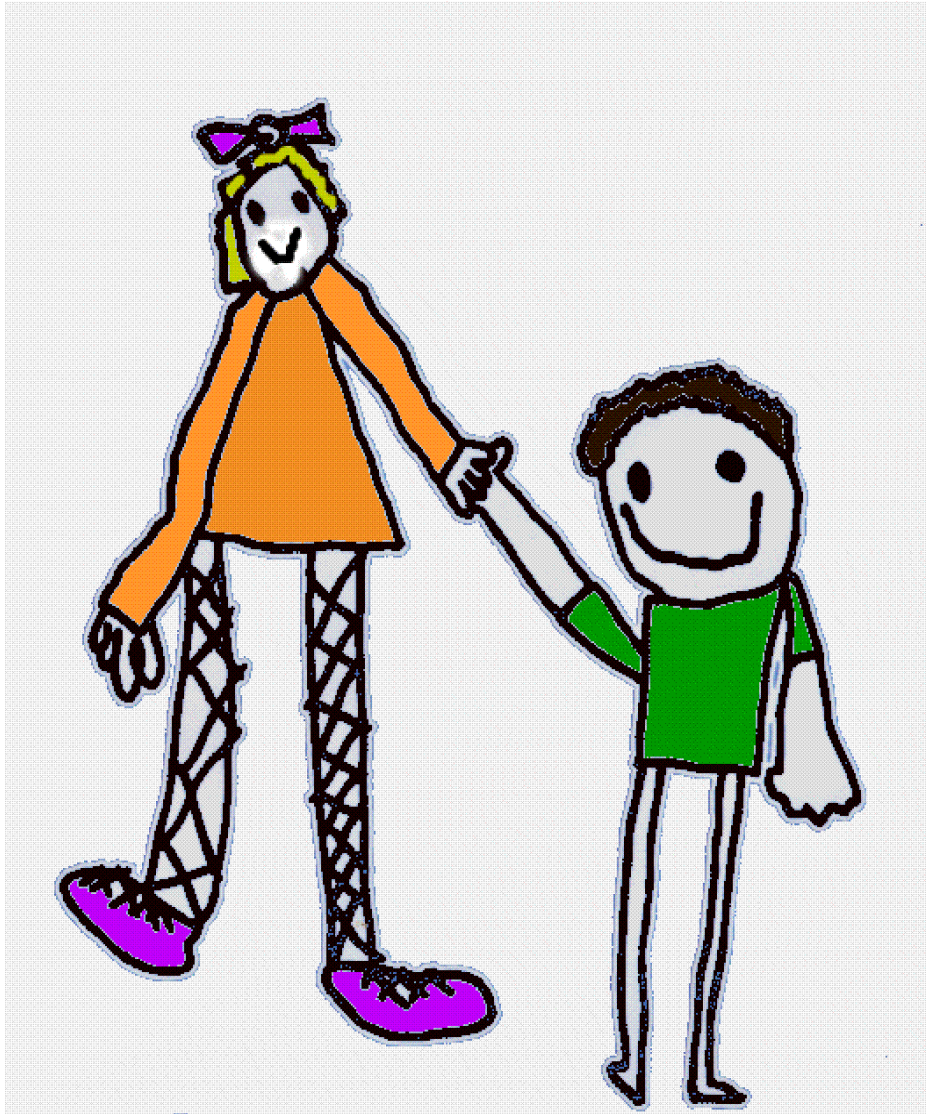


All Saints Preschool
720 29th St. SE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403
(319) 298-9844



2011 - 2012
Parent Handbook

All Saints Preschool

Handbook of Policies and Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to All Saints Preschool where “*learning and growing go hand in hand.*” This purpose of this handbook is to welcome you and to explain some of our policies and procedures. ***Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference.*** A copy of the All Saints Preschool Department of Human Services Policy manual is available upon request for complete details and listing of all policies.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

All Saints Preschool will provide a safe and caring Christian learning environment for your child. It is our goal to work in cooperation with each child’s family to provide educational experiences within a Christian atmosphere that encourages the development of the “total” child – spiritually, emotionally, cognitively, physically, and socially. We will enhance your child’s self-esteem and develop positive feelings towards learning.

