE** you provide in your home.

Parents are responsible for:

- Supporting school policy and the authority of the administration and teachers
- Modeling and supporting your children's practice of the Catholic Faith
- Encouraging your child to complete all assignments
- Insisting that your child obey the regulations and principles of good

behavior

- Discussing problems with the persons concerned and avoiding any criticism of the teachers and school policy
- Following the policies and procedures stated in this handbook
- Paying all fees (tuition, education, lunch, etc.) on time
- Reimbursing any property destroyed (accidentally or intentionally).

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

Admission

St. Mark School is a Catholic elementary school intended to provide quality Catholic education to children of families who are registered and active members of St. Mark Parish. Non-active members and non-parishioners will be considered for admission as space and finances permit. Applications for St. Mark School will be considered on the basis of the following guidelines:

Non-Discrimination Policy

St. Mark School admits students of any race, color, sex, and national or ethnic origin to all the 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, sex, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

Admission of Non-Parishioners

- Families are required to accept and work within the School philosophy.
- Admission in this category can only be considered if class size permits.

Preschool Registration

Registration for preschool will occur during the month of January. To register a child in our Preschool, the child must be 4 years old by September 30th and **completely potty trained**. An open house for interested families will be held in late January of each year. Registration occurs through Digital Academy, which can be accessed through our school website: www.stmarkwestpark.com

Non-refundable Registration and Processing Fees are due in the Parish Office no later than March 1st. Refer to the **FINANCES** section for specific amounts and details.

Waiting List Procedure

Families on the waiting list will be contacted according to the admission priorities and as class size permits. An interview will be arranged with the Principal to review the student's academic records, conduct records, and other documentation required for admission.

The Principal will verify the following documentation:

- Parish registration and place of residence
- Birth and baptismal certificates
- Academic and conduct records from all previously attended schools
- Other records as the Principal may require to establish the applicant's complete registration.

All documents are required to complete registration.

A student will not be refused admission because of race, sex, or national origin. In accordance with St. Mark School Policy, any student, whether parishioner or non-parishioner seeking admission to St. Mark School for reasons related to the racial composition or desegregation of the previously attended school will not be accepted.

TUITION AND FEES

There is a \$100 non-refundable registration fee due at the time of registration.

Days	Age	Time	Scheduled Days	Tuition
5	Pre-K	8:00-11:00	Monday-Friday	\$2,000/year
5	Pre-K	8:00-2:30	Monday-Friday	\$4,000/year

All tuition and fees must be paid when due. Failure to do so, will result in late fees of \$30 per month being assessed to the family's account. Failure to pay

the fees may result in the child being dismissed from St. Mark Preschool. If you have any further questions, please call the finance office at 216-226-7577.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURE

Preschool children will be dropped off at the Fischer Road entrance to the preschool. The aide/teacher will be present to greet them.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Preschool children will be picked up at the Fischer Road entrance either at 11:00am or 2:30pm **promptly**. The aide/teacher will be present to dismiss children to their parent/guardian.

ABSENCES

Please call the school office (216-521-4115) by 8:00 a.m. if your child is absent. You may call the school number at any time and leave a message on the absentee voicemail or email the school at office@stmarkwestpark.com Please be sure to state your child's name, grade and reason for the illness. The school will call parents who do not call in an absence. Parents should also send a message of their child's absence to the teacher via email. Please notify the school office if the illness is of a contagious nature.

A note written by the parent must be given to the preschool teacher when a child returns from any absence.

TOILETING

All children attending St. Mark Preschool must be **fully potty trained** before they attend.

In the preschool classroom, "fully potty trained" requires a child to:

- Recognize he or she needs to use the bathroom. The phrase we use is "Listen to your body."
- Stop their activity, and tell a teacher they need to go.
- Enter the bathroom, pull their pants and underwear down, stand near or sit on the toilet, and void the bowels and/or bladder into the toilet bowl.
- Wipe themselves to the best of their ability with an appropriate amount of toilet paper.
- Pull their underwear and pants back up.

- Flush the toilet.
- Wash their hands with soap and water and dry their hands with paper towels.
- Dispose of paper towels in the trash can, not the toilet. Exit the bathroom.

