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Mission Statement

The mission of St. Michael's Episcopal Preschool is to encourage the spiritual, physical, and intellectual development of each child.

- Our goal is to prepare children for future academic and social challenges by providing a superior education program in a warm, loving, and Christian environment.
- The preschool provides a safe, secure, and predictable setting in which children can engage in activities, explore materials, and develop friendships.
- Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers, and participate in educational and social functions to the extent possible once Covid restrictions are lifted.

Purpose of Our Preschool Ministry

St. Michael's Episcopal Preschool has been established in order to serve the needs of its church members and the community. We serve children from eighteen months to five years of age in our program. Our goals are to:

- Provide a healthy environment for the children and to help them develop into well rounded individuals.
- Provide interesting classroom environments and activities that encourage exploration and discovery.
- Provide nurturing caregivers that practice positive reinforcement and use positive speaking skills.
- Provide a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and uses hands-on learning activities.
- Provide a means to involve the family in the Preschool's activities.
- Help preschoolers begin to understand
 - God is creator, giver of all good things;
 - Jesus is God's Son and our best friend; and the
 - Bible is the true, special book that tells about God and Jesus.

Philosophy

The Preschool is designed to create an environment of trust where children can grow socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and spiritually. All people within the Preschool, children and adults, are learners and teachers. Everyone is valued as an individual.

A child learns through his/her experiences. The Preschool is a place of many experiences which include discovering one's self in relation to others and to an environment. In this light, the Preschool should provide experiences that allow a child to wonder, question, and explore individual's feelings of

self-worth. It is a sharing environment based on the premise that each of us has a unique gift to share.

Each person here has the right and the responsibility to experience, learn, and support one another in their growth and development in Christianity.

Curriculum

St. Michael's curriculum is developmentally appropriate using thematic units and learning centers to encourage each child's physical, social, cognitive, and spiritual growth. Each day will offer a balance of vigorous and quiet activities that are appropriate for the preschool child and encourage a positive attitude toward learning and school. Specific curriculum areas that will be included are:

- Literature and whole language activities, including Spanish in the three-year-old and Pre-K classes
- Music and rhythms
- Math and Science activities
- Sensory and Creative expression learning centers
- Large motor skills and outdoor play
- Socialization experiences
- Small motor skills and manipulative learning centers
- Chapel time weekly

Staff and Class Structure

St. Michaels' lead teachers have either a college degree or teaching certificate. The majority of the teacher assistants holds either a Child Development Associate, college degree, or is currently enrolled in college courses for credits toward their degree.

The faculty continues to improve their understanding and skills in preschool education by attending professional seminars throughout the year. The faculty and staff are also trained in safe food handling, CPR, and Child Sexual Abuse. St. Michael's child/staff ratio is below state requirements. We try to have two teachers in each classroom with the exception when classroom numbers are low.

State required child/staff ratio is as follows:

St. Michael's Ratio

<u>Children</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Teachers</u>
8 Toddlers (12-23 mos.)	1	10 Toddlers	2
12 Two Year Olds (24-36 mos.)	1	12 Two Year Olds	2
14 Three Year Olds	1	14 Three Year Olds	2
16 Four Year Olds (48 mo.-5 yrs.)	1	15 Four Year Olds	2
20 Five Year Olds	1	15 Five Year Olds	2
25 School Age (6yrs+)	1		

Enrollment

Our school year begins in August. Registration takes place the preceding January. Members of the St. Michael's Church and families of currently enrolled students in either the Preschool or Little Learners programs will receive placement in that order. Subject to the foregoing, registration will then be opened to the community based on first come, first served basis.

All enrollment forms must be completed prior to attendance. The enrollment packet includes:

- Payment of all required fees; payment information for monthly tuition drafts.
- Student Information Form
- Program Enrollment/Parent Contract
- Extended Care Policy
- Public Information/Communication Release
- Medical Information
- Emergency Card

Immunization records are due by the first day of school.

Children are placed in classrooms according to their birth dates and are grouped approximately within 6 to 8-month age spans. This allows the children to work in peer groups that are developmentally balanced. Child must be 18 months of age by the first day of school and walking and self-feeding.