All Saints Preschool offers a complete preschool program with classes for children ages 3-5 years old.

The main emphasis of our 3 year old class is on the social development. Our goal is to allow these children to feel positive and secure in an environment other than home. We value play as an appropriate way of learning and will assist children with their communication skills, and relationships with other children, seeing that they engage in solitary, parallel, and cooperative play. We introduce a variety of Pre-K skills, such as writing their first name, cutting, counting, shapes, colors, etc., and allow the children to develop these skills at their own rate.

Our 4 year old class goes another step further. We still place great value on the social development as children continue to develop their communication and social skills; however, we begin to concentrate on Kindergarten readiness skills. Throughout the year, we work on skills such as colors, shapes, number and alphabet recognition, first and last names, responsibility within the classroom, manners, and self-help skills. Our goal is to provide the children with a fun and developmentally appropriate environment that is conducive to their learning.

Our Enrichment class is an extension of our 4 year old class. This class will provide the link between preschool and Kindergarten. We continue to place great value on social development, but the main focus will be on Kindergarten readiness skills. We will enrich the child’s development through active exploratory learning centers, and promote a positive attitude towards learning.

In order to provide a comprehensive Early Learning Preschool experience, we will:

- Accept children and their families at their individual levels, value their uniqueness and encourage them to progress at their own pace.
- Develop a multi-cultural, non-sexist curriculum and environment
- Provide a stimulating child-centered environment that recognizes play as a viable means for learning about self, others, and the world.

- Encourage children’s learning through play by providing activities which enable children to plan, observe, explore, pretend, question, and evaluate.
- Provide a nurturing environment that fosters a positive self-image, a sense of trust, self –reliance, self –confidence, and appreciation of others.
- Provide a developmentally appropriate thematic curriculum and activities adapted from the Creative Curriculum for Preschool that promote cognitive, language, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual growth in an integrated format.
- Utilize and incorporate the State of Iowa Early Learning Standards, Jolly Phonics program, and Handwriting Without Tears program.
- Introduce faith-based values and concepts that will enhance each child’s feelings of belonging, ability to share with others, and skills for living cooperatively in the world and Christian community.
- Provide a balance of child and teacher initiated activities, individual and group activities, structured and unstructured play, and active and quiet times.
- Encourage language and literacy development through daily exposure to activities such as stories, poems, field trips, functional uses of print, dramatic play, and dramatization.
- Encourage math and problem solving skills through manipulation of objects.
- Help each child grow in large and small motor ability.
- Collaborate with community agencies to meet the unique needs of children and families.
- Emphasize family participation through volunteerism, and family activities and social events.
- Use evaluation of children’s progress and achievement to plan curriculum, meet individual needs, communicate with parents, and evaluate the program’s effectiveness.

ORGANIZATION AND LICENSE

All Saints Preschool is sponsored by the All Saints Board of Education and is a non-profit organization. We are an Iowa Quality Rated System (QRS) Center licensed by the Department of Human Services and the Archdiocese of Dubuque.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

In order to attend Preschool, a child must be 3 years old and completely toilet trained. The child will not be allowed to begin Preschool until the required enrollment forms (listed below) are complete and on file at the Center. Forms shall be updated annually.

Forms required for enrollment are:

1. Registration Form
2. Enrollment Form
3. Parental Emergency Medical Consent Form
4. Authorization Statements
5. Physical Form
6. Immunization Card
7. Volunteer Statement
8. Certificate of Dental Screening
9. Vision Card (optional)
10. Tuition Plan

The Center expects the forms to be kept current. The parents must provide new information to the staff regarding information on forms such as emergency persons, names, employers, and phone numbers, authorized pick-up names and address changes.