We do not have the facilities, staff, or licensing necessary to change or assist with any toileting difficulties. Our staff is not permitted to enter the bathroom to assist with any part of the toileting process or changing process that occurs during accidents.

We of course recognize that toileting accidents will happen. It is imperative that children immediately notify a teacher if an accident occurs. "Accidents" by definition are unusual incidents and occur infrequently. **Please provide a seasonally appropriate change of clothes in a Ziploc bag marked with your child's name in the event there is an accident and your child needs to change clothes.** Parents may be contacted to come to school to help their child change and/or take them home after accidents.

If regular or frequent toileting accidents become an ongoing concern, St. Mark preschool staff will evaluate the situation on an individual basis. A conference may be scheduled with the child's parents and staff members to address the child's readiness for our program and determine the best course of action.

HEALTH AND ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

The health of children is critical to success in every stage of life. The school provides a comprehensive approach to a healthy environment for students.

Good hygiene practices are followed which include but not limited to:

- The instruction of and frequency of proper hand washing techniques requiring two minutes of time using soap and water
- Cough and cold safety precautions

A health aide who administers first aid in cases of injury or illness staffs St. Mark School Clinic. She is present five days a week. The school furnishes an emergency authorization form, which directs the school's course of action in each individual case. It is essential that the parents notify the school of home phone number, cell phone number, address, and employment throughout the

school year so this data is always up-to-date.

Health Services

Health immunization records and physicals are due before the start of each school year. During the school year vision screening, height, and weight measurements are given to all students. Any test may be given upon parent or teacher request.

Food Allergy Plan

St. Mark School will make every effort to become aware of any allergies that its students may have, and take all necessary precautions to protect these students from exposure to offending allergens and subsequent reactions. Allergic reactions can range from mild skin rashes to severe, life threatening reactions such as anaphylaxis.

Procedures and Practices, including responsible person(s):

When children with food allergies attend school:

The school health aide will provide the family with the Food Allergy Action Plan to be filled out by the child's healthcare provider or parent.

Based on the child's Food Allergy Action Plan, caregivers will receive training and put into practice:

- Preventing exposure to specific foods that trigger allergy
- Recognize symptoms of allergic reaction
- Treating allergic reaction

Parents and staff shall arrange to have appropriate medication (if necessary) on site, proper storage of medication, and training to use medication while in school.

The school nurse, health aide or teacher will promptly take steps outlined in the Action Plan if a student has a reaction while in school.

The school nurse, health aide or teacher will call 911 if epinephrine has been given and then call the student's parents.

The student's Food Allergy Action Plan will be given to all school personnel who come in contact with the child throughout the day.

The Action Plan and medication will be taken on all field trips.

Contagious Diseases

Parents are asked to contact the school when their child has been diagnosed as having a contagious condition. This includes strep throat and head lice. **When a child has been home with an illness, the child should not return to school until free of symptoms and temperature has been normal for at least 24 hours.**

Strep Throat Cultures

If a child has had a throat culture one day, he/she should be kept home the following day until the results of the culture are known.

Dismissals due to Illness

(1) The program shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.

(2) A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent or guardian:

- (a) Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four hour period);
- (b) Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;
- (c) Difficult or rapid breathing;
- (d) Yellowish skin or eyes;
- (e) Conjunctivitis;
- (f) Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness;
- (g) Untreated infected skin patch(es);
- (h) Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool; or
- (i) Stiff neck;
- (j) Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation;
- (k) Unusual spots or rashes; or
- (l) Sore throat or difficulty swallowing.

(3) A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be

immediately isolated from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the director and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program, shall be carefully watched for symptoms listed in paragraph (2b) of this rule as well as the following:

- (a) Elevated temperature; or
- (b) Vomiting

Students cannot dismiss themselves by calling home, and an ill child may not go home alone.

Isolation will occur in the classroom, but away from other children. Isolated children will be provided with a cot and any other needs required to make the child comfortable while they wait to be picked up.

If a child is complaining of feeling unwell, but his/her symptoms do not necessitate an early dismissal, the child will be made as comfortable as possible. Water, access to the restroom, and a cot will be made available as deemed necessary.

