



# 2017-2018

# Family Handbook

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# Welcome

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool. I know the 2017-2018 school year will be amazing, full of many blessed memories.

The main purpose of our preschool program is to give your child a positive learning experience. We believe that a child thrives and grows in all aspects when they are in a faith filled, loving, nurturing environment. We feel that we can best support a child's developing self-confidence by positive reinforcement and actions. In order to develop each child at their appropriate age level, Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Church Preschool Program integrates five specific areas:

Spiritual      Emotional      Cognitive      Physical      Social

The entire staff of our Preschool sincerely cares about your child. We are committed to seeing that each child meets with success and enjoys learning. We are dedicated to providing a safe and Christian atmosphere where love and acceptance are demonstrated by our words and actions.

We encourage and invite parental involvement in all activities here at Saint Mary Magdalene. Your participation with your children will greatly enhance their preschool experience.

Our program curriculum, staff and procedures are monitored twice a year by the Archdiocese of Atlanta's Director of Parish Preschool Programs.

This handbook is your guide to the policies and procedures of our preschool. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions, concerns or comments.

We are looking forward to a great year together!

God Bless,

Gina DeGennaro  
Director

## Core Values

We value a safe, secure and God-centered environment.

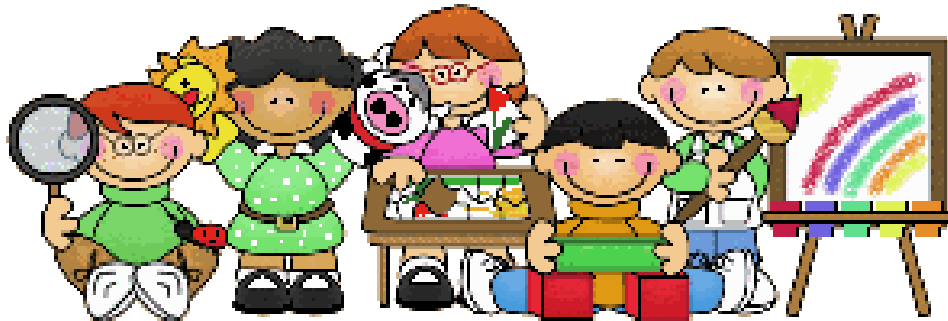
We value respect for others.

We value personal responsibility.

We value creativity and improvement.

We value honesty and integrity in all we do.

We value life-long learning.





## Children Need

Appreciation, for all they bring into our lives.  
Balance, somewhere between too little and too much.  
Commitment, it's the little things we do each day that matter.  
Dreams, to touch the future.  
Empathy, remember what it was like to be a child.  
Family and Friends, everyone needs someone to love.  
Guidance, actions speak louder than words.  
Healthy Habits, to nurture body, mind and spirit.  
Inspiration, to explore beauty, wonder and mystery.  
Joy, sprinkle laughter and happiness daily.  
Kindness, to learn to care for others as they are cared for.  
Limits, set boundaries and consequences together.  
Mentors, to give wings to their aspirations.  
Nature, to delight in rainbow butterflies and shooting stars.  
Opportunities, to discover what truly makes their heart sing.  
Play, the "work" of childhood.  
Quiet Time, to recharge their batteries.  
Responsibilities, to build self-esteem and self-confidence.  
Security, feeling safe is essential for growth.  
Traditions, keep the family tree alive & sprout new branches.  
Unconditional Love, for who they are, not for what they do.  
Values, live yours and encourage them to find theirs.  
Words of Encouragement, You can do it, I believe in you.  
Xoxoxo's, hug and kiss them each and every day.  
You, your presence more than your presents.  
Zzzzzzz's, a good night's sleep.



## **Mission Statement**

Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool will provide children an opportunity to develop spiritually, emotionally, physically, socially, and cognitively in a trusting and warm environment. We believe in providing opportunities for children to develop a love of learning, to respect others, and to be Christ-like. In the true spirit of our Catholic faith, children here will bloom and grow through the example of Jesus Christ.

## **Philosophy**

We believe that children are unique and develop in their own time and pace. That through the guidance of our teachers, children will learn about respecting others and themselves, sharing, listening, and embracing God's love. Our goal is to create strong relationships among the children, their families, and the church community.



