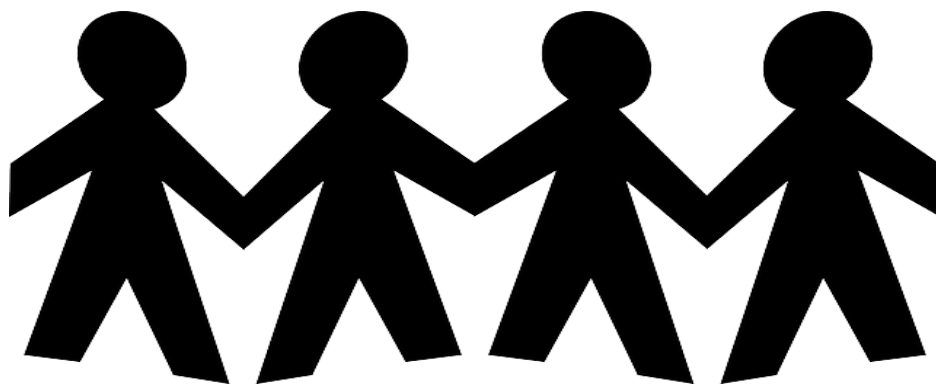


# St. Charles Early Childhood Program



## Family Handbook



**MCDONELL AREA  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**  
Est. 1882

*Education for Life*



McDonnell Area Catholic Schools (MACS) reserves the right to make corrections and/or changes to this handbook as needed. Any corrections or changes will be posted and effective immediately in our 2021-22 Family Handbook, which can be found on our website.

## *Education for Life*

### **Our Mission**

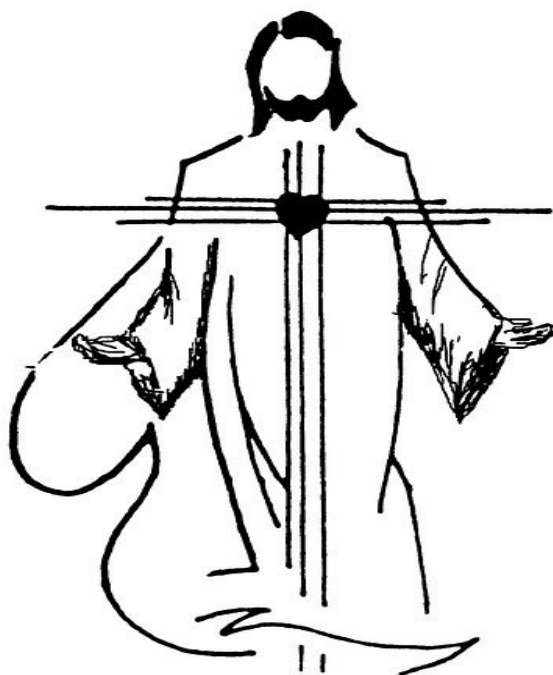
McDonell Area Catholic Schools are committed to the formation of community, academic excellence and the spiritual and physical well-being of each student in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

### **Our Vision**

We are the school of choice for an excellent Catholic faith based education within the Chippewa Falls area. We welcome all families to be a part of our school community no matter their faith or financial means. In partnership with our parents, we form the whole child in support of our values and mission.

Our vision of the whole child consists of a lifelong learner, who upon graduation, is academically prepared for postsecondary education and career, grounded in relationship with Jesus Christ, balanced physically and emotionally, and actively engages as servant leaders in family, parish, and civic communities.

**St. Charles Early Childhood is a Catholic School in the Diocese of La Crosse. As a Catholic School we will teach and advocate our Catholic Faith. All students are welcome in our school, and all parents and legal guardians must understand that Catholic Doctrine will be taught. The passing on of our Catholic Faith is our number one priority.**



## **Our Core Values**

### **FAITH**

*“Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”  
(John 17:3)*

I live my life in relationship with Jesus Christ, alive for us in his church.

- Strive to know and love God with all my heart, mind, soul and strength
- Maintain a living personal relationship with Christ through prayer and the Sacraments
- Seek to discern the Father’s will for me, especially in terms of my vocation in life
- Receive spiritual nourishment by regular participation in the holy Eucharist
- Listen to God’s Word present in creation, Scriptures, and the living Tradition of the Church
- Integrate my Catholic Faith into all my relationships and activities

### **HONOR**

*“My Father will honor the one who serves me.” (John 12:26)*

I am honorable. I treat others with respect. I care about doing the right thing. I am civil. My actions reflect my respect. My conversations are without malice or envy.

- Be guided in all things by Christ, the Way, the truth and the Life
- Practice the virtue of justice in my relationship with others.
- Always be trusted to keep my promises
- Avoid doing things that make me feel ashamed
- Demonstrate manners in everyday actions
- Know there may be disagreements but resolve them respectfully
- Use my freedom to do what is good, and beautiful

### **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

*“Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”  
(Philippians 4:8)*

I give my best to the work I do for the glory of God. I give my best to others for the love of God. I set high goals and expectations. I choose excellence in learning.

- Seek the truth in all things
- Practice the virtue of fortitude in pursuing what is good
- Strive to surpass good and attain excellence
- Have high expectations and standards
- Make school work personal and meaningful
- Set vigorous goals and challenges and develop support to meet them

### **HEALTHY LIVING**

*“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You are not your own.” (Corinthians 6:19)*

As a temple of the Holy Spirit, I live a healthy life. I am physically, socially and emotionally healthy.

- Practice the virtues of temperance and chastity.
- Eat well
- Exercise regularly
- Get sufficient rest
- Exercise my brain

- Focus on things I can change

## COMMUNITY

*“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” (1 Corinthians 12:12)*

I am aware of the world that surrounds me and recognize that I must contribute to make it a better place to exist. I am compassionate. I notice and act when people are hurt or need my help. I take the time to show I care.

- Practice good stewardship of the gifts that God has given me
- Be actively involved with parish community
- Show empathy and share in others’ pain and joy
- Forgive others when they make mistakes
- Reach out to others through conversation and activities
- Be interested in and accepting of other cultures
- Be helpful to all creatures of God



## SERVANT LEADERSHIP

*“The Son of Man has come not to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for the many.” (Matthew 20:28)*

I am a person of service after the example of Jesus, who gave himself that we might have life. I do my part to make a better world. I am a leader. I am responsible. I lead to serve others.