Medications

St. Mark School follows the policy of the Cleveland Board of Health for giving medications. School personnel can administer medications only when a specific procedure is followed. Forms must be obtained from the health clinic or the school office, to be signed by the parent and signed and completed by the physician requesting medication to be given. Medication must be delivered by the parent to the preschool in a properly labeled container from the pharmacy. The child will be given medication by the preschool teacher. Parents should not send in medications with the child to be administered by the school health aide or office. School personnel may not administer non-prescription drugs, such as aspirin and Tylenol without a form filled out by the physician. **All medication will be secured in a locked file cabinet.** The policy is on file in the office. We follow Diocesan policy regarding injections. The school health aide is the only one authorized to give injections.

AIDS Policy regarding students (Diocese of Cleveland)

Children with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) enrolled or seeking enrollment in Grade K through 12 shall be permitted to attend school

or parish religious education programs in regular classroom setting provided:

1. The health of a child, as documented by his/her physician, allows participation in regular academic school activities.
2. The child behaves acceptably; in a manner that would not cause spread of the disease or in any way put others at risk.
3. The child does not have open sores, skin eruptions, or any other condition, which prevents his/her control of bodily secretions.
4. There are periodic evaluations of the child's physical condition with written certification from his/her physician allowing continuing participation in regular academic school activities.

In Parish Elementary Schools and Parish Schools of Religion, the Pastor and Principal will confer with the appropriate persons and consult with the Regional Superintendent before the Pastor/Principal makes the final decision on each case in the parish school.

Parents and guardians have the obligation to report to the school administration when any child has been diagnosed as having AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC (AIDS Related Complex), or other illness caused by HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus that causes AID, also known as HTV VIII or LAV).

In order to protect confidentiality, when a child with AIDS is admitted to school personnel who are made aware of the child's condition should be the minimum necessary to assure proper care of the child.

Based on the condition of the child and the expected type of interaction with others, the Principal, after consultation with the proper authorities, may limit the child's participation in school activities.

A student with AIDS who is excluded from school or a Parish School or Religious Program shall be provided with an alternative means of catechetical instruction.

Chemical Use/Abuse

The school/parish is co-tenant of lockers and desks and reserves the right to search them at any time without notice. Parents will be notified immediately if a student is found to have or be under the influence of tobacco, hallucinogens,

alcohol or drugs, or any substance or to have drug paraphernalia in his/her possession on school property, or the bus or during off-campus activities sponsored by the school or school related activities. A mandatory conference with both parents will be arranged before the student returns to school. Intervention by trained professionals may be required as a condition for the student to remain at St. Mark School. Lack of cooperation by either the student or the parents in this matter will result in the student's suspension or expulsion. If a student gives evidence or sign of chemical dependency, parents will be contacted by the principal and teachers, and an appropriate course of action will be decided upon. Parents who are aware of similar problems with a student are to inform the school so that together we can assist the student in overcoming this dependency.

HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY

Purpose

St. Mark School is firmly committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for everyone in the school, free of harassment and sexual harassment. For this reason, and in keeping with the goals and objectives of Catholic education, St. Mark School expressly prohibits harassment and sexual harassment and sexual violence in the school environment. This policy re-emphasizes the personal dignity of the individual and fosters positive sexual attitudes and respect for others.

Harassment

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior by any student/school personnel in St. Mark School is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying," in accordance with House Bill 276, mean any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts including electronically transmitted acts i.e. Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop that a reasonable person under the circumstance should know will have the effect of:

- Causing mental or physical harm to the other student/school personnel

- including placing an individual in reasonable fear of physical harm and/or damaging of students'/personal property; and
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student/school personnel.

St. Mark School will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety on any student, school employee, or volunteer. A student, school employee or volunteer shall not intimidate or harass another student, school employee or volunteer through words or actions whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school or at school-sponsored events, or from any computer not on school property.