# Overall Objectives

**SPIRITUALLY:** To help your child....

- grow in the knowledge and love of Jesus
- develop happy, wholesome feelings towards his/her church
- become familiar with related Bible stories

**SOCIALLY:** To help your child....

- grow in his/her ability to work and play with others
- respect the personal and property rights of others
- become more friendly, likable, thoughtful and helpful
- develop an attitude of kindness, cooperation and courtesy

**PHYSICALLY:** To help your child....

- establish desirable health and safety habits
- strengthen and coordinate his/her body through large and small muscle activities

**COGNITIVELY:** To help your child....

- progress at his/her own rate
- develop independent thinking, problem solving, following directions and carrying out planned procedures to the best of his/her ability

**EMOTIONALLY:** To help your child....

- gradually mature and properly express emotional responses
- face and overcome emotional problems
- develop a positive self-image

Here at St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool we are building a readiness foundation for your child in the areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, music, movement and art which is presented appropriately according to your child's age. Monthly thematic units will be used to teach and reinforce all skills and meet our objectives.





# **Curriculum Overview**

## **SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES**

2 year-olds: Children will learn common Christian prayers and songs in accordance with the Catholic faith. They will also learn manners under our Manner of the Month program.

3-4 year-olds: Children will learn to recite grace before meals, attend religious study in the Church and begin to learn the Sign of the Cross, the Hail Mary, and the Lord's Prayer. Monthly religious themes include: the Saints, the Ten Commandments, Bible stories from the Old and New Testament and individual Bible verses, *Seeds Gospel Weeklies*, Acts of Mercy, and a monthly Virtue.

## **PHYSICAL OBJECTIVES**

2 year-olds: Children will enhance their gross motor skills through a movement class, daily playground activities and classroom games. They will also enhance their fine motor skills by using manipulatives such as beads, puzzles, blocks, play dough and writing materials.

3-4 year-olds: Children will further develop their gross motor skills in their music and movement class times, playground activities, and classroom games. They will also further develop fine motor skills in their structured, center-based classroom environment and small group instruction.

## **EMOTIONAL / SOCIAL OBJECTIVES**

2 year-olds: Children will start to gain a sense of security and independence through our nurturing emotional growth outside the home environment.

3-4 year-olds: Children will further their emotional and social development through interactive group activities designed to build their independence, confidence, and interpersonal skills.

## **COGNITIVE OBJECTIVES**

2 year-olds: Children will learn through a variety of experiences that will stimulate cognitive development through sorting shapes and colors, make-believe play, understanding the relationship to objects, and language activities through rhyming and songs.

3-4 year-olds: Children will learn through centers that encompass individual modes of learning, such as verbal, logical, scientific, and artistic. They will gain logical and critical thinking skills through music, art, and science, as well as established programs in math, phonemic awareness, language arts, and social studies.

# **Child Abuse Prevention**

Child abuse is a painful reality in our society today. Nationally, over 3 million reports of child abuse and neglect are made each year. Statistics indicate that before age 18, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 5 boys will experience some form of sexual abuse, not counting other forms of abuse. Child abuse occurs in every economic, racial, ethnic, religious, or other demographic group. No community is immune from this problem, it can happen anywhere. Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Parish/Preschool is a community of faith that can offer a safe haven and sanctuary where children and youth can seek help and be nurtured.

Safety and protection of our children is of paramount concern to the staff of Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool. Our staff follows mandatory state reporting guidelines (Georgia State Code 19-7-5) in suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.

As a Christian community of faith and a Catholic preschool program, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth as well as all workers with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the hiring and training of workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; and we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of Georgia State Law and the policies of the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool will not tolerate any form of child abuse on the premises; we will take appropriate actions to report suspected abuse and all necessary steps to remove offenders.

# Positive Guidance and Discipline Overview

In order to guarantee your child, and all children at Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool, the excellent learning climate they deserve, we follow this general Discipline Plan. Each teacher may have a modified version of this plan in her classroom and will review this with you during Parent Orientation night.

## General Classroom Rules:

1. We use "I care" language.
2. Hands are for helping, not hurting.
3. We care about each other's feelings.
4. We are responsible for what we say and do.
5. We listen to each other.

## IF A CHILD CHOOSES TO BREAK A RULE:

First Time: The child will receive a reminder of what is expected.

Second Time: The child will be given a second reminder.