- Listen to understand before talking
- Look for opportunities to be of service to others and be committed to the growth of people
- Work with enthusiasm and to the best of my ability
- Admit mistakes without making excuses
- Be ready and willing to clear up misunderstandings

## St. Charles Early Childhood Philosophy

St. Charles Early Childhood Program, a proud member of the McDonell Area Catholic School system, provides a nurturing atmosphere that is dedicated to educating children in a Christian environment. Our program is committed to providing a welcoming environment for all families with age-appropriate activities, with emphasis on safety, self-reliance, self-respect, kindness, cooperation, curiosity and creativity. Children are naturally encouraged by a child-centered program where they can learn by doing and participate as valuable members of their classroom community. Guided by Christ, we advocate for the development of the whole child as a lifelong-learner, according to best practices in Early Childhood Education.

The St. Charles Early Childhood program is continually aware of the need for high-quality, diverse early learning programs that foster whole-child development, bridges gaps in academic achievement, guides social and emotional learning, supports physical health and wellness, offers standard-aligned curriculum and assessment to set progressive goals for all children. The program chooses to participate in accreditation to continually self-evaluate internal processes and teaching practices that support quality benchmarks and stay aware of best practices in early learning.

### **Early Childhood Program Goals**

**Mind:** We will implement a standard-based curriculum, with the goal of guiding children to become active learners within engaging, intentionally-planned learning environments. We will use a developmentally-appropriate assessment, the Child Observation Record to guide lesson planning, individualize learning and measure growth over time for all Early Childhood Program students and share that progress with families.

**Body:** We will explore physical activity and large motor development during two daily class periods for at least thirty minutes each. Fine motor development will be practiced and refined within a balance of teacher-planned and child-guided activities in the lesson plans. Children will be served balanced and nutritionally sound meals and snacks, with fresh fruit and vegetables and whole, unprocessed foods made the priority.

**Spirit:** We will work toward becoming a community of early learners that is kind, safe and helpful. Within our faith, we will explore how special God made each one of us and as that faith develops, we can extend gratitude and wonder to the world around us. We will incorporate the God Made Us Curriculum from Loyola Press, designed to be developmentally appropriate for preschool children. We will incorporate positive and loving guidance techniques outlined through Conscious Discipline and the Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning.

**Community:** We practice being empathetic toward and understanding of all of God's children, supportive of diverse cultures, family structures, and abilities within our community.

### **Early Childhood Office Hours**

St. Charles Early Childhood Program *office* is open from **7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.**  
The telephone number for the **office** is **715-723-2161**.

### **Schedule of Operation**

**St. Charles Early Childhood Program is open Monday through Friday, from 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

We ask that you be prompt in picking up your child at the end of the day. When children are still here after operating hours, the State may be notified in the form of a call to the local police or sheriff's department. We must make this call no later than 6:30 p.m. A **late pick-up fee of \$15.00** will be assessed every 15 minutes past 6:00 p.m. Consistent late pick-up could jeopardize the family's participation and future enrollments in the Program.

The Early Childhood Program is closed in observance of the following holidays:

- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day & Day after
- Christmas Eve & Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Holy Monday
- Memorial Day

The center may be closed on the day after Christmas, and New Year's Eve; this is determined by *contracted* scheduled attendance. Programming will be available on school vacation days (when school is not in session) when sufficient need warrants it. Families are required to contract IN ADVANCE for school vacation days. If contracted for a school vacation day and the child does not attend, there will be a charge for that day.

### Visiting School

The center supports an "open door" policy. We encourage families to visit anytime unless access is denied by a court order and that order is on file at the center. We also encourage you to participate in special events, field trips, lunchtime or whenever you have a free moment. Our school doors are locked during the day for the safety of our children and the staff. Please come to the front doors and ring the doorbell. You may be asked to identify yourself and state your business with our school if we do not recognize you.

Our parking lots are also our playgrounds. If you come to visit during the school day, we ask that you kindly park on the street. **Please avoid parking in our bus zones** at the immediate front and rear lanes of the school.

### Accreditation



<http://www.advanc-ed.org/services/early-learning-accreditation>

The St. Charles Early Childhood Program is an accredited early learning program through AdvancED. All staff at the St. Charles Early Childhood Program have made a commitment to continually improve according to current research-based information about how young children best learn and how to provide those experiences within their school day.

*From Advanc-ED's website on Early Learning Accreditation (URL above):*

We know that children who receive high-quality early childhood education are better prepared to succeed in elementary and secondary classrooms. These children are better positioned for long term success.

Children actively engaged in early learning programs:

- Are more social,
- Earn better grades,
- Require less or need no special education instruction later in school,
- Improve their attention spans,
- Are more likely to graduate from high school and attend college,
- Exhibit fewer behavioral problems and
- Are less likely to become involved with crime in later years.

## **Admissions & Enrollment**

To enroll a child, families will meet with a program administrator and have a tour of the Early Childhood Program. If the family decides to enroll, registration paperwork must be completed and a non-refundable family registration fee of \$30 is paid. This fee is billed per family and must be presented with enrollment paperwork before the child begins. This registration fee can be paid by check or cash. It is a requirement that all paperwork be filled out before the child's first day of attendance, as is stipulated in the Early Childhood Program Enrollment Agreement. If a room is unable to accept a new enrollment at the time of the tour, the family has the option of going onto a center waiting list. (*See Appendix for Waiting List Procedure*).

Families are required to keep children's records up to date with changes in phone numbers, addresses, employers, emergency contact information and health reports. Enrollment records are kept secure in the Early Childhood Program office, which is locked when unattended. These files are accessible to administrators, teaching staff and regulatory authorities with the assistance of management. (*See Appendix for Additional Enrollment Requirements*).

## **Arrival and Departure**

Children are not to arrive before 6:30 am. The center closes at 6:00 pm

You must accompany your child to the classroom each day in direct transfer to a staff member in the Program. We cannot accept responsibility for any child dropped off outside.

You must sign your child in and out of the office using the time clock.

Please call ahead if you are going to be late to pick-up, or if someone other than you is going to pick-up your child. Children are released only to those persons who are authorized by the family in writing. If the child is to be picked up by someone other than an authorized person, the family must notify the program in writing as to who that person will be. A picture ID may be required. The program will call a family if an unauthorized party attempts to pick-up their child.