Such behavior includes overt intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate another student, school employee or volunteer. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include:

1. Physical violence and/or attacks
2. Threats, taunts and intimidation through word and/or gestures
3. Extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions
4. Exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors; and
5. Repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other Web-based/online sites (also known as "cyberbullying"), such as the following:
 - Posting slurs on Websites where students congregate or on Web logs
 - Sending abusive or threatening instant messages
 - Using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs of student and posting them online (including Facebook)
 - Using Websites to circulate gossip and rumors to other students (including Facebook)
 - Excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

Sexual Harassment

For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment includes the following specific instances but is not limited to: verbal sexual abuse; disseminating obscene or sexually explicit material, whether in the form of music, written lyrics,

pornographic pictures or other literature, or having such material in one's possession in the school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities; obscene or sexually explicit graffiti anywhere in the school or on the school/parish grounds, continuing and unwanted written or oral communication directed to another of a sexual nature; spreading sexual rumor/innuendoes; obscene T-shirts, hats, or button; touching oneself sexually in front of others; obscene and /or sexually explicit gestures; and any other inappropriate behavior of a sexually explicit or obscene nature that demeans or offends the recipient. The above list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but is intended to provide guidance as to what may constitute sexual harassment. Harassment is not tolerated. Allegations of harassment or sexual harassment are to be reported to the teacher and the principal. The principal will investigate. Parents of both the offender and the victim will be informed of the allegations. The matter is to be kept confidential to the extent possible by all parties involved, and every effort will be made to protect the alleged victim and witnesses from retaliation. The parents of both the offender and the victim are obligated to cooperate in remedying the situation. The principal will determine disciplinary action. The complete policy is on file in the office.

The school personnel are trained in the Virtus program, on file in the office. If the allegations are substantiated, disciplinary actions will be taken. These will depend on the nature, frequency and severity of the action, the ages of the offender and victim, the history of similar actions by this individual, and the circumstances in which the harassment occurred. Possible disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to any or all the following:

- Verbal warning/reprimand and apology to the victim
- A parent/student/ principal conference
- Written warning/reprimand and parent notification, entered in the student's file
- Detention or removal from selected school activities and/or extracurricular activities
- Behavior/probation contracts, possibly requiring professional intervention, suspension, or expulsion

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence and some sexual harassment may be criminal in nature. If an incident of sexual violence occurs, the principal, pastor, or other school authority is required under state law to report the incident. The Department

of Human Services and the police will be contacted immediately if there is any "reason to believe" that sexual abuse or violence has occurred involving a child less than eighteen years of age. The Diocesan Legal Office will be contacted immediately in these situations. Generally sexual harassment should be construed as sexual violence when the recipient is physically touched without his/her consent in a sexual manner; is expressly threatened or perceives a threat of physical harm for purposes of the offender's sexual gratification; or is the victim of sex offenses under Ohio law. In these cases, the Department of Human Services and the police will be contacted immediately. Any child who feels he/she has been a victim of child abuse should notify their parent and teachers immediately.

Gangs

Youth gangs and gang-related activity are prohibited. A gang is defined as any non-school sponsored group, possibly secret and/or exclusive in membership, whose purpose or practices include the commission of illegal acts, unlawful or antisocial behavior, violation of school rules, establishment of territory or turf or any action that threatens the safety or welfare of others or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Gang activity includes but is not limited to recruitment, initiation, a manner of grooming, hair style and/or wearing of clothing, jewelry, head coverings, or accessories which by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark or other attribute denotes membership in a gang, displaying gang markings or slogans on school or personal property or clothing, having gang tattoos, possessing literature that indicates gang membership, fighting, assault, hazing, extortion, establishing turf, use of hand signals, gang vocabulary and nicknames, possession of beepers or cellular phones, possession of weapons or explosive materials, possession of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, attendance at functions sponsored by a gang or known gang members, exhibiting behavior fitting police profiles of gang-related drug dealings, being arrested or stopped by police with a known gang member, selling or distributing drugs for a known gang member, helping a known gang member commit a crime, or any other action directly resulting from membership or interest.