FEES AND PAYMENT POLICY

2011–2012 Preschool tuition (based on 9 month payment schedule):

3 year old 2-day program -	\$90.00 per month
3 year old 3-day program -	\$105.00 per month
4 year old 3-day PLUS program -	\$135.00 per month
4 year old 4-day program -	\$130.00 per month
Enrichment program -	\$160.00 per month

1. A non-refundable annual registration fee is required of all students. This fee is due with the registration form and effective for the calendar school year.
2. Preschool tuition payments are paid monthly through the nine month Automatic Tuition Plan (refer to the Automatic Tuition Plan Form), or annually with the total tuition due at registration in August, or semi-annually with the first half of tuition due at registration in August, and the second half of tuition due January 15. Any other payment arrangements are at the discretion and approval of the director/administration. A Special Exception Payment Contract will be issued.
3. Insufficient funds are subject to a service fee. Parents will be notified immediately upon receipt of the non-sufficient notice by the program director and shall have one week (seven days) to pay the service fee and tuition in full. If the service fee and tuition are not paid at the end of one week, continuation of preschool services may be suspended until fees/tuition are paid in full.
4. Refunds are not given for absences, illness, holidays, vacation, school cancellations, early dismissals, withdrawal from the program, etc.
5. If the preschool tuition balance falls 30 days overdue, you have 30 days from the notice by the program director to pay the full unpaid balance. If the unpaid balance is not paid by the end of 30 days, the child will be discharged from the preschool program until the balance is paid in full. Reinstatement may occur on a space available basis when the balance has been paid in full. Any other arrangements are at the discretion of the director/administration.
6. LATE CHARGE FEE: If a child is not picked up from preschool within 15 minutes of dismissal time, families are subject to a \$1.00 per minute late per child fee. The child will remain in preschool until a parent/authorized designee picks up the child.

PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE

Three year old program:

- Meets Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:00 – 11:30 AM
OR Monday-Wednesday-Friday mornings from 9:00 - 11:30 AM.
- Maximum of 16 children per class who are supervised by one teacher and one teacher associate.
- Enrolled children must be 3 years of age and be completely toilet trained to participate in the program.

Four year old program:

- Meets Monday and Friday mornings from 9:00 – 11:30 AM and Wednesday from 9:00 AM – 1:30 PM (lunch included)
OR Monday-Tuesday-Thursday-Friday afternoons from 1:00 – 3:35 PM.
- Maximum of 18 children per class who are supervised by one teacher and one teacher associate.
- Enrolled children must be 4 years of age by September 15 to participate in the program.

Enrichment program:

- Meets Monday through Friday afternoons from 1:00 – 3:35 PM.
- Maximum of 18 children per class who are supervised by one teacher and one teacher associate.
- Enrolled children must be 5 years of age by December 31 to participate in the program.

Classes begin promptly at 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM each day. We suggest that you avoid long-lingering good-byes to ease the separation of child and parent. It is our hope that a quick loving good-bye and a busy start to the school day will help alleviate this anxiety.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

All children in Child Care will be escorted by staff to and from preschool.

Morning Classes - 9:00 AM arrival:

Children must be escorted into their preschool classroom by an adult or authorized designee. The children **SHOULD NOT** arrive before 8:45 AM, as this is an important time for class preparation. Late arrivals must check in through the main office.

Afternoon Classes – 1:00 PM arrival:

Parents may drive up and drop off their child at the main school entrance door **BEGINNING** at 12:50 PM. The preschool staff will be at the main entrance to greet the children and escort them to their classroom. Preschool staff will remain at this door for arrivals until 1:05 PM. Late arrivals must check in through the main office.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

All children in Child Care will be escorted by staff to and from preschool.

Morning Classes – 11:30 AM dismissal:

Preschool staff will dismiss the children at 11:30 AM from the school lobby. Parents may wait in the school lobby until the staff escorts the children to the lobby area for dismissal.

* Please note for the 1:30 PM dismissal on **Wednesdays** in the 4 year old PLUS program, staff will dismiss the children from their classroom. Parents or authorized designees may wait in the hallway outside the Preschool classrooms as the children are dismissed to them.