If there is a situation where a child is not to be released to a particular person, the family must notify the director verbally and in writing, as well as list all relevant notices on the child's information form. Copies of any court orders or legal paperwork regarding non-release or custody arrangements must be on file in the child's file in the office.

When dropping off or picking up your children, families should park cars east of the building between the church and school. Please do not pull up to the doors or drive around the school near the playground.

## Billing

### **Billing:**

Payment will be due on Fridays. A bi-weekly statement will be made available to each family every other Friday. It will reflect payments made for contracted charges and any additional charges due (ie. for added days, or field trip fees). If a family hasn't paid the balance on or before the payment due date, a late payment fee of \$15 will be billed to the account.

Payment for field trip fees, billing-related fees, registration and supply or activities fees will be billed to the account.

### **Late Payments and Delinquent Accounts:**

Bi-weekly charges not paid in full will be charged a **\$15 late fee**. The St. Charles Early Childhood Program may refuse to admit a child each day until the family makes the overdue payment in full by check or cash. If the program has not received the overdue payment on or before the next billing cycle or contract period is due, the director may suspend or terminate child's enrollment at the St. Charles Early Childhood Program until outstanding fees are cleared and move forward with the collections process. . Re-enrollment is not guaranteed after outstanding fees are cleared. Program administration has the right to deny enrollment for non compliance to policies and procedures in this handbook.

The family understands and accepts responsibility for the prompt payment of fees and other charges incurred for the services rendered by the McDonell Area Catholic Schools. The family has notified the Program of any custodial agreements and payment responsibilities shared with another adult who is not the spouse. The family understands that fees will be considered delinquent if in arrears for more than 30 days at any time. MACS will contact the family if child's fees are delinquent. If the family fails to make payment arrangements approved by the schools, MACS has the right to use all legal means to collect unpaid fees.

### **Collection Policy and Procedure -**

#### Collection Policy

Handling the aged portion of our accounts receivable portfolio requires planned action that reflects the mission and goals of McDonell Area Catholic Schools. Clearly written process on important collection procedures will ensure consistent and effective A/R management that contributes to realizing those goals. The policy includes the following procedures:

When to contact a family;

A family is notified on Monday after their payment is due, payments are due on Fridays. It should be done in one of **four** ways;

1. Email, phone call, face to face or mail a letter and statement. - see ***Letter of Notice***.

Should a family not respond within 5 business days after contact was made, a second contact will be made in one of three ways;

1. Send a Certified Letter with the original bill.– see ***Second Notice***
2. Face to Face with a letter including a copy of the original bill
3. An email and a phone call.



Providing two weeks for the family to correct the situation they will be notified by the following Monday that their child(ren) will no longer receive programming at St. Charles Early Childhood Center unless they contact us and work out a payment plan **immediately**.

1. Send a letter including a copy of the original bill – ***Third letter - CERTIFIED***

Having allowed 20 days for the family to contact the Early Childhood Center after the preceding first step, we notify them that we will begin a collection process by whatever means necessary. We will send a final letter to give families a chance to correct their bill before moving forward with collections.

1. Send a letter including a copy of the current bill - ***Final Letter - Certified***

### **Collection Process**

1. **File small claims**
2. **Garnishment of wages**
3. **Account will be proceed to collections**

### **Cash Only Enrollment**

If your family is enrolled as a “cash only” enrollment, payment in full is due before children may attend. If days need to be added in the month, cash payment in full is required when additional days are scheduled. If sick days are utilized, the account will be credited toward the next month’s contract fees. Upon withdrawal from the program, any credit can be returned after 30 days from the last day attended.

### **Late Pickup Charges**

We ask that you be prompt in picking up your child at the end of the day. When children are still here after operating hours, the State may be notified in the form of a call to the local police or sheriff’s department. We must make this call no later than 6:30 p.m. A late pick-up fee of \$15.00 will be assessed every 15 minutes past 6:00 p.m. Consistent late pick-up could jeopardize the family’s participation and future enrollments in the Program.

### **Returned Checks for Nonpayment:**

If a check payment is returned to us for nonpayment, the center may require all future payments by cash only. A \$30 bank fee will be added to the repayment balance.

**\*\*We now accept credit card and debit card payments. We can also set up automatic withdrawal through Tuition Express which is part of our software Procure.**

### **Full-Time Multiple Child Discount**

A full time multiple child discount will be considered for applicable families. The youngest child will be charged the full program rate. A 15% discount will be applied to the oldest child.

**Before and After school, part time (1-2 days a week), wrap around, drop-in and half days do not qualify for the full time multiple child discount.**

## Contracts

Contract schedules are posted to your account for the upcoming two weeks. Families will be billed according to their contracts. The contracts must be **completed and returned** before your child will be allowed to attend.

Your contract is a commitment to your payment plan. Contracts are offered in 9 month, Summer 3-month terms and Summer monthly.

- **Nine (9) month contracts** (for the months of September 1st – June 1st) must be completed and returned to the office by **August 15<sup>th</sup>**.
- **Summer Three (3) month contract** (for the months of June – August) must be completed and returned to the office by **May 15<sup>th</sup>**.
- **Summer Monthly contract** (June–August) must be completed and returned based on the due date stated on the contract.

Late contracts will be charged a \$15 late contract fee and personal days may be adjusted to reflect the late submission.

Non-school day contracts are available to all families and are treated like an addendum to your regular contract. These must be completed and returned based on the due dates stated on the contracts.

If contracted for a day and the child does not attend, there will still be a charge for that day. ***Families will be charged for all the days of care that are reserved, even if they are not used.*** If a child has personal days available, they may use a personal day credit for this day. Contact Natalia Her regarding any personal day questions or concerns. Days are available to switch or add based on space available in the child's classroom.

It is **required** to turn in a contract for each child that attends. Staffing is dependent on these contracted hours. If a child is not scheduled with a contract, the center has authority to refuse services to the family. If a child comes from school and is not contracted to come, family will be called to pick up the child. Contracts can be found on our website; [www.macs.k12.wi.us](http://www.macs.k12.wi.us) or in the Early Childhood Program office.

***A family must have a zero-balance account at the end of their contract term before a new contract begins.***

## Breast Feeding

The St. Charles supports and accommodates breastfeeding. If a mother prefers, she is more than welcome to nurse her child at the Center. Expressed breast milk must be brought to the Center in ready-to-feed bottles or cups labeled with the child's full name and the date of collection. Expressed breast milk will be stored in the refrigerator for no more than one day or the freezer for no more than three months. Expressed breast milk will be discarded at the end of a feeding. (*See the Appendix for more about our breastfeeding support*).