Third Time: The child will be put in the "Thinking Chair" for a minute for each year of their age. For example, a 2 year-old child would be in the "Thinking Chair" for 2 minutes. After "Thinking" if the behavior continues, the child will be sent to the preschool office.

## EXCEPTIONS:

- Any child who bites will immediately be taken to the preschool office and his/her parent will be notified either by phone or incident report or both. If three biting incidents occur, the child will be asked to leave the school.
- Any child who becomes excessively disruptive verbally and/or physically in the classroom or is being harmful to themselves or their fellow students will be removed from the classroom immediately and taken to the preschool director's office. A written note will be sent to his/her parents outlining the event. If a child has three occurrences of this nature, they will be asked to leave the school.

If at any time you would like to discuss behavior concerns with your child's preschool teacher, please contact the Director to set up a conference time. When the preschool teacher and the parents work together, positive results are achieved. Please help your child to learn appropriate school behavior by supporting our attempts to instill positive behavior in your child.

# **Preschool Hours**

**9:00 am – 12:30 pm**

PLEASE NOTE: The children are not allowed to be in the classroom before 8:45 am. The time prior to this is preparation time for the preschool teachers. They will not be available to supervise your child. Please be sure your child has finished their breakfast and had a chance to go to the bathroom just before coming to school. They cannot enter their classroom while finishing up their breakfast.

## **Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures**

At 8:45 am, please walk your child into his/her classroom. There will be a log sheet for both drop-off and pick-up that you must be complete and initial with the time your child arrived and the time they are picked up. This will be located in the preschool hall near the wall of communication folders.

Dismissal is promptly at 12:30 pm. Doors will be open at 12:25 pm for your convenience in getting your children packed up and ready to go timely. At dismissal, please sign your child out with the time they leave. Please be sure to use safety awareness in the parking lot. Drive slowly and carefully and refrain from texting at any time in your car or in the parking lot.

We are sure you want your child to receive the best possible school experience. In order for this to happen, each student needs to attend school regularly and to be on time each day. When he/she misses a day or arrives late, many exciting activities are missed.

If a child shows any signs of illness, please keep him/her at home. If the absence is planned in advance, please send a note ahead of time. It is not necessary to call the preschool on the day he/she is out. We do request that you call the preschool if the absence is due to a communicable disease so we can notify the other parents.

**It is our policy that our teachers are not to participate in watching students outside of business hours. This is a conflict of interest and may be reason for termination.**

**TARDINESS**

Please be prompt when picking up your child. Any child who is not picked up by 12:35 pm will be taken to the Preschool Director’s Office. There will be a charge of \$1.00 per minute late beginning at 12:35 pm. This fee is due upon arrival the next day that your child attends preschool. If tardiness becomes habitual, then your child will become at risk for permanent dismissal.

Warning #1 –Verbal

Warning #2- Written

Warning #3-Written with Late Fee amount indicated

**Pick up Tardy Citation Form....Sample**

To the parents of: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

As stated in our drop off and pick up procedures part of the Family Handbook- In the event that you are again late for pick-up you will be charged \$1.00 per minute beginning at 12:35pm.

**Warning notice**

You picked up \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ at the time of \_\_\_\_\_ and were \_\_\_\_\_ minutes late.

**Late Fee Notice**

You will be charged a fee of \_\_\_\_\_ that is due upon arrival the next school day your child is present. If policy and procedures aren’t respected and followed, the director may determine the child be dismissed from Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Gina DeGennaro  
Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool

# **Child Released to an Alternate Adult**

## **WE MUST HAVE WRITTEN PERMISSION TO SEND YOUR CHILD HOME WITH SOMEONE OTHER THAN YOU**

Please send a note with your child stating who will pick your child up. Please note that anyone picking up your child may be asked for a photo ID at the time of pickup. If an emergency arises and you need someone else to pick up your child, please call the Preschool Director and she will arrange dismissal for your child. This procedure is for your child's protection. If you will be carpooling with another student on a regular basis, one note at the beginning of the year will be fine from each parent, and it will be placed in your permanent file.

If there is anyone that you **do not** want your child released to, please make a special notation to the Director. Any changes due to a special circumstance should be done in writing and only by phone in case of an emergency.

See section **Family and Custodial Situations** for additional limitations of who can pick a child up.

Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool is exempt from licensing under *Bright from the Start Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning*. Therefore, we cannot legally operate more than four hours per day. Your understanding and cooperation in this area is needed and fully expected.