Consequences

If a student is suspected or identified as being a member of a gang, shows interest in joining a gang, initiates or participates in any gang related activity, or has been approached for recruitment, any or all of the following steps may

be taken:

1. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and appropriate intervention initiated.
2. A behavior contract will be prepared stating the conditions for the student remaining in the school.
3. Students may be referred to counseling (personal and/or family)
4. Students may be referred to the Department of Children's Services or other welfare or childcare agencies of the respective county.
5. Students may be referred to outside agencies or programs for treatment when use of drugs and/or alcohol is involved.
6. Students may be referred to the Committee for a Safer Cleveland.
7. Police, Juvenile Court, and other appropriate authorities will be notified of violence and/or illegal activities.
8. Students may be suspended and/or expelled as already outlined in the school discipline policies. Parents/students will be held liable and financially responsible for all forms of vandalism.

Jurisdiction

Realizing that gang activity is a community concern, communication will be maintained with the police department and public school officials on all matters related to gang activity within the community. Involvement and jurisdiction of school authorities in gang related incidents occurring outside the school or off school/parish property will be determined in cooperation with diocesan legal authorities and the police, and will take into consideration the nature of the incident, the safety of the student, the effect of the incident on other students, and the good order and functioning of the school.

Related Policies

In order to prevent the onset of gang related activity, the following related policies would be strictly enforced:

1. Dress code and uniform policy as defined in the School Handbook.
2. Discipline policies and consequences as defined in the School Handbook
3. The right of school authorities to search lockers, student desks, and personal property, upon request if suspicion of gang involvement exists.
4. Policies and procedures relative to scheduling, supervision and

- attendance at school/parish sponsored events, held during the school day, in the evening or on weekends, whether held on parish property or at other public facilities.
5. Policies and procedures established relative to participation in and attendance at school/parish sponsored athletic functions whether held on parish property or at other public facilities.
 6. Insistence on parent cooperation in not permitting children to host/attend unsupervised parties or activities.

Prevention

In order to assist students in the development of positive self-esteem, decision-making skills, and social values, appropriate educational programs and activities will be provided as judged appropriate by the pastor and/or principal. These may include guidance programs, parent education programs, social activities that foster positive group identification and behavior, parish-based youth ministry activities, etc.

Weapons

In furtherance of the overall philosophy, goals, and objectives of the Catholic educational experience, the St. Mark School expressly prohibits the use, possession, sale, or discharge of any weapons or explosive devices in the school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities. This policy shall apply to all students, participants in parish programs, teachers, administrators, and other personnel in the school or parish. **No toy weapons are allowed.**

This policy includes, but is not limited to, any firearm, knife, deadly weapon, or explosive or incendiary device. As defined by state law, a deadly weapon is "any instrument, device or thing capable of inflicting death, and designed or specifically adapted for use as a weapon, or possessed, carried or used as a weapon". Firearms shall include any loaded or unloaded gun of any caliber or type. This prohibition also includes any pistol, rifle, or other device that uses air or gas propelled projectiles. Violations of this policy may warrant notification of the police, immediate suspension, and possible expulsion. If possession of a weapon is suspected, the principal or other administrator will immediately contact the police department and the Diocesan Legal Office before confronting the individual. If it is determined that this policy has been violated, the parents of the offender shall be immediately contacted and must

cooperate with the disciplinary process.

Disciplinary action may include immediate in-or out-of-school suspension, pending investigation and resolution. If the student's infraction does not warrant immediate dismissal, then the parents may be required to sign a probation contract that includes all conditions of the student's retention at the school. Possible terms of this probation agreement may include professional counseling, participation in the community program addressing youth violence, suspension from extracurricular activities, and any other conditions deemed appropriate by the administration of the school or parish program after consultation with the Diocesan Legal Office. The pastor/principal makes individual judgments of cases.

Reporting Child Abuse

If a faculty or staff member of St. Mark becomes aware of suspected child abuse, the Child Abuse hotline (696-kids) will be called by the person suspecting the abuse. The Principal must be notified. We will follow the recommendations of the Child Abuse Hotline Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.421.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

All users are expected to use the technology available at St. Mark School in a manner that is consistent with the teachings and mission of the Catholic Church and the school's academic programs. Technology includes, but is not limited to, cellular telephones, video recorders, video games, personal data devices, computers, other hardware, electronic devices, software, Internet, e-mail and all other similar networks and devices. Users are expected to be responsible and use technology to which they have accessed appropriately. Obscene, pornographic, threatening, or other inappropriate use of technology, including, but not limited to e-mail, instant messaging, web pages, Facebook and the use of hardware and/or software which disrupts or interferes with the safety and welfare of the school community, is prohibited, even if such uses take place **after school hours** or **off school property** (i.e., home, business, private property, etc.)