Afternoon classes – 3:35 PM dismissal:

Preschool staff will dismiss the children from their prospective classrooms at 3:35 PM. Parents or authorized designees may wait in the hallway outside the Preschool classrooms as the children are dismissed to them. If a parent wants to designate an older sibling/student to pick up their child from Preschool, the parent is required to complete an

authorization form allowing us to release the child to the sibling/student. These forms are available upon request. Please be aware that at 3:35 PM the entire student body of All Saints School is dismissed. Please exercise extreme caution in the parking lot at dismissal time, as the safety of students is our concern.

We will release your child only to parents/guardians or authorized persons designated by you on the Parental Consent form. If someone other than those authorized is to pick up a child, it is imperative that Preschool is notified and an authorization form is filled out.

Please call Preschool if you are delayed so we are aware of the situation and may explain the situation to your child. Please respect teacher's other commitments and appointments by being prompt. If a child is not picked up from preschool within 15 minutes of dismissal time, families are subject to a \$1.00 per minute per child fee. The child will remain in preschool until a parent/authorized designee picks up the child.

If any staff member suspects that the parent/guardian or authorized designee who is picking up a child from the Center is under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicants, this incident could be reported to the DHS as possible child abuse. Attempts will be made to seek alternative means of transportation in regards to the safety of those involved. If the individual continues with their intent to drive the child, the local law enforcement agency will be contacted immediately.

ATTENDANCE

In the event of illness, vacation or other absences which take place on regularly scheduled days, please notify Preschool at 298-9844. We will follow the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Catholic Schools calendar regarding vacations, holidays, in-service days, etc. *Please see attached 2011-2012 Metropolitan Catholic School calendar.*

SNOW DELAYS AND CLOSING

Preschool closes if the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Catholic School/Cedar Rapids Community Schools close due to inclement weather. Local radio, television, and internet carry these announcements. If schools are delayed, morning classes will be canceled; with the exception of Wednesdays in the 4 year old PLUS program which will follow the delayed start time and dismiss at 1:30 PM. If schools are delayed, the afternoon classes will continue to meet at the regular scheduled time. Snow delays and closings are not reimbursed.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS

The All Saints School dress code **does not** apply to Preschool. We request that children wear play clothes that are washable and comfortable. Please have names on all outside garments. Preschool is not responsible for lost garments.

Children can care more easily for their own bathroom needs when dressed in clothing that is easy for them to remove. Accidents do happen however, so each child needs to keep an extra set of clothing in their school bag. We keep extra clothing at Preschool, but children feel more comfortable in their own clothes.

Please note that for the safety of the children, closed toe and heel shoes are preferred. Many accidents have occurred when children wear "flip flops."

We encourage your child to learn by using the Preschool toys and equipment. Please leave personal toys at home unless it is your child's "Sharing Day."

SUPPLIES

Every child needs a large school bag or backpack, and a 16 or 24 count box of crayons. Please label your child's bag with their name. In this bag, children will carry notes, newsletters/calendars, art and craft projects, etc. We will place any important messages in the bag, so be sure to **empty the bag daily**. **If you have a message that needs to get to the teacher, please pin the message on the outside of your child's bag.**

SHARING

ALL 3 year old and 4 year old classes:

When it is your child's scheduled snack day, it is also their special SHARING DAY. Your child will receive a sharing bag the class day prior to their sharing day. Your child may bring 2 items of their choice and a favorite book to share with the class. Please respect our "NO WEAPON" policy and DO NOT send any item that represents a weapon of any kind.

Enrichment class ONLY:

In the beginning of the year a traveling bear and journal will be sent home on a weekly rotating basis. Instructions are included with the journal. We will conclude the year with a rotating interactive clue game called, "Are You Curious?" Instructions are included with the game.

SNACKS

Parents are asked to provide a **nutritious** snack and drink for their child's class on a rotating basis. The Preschool monthly snack calendar will indicate your child's snack day and the number of snacks required to feed their class. Snack time is an important part of our Preschool day. Besides the nutritional supplement it provides the children, it is also a vital nutritional learning tool. What we teach the children now, sets the eating patterns and habits of children for a lifetime. We view snack time as an opportunity to help the children make healthy choices in their eating habits.