**PLEASE REMEMBER: Photo ID** must be presented by the person picking up your child or your child will not be released.

# **Snack and Meal Times**

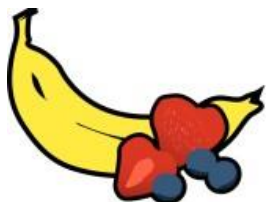
## **TWO AND THREE YEAR-OLDS**

We ask parents to provide daily a healthy morning and afternoon snack that require no refrigeration. The snack should be one item each (e.g. animal crackers and fruit sections, or cheese cubes and cut fruit, etc.) that requires no refrigeration. Please do not send dessert-like or sugary foods. The items should be familiar to the child to avoid first-time allergic reactions that may occur with new foods. We will provide the children with cool water to drink throughout the day, so please provide a clean sippy cup each day your child is here. You may choose to send a juice box or pouch with your child; however, please do not send milk products. Please also note that we do not have the facility to sterilize drinking cups or utensils. All foods should be ready to serve.

## **FOUR YEAR-OLDS**

We ask parents to provide daily a healthy morning snack and afternoon lunch that require no refrigeration. The morning snack should be one item only. Lunch should include a main item and side. By this age, your child is ready to begin learning to sit for a longer period and eat with his/her peers. This will prepare them well for Kindergarten. Please do not send dessert-like or sugary foods. The items should be familiar to the child to avoid first-time allergic reactions that may occur with new foods. We will provide the children with cool water to drink throughout the day, so please provide a clean sippy cup each day your child is here. You may choose to send a juice box or pouch with your child; however, please do not send milk products. Please also note that we do not have the facility to sterilize drinking cups or utensils. All foods should be ready to serve. PK-4 children should be able to open and eat their lunch items independently.

## Nutritious Snack Ideas



### 2 Year-Olds

Animal crackers  
Goldfish crackers  
Graham crackers (plain or cinnamon)  
Vanilla wafers  
Cheese Crackers  
Pretzels (small twists, not sticks)  
Dry cereal (low sugar)  
Bread Sticks  
Cheese (slices or cubes)



### 3 Year-Olds

Above list plus:  
Raw fruit (cut in fourths)  
Vegetables (cut in sticks, slices)  
Dips for fruit and vegetables (yogurt)  
Ham and turkey cubes  
Bagels (spread with cream cheese, peanut butter and cut into fourths)  
Small muffins  
Finger gelatin (Jell-O Jigglers)  
Saltine crackers (spread with peanut butter, margarine, or cheese spread)

### 4 and Early 5 Year-Olds

Above two lists plus:  
Celery (spread with cream cheese, peanut butter, raisins,  
chocolate chips, shredded carrot)  
Fruit Kabobs (fruit and cheese cubes strung on a toothpick)

We've taken into consideration such things as safety for the children (nothing that would pose a choking hazard), ease of clean up for the preschool teachers, and popular snacks. Please remember that anything you send should be ready to serve.

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND POPCORN, WHOLE GRAPES (THEY MAY BE CUT IN HALF), OR NUTS. THESE ARE THE FOODS CHILDREN MOST OFTEN CHOKE ON.**



## **Birthdays and Holiday Parties**

You are welcome to provide a special snack on or near your child's birthday. If you are choosing to celebrate with cake, we suggest that you send in mini cupcakes. Our students are still learning how to handle cupcake wrappers and minis are the best for success. If you choose to go healthy, some ideas are located on the snack page. If you are unsure, please see the director for additional assistance. Juice or drink boxes may also be sent in for this occasion. You are welcome to come and share this experience with your child after lunch time.

Invitations for parties at home will only be distributed to the entire class. If you wish to invite an individual child, please do so on your own.

We will have many special parties during the year: Munchkin Masquerade (Halloween), Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and End of Year. Parents are encouraged to volunteer to help with at least one holiday party during the year. You may sign up to help at Parents Orientation Night. Some suggested simple party ideas for parents are: a simple craft, a holiday related story, a game, or an organized pot luck. Some parties will be students only and some will include parents and families. Please understand that our students' enjoyment and success at the party are most important to us and that not all children do well with overstimulation.

The teachers and director will schedule all parties and communicate the details to you in our weekly newsletters.