STUDENT SAFETY

The entire school community is responsible for ensuring the safety of all the students.

1. Fire/Tornado Drills are conducted on a monthly basis.
2. School Safety (Lockdown) Drills are conducted monthly.
3. An Emergency Evacuation Drill is conducted yearly.

Emergency Evacuations

In the event of an emergency, we will follow the directions of civil authorities. If we are to close the school, we will contact a parent or guardian who can pick the student up. No child will be dismissed without proper parent authorization to another adult.

Traffic Patterns

Morning Drop-off

Preschool children will be dropped off in front of the preschool entrance on Fischer Rd.

Children need to be in their classrooms before 8:00. The main school doors will be opened at 7:30 to begin student drop off for families who have children attending St. Mark School. Preschool doors will remain locked.

Afternoon Pick-up

Preschool children will be picked up at the Fischer Road entrance either at 11:00am or 2:30pm. The aide/teacher will be present to help children to their cars.

SNOW DAYS/SEVERE WEATHER

When **St. Mark Catholic Elementary School** is closed - the preschool program will be closed as well. If St. Mark School closes, our Digital Academy Alert System will notify registered parents. All TV and radio stations will be notified. The closing will be listed as "**St. Mark School**".

The school administration will continue to communicate updates through the Digital Academy.

TOILETING

Toilet training will not be coerced. Children will wash their hands with liquid soap and running water after using the toilet. Individual paper towels shall be used to dry hands. When handling clothing soiled with feces, urine, vomit, or blood, staff members will wear gloves and bag clothing in sealed plastic bags, storing them apart from other items. **Children must be fully potty-trained to attend St. Mark Pre-K.**

NAP/REST TIME

All children who stay from 8:00 AM-2:30 PM will need a nap time. Nap time will occur from 12:30pm-1:30pm. Rest mats are part of the student supply list. Each rest mat is labeled with the child's name. The child will use only their own rest mat each day. Rest mats are disinfected regularly. Each child should bring a beach towel from home to rest on, which will be sent home weekly to be cleaned.

NUTRITION

Snacks and lunch will be provided by parents. St. Mark Preschool will have milk available for purchase. The Milk Order Form can be found on the Digital Academy. Some snack options include: low sugar cereal - pretzels - fruits - granola - bread sticks - fruit juice - water. During the lunch period, the staff/child ratio will be maintained.

In the event a student does not bring a snack or lunch, parents will first be contacted to bring a snack and/or lunch for their child. If timely contact cannot be made or if parents cannot bring items in a timely manner, the student will be provided an alternate nutritious snack or meal. Any dietary restrictions of the student will be followed.

PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE

The photo/video release form allows the preschool to use photographs and/or videos for educational purposes and promotion of the preschool's activities and the program itself. Parents may revoke their permission at any time.

FAMILY/CUSTODIAL SITUATIONS - RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL

In two-parent families it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. St. Mark School personnel will, therefore, send home notices, communications etc. with the child. It is assumed

that both parents are communicating regarding the child and that all information is shared by and between the parents. This information includes but is not limited to conference appointments, report cards, interims, discussions with school personnel, and tuition statements.

In families experiencing separation of parents, or pending divorce, the above information will be sent home with the child to whichever parent currently has care of the child. It is assumed that this information is shared by the parents and between the parents. Since this situation frequently impacts on a child's achievement and interactions at school, parents are asked to inform both the principal and teacher of this fact so that appropriate support can be given to the child. St. Mark School personnel cannot proceed on hearsay, rumors, or demands of a parent, but only with the appropriate documentation detailed below.