Admissions Policy

- Discrimination by child-care and school centers on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, handicapping condition or ancestry is prohibited.
- The parent is responsible for completing all enrollment forms prior to the child's attendance each year.

- The school may deny admission to any child whose needs cannot be met or whose behavior would endanger other children. The school accepts only those children who are at the stage of growth and development that enables them to benefit from the program.

Tuition and Payment

All fees are to be paid by ACH auto draft from a checking account. There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$250.00 due at the time of enrollment. The registration fee is required to secure a child's spot.

St. Michael's Episcopal Preschool charges an annual tuition. For the parents' convenience, we can divide this annual tuition into ten equal payments. For this reason, no credit is given for missed days. Payments are billed on the 1st of each month, and automatically drafted out of your account on the 5th. The monthly payments are due July 5, 2021, through April 5, 2022.

There is a \$100.00 non-refundable facilitation fee per family that will be due with the first tuition payment on July 5, 2021.

Extended Care bills are sent out at the end of the month and are added to your tuition auto draft. Parents or guardians will receive a monthly emailed statement notifying of the amount to be deducted on the 5th of each month.

- **Checking Your Balance**
You can log into the Tuition Express website for billing and payment information. You can get the registration information from the school office.
- **New Students**
When a new student enrolls during the school year (August – May), a non-refundable registration fee is required. The tuition payment will be either a whole month or half month after the 15th. No days will be pro-rated and credit cannot be given for any days missed no matter the circumstance.
- **Delinquent Payments**
A late fee of \$20.00 will be assessed if payment is not received by the 15th of the month. **Any payment past due by more than 15 days will result in the child's removal from class.**
- **Returned Items**
A returned ACH fee due to non-sufficient funds is \$35.00. The responsible party has three days to make tuition payment and any service fee incurred. After three days, preschool services are terminated.
- **Student Withdrawals**
To withdraw from the Preschool, a four-week written notice must be given to the school. Withdrawal forms can be obtained from the front office.

- Extended Care

Preschool drop-off begins at 8:35 am and preschool begins at 9:00 am. Preschool pick up is from 2:40 pm to 3:15 pm. An Extended Care hourly charge of \$5.00 will be assessed for the hours between 7:30am – 8:45am and 3:00pm – 5:30pm. **An additional \$2.00 per minute will be charged for every minute a child is left after 5:30pm. Misuse of late pickups will be referred to the Head of School for a required earlier pickup.**

St. Michael’s Episcopal Church members will receive a discount. A letter written from the rector must be included in the registration materials and applied for each school year. A 5% sibling tuition discount is available. If the entire tuition amount is paid by July 1st, a 3% discount is applied. A 1% discount is available if tuition is paid in two 50% payments due July 1st and December 1st.

2021-2022 Tuition fees are as follows and are due each month on the 5th.

3-day program.....\$520.00

5-day program.....\$678.00

2021-2022 Little Learners Tuition fees are as follow and are due each month on the 5th.

5-day program.....\$730.00

Discipline and Guidance

Our program provides a caring environment that encourages the children to use their verbal and social skills to solve problems and resolve conflicts. Our focus is on the positive methods of discipline and reinforcement while also providing the opportunity for the child to develop self-control.

St. Michael’s Preschool operates on the premise that young children are never “bad.” The types of inappropriate behavior most often seen in young children, including temper tantrums, refusal to cooperate, hitting other children, and failure to follow rules, are usually the result of the child’s level of development. A young child simply lacks the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills to comply with many adult demands. For these reasons, St. Michael’s staff uses the following guidelines for promoting positive behavior and for responding to problem behavior.

- Hitting or paddling children at St. Michael’s is forbidden. Cruel, severe, unusual, or unnecessary punishment will not be inflicted on children.
- Shouting or yelling at children at St. Michael’s is forbidden. Yelling usually frightens children and distracts them from the problem. Shouting, which is often accompanied by name calling on the part of the adult, also damages a child’s self-esteem.
- Derogatory remarks shall not be made in the presence of children about their family members or children in our care or about the children themselves.
- Having active play time withheld for disciplinary purposes is prohibited, except thinking time may be used during active play time for an infraction incurred during the play time.