Please notify the preschool teacher in writing if your child is allergic to any foods or juices. We ask the parents of the child with the allergy to provide a back-up supply of "safe snacks" to be kept on hand. Allergies will be posted in a discreet area of the room.



## Health

We ask your cooperation in keeping your child at home whenever he/she is ill. We will contact you if your child becomes ill while at school. Health conditions that may represent a contagious disease are:

- Fever within the last 24 hours without medication
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours without medication
- Rash of unknown origin
- Cold symptoms: bad running nose, frequent cough, green mucus, etc.
- Red, watery eyes

Any child exhibiting the above symptoms should not be with other children until the symptoms are not present for 24 hours after the last use of medication.

**WE WILL GIVE NO MEDICATION/VITAMINS AT SCHOOL** it is best that a child who needs medication or a daily vitamin receive this before school. If they need to have this during school hours, we ask that you keep them at home.

We will not apply anything topical to your child without a prior written or verbal parental consent. This includes but not limited to diaper rash ointment, insect repellent, sun screen, lip balm, Neosporin, bee sting ointment, etc.

We will go outside each day if the weather is above 32 degrees and is not considered severe. If your child is not well enough to go outside on the playground each day, he/she is probably not well enough to come to school. Please do not ask the teacher to allow your child to remain inside during this time. We are not fully staffed for children to be separated from their class during outside play.

As of August 1, 2000, it is required that each child attending school must have the health form #3231 in their school file. Please contact your pediatrician about obtaining this form for your child's school file immediately. All forms must be current in your child's school file before your child may begin school.

Any child that requires an EpiPen or other medical device to be secured in the preschool office must have a *Food Allergy Action Plan* form completed by their physician on file with the preschool. This form is available through your preschool teacher or the preschool director's office.

It is mandatory that all children have the CHICKEN POX VACCINE in order to begin school.

Your child's *Food Allergy Action Plan* and Immunization Forms (#3231) must be kept up-to-date and on file in the preschool office. If your child has an allergy of any kind, please provide written information explaining what offends him/her and what his/her reactions are. We will try to keep him/her as comfortable as possible.

If your child has a minor accident at school, the staff will administer first aid and you will receive an *Incident/Accident Report*. If your child becomes ill at school, he or she will be taken to the preschool office and a parent or guardian will be called. A report will be sent home explaining the events of your child's illness. If medical attention is required, the staff will call the local ambulance service, which will transport the child to the local hospital. Every effort will be made to contact the child's own physician. You will be notified as quickly as possible.

## **Emergency Numbers**

When you are not at home during school hours, it is very important that we are able to reach a person of your choice should your child need extra attention. You will receive information in your packet regarding this to fill out.

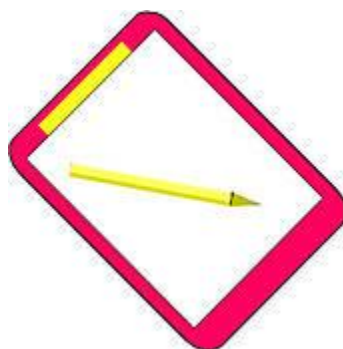
It is very important to keep updated emergency numbers on file at the preschool. Please notify your child's preschool teacher or the preschool office of any changes.

## **School Bags**

It is important that your child bring his/her bag every day. Please make sure they are labeled on the inside with the child's name and teacher.

## **Toys**

Please DO NOT allow your child to bring toys, stuffed animals, etc. to school except on days designated for "show and share" by your child's preschool teacher. No toy guns, swords or weapon-like toys are permitted. You child is permitted to bring books to share with the class at any time. Please be sure and put your child's name on any books or toys.



## **Visitors**

Visitors are always welcome at our school; however, adult visitors must have received Virtus training first. This complies with Archdiocesan policy to maintain a safe environment for the students. If you have not participated in this training program and you wish to visit the classroom, the Director can help you sign up for the training. If visiting between the hours of 8:30 am and 12:30 pm please come to the Director's office, Room 105 (or 106?), to sign in and verify your training information. Advanced notification for visiting is preferred. If you do not have the proper credentials in order to be on the premises, your request may be denied. Please be sensitive to the teachers' need to devote their time and attention to the students while you are visiting.