### **Birthdays and Special Events**

We enjoy recognizing student birthdays at our schools. Each classroom may have a different way to celebrate these special days. Spending lunch at school with your student is a perfect way to celebrate such a special day. Birthday or special events treats, we prefer that they have a factory printed list of ingredients and meet allergy guidelines. If you would like to bring in a baked treat, we ask that you check with the classroom teacher on allergies and provide ingredients.

### **Child Guidance**

It is the policy of the St. Charles Early Childhood Program to promote the development of children's resiliency, self-efficacy, and self-control through positive guidance techniques. We try to help each child understand that some rules must be followed for safety and health. We stress the importance of kindness, safety, and respect. We use developmentally appropriate methods for discipline and guidance. Teachers create an environment and opportunities that promote positive interactions among the children. As early childhood professionals, we understand that most behaviors are a child's way of communicating a need, even though that the communication of that need may not be the most appropriate means, it doesn't change that the child has a need that should be met in some way. *(See Appendix for more information on Child Guidance & Biting).*

### **Class Pictures**

Individual student photographs as well as class composites will be taken in the fall. Photograph packets may be purchased by families. The pictures will also be published in the yearbook in the spring.

### **Clothing**

Due to the wide range of activities planned daily, children are encouraged to wear durable, washable, comfortable clothes, socks and flexible shoes with backs on them. This allows them to take full opportunity to participate in playing outdoors, painting, exploring, cooking, etc.

We will go outside daily, as weather permits, even in the winter. Please make sure your child has appropriate dress for the weather. Cool, light, and breathable materials are appropriate for summer months. If your child requires swim clothing, you will be notified. Spring and fall seasons will require a light to medium jacket, hat, and light mittens. In winter, please include a warm coat, snow pants, boots, mittens, and a scarf. The child's NAME should be placed on all outdoor clothing to help ensure the return of all possessions that get misplaced.

The children should have an extra set(s) of clothing available to change into in case of messes, wet sleeves, or bathroom accidents. Please label all of your child's extra clothing; this will help avoid confusion. Be sure to change out extra clothing so it remains seasonally appropriate to the comfort of your child.

## Commitment to Healthy Kids

With the support of the following research-based and nationally-recognized curriculums, Energy Balance for Early Childhood and Food & Fun for Super Kids, the St. Charles Early Childhood Programs makes a commitment to provide a program that supports the following goals for young children:

- healthy meals and snacks.
- at least 60 minutes of active play daily.



When planning meals for children, the program supports healthy habits by:

- Making water a choice with every meal and snack and at any time during the day.
- Making a priority to serve fresh, seasonal fruit when possible. Any canned fruit items (applesauce, pineapple) have no added sugars.
- Serving whole grains.
- Eliminating highly-sugared cereals, drinks and juices from the menu.
- Preparing foods from simple ingredients with minimal processing.
- Incorporating nutrition and healthy cooking into curriculum and lesson planning.
- Participating in school gardening efforts and visiting local farmer's markets to understand where food comes from in their community.
- Celebrating special holidays and events with fun instead of food.

## Communication

Good communication between MACS staff and families is one of the most important elements of our success as a learning center. In order to ensure that you receive all vital information from school, we will use various vehicles of communication:

- A new, mobile-device friendly website has been launched this year. The current version will continue to be available for enrollment paperwork, newsletters, scheduling contracts and this Family handbook. Check it out at <http://www.mcdonellareacatholicschools.org/>
- We also have our new Early Childhood website at [www.stcharlesecc.weebly.com](http://www.stcharlesecc.weebly.com)
- Because some families may not have access to digital materials or internet service, important school information will be placed in your family file folder located in the office.
- You will receive a monthly MACS student newsletter via email. The newsletters can also be viewed on our website and a few paper copies will be available in the office.
- The St. Charles Early Childhood Program has a Facebook page. This social media form of communication has reminders, parent education article links and photos of children.
- Class Dojo

Successful communication needs to go back and forth. We are partners in the education of your children and welcome your ideas, questions, thoughts and concerns. If a member of your family's primary language is not English, please inform administration about getting communication arrangements made to accommodate this need.

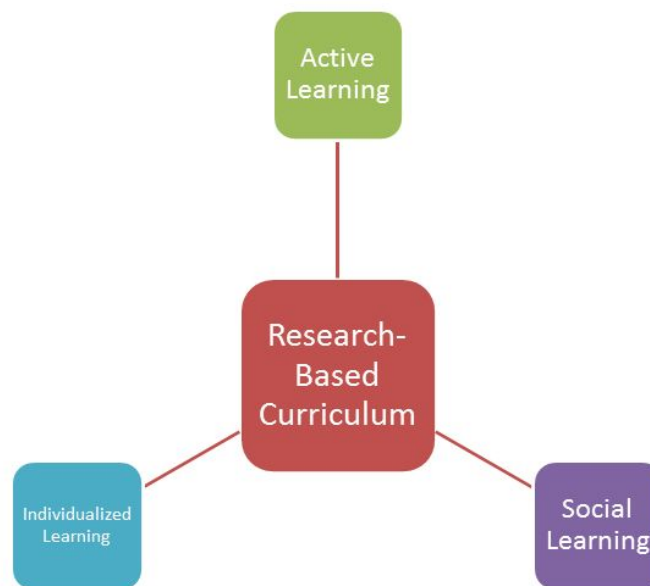
The Director will keep families informed of upcoming program events and other information through monthly newsletters and memos. Teachers keep families regularly informed of classroom activities through the use of a Family Information bulletin board that includes posted lesson plans, monthly newsletters, the month's lunch food menus, daily schedule, and other classroom relevant information.

If conflict resolution is required between teachers and families, the Director will mediate and facilitate the communication process using steps outlined in a Mediation for Education process. In the case of a conflict between families and the Director, the president of MACS will intervene to assist in the resolution of conflict.

### Confidentiality

During the course of your association with the program you may see and hear things about other children or the program's business. Such information is confidential, protected by privacy laws and Family must treat such information as strictly confidential, just as you would expect the program to treat information about you or your child.