While St. Michael's staff respects the rights of every parent to discipline his or her own child in a personal way, except where child abuse or neglect is concerned, parents who volunteer in our school may not hit or shout at any child, including their own. Hitting or shouting at a child in the presence of others upsets everyone and disturbs the classroom routine. No child or group of children shall be allowed to discipline another child. When a child is removed from the group for disciplinary reasons, he will never be out of the sight of a staff member.

Suspected abuse and/or neglect of a child will be reported in accordance with Louisiana Revised Statutes 14:403. No child will be deprived of meals or any part of meals for disciplinary reasons.

Biting, scratching, and bullying are forbidden. When repeated biting, scratching, or bullying occurs, the child may be removed from the Preschool for the day or permanently depending on the circumstance.

A child that is continuously disruptive to a productive classroom environment shall first be given warnings. If the behavior continues, that child may be removed from the preschool.

Acceptable Ways of Disciplining Children

The policy of St. Michael's regarding discipline does not mean that the staff wants to permit inappropriate behavior. Instead, the staff wishes to mold or change behavior. Some of these techniques are:

- Developing with children rules that are stated at the children's developmental level.
- Giving time to "think about it" is one minute per year of age (for ages two and above) for inappropriate behavior. To "think about it" is another way of telling a child that his or her behavior is not acceptable and will give them a minute to reflect on it.
- Clarifying the consequences of disobeying rules before the disobedience occurs.
- Ignoring some kinds of inappropriate behavior, because the more attention a child gets, the more likely it is the behavior will be repeated.
- Having age appropriate expectations for children. We do not expect children to understand and obey complex rules.
- Reinforcing desirable behavior by praising or rewarding the child. When the child realizes that attention comes from appropriate behavior, that behavior is more likely to continue.

Roles of Parents in the Discipline Process

Children are more likely to respond to attempts to discipline them when the adults involved are consistent; that is, when every adult who disciplines the child uses similar techniques.

Parents often find it difficult to be consistent at those times when the family, financial pressures, or other stresses seem more important than a child's behavior. The parent may feel that keeping the child quiet, or whatever it takes, is the only solution.

However, there are other solutions. One of the many roles of the St. Michael's staff is to work together with parents to help children develop appropriate patterns of behavior. Parents are invited and encouraged to discuss their concerns about their child's behavior with teachers and to plan together with the staff members the means of responding consistently to problem behaviors. In this way, children will always get the same message from the important adults in their lives (parents and teachers) about those behaviors that are acceptable and those that are not.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. Teachers at school count it as a privilege to partner with parents in laying foundations for faith in young lives.

Parents can help teachers by observing the following guidelines:

- Become familiar with the Preschool Policies and Procedures. These policies have been adopted by our preschool family and are enforced for the well-being of every child in our care.
- Remember that each policy and guideline is based on the desire to provide a safe, secure learning environment for your child. If you do not understand the reason for a policy or guideline, please ask the Head of School, or preschool teacher to discuss it with you.

Before Coming to School

- Remember to **label all items** (i.e. bag, blankets, towels, jackets, and clothing) with your child's name.
- Preschoolers need to bring an extra change of clothing in a labeled bag. Clothes should be easy to take off and put on.
- Leave personal toys at home. It makes sharing too difficult and may not be appropriate for use in teaching.
- **Bring your child to preschool on time.** She/he will feel more secure and eager to enter his/her room when preschool becomes his established routine.
- Talk to your child *positively* about going to preschool. Use names of your child's teachers and friends in his room when talking about happy times at preschool.