In cases of an actual divorce decree involving clear custody by one parent, the principal is to be informed by the custodial parent of this fact. A copy of the entire decree bearing the case number and the final page bearing the judge's signature is to be submitted to the principal. Unless the decree indicates otherwise, school communications will be sent home to the custodial parent. Custodial parents should understand, however, that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-custodial parent's right to access to records, the non-custodial parent has a right to the same access as the custodial parent. St. Mark School, will, unless instructed by a Court Order, release such records upon request to the non-custodial parent. "Records" includes official transcripts, report cards, health records, referrals for special services, and communications regarding major disciplinary actions. It does not include daily class work and papers, or routine communications sent through the children to the home of residence. In these cases, the custodial parent is asked to cooperate with the school and share this information directly with the non-custodial parent. This avoids time-consuming duplication of services.

Further, you should realize that unless restricted by Court Order, any non-custodial parent has the right to attend any school activity of his/her child, which includes sport activities and classroom programs. Parents should keep each other informed as to these activities to avoid duplication of communications and to allow the school to better attend to the duty of teaching your children.

In cases of "joint custody" entitling both parents access to school personnel and activities, it is assumed that one copy of communications and information will be

sent home with the child, and that this will be shared by and **between** the parents. Regarding parent conferences in all custody situations: It is preferred and will be the general procedure that **one** conference appointment be scheduled "jointly" if both parents wish to be present. It is assumed that parents are able to set aside differences and to come together on behalf of their child for this time. Joint conference further ensures that both parents are given the same information at the same time, thereby avoiding misunderstanding and misinterpretations.

In cases where joint conferences are clearly neither possible nor desirable by the parties involved, alternate arrangements may be discussed with the principal, subject to the approval of both parents, and further reviewed by St. Mark School's legal counsel. Every effort will be made to keep communications open with both parents while at the same time avoiding duplication of services and excessive demands on the teacher's time.

Visitations should generally begin at the home of one of the parents and not at school. It is hoped that visitation arrangements would reflect the sensitivity of both parents to the consistency and routines that foster security in a child and allow for school responsibilities and homework to be taken care of during the school week.

If there are questions concerning this re-statement of procedures or circumstances you feel necessitate other arrangements, please contact the principal person.

BIRTHDAYS and UNBIRTHDAYS

We celebrate birthdays at school by sharing a simple parent provided treat or snack, and recognizing our special friend throughout the day. All treats are sent home to be consumed. Birthday celebrations can be scheduled on the school day closest to the actual date. Summer birthdays are celebrated during Un-birthday Week(s). The teacher will inform parents of the upcoming Un-birthday fun within the newsletter.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the key to a great school year! You may contact the staff

through notes, email, or contact by phone before and after school at (216) 521-4115. We are reachable between 7:30-8:00 am in the morning, and again after school from 2:30-3:00pm. [We are unable to answer the phone during class time. Please feel free to leave a voice message and calls will be returned at our earliest convenience.] For individual concerns, the staff will contact you by phone, send a note home, or email (if an email address is provided).

NEWSLETTER

A weekly newsletter will be sent home to provide parents with information about themes, activities, and upcoming events. The newsletter will also include important dates and upcoming events.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Parents are asked to notify the classroom teacher, the director of the program and the principal of St. Mark school of a withdrawal from the preschool program prior to the removal date.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Many opportunities for family involvement will be provided throughout the school year. We provide teacher planned family involvement activities each year that take place at school or within the community. These are great opportunities for families and students to meet outside of class time.

PARENT VISITATION POLICY

To ensure all of our students receive the greatest benefit from class time, we ask that visitors be arranged with the teacher prior to entering the classroom, with the exception for emergencies. We also ask that visitors sign in at the Main School Office for safety and security purposes. Many opportunities for classroom volunteer help will be offered throughout the school year.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

Helping hands are always needed and appreciated! Any parent who would like to volunteer in the classroom to share a talent or skill with the children is welcome. **All volunteers must be Virtus trained.**

DISCIPLINE

We encourage students to work together with peers and staff in a caring and

collaborative environment. We assist in the development of problem solving, communication, and self-control skills to keep order in the classroom. If a conflict arises, we try to redirect and teach students to mediate the situation. We promote children being responsible for their actions and words and help them understand the meaning behind what they say and do.