### Curriculum



#### **Active Learning**

Active learning is accomplished by designing learning environments that invite children to explore. They offer a variety of interesting areas that have equipment and activities that invite standard-based learning to occur on the child's terms. Creativity and complex thinking skills are encouraged when teachers ask open-ended questions that prompt conversations that build on learning concepts. Children are encouraged to build and create during child-initiated activities. Teaching staff allow children to save their work and develop more complex creations over days or even weeks. Active learning balances spontaneous play with intentionally-planned activities and classroom enhancements, allowing children to interact in small and large groups, as well as work independently. Children aren't "just playing" in our active learning program; they investigate, measure, dance, jump, sing, draw, read, help, dig, pray, write and laugh.

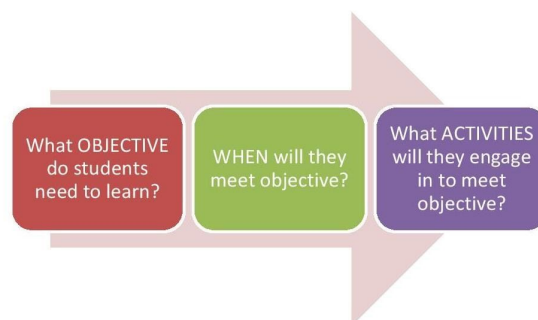
Our active learning program is influenced by the following research-based early education curriculum approaches: High Scope and Reggio Emilia. The environment of a program is closely intertwined with the curriculum. Our learning environments are safe, functional and intentionally planned for children to be successful in their quest for self-regulation. They incorporate children's interests and accommodate diverse abilities and cultures. Planned within the framework of our mission, the curriculum is carried out in a series of small and large group times that incorporate religious themes, literacy, early math skills, service projects, stories, songs and finger plays, creative arts, games, large and small muscle development activities, nutrition, health, science and nature activities, and celebration of special days. Field-trips are planned to expose the children to learning experiences in our community, as appropriate for their developmental level.

### Social Emotional Learning

St. Charles Early Childhood Program provides a nurturing atmosphere that is dedicated to educating children in a Catholic environment. Our program is committed to providing a welcoming environment for all families that includes age-appropriate activities, with emphasis on safety, self-reliance, self-respect, kindness, cooperation, curiosity, diversity, and creativity. Children are naturally encouraged by a child-centered program that fosters whole-child development where they learn by doing and participate as valuable members of their classroom community. In partnership with families, teachers set progressive, developmentally-appropriate goals for all students and meet regularly to support and guide them along the way. Guided by Christ, we advocate for the development of the whole child as a lifelong-learner, according to best practices in Early Childhood Education. St. Charles Early Childhood Program strives to be an inclusive and diverse environment. The family is the foundation for building a sense of identity for a child, composed of personality, values, culture and traditions. Diversity is not limited to skin color or ethnicity, it also relates to languages, differing physical and cognitive abilities, family structures, gender roles, socio-economic status, level of education and more. A diverse classroom reflects children's home culture and experiences, while providing exposure to other cultures, families, and abilities through shared, developmentally appropriate experiences that occur on a daily basis and become incorporated into the normal early childhood environment.

### Individualized Learning

Each learner is unique. Through regular and effective two-way communication, teachers build relationships with learners and families to understand the unique gifts that all children bring. In this collaborative partnership, St. Charles recognizes that families are experts when it comes to their own children and teachers prioritize the contributions that families share, as we work together for the best outcomes. Each child is unique and the best way to get to know them is to offer a wide range of creative experiences that allow them to freely express themselves. The respect that teachers have for children at St. Charles creates the best environment for developing critical thinking skills through intentional questions, explorations, open-ended questions and demonstrating a genuine interest in each child's contributions, valuing their role in the construction of their own learning.





## COR Advantage & Wisconsin Model of Early Learning Standards

The COR Advantage is a developmentally-appropriate, research-based collection of learning objectives. It focuses on the processes of learning rather than the outcome, and aligns with state standards of education for early learning, the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS). *COR Advantage focuses on children's naturally occurring activities rather than their performance on tests, allowing for a broader assessment of each child's development. It can be used with any developmentally-appropriate curriculum, and assesses all key developmental areas of children's progress.* For more information on COR Advantage and Wisconsin Model of Early Learning, a link to the publisher's websites is here: <http://coradvantage.org/overview/> and <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/fscp/pdf/ec-wmels-rev2013.pdf>.



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**HIGHSCOPE.**



The Supers program uses a combination of published curricula designed to engage children in fun, activity-based learning during their time away from school. The following curriculum models focus learning on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), literacy, creative writing, health and nutrition, and physical activity. The Supers Program curriculum is designed to engage children in activities that teach them effortlessly in a peer-strong environment, preventing achievement gaps from slowing educational progress and supporting the development of healthy, life-long habits. The activities are planned from a variety of resources, many of which are listed below. For more information on these programs, web resource addresses have been provided.

- Food & Fun Afterschool - <http://www.foodandfun.org/?p=about&subject=Basic+Information>
- NPASS Design It! Explore It! - <http://npass2.edc.org/curriculum>
- Program in Education Afterschool and Resiliency (PEAR) - <http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/>



**Explore It!**   
Science Investigations in After School Programs

**Design It!**   
Engineering in After School Programs

## Religion

All students are incorporated into religion classes and religion activities that are school related. We strive to help young children understand, follow and live the Catholic virtues of faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, respect and friendship. These virtues are part of our curriculum and encouraged in our daily routines, school activities and events. The Early Childhood Program uses a developmentally appropriate curriculum published by Loyola Press, called *God Made Everything*. It is a comprehensive faith formation program broken down into five units. For more information on the units, chapters and topics of study, learn more at:

[http://www.loyolapress.com/assets/gme/i\\_PreK\\_3\\_ScopeSeq.pdf](http://www.loyolapress.com/assets/gme/i_PreK_3_ScopeSeq.pdf)

## Custody Arrangements

McDonell Area Catholic Schools (MACS) maintains strict neutrality between families who are involved in an action affecting the family, unless otherwise directed by a court order.

During the enrollment process, each Family enrolling a student will be requested to provide the principal with current information regarding any court order that indicates specific rights for the child's family. In the absence of a court order, neither party will have rights over the other. In the situation where only one custodial guardian utilizes the St. Charles Early Childhood Program, that is the only guardian that will receive information about progress, updates, newsletters, conferences and events. If more guardians are paying rates or tuition for the program, all parties are required to fill out their own set of enrollment paperwork and all are entitled to receive communications from the teachers and administration, as well as the larger MACS system.