# Clothing & Potty Training Procedures

We recommend that children wear play clothes that are practical, comfortable, washable, and easy for the child to put on and take off. (Example: overalls and rompers that have a lot of buttons and snaps do not give the children a feeling of success and accomplishment when attempting to use the bathroom by themselves.) Any piece of clothing that your child might take off at school (sweaters, coats, hats, gloves, raincoats, etc.) should be clearly marked with your child's name.

**ALL CHILDREN** will need a complete change of clothes, including socks, left at the school. Please keep clothing seasonal and labeled.

**FOR ALL 2 YEAR-OLD STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT POTTY TRAINED:** Please send in diapers and or pull-ups along with wipes either daily or weekly. We do not provide them for your child. We do not allow plastic undergarments or training pants at school due to safety and procedures.

**3 Year-Olds:** They need to be potty trained (able to know when they have to go and are successful at using the potty). They need to be mostly independent in the bathroom (i.e., undressing and dressing, wiping, and hand-washing). If they have repeated accidents, the parent will be notified to come to the school and change them. If they continue to be unsuccessful using the potty, then the Director will determine if the child will need to be dismissed.

**4 Year-Olds:** They need to be potty trained (able to know when they have to go and are successful at using the potty). They need to be completely independent in the bathroom (i.e., undressing and dressing, wiping, and hand-washing). If they are unsuccessful at using the potty and are having continual accidents, then the Director will determine if the child will need to be dismissed.

## Severe Weather

In case of severe weather, Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool will follow the Coweta County Schools schedule. Please listen to your local radio and TV stations for this information. We do not make up any days that are lost due to weather. If there is a delay, we will close for the entire day.

## **Parent Conferences**

Please feel free to leave a message at the preschool office for your child's preschool teacher anytime a question may arise. You may schedule a meeting with the preschool teacher or Director, but please do not show up unannounced. This takes the preschool teacher away from the other students in the class and is not fair to you or to the children if her attention is diverted.

There will be two Parent/Teacher Conferences scheduled, one in the Fall and one in the Spring for all grade levels. Your child's teacher will notify you through the class newsletter and a schedule to sign your name on will be located outside of the students' classroom closer to date.

If there is a problem at school that needs immediate attention, the Director will call you at home to discuss the concern and you may need to set up a conference with the teacher.

# Tuition

Your child is enrolled for the entire school year of August through May. We do not refund or credit any absences. All tuition payments are received in our gold tuition envelopes and are processed through the Parish Administration Office. The gold tuition envelopes will be distributed via your student's Communication Folder two weeks prior to its due date. Nine equal payments are due on the first of each month starting in September; after the 10<sup>th</sup>, it will be considered late which will result in a late fee of \$10. If you wish to set up a bill pay account through your bank, please notify the business manager, Diane Jones, in the administrative office. If you wish to pay your tuition in full, we offer a 5% savings discount if paid in full by August 16, 2017. If there are multiple siblings, the 2<sup>nd</sup> sibling will receive a 3% discount.

## Tuition Rates

### Preschool Tuition Scale

	2 year-olds	3 year-olds	4 year-olds
2 days/week	\$145	xxx	xxx
3 days/week	\$160	xxx	xxx
4 days/week	xxx	\$175	\$175
5 days/week	xxx	\$190	\$190

### Preschool Tuition Breakdown

	Yearly	Monthly	Multi child per Month/3% disc	Pay in full 5% disc
2 days/week	\$1,305	\$145	\$140	\$1,240
3 days/week	\$1,440	\$160	\$155	\$1,368
4 days/week	\$1,575	\$175	\$170	\$1,495
5 days/week	\$1,710	\$190	\$185	\$1,625

### Registration Fee = one month's tuition

Due at time of Registration (non-refundable);  
payment in full guarantees the child's place in class.

### **LATE ENTRANTS TO PROGRAM**

A new student who enters the program after the start date is required to provide a registration form with registration payment along with a non-refundable first month of tuition.

# **Registration**

A registration fee is due at the time of registration, even after classes have started, and is **non-refundable** at any time. This fee holds the child's place in a class and helps purchase supplies.

Students already enrolled and their siblings will be allowed to register for the following school year first; then, Saint Mary Magdalene Parishioners; then, the general public will be able to register for the remaining positions. Enrollment is limited to ensure a low student to teacher ratio and provide the best program possible for each child.

Once classes are full, names will be added to a waiting list. Should space become available at any time during the year, parents will be contacted in order.