This is done by all staff members: clearly defining limits and consistently maintaining them, allowing children the time to problem solve for themselves and offering suggestions when needed, facilitating discussions amongst peers when needed, talking about actions and consequences, offering positive redirection, using kind words and tone of voice that help students to better understand the problem, and by providing appropriate outlets for releasing tension and built up energy.

If student behavior exceeds the set limits, the student will be removed from the group/activity and placed in "quiet zone" for as many minutes as they are old. An adult will talk them through the situation and consequence to help them understand what they did and why it was not acceptable. If continual problems exist, parents will be contacted and a behavior plan collaborating with parents will be put into place.

St. Mark's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

1. There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment, or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
2. No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
3. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
4. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.
5. No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family or other verbal abuse.
6. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
7. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame or frighten a child.
8. Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.

9. Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and development ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
 10. St. Mark Preschool shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.
- THE LEAD TEACHER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL DISCIPLINE.

Medicaid Information

Per the requirements from the ODE, we must ensure that Medicaid information is made available to all parents.

Healthchek services are available for families that are eligible for Medicaid. Healthcheck is Ohio's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program. It is a service package for babies, kids, and young adults younger than age 21 who are enrolled on Ohio Medicaid.

The purpose of Healthcheck is to discover and treat health problems early. If a potential health problem is found, further diagnosis and treatment are covered by Medicaid. Healthchek covers ten check-ups in the first two years of life and annual check-ups thereafter and offers a comprehensive physical examination that includes:

- Medical history
- Complete unclothed exam (with parent approval)
- Developmental screening (to assess if child's physical and mental abilities are age appropriate)
- Vision screening
- Dental screening
- Hearing assessment

- Immunization assessment
- Lead screening; and
- Other services or screenings as needed

If your children are enrolled on Ohio Medicaid, Healthchek services are available to them. If you are younger than age 21 and are also enrolled, you can receive Healthchek services, too.

If you are interested in more information about this service as well as many other programs available to families with young children, please visit: [the Ohio Department of Education's Early Childhood Initiatives Report](#).

TRANSITIONS

Transitioning into the Program

The transition to preschool can be stressful, both for students and their parents. In order to make this transition as smooth as possible, St. Mark Preschool asks parents to fill out a written questionnaire about their child, providing the teachers with information that will make the student feel as comfortable at school as possible. Additionally, a Parent Meeting and separate Drop-In day is offered in August, allowing the parents and the students to meet the teachers, see the classroom, and have any of their questions about the program answered.

Transitions within the Program

Within the program, it is possible for a child to transition from half-day to full-day. In order to make this transition as easy as possible for the student regular communication occurs between the teachers and the parents.

Transitioning out of the Program

The transition from pre-K to kindergarten is an important step for children, their families, their new teachers and schools. Students in the preschool program are given a number of opportunities to meet the kindergarten teachers

and visit the kindergarten classroom. Parent participation in the transition process is important for a smooth start in kindergarten, so St. Mark School provides a Q & A session each spring for parents, combined with an opportunity for students to meet their teachers, see their classrooms, and meet friends.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

St. Mark Catholic School Main Office: 216-521-4115 Mrs. Donahue (M/W/F) and Mrs. Glazier (T/W/Th) are the school secretaries.

Mrs. Gunn is the school principal and Mrs. Finkovich is the assistant principal. Both can be reached at 216-521-4115.

Attendance Line: 216-521-4115 and press 3 to report an absence.

Contact ODE (Ohio department of Education) for information about the Inspection report for the program.

St. Mark Preschool Schedule

7:30-8:15 Arrival/Unpack/Table Time

8:15-8:45 Morning Meeting

8:45-9:00 Journals

9:00-9:30 Small Groups

9:30-9:45 Snack

9:45-10:15 Language & Literacy

10:15-11:00 Centers

11:00-11:40 Outdoor Play/Music & Movement

11:40-12:30 Wash hands, Lunch, Bathroom Break, Books

12:30-1:30 Rest Time

1:30-1:45 Quiet Activities

1:45-2:15 Centers or Outdoor Play

2:15-2:30 Dismissal Prep & Dismissal