## Daily Notes

Daily notes are provided for toddlers on a board inside the classroom. These notes will indicate your child's meal schedule, nap schedule, diaper changes as well as activities. For preschool age children, a "What We Did Today" note will be posted on each classroom door or bulletin board. This is a brief explanation of the group's activities and other information. We feel this provides a quick means for you to be informed of your child's daily activities and can promote conversation on the way home.

## Diversity Policy

The St. Charles Early Childhood Program strives to be an inclusive and diverse environment. The family is the foundation for building a sense of identity for a child, composed of personality, values, culture and traditions. Diversity is not limited to skin color or ethnicity, it also relates to languages, differing physical and cognitive abilities, family structures, gender roles, socio-economic status, level of education and more. A diverse classroom reflects children's home culture and experiences, while providing exposure to other cultures, families, and abilities through shared, developmentally appropriate experiences that occur on a daily basis and become incorporated into the normal early childhood environment.

Curriculum has been known to focus on teacher interests, especially around holidays like Christmas, Halloween and Valentine's Day. The St. Charles Early Childhood Program uses a more child-centered approach. We try to follow the children's interests when planning lessons and activities because this leads to excitement and engagement about the topics. This philosophy affects how holidays are celebrated in the center. Very young children have a limited scope of what makes up a popular holiday, and we focus on what that season means to them directly. Our curriculum approach and program philosophy are based on mutual respect between children, parents and teachers; and we emphasize universal values such as respect, responsibility, caring, and honesty. We emphasize building an open, caring community of learners within our program. We believe the most important thing any adult can do to promote diversity is to maintain an attitude of respect and openness with all people. We avoid the "tourist" approach to diversity because that view often relies on stereotypes and gives children a false, often inaccurate, view of another culture. In other words, you won't see us doing "Mexico week" in our classrooms. You will see literature, music, art and play materials from many cultures in our classrooms every day. Every effort is made in offering children to have classroom contact with teachers that understand and have connections to the child's home culture, language, and beliefs.



At the Center, we focus on what they mean for our families. Older preschool children and school-age children love to share their own rituals and learn about how others spend special occasions in their own homes. If you'd like to share some of your own traditions with the children at the center, talk to your child's teacher.

### **EPSDT**

When children attend the St. Charles Early Childhood Program, Wisconsin regulations require that a medical clearance and proof of immunizations be kept on file. In addition, families are asked to provide health and emergency care information for each child in the program. Reminders will be sent to families to help them stay current on immunizations, well-child appointments with the primary health professional, and developmental screenings as laid out by the Wisconsin Department of Public Health's HealthCheck program. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p01007.pdf>

### **Drop-In/Walk-In (Short-term Care)**

Child care is available to families for unexpected events or short-term care. Availability of drop-in or walk-in program attendance are on an as-needed basis, pending space availability in the appropriate classroom. We offer this option for the convenience of families that find themselves without safe care for their children when life presents changes or challenges in the daily routine. If you feel that your situation may require use of our drop-in program, we encourage you to have paperwork on file for your child(ren) and the family registration fee can be paid on the first day a child attends when payment for care is made. Twenty-four hour notice required to check for availability for drop-in. For walk-in care it's the same day without prior notice. For admission to the drop-in or walk-in program, an enrollment packet is required with a one-time registration fee of \$30. All enrollment paperwork for drop-in/walk-in children must be on file before the child can attend. Drop-in/walk-in scheduling is an option for children aged 2-12 years. Payment for drop-in/walk-in attendance is required at drop-off. For drop-in/walk-in students coming after school, payment is required at pick up on the same day of attendance. Children may not drop-in on a field-trip day or event requiring the children to leave the center.

### **Field Trip Policy**

An important part of St. Charles Early Childhood Program's curriculum is experiencing the many opportunities to expand learning and interact with different environments within the community. Therefore, field trips are built into the yearly calendar. Families will be informed of the trips in advance through newsletters and a permission slip form which will be sent home for each trip. **A signed permission form has to be on file for the child to attend the field trip.** Fees for field trips are separate from program payments and vary from trip to trip. Costs are kept as minimal as possible.

Transportation will either be provided by the Chippewa Yellow Bus Company or on the McDonell Area Catholic Schools blue bus. If a trip is within walking distance, children may leave the center grounds if permission has been authorized for a walking field trip.

In addition, the teachers shall use the following procedures:

- Staff shall maintain an attendance list of all children attending the field trip.
- Staff shall be equipped with children's emergency information and first-aid kit.
- Staff shall walk from the front of the bus to the back of the bus after all children have departed to look for children and belongings.

### Fundraising Policy

McDonell Area Catholic Schools limits the number of system wide fundraisers. Our two primary fundraisers are the Spaghetti Spectacular, held in November each year, and the Mardi Gras celebration, held in February. Families are asked to volunteer to help at each of these events. Another MACS fundraiser that provides needed funding for McDonell Area Catholic Schools is the **Scrip Program**. Family members are encouraged to purchase local or national gift cards on a regular basis.

Smaller student fundraisers such as a bake sale may be held in the individual schools (with prior administrative approval) to help defray the cost of large field trips or for the purchase of specific, approved items.

### Hand Washing Policy

Hand washing is an important health practice in early learning centers. It is the single best way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases and infection. When you drop off your child each day, please support this health practice by reminding them to wash their hands when they enter the classroom. If your child's classroom doesn't have a sink, please allow them to use the restroom to wash up when they arrive. Staff will remind or assist children with hand washing during the following times, as needed:

- Upon arrival for the day.
- Before and after eating, handling food, or feeding a child.
- Before and after giving medicine.
- After diapering and toileting.
- After blowing or wiping their nose.
- After cleaning or handling garbage.
- After handling pets or animals.
- After playing in the water.
- When moving from group to another.

### Head Lice Policy

Unfortunately, it happens! If a student is found to have head lice (either nits or live lice), Families will be called and the student will be sent home. After the student has been treated and the nits removed, he/she will be allowed back into class. When children return, it is our policy that they are checked in the office and visually cleared of nits or lice before returning to their classroom. We ask that you notify the school if you find head lice at home.