Each child must be the age of the class on or before September 1 to be admitted to the class. E.g., he/she must be 3 by Sept. 1 to be in the 3 year-old class. No exceptions will be made.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The preschool welcomes all children and does not discriminate based on physical, mental, emotional, religious, or racial differences. However, our facilities, equipment, staff training and ratio numbers limit our ability to meet the needs of some children who may apply. Therefore, admittance and continuance in our program will be considered and reviewed on an individual basis by the Director and/or the Pastor.

In accordance with Church policy, Catholic preschools shall not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or natural origin. In addition, the Internal Revenue Service requires a tax-exempt, private school to be non-discriminatory in its enrollment policies.



## Areas of Communication

Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool has many forms of communicating with our parents. Listed below are explanations of the areas we utilize:

1. **Newsletters** – Mrs. Tami’s 3 year-old class and Mrs. Amy’s 4 year-old class will be sending home newsletters about the things your child is learning about. They will feature STREAM activities and monthly themes.

2. **Communication Folder Station**— Stationary Pocket Folder located inside the preschool hall.

3. **Saint Mary Magdalene Church Bulletin** – Our page in the parish bulletin provides many important highlights from our program.

4. **Remind...(formerly remind 101)** will be used accordingly to send home information to preschool families for each class.

5. **E-Mail** – You may correspond with your child’s teachers through their school emails:

Mrs. Amy’s is [arivard@smmcatholic.org](mailto:arivard@smmcatholic.org)

Mrs. Tami’s is [tgokey@smmcatholic.org](mailto:tgokey@smmcatholic.org)

Ms. Emily’s is [erodgers@smmcatholic.org](mailto:erodgers@smmcatholic.org)

Mrs. Heather’s is [halley@smmcatholic.org](mailto:halley@smmcatholic.org)

There can be no email interaction between parents and preschool teachers’ personal email.

The Preschool Director, Gina DeGennaro, can be reached at [gdegennaro@smmcatholic.org](mailto:gdegennaro@smmcatholic.org). or contact me at 678-854-9990.

6. **Website** – You can look on the church website [www.smmcatholic.org](http://www.smmcatholic.org) and click the preschool link for additional information on our preschool or go directly to the preschool website [www.smmcatholic.org/parish-preschool-2](http://www.smmcatholic.org/parish-preschool-2). Our Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/StMaryMagdaleneCatholicPreschool>

## **Family and Custodial Situations**

Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool is aware of an increasing number of families experiencing transitions in parental custodial relationships. In addition, laws governing divorce settlements and custody have been recently changed. For this reason we find it necessary to clarify the usual procedures followed by the administration and faculty in dealing with parents in such situations.

In two-parent families it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. Our 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 between the parents. This information includes, but is not limited to, conference appointments, fall and spring evaluations, 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 custody of the child. It is assumed that this information is shared between the parents. Since separation and divorce frequently impact a child's achievement and interactions at school, parents are asked to inform both the director and teacher of this fact so that appropriate support can be given to the child. Preschool 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 director is to be informed by the custodial parent of this fact. A copy of the first page of the decree bearing the case number, the pages referring to custody and the relationship with the school, and the final page bearing the judge's signature are to be submitted to the director. 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 the records, the non-custodial parent has a right to the same access as the custodial parent. We will, unless instructed by a Court Order, release such records upon request to the non-custodial parent. "Records" include evaluations, 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 custodial parent. 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.

Unless restricted by Court Order, any non-custodial parent has the right to attend any school activity of their child, which includes class programs and class parties. Parents should keep each other informed as to these activities to avoid lack of communication and to allow the school to better attend to the duty of teaching your children.

In cases of 'joint custody' (shared parenting agreements) entitling both parents access to school personnel and activities, one copy of communications and information will be sent home with the child and it is assumed that this will be shared between the parents.

Every effort will be made to keep communication open with both parents while at the same time avoiding duplication of services and excessive demands on the teacher's time.

Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool remains neutral in divorce/custodial situations.

If there are questions concerning this policy, or other arrangements are necessary, please contact the Director personally.

# **Withdrawal/Dismissals**

## **WITHDRAWAL**

If a child needs to be withdrawn from preschool, 30 days written notice is required so that another child can fill the space; tuition for those 30 days is charged. The final month of tuition will be pro-rated based on the number of days remaining of the 30-day period. The child may attend preschool during those 30 days.