Arriving at Preschool

- Before care is 7:30 am – 8:30 am. Please park and walk to the front door where a staff member will take your child's temperature (if necessary). Parents may not enter the building.
- Regular drop off will start at 8:35 am and end at 9:00 am. Parents will enter through the gravel road for drop off. Please have your car name tag hanging from your rear view mirror.
- Drive around the back of the property until you reach the Pre-K carport where a staff member will take your child's temperature (if necessary), and remove them from the car. Parents and family members must remain in the vehicle.
- If possible, please move the car seat to the passenger side.
- No late drop offs are allowed.
- **No child will be allowed to come to school after 9:30 a.m. without a doctor's note. After 11 a.m., your child may not come to school, even with a doctor's note.**

Picking up at Preschool

- Pick up is the same way through the gravel road between 2:45 pm – 3:15 pm. Please have your car name tag hanging from the rearview mirror. Once your child is in your car, pull up to the main parking lot to properly strap in your child.
- After care begins at 3:15 pm, so after 3:15 pm, please pull around to the front carport. Upon arrival, please park and walk up to the front double doors, and we will bring your child to you.
- Once a child is picked up, the child may not return to school for the day.

Parent Visits

The school has an open-door policy (once Covid restrictions are lifted); however, we ask that you do not disrupt the class. You are more than welcome to watch your child interact through our in-house cameras.

Parents will be offered a minimum of two opportunities for involvement each year (if applicable), not limited to open house, fall family picnic, Christmas program, Breakfast with Santa, and Episcopal School Sunday.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

We have one scheduled parent/teacher conference and one optional conference during the year. Generally, the four-year-old conferences are held in November. The two and three-year-old conferences are scheduled in January. This is a valuable opportunity to meet with your child's teacher, ask questions, review work, and receive evaluation. If you require assistance for your conference, such as an interpreter, the administration will be happy to help you in making arrangements for your needs. We encourage open communication between parents and teachers throughout the year.

Health Policies

1. For the protection of all children and adults at school, parents are requested not to bring a child who appears to be ill.
 - Fever
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - Any symptom of a childhood disease such as scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough
 - Common cold-from the onset through one week
 - Sore throat
 - Croup
 - Any unexplained rash
 - Any skin infection-boils, ringworm, impetigo
 - Pink eye or another eye infection
 - Earache
 - Yellow or green discharge from nose or eyes

2. A parent will be notified if a child develops illness during preschool activities. The child will be separated from other children and the parent/guardian called to remove the sick child. **Parents must pick up child within 30 minutes as mandated by Federal Law.**

3. No oral medication will be given to a preschool child without proper documentation. Please speak with the front office to discuss any special medication needs.

4. If a child contracts a childhood disease following being present at school, parents should notify the school so that other parents and teachers may be informed.

5. Parents should report any allergies and special needs to the Head of School.

6. Children may return to school with a physician's release or must wait at least 24 hours after being sent home before returning to school.

7. Children with Mollusca must have affected area covered with clothing or a Band-Aid at all times.

8. Please see the addendum which will state our exclusion policies and the recommendations from the Louisiana Department of Health.

Handling Accidents/Injuries:

- In the unlikely event a child is injured seriously, parents will be notified immediately.
- If a child sustains a minor injury (i.e. bump, bruise, scrape), parents will be notified when the child is picked up.
- A Parent Notice Form will be completed for every accident. These reports will be signed and dated by the teachers and kept on file.

General Policies

Car Seats

All children must be strapped into a car safety seat. St. Michael's has three safety seats available for one-day use if needed in an emergency.

Cell Phone Use

Parents/Guardians should refrain from using cell phones while in car line.

Clothing Guidelines

Please dress your child in comfortable and practical clothing for the preschool day. Please do not send your child in outfits that snap. The day includes outside play, art activities, naptime, and meals. Shoes or tennis shoes (with Velcro fasteners) and socks are to be worn every day. These protect their feet from bark, dirt and rocks on the playground and aids in preventing tripping. We ask that **NO SANDALS, BOOTS, OR CROCS ARE WORN AT ANYTIME!**

Computer Practices

Pre-K classrooms are equipped with touch screen computers that have filtering software that limits access to children to inappropriate websites, e-mail, and instant messaging. We do not have computer access to children under 4 years of age.

Electronic Devices

Electronic device activities for children under age two are prohibited.

Extreme Weather

St. Michael's Preschool will notify parents of weather related closures by email and/or text message. The Preschool will reopen as soon as possible.