### Health Reports & Immunization Requirements

We adhere to state regulations regarding health and immunization records for a child. Each child shall have a physical examination not more than six months prior to nor later than 30 days after admission to the program. **Please note that health examination forms must be updated every two years for children over the age of two and bi-annually for children under two years old.**

State regulations require the program to obtain and keep on file health information on all children enrolling in preschool and child care programs as explained on the enrollment forms. These records are kept secure in the office, which is locked when unattended. These files are accessible to administrators or teaching staff, families or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities with the assistance of management.

Families must submit a record of immunizations with enrollment paperwork on or before the first day of attendance. Exceptions are granted only where such health practices are against the religious or personal conviction of the family. Immunizations may also be waived upon the signature and statement from a physician that the child should not be vaccinated for health reasons. If a required vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program, staff will implement a plan to promptly exclude any child who is waived from vaccinations. The family of the child will be contacted immediately upon discovery of the disease and the family will be expected to pick-up the child to remove him/her from the facility. The duration of exclusion from the program is dependent upon the specific disease that has occurred. Information regarding the disease and exclusion period will be provided to the family at the time of child exclusion.

School-age children who attend the program must submit a copy of their current immunizations and a health report signed by the physician for their file. We do not have authorization to copy your school-age child's immunizations (or any other component of their school file). Those files are kept confidential and fall under different regulations under DPI. You can request a copy of from your child's school office and forward them on to us.

### **Home and School Association (HandS)**

Our Home and School Association is an organization for McDonell Area Catholic Schools families that supports teachers and families by assisting them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the Christian formation of their child. All families, guardians, and staff are encouraged to become involved in HandS by attending quarterly meetings and volunteering to help with the numerous opportunities that build community relationships and support our students' education. It is through the Home and School efforts that our students enjoy such activities as Windy City Players, the Harvest Hoedown celebration, family game nights and fun events during Catholic Schools Week. The St. Charles "Little MACS" yearbook is designed by our HandS Families. They will be available in the spring. HandS also awards "Make It Happen" grants to faculty members and supports teacher appreciation events.

### **Child Illness Policy**

*(Communicable Diseases chart is listed in the EC office)*

On the average, babies experience eight to ten illnesses a year; preschoolers experience almost as many. We know that managing the demands of work can be challenging when your child is ill. We strive to limit the spread of communicable disease in our centers and are committed to implementing policies that balance and respect the needs of children, families, and staff in these circumstances.

Our Child Illness Policy is based on the Model Health Care Policies developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Bright Horizons understands that it is difficult for a parent/guardian to leave or miss work; therefore, it is suggested that alternative arrangements be made for occasions when children must remain at home or be picked up due to illness. Exclusion from the center is sometimes necessary either to reduce the transmission of illness or because the center is not able to adequately meet the needs of the child. Mild illnesses are common among children, and infections are often spread before the onset of any symptoms. In these cases, we try to keep the children comfortable throughout the day. Reasons for Bright Horizons to exclude children include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities, such as going outdoors.

- Illness that results in a greater need for care than our staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful disease to others
- Severely ill appearance
- Fever of 100 degrees or above or an equivalent measure accompanied by behavior change or other signs and symptoms.
- Unexplained fever in a child younger than 4 months
- Fever of 100 degrees or above (axillary) or 101 or above (orally) in an infant younger than two months; such circumstances should be medically evaluated within an hour
- Fever of 104°F or greater in a child of any age (requires immediate medical attention)
- Diarrhea; watery stools or decreased form of stool not associated with change of diet; stool not contained in the diaper; child unable to reach the toilet; or stool frequency that exceeds 2 or more stools above normal for that child.
  - Cases of bloody diarrhea and diarrhea caused by Shigella, salmonella, Shiga toxin producing E coli, Cryptosporidium or G intestinalis must be cleared for readmission by a health care professional.
- Blood or mucus in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.
- Vomiting more than 2 times in the previous 24 hours (unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration).
- Mouth sores with drooling (unless the child's medical provider or local health department authority states that the child is noninfectious).
- Abdominal pain that continues for more than 2 hours; intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever, dehydration, or other signs of illness.
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes (unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease).
- Skin sores weeping fluid and on an exposed area that cannot be covered
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge) until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Strep throat (or other streptococcal infection) until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Head lice or nits until after first treatment.
- Rubella, until 7 days after the rash appears.
- Scabies until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried or crusted (usually 6 days after onset of rash).

- Pertussis (whooping cough) until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Hepatitis A virus until 1 week after onset of illness or jaundice or as directed by the health department (if the child's symptoms are mild).
- Tuberculosis, until the child's medical provider or local health department states the child is on appropriate treatment and can return.
- Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.

For your child's comfort, and to reduce the risk of contagion, we ask that children be picked up within 1.5 hours of notification. Until then, your child will be kept comfortable and will continue to be observed for symptoms.

Children need to remain home for 24 hours without symptoms before returning to the program, unless the center receives a note from the child's medical provider stating that the child is not contagious and may return to the center. In the case of a (suspected) contagious disease, rash, or continuing symptoms, a note from the child's medical provider may be required before the child can return. Children who have been excluded may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for a full 24 hours.
- Re-admission after diarrhea can occur when diapered children have their stool contained by the diaper (even if stools remain loose) and when toilet-trained children do not have toileting accidents.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual program activities, including outdoor time.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless
  - the child's medical provider signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and
  - the involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.

If a child is excluded because of a reportable communicable disease, a note from the child's medical provider stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return is required.

The final decision on whether to exclude a child from the program due to illness will be made by the child care center.

**Note:** Notes allowing for a child's return to the center after exclusion due to illness must originate from the child's medical provider. A note written and signed by the child's parent/guardian who is also a physician is not acceptable.