## **REASONS FOR DISMISSAL**

1. Non-payment of fees: any account at least 30 days in arrears will make the child subject to suspension until payment is received and, if the account reaches 60 days in arrears, will lead to dismissal unless arrangements are made with the Director.
2. Extremely disruptive, destructive, or dangerous behavior of a child in a classroom will be cause for dismissal. Every effort will be made to work with the parents to provide the best environment for the child.
3. Consistent tardiness picking up your child.
4. Consistent trouble with independent bathroom skills in both Pre K-3 and Pre K-4 classrooms.

# **Monthly Fire Drills**

The preschool will participate in fire drills that will be conducted unannounced at least once a month. Upon hearing the sounding of the signal chimes, all children and staff shall evacuate the building along the designated route posted in each classroom. The children shall evacuate orderly and quietly.

1. All children shall stop work immediately at the sound of the alarm.
2. Children shall not stop to take books, coats, or other personal belongings with them except valuables immediately accessible, like purses.
3. Speed should be subordinate to control and order. Children should remain quiet at all times. No running or pushing.
4. The last one to leave the room shall check to be sure everyone is out and then close the door.
5. The teacher shall pick up their attendance sheet and green/red cards and shall move with her class.
6. All school personnel and visitors shall leave the building immediately or as soon as their assigned fire duties are completed. Teachers are to take classes to the Church parking lot in front of the preschool or to the grass field behind their classrooms.
7. Children in the "music and movement" room shall go to the Church parking lot in front of the preschool or to the grass field behind their classrooms.
8. The teacher shall see that the class goes to its assigned position on the grounds, after which roll is called to make certain all children are present. Teachers should hold up a GREEN card if all children are present or a RED card if a child is missing.
9. Any missing children shall be reported to the Director immediately. The teacher must remain with the class.
10. Teachers should move their children as far from the building as possible.

# **Severe Weather Drills**

The following plan will be implemented in the event of severe weather warning. Please read through this section and be familiar with your responsibility.

TORNADO WATCH means conditions are right for a tornado. During a watch, business is conducted as usual.

TORNADO WARNING means a tornado has been sighted. During the warning, we will execute the take-cover position: all students with teachers will go to designated bathrooms for shelter and go into the drop down position.

DRILLS: All students will participate in quarterly unannounced tornado drills. They will go into a position of dropping to their knees, facing the wall, and have their backs to the ceiling.

OUTSIDE PROCEDURE: During inclement weather all outdoor classes will be moved to the inside. In the event of a rapidly approaching storm with no warning, the children will follow these guidelines:

1. Crouch or lie down behind available protection.
2. If in the open, drop to the ground with your back to the sky.
3. Stay in this position until the drill is over.

# Faculty

**Pastor:** Rev. Terry Crone

**Deacons:** Rev. Mr. Dennis Carazza  
Rev. Mr. Scott Parker

**Preschool Director:** Mrs. Gina DeGennaro  
[gdegennaro@smmcatholic.org](mailto:gdegennaro@smmcatholic.org)  
678-854-9990

**Teachers:** Ms. Emily Rodgers (2 year old class)  
[erodgers@smmcatholic.org](mailto:erodgers@smmcatholic.org)

Mrs. Tami Gokey (3 year-old class)  
[tgokey@smmcatholic.org](mailto:tgokey@smmcatholic.org)

Mrs. Amy Rivard (4 year-old class)  
[arivard@smmacatholic.org](mailto:arivard@smmacatholic.org)

**Teachers' Assistant:** Mrs. Heather Alley  
[halley@smmcatholic.org](mailto:halley@smmcatholic.org)

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# Acknowledgment of Handbook Receipt

I have received and read thoroughly a copy of the Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Preschool Handbook. I understand it is my responsibility to become familiar with these policies and procedures and to abide by them.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta, Office of Catholic Schools, ensures that this program follows the prescribed guidelines for parish early childhood programs. This preschool holds a Certificate of Exemption from licensure from the State of Georgia (Bright from the Start). Parish preschools in good standing are eligible to renew their Archdiocesan Charter every 5 years.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mother/Legal Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mother/Legal Guardian's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Father/Legal Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Father/Legal Guardian's Printed Name

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

***Please complete this sheet, tear off, and return to the Preschool Director.***