Preschool follows the DHS and CACFP regulation requirements. An approved "**Snack Guidelines**" is attached for your information and use. We are confident you will have some interesting and delicious ways to meet the nutritional requirements. Please contact the Preschool staff for ideas or suggestions if necessary.

ALL snacks brought to preschool must be either whole fruits or snacks that are commercially pre-packaged in factory sealed containers. Homemade snacks are no longer acceptable. A refrigerator is available for snacks that need refrigeration. Children who must bring their own snacks due to allergies, medical conditions, etc. must still follow CACFP guidelines.

In regards to children's safety, preschool is discouraging grapes and carrots to prevent choking incidents, and any kind of nuts or peanut butter to prevent allergy issues. Please note All Saints Preschool follows a "**NUT FREE ZONE**" policy. This policy is to help children who are allergic to **nuts and nut products**, such as peanut butter. Avoidance to these food products is the key to preventing an allergic reaction. Please

help us do our best to ensure a safe “**NUT FREE ZONE**” environment to prevent any accidental contact or ingestion of nuts or peanut butter. **Due to the fact that allergic reactions to nuts can become severe and even life threatening, we are requesting that NO food/ snacks/ treats be allowed with any kind of nuts (i.e. peanuts, almonds, pecans, etc.) OR peanut butter.**

Staff will monitor snacks in accordance with snack guidelines and supplement if necessary. In the event that snack does not meet nutritional requirements, Preschool will supply back-up snack to supplement, and ask that you replace our back-up snack. The drink provided is also included in this policy. Milk is acceptable, as well as 100% **CLEAR** juices. Please be careful when selecting clear juices so that the label reads 100% juice. Hi-C drink is an example of an unacceptable drink because it only contains 10% real juice. Because spills do occur, please choose **CLEAR** juices so that we can prevent staining of children’s clothing as well as the carpeting.

We appreciate your assistance in helping make snack time a delicious and safe learning experience!

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

A child’s birthday is one of the most important events of his/her year. Therefore, we would like you to provide snack on their birthday celebration day. The Preschool monthly snack calendar will indicate your child’s birthday celebration day and the number of snacks required to feed their class. Along with an approved **nutritional snack**, simple treats such as a cookie, bars, etc. are acceptable for birthday celebrations. Cupcakes and cake is discouraged due to the their nutritional value, as well as for cleanliness.

FIELD TRIPS

The Center feels that children learn by experiencing the world around them, therefore field trips are taken throughout the year. Field trips include but are not limited to: grocery store, public library, pumpkin farm, apple orchard, Nature Center, etc. Field trip permission forms will be sent in advance for each field trip. Children will be transported by school bus. If a parent does not want their child to participate in a field trip or does not want their child to be transported by bus, an agreement will be made between the director and parent on an individual basis.

NON-CENTER ACTIVITIES

Any child leaving Preschool during Preschool hours with anyone other than Center staff will be required to have a non-center activity form signed by the parent/guardian. Non-center activities may include Speech, Occupational Therapy, etc. Parents/authorized designees are responsible for transportation if necessary. These forms are available upon request.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Children enrolled in Preschool have access to a variety of support services should the need arise. These services include the All Saints school staff, and the Grant Wood Area Education Agency Early Access team for services including speech-language

pathologist, audiologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, psychologist, social worker, and others. Teachers and families may use input on an informal basis or request formal assistance identifying strategies to address a concern.

HEALTH POLICY

Parents should keep their child at home at any sign of illness for the child's own welfare as well as for the protection of the other children.

A child who arrives at Preschool noticeably ill will not be admitted for that day. This decision is under the discretion of the teacher or director. If a child becomes ill while at the program, parents will be notified immediately to pick up their child. The child will remain under adult supervision in a quiet area until the parents or authorized designee arrives.