### **Immediate Termination**

Program may terminate child's enrollment in program effective immediately upon written notice to family of such termination, if any of the following conditions arise:

- It is evident that the child cannot adjust to the program's environment.
- Based on the director's reasonable opinion and observation, child's behavior significantly and directly threatens the physical or mental health, safety or well-being of one or more of the other enrolled children at program and that the threat cannot be eliminated. If reasonable accommodations will eliminate the threat, child may be suspended until such time as the accommodation can be implemented.
- The program is not equipped to properly deal with the special needs of the child.
- Lack of cooperation from family with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or meet the child's needs through family/staff meetings or conferences.
- Abusive behaviors by family toward their child or other children, program staff or other families (including foul language).
- An established payment agreement between director and family is not upheld per conditions stated therein.
- If child is picked-up late more than 3 times in any 30 day period.
- If, in the judgment of Director, child evidences obvious symptoms of infectious or acute illness or family fails to pick up child from school promptly when notified by program that child is ill. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis if the child is ill due to a disability and the direct threat can be eliminated. If reasonable accommodations will eliminate the threat, child may be suspended until such time as the accommodation can be implemented.
- Failure to submit required forms and information.

### **Inclusion**

Children often have special needs including those that relate to behavioral issues, developmental concerns, or health issues. The St. Charles Early Childhood Program feels it to be best practices to accommodate children's needs to the best of our abilities. If a family comes to the program with a special need, the Director and the family will meet to determine if the child can participate in the program with reasonable accommodation. If it has been approved, they will meet with the classroom teacher to develop an Individual Support Plan to ensure the child's needs will be met. The plan should be in place before the child is left in the care of the program. The Individual Support Plan will be reviewed annually or whenever changes need to be made. Any instructions for any of the child's special health needs (such as allergies, asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, seizures, diabetes, or other chronic illnesses) must be documented within the child's health record using the provided program form. For resources in how to support your child's individual needs within the school setting, visit Understood.org and Pacer at

- <https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/partnering-with-childrens-school/working-with-childrens-teacher/10-ways-to-be-an-effective-advocate-for-your-child#slide-7>
- <http://www.pacer.org/ec/>

St. Charles Early Childhood supports intervention and support for all children in an effort to provide them with the best environment for their individual needs. This process is confidential between the classroom teaching team, administrator and family until the family authorizes an outside individual to be included in the process. The procedure for addressing target behaviors and integrating support services is as follows:

1. The classroom teaching team closely observes and documents the child's behavior.
2. The teaching team will attempt to adapt the activities and environment to meet the child's distinct learning or behavioral needs.

3. The teaching team and administration will also enlist the help of the child's family as they are the primary source of information concerning the child to construct a plan using the Individual Behavior Plan.
4. Developmental screening tools may be used at this point to further document the child's individual development and behavior.
5. The teaching team and administration may encourage the family to seek out support services and give them appropriate contact information for Early Childhood specific specialists, therapists and interventionists.
6. If an IEP or Early Intervention system is established for the child, the program will work collaboratively with the IEP team of professionals and the family to support the individual needs of the child.

If you have concerns or questions about a child's development (physical, social-emotional, or cognitive) contact: **Wisconsin First Step Information and Referral Hotline** at 1-800-642-STEP (7837).

Every Catholic School in the La Crosse Diocese respects the dignity of each individual and, therefore, will not discriminate on the basis of race, nationality, or sex in regard to enrollment. The Diocese of La Crosse has the obligation to publicize its nondiscrimination policies.

### **Program Transitions**

As part of the St. Charles Early Childhood Program's affiliation with McDonell Area Catholic Schools and Chippewa Falls Unified Public Schools, our programs support the transition of enrolled children into BB4C and kindergarten. We plan curriculum according to a curriculum crosswalk between the COR Advantage Child Assessment system, Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS). This ensures that the children have had standards-based lesson planning that align with other specialized programs that also utilize WMELS and prepare children to enter kindergarten.

### **Internet Use Policy**

Internet use is an important learning tool that students will use from time to time. For these instructional purposes, classroom teachers may use the Internet for child-appropriate activities. No unsupervised use of the Internet by students is allowed. Any student use will be on district-approved or staff-previewed sites.

### **Lost and Found**

Each year the number of articles "found" is much larger than the number of items claimed. Our "Lost and Found" basket will be located in the school office. Your children should be encouraged to check this basket if they have lost something. Small valuables such as watches and jewelry will be kept in the program office. The labeling of clothing and possessions is helpful in returning lost items to the rightful owner. All unclaimed Lost and Found items will be donated to a charity at the end of the school year.

### **Medical Emergencies**

In the case of a medical emergency, the staff will administer basic first aid and/or CPR. The family or emergency contact/authorized adult will be notified as soon as possible. If medical attention is required, the staff will call the local ambulance service, and the child will be transported to the hospital. A staff member will stay with the child until an authorized adult arrives. Every effort will be made to contact the child's own physician if the situation allows.

The primary hospital of the St. Charles Early Childhood Program:  
 St. Joseph Hospital – Chippewa Falls  
 2661 County Highway I  
 Chippewa Falls, WI 54729  
 Emergency Phone: (715) 717-7220 or 911  
 Phone: (715) 723-1811

The primary dental care facility of the St. Charles Early Childhood Program:  
 Smiles in Motion  
 583 Lakeland Dr  
 Chippewa Falls, WI 54729  
 Phone: (715) 723-2000  
 Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00am–4:00pm  
 For Dental Emergencies outside these hours, St. Joseph’s Hospital will be called.

### **Medication Policy**

According to state regulations, any substance given orally or topically that the child may be given is considered medication. Anything other than soap and water is considered “medication” by the regulatory agencies and medical professionals, this includes hand lotion, diaper cream, and chapstick/lip balm.

The health and safety of the child is our primary concern when administering medication. We adhere to state guidelines and best practices to ensure that the child receives the proper dosage of medication. The administration of medication shall be the immediate responsibility of administrative team in the office. In the event that management is unable to administer the medication, an authorized lead team member will do so. Any staff member administering medication has been trained by a health professional in the Six Rights process.

All medications are stored in a locked cabinet in the office with the exception of Epi-pens and/or glucose tablets, which will be with the child’s classroom first aid kit. All medications are to be brought to the program by an authorized adult caregiver or family member. **Please do not leave medications of any kind in the child’s diaper bag or backpack. The medication must be handed to the teacher to office staff member.** We will not administer the initial dosage of a medication. Expired medications will be sent home.

Over-the-Counter:

We must have written consent to administer any medication using a medication authorization form that has been signed by a legal guardian. This form must have the following information included:

- child’s name
- birthdate
- name of medication
- administration instructions
- medication intervals
- length of time of this authorization
- signature
- date of authorization



Over-the-counter medication must be in its original container and have the child's name on it. **Over-the-counter medications may only be administered according to product recommendations on