Field Trips

We plan to hold special events throughout the year at our school; therefore, the children will never leave school grounds. Events will be age appropriate. Teachers will be present at all events scheduled.

Fire Drills/Tornado Drills

Fire Drills are held monthly and tornado drills are held during the months of March-June for the benefit of the children and the staff. Emergency procedures are reviewed with the staff frequently.

Licensing

Responsibility for licensing Day Care Centers lies with the Louisiana Department of Education. Any suspected abuse and/or neglect to a child at the preschool will be reported in accordance with LA R.S. 4:403 to the Child Protection Agency.

Also, according to the Department of Education, St. Michael's Preschool is a drug free and a smoke free campus. Concealed weapons are strictly prohibited from the campus. Any questions regarding licensing can be directed to the Louisiana Department of Education at LDELicensing@la.gov.

Meals

Meals will be served to all children registered for Preschool. The Preschool will provide all food including lunch and snacks. A snack will be served in the morning, after naptime, and during aftercare. **Children will not be permitted to bring snacks or lunches.** A physician's note or statement of religious reasons must accompany any request for changes in meals provide.

If there is a celebration or special activity in a particular classroom, food items may be requested by teachers for that classroom.

Please do not bring your child's breakfast into the school. If you feed your child in the car, make sure that it is left in the car.

The children are not allowed to take any snacks with them from school. This is a safety issue with regards to possible choking on the snack while in the car.

Newsletters and Notices

Even though each classroom sends home notices, we believe it is important that the parents are informed as to what is going on in the entire school. Please make sure that you check your email that was provided to us during registration for notices, our lunch menu, information about upcoming events, and general news of what is happening at St. Michael's Preschool. Please take the time to read these notices. Parents are also able to view the website at www.stmichaelspreschool.edu for

weather updates, menus, and notices concerning the school, and on our Facebook page (St. Michael's Episcopal Preschool, Mandeville)

Important messages and reminders about tuition payments may also be sent via text messaging or email.

Pacifiers and Sippy Cups

The Little Learners class is the only age group that will be given sippy cups for lunch and snacks. For the rest of the school, (2yrs+) drinking from a cup is the desired outcome and the teachers will keep the parents informed concerning progress in this area.

For the Little Learners and two year-old classes (only), we limit the use of pacifiers to **naptime only** due to the following:

- *Sanitary purposes-children "share" them; they drop on the playground in the dirt and bark.
- *Participation in group activities limits their use of words.
- *Losing them, either in the classroom or on the playground.

One of the major goals with the children is to help them learn to speak and pronounce their words correctly. They need to use words to ask for what they need, to share information, and to solve conflicts.

If your child is using a pacifier, please place it in their bag or cubby in a zip lock baggie. Please make sure the teacher is aware that the child needs a pacifier during naptime. We will give it to them only at naptime and then return it to the bag.

Parking Lot Concerns

Please proceed through the parking lot slowly and with caution. When picking up or dropping off a St. Michaels' student for before care and after care, younger or older siblings are never to be left alone in a vehicle. **It is Louisiana State Law that children are not left in a car unattended at any time and can result in a ticket or fine for such a practice.** The temperature inside a parked car can reach 125 degrees in 20 minutes and a child left unattended in a running locked car could accidentally cause a traffic accident in the school's parking lot. Please make every effort to keep our children safe.

Also, we have very limited handicapped parking by the church. Please be considerate and do NOT park there if you do not have a handicapped plate or tag.

Potty Training

All three year olds and older must be potty trained. Our program does not facilitate diapers or pull-ups. Therefore, upon entering this program, a child must be fully potty trained.

The two-year-old children are encouraged to begin using the potty. As they become better at controlling their bladders, we require the child to wear pull-ups that detach and reattach at the side,

not “big boy” or “big girl” panties. Once the child can verbalize their need BEFORE the action, he/she can wear regular underwear.

Programs, Movies and Video Games Policy

All television, video, DVD or other programming will be rated “G” only. We do not allow any hand-held video games at school.

Speech/Hearing

Our school offers speech and hearing screenings during the school year. These services are performed by a certified therapist for a nominal fee.