Your child must stay home if he/she:

1. is vomiting, or has vomited within the last 24 hours
2. appears listless
3. has diarrhea, or has had diarrhea within the last 24 hours
4. has a temperature of 100 or above within the last 24 hours
5. has any contagious disease
6. is under a doctor's care which requires a doctor's approval to return to the Center

Parents must notify Preschool if your child will be absent due to illness. The child may return to Preschool once he/she fully recovers. The child should be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medication. Upon return, parents must inform Preschool if the child needs any special care and reasonable accommodations will be arranged if possible.

Parents must notify Preschool if your child contracts a communicable disease. This information will be posted for other parent's awareness. The ill child **will not** be allowed to return to Preschool until the period of contagion has passed.

The Preschool staff **does not** routinely dispense medication (prescription or non-prescription) since school is in session only a few hours.

In the event that a child is injured during an incident /accident, parents will be contacted if needed and an accident/incident report will be completed for parent/guardian information. Parent/guardian will be asked to sign the incident/accident report and return a copy to Preschool.

In case of a medical emergency, the staff may administer first aid. The staff members are certified in infant/child/adult First Aid and CPR. The parent/guardian will be notified.

Parents must notify Preschool when there are changes in emergency or medical information so we can keep files current.

SAFETY POLICY

No access is allowed in the Preschool or Child Care areas without supervised approval. All visitors must check in the School or Child Care office for approved access.

Parents are required to complete a Parental Emergency Medical Consent form to provide names, relationships, and phone numbers of people authorized to pick up a child from the Center. Children will be allowed to leave only with the persons designated in

writing by their parents. A “Pick-Up” Authorization form must be completed by the parent/guardian to authorize anyone other than those listed on the consent form, to pick up a child from the Center. This consent form provides medical or dental personnel the authority to treat children in an emergency situation. All Saints will notify parents/guardians in the event of any kind of emergency involving their child as soon as possible after emergency personnel are notified. If we are unable to reach a parent/guardian, we will try to notify the emergency contacts provided on the form. Parental Emergency Medical Consent forms are to be kept current and updated annually.

MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

All employees of All Saints School are mandatory reporters of child abuse. If any staff member suspects that a child is being physically, sexually, or emotionally abused the Director will be informed. The Director and staff are then mandated to report any allegations of abuse to the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Sections 232.69 of the Iowa Code requires that “every employee of a licensed child care or preschool facility who, in the course of employment, reasonably believes a child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, mental injury, child prostitution, denial of critical care, bestiality in the presence of a child, the presence of illegal drugs in the child or the person responsible for the care of a child and in the presence of the child, manufactures a dangerous substance or is in possession of a dangerous substance shall immediately report the suspected abuse directly to the Department of Human Services.”

Staff must report both orally and in writing their suspicion of potential child abuse. Any mandatory reporter who, in good faith, makes a report of child abuse or participates in the investigation of child abuse has immunity from any liability (civil and criminal). Records and/or information pertaining to the abuse may be released to the child abuse investigator without release authorization required in other situations. Trained investigators decide whether abuse actually took place. All children get bumps, bruises, and scrapes as part of growing up. It is important, however, that you tell your child’s teacher about any unusual injuries or conditions.

EMERGENCY PLANS

1. Fire drills are practiced and recorded monthly.
2. Tornado drills are practiced and recorded monthly. In the event of an actual tornado warning, please do not call Preschool regarding the safety of your child. We will contact you if the need arises.
3. In the event of an accident at the Duane Arnold Energy Center, Civil Defense regulations may require an evacuation of Cedar Rapids. Parents will be notified via the Emergency Alert System and should pick up their child from the Center as soon as possible. If parents are unable to pick up their child before a city evacuation is required, the staff will accompany the children to the temporary relocation site at City High School, Iowa City, Iowa. Linn County will provide transportation. Children will be cared for until parents or authorized designees are able to pick up the child. If no one is able to pick up the child from the temporary location site, the child will be taken to a permanent relocation site. Notification of the site will be made over the Emergency Alert System (WMT AM or FM).

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION/VISITATION

The All Saints Preschool Program is a collaborative effort of home, school, and community. Parents are always welcome to visit. If parental contact is prohibited, a copy of the court order must be on file at Preschool. Children are learning how to deal with separation from parents, therefore we ask you to refrain from long visits especially the first month. As your child becomes more familiar with his/her new friends and teachers, it will be easier for him/her to participate in the classroom activities. Children delight in sharing their Preschool day. Parent Helper Sign-Up sheets are available in the hallway Preschool Information Center. We also welcome the sharing of any special talents or interests you may have. For the protection of the children, as well as the Center's liability, **ALL** Preschool volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Statement. All volunteers will be under staff supervision at **ALL** times.

UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS POLICY

The Center is responsible for ensuring that children are not exposed to people who may pose a risk of harm to them. Only persons who are subject to a record check and who have been cleared for involvement with child care or preschool may be directly responsible for the care of children or have access to a child when a child is alone. The All Saints Preschool and Child Care Center restricts access to the Preschool and Child Care areas during normal business hours unless there has been pre-authorization clearance through All Saints Parish. All visitors must check in and out of the main school office or Child Care office for approval to be on the premises.

All visitors, parents, volunteers, etc. permitted on parish property when children are present, who have not been cleared for involvement in the children's care through the formal record check process, will be monitored and supervised at all times by the center staff. At no time will a child be left alone in the care of someone other than center staff. An exception to this includes parents/guardians in relation to their own children. Children will remain in staff supervised designated areas within the center away from any permissible groups. Staff will provide supervision by consistent involvement and management of the children and their activities within the center's designated areas. Staff will monitor the center by checking and watching all areas and activities to maintain safety and restrictive access of children.

Center staff will be assigned to specific groups and/or classes of children and provide direct responsibility for supervision and monitoring of the children, activities, and environment. Exemptions to access include the release of children to professionals who are licensed by the Educational Examiners Board and deliver professional services within the center consistent with law and rules governing their license. i.e. Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist. If a conflict of interest arises concerning access, center staff will contact Directors and/or Administration for immediate assistance.

COMMUNICATION

It is important to establish a line of communication between the Preschool staff and parents. Our monthly newsletter and calendar, the "All Saints Pre-Scoop," will be sent home with your child via their school bag. Please read this carefully as it will contain announcements about upcoming classroom events, field trips, snack days,

themes, and other important information. You will also receive a monthly Parish School Newsletter containing information in regards to All Saints School.

Parents are encouraged to check the Preschool Information Center where we will post and announce current and upcoming events.

Teachers will make very effort to communicate with parents in several ways: at school, through telephone conversations, written notes, and e-mails. Please feel free to contact your child's teachers before or after preschool hours.

Formal conferences will be held in the Fall and Spring for our 4 year old and Enrichment classes. A written Social Progress Report will be sent home in the Spring for children in our 3 year old classes.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline has the two-fold purpose of providing for the common good and the individual good. Discipline helps every child as it contributes to a climate conducive to learning and living. It helps each child as it provides an environment where he/she learns to be self-controlled. Every effort will be made to use positive guidance, redirection, and conflict resolution, however, when a situation arises that calls for a child to be reprimanded, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The first time a child needs to be disciplined, the child will receive a VERBAL WARNING from the teacher who is charge of that child/group.
2. A second reprimand for the same incident will warrant a TIME OUT by the teacher in charge. The child will sit in time out away from the other children for a total of one minute for each year of age. The teacher will speak with the child about the problem, make sure the child understands why they are in time out, and why that behavior is unacceptable, as well as discuss what they should do next time.
3. If the teacher should have to discipline a third time for a recurring incident, the child will be taken to the director, who will either speak to the child's parent(s) at dismissal time or notify parent(s) by phone. The director, parent(s), and child's teacher will decide together how to handle the problem. In extreme cases, the director has the discretion to call the parent(s) to come and pick up the child from the Center if the child is not able to control their behavior.
4. For major or recurring discipline problems, a child may be dismissed from the Child Care and Preschool Center for a period of time. This will be handled between the parent(s), child, director, teacher, school principal, and anyone else involved.

BITING POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Even in the best preschool and child care programs, periodic outbreaks of biting occur among infants, and toddlers, and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is important to think positively of children who bite. Biting is a form of communication, as biting is almost always a response to the child's needs not being met or coping with a challenge or stressor. The five broad causes of biting behavior are: (1) the developmental stage of the child, (2) individual differences, (3) the environment, (4) the child does not know something yet, and (5) unmet emotional needs.

Proactively understanding the developmental stages of the children in the program, and their individual needs, can prevent biting behaviors. Supportive, nurturing and responsive relationships between caregivers and children in the program are critical.

Developmentally appropriate environments including schedules, activities, group size, routines, and transitions are essential elements in preventing biting behavior.

The Center's response to biting is to address the underlying causes of biting incidents to meet the child's ongoing needs. A responsive caregiver can begin to anticipate when a bite might occur. Observing and recording behavior is an important tool to assessing the triggers that lead to biting. When observing signs that a child might be on the verge of biting, caregivers may be able to act immediately to prevent the biting behavior. If a biting incident does occur, appropriate caregiver responses will include:

- Remaining calm by not expressing frustration or anger towards the child
- Ensure the safety of all children
- First –aid
- Accident/Incident Documentation
- Firmly and calmly address the child that bit in a simple and clear manner
- Shift the attention to the child who was bitten and show concern and support for that child
- Talk with the child who bit and discuss different strategies to use instead of biting
- Help the children move on
- Assess the environment, activities, group of children, situation

When a biting incident occurs, rather than focusing on the child as needing discipline, it is the Center's responsibility to observe the child and determine the child's needs that are not being met. Observation and assessment are necessary to identify the potential external causes triggering the biting behavior, so that further incidents can be prevented. Parental permission for observation will be on file at the Center. Caregivers will observe and document the behaviors and context both before and after biting occurs to identify functions of the behavior. This data will be used to find patterns and potential solutions. Caregivers will work with the child's family to share information and address the child's needs. The Center will maintain an emphasis on proactive purposeful planning of environments and opportunities to develop healthy relationships within the Center's environment through director support, staff teamwork, and professional development including training and consultation.

When a biting incident occurs, the child who was bitten should be immediately cared for and shown concern and support. First Aid must be administered immediately. An Accident/Incident Report must be completed and parents/guardians must be notified for both the child that was bitten, and the child doing the biting. The child with the challenging behavior should be taught in a caring and firm way that biting is not acceptable, and there are alternate ways to express their needs and desires. The Center will examine the needs of the child; assess the environment and routines to prevent future incidents. The staff and family will work together to proactively approach the biting behavior. In the case of repeated biting incidents, the Center will seek consultants and other resources to support the child. Biting is treated very seriously on a case-by-case basis. Dismissal from the Center is needed only in rare extreme situations.

The Center will provide a confidential Accident/Incident report to parents/guardians of involved children. In addition to notification of incidents, information about biting will be included.

All biting incidents will be documented to assist the staff with identifying patterns and preventing future incidents through changing the environment, and intentional teaching strategies. A confidential copy of the Accident/Incident report will be maintained in the child's file, and a confidential behavior chart may be useful if the biting is not an isolated incident.

When informing parents/guardians, all staff and those involved with a biting incident will maintain confidentiality in using the names of the child bitten, and the child that bit.

First Aid procedures for injuries from human bites include:

- Thoroughly wash the bite area with soap and water
- Apply band aid if needed
- Apply ice pack to area for pain relief
- If the wound is deep or there is unusual concern, consult medical treatment

DISCHARGE POLICY

In accordance with the Department of Human Services, if it should be determined by the teacher/director and members of the Parish Board of Education, that your child's behavior is disruptive to the extent of being harmful to other children enrolled, or self, All Saints Child Care and Preschool reserves the right to discharge your child from the Center. If fees are not paid or kept current, All Saints Child Care and Preschool reserves the right to discharge your child from the Center. A parent wishing to appeal the decision may speak to the Parish Board of Education at their next regularly scheduled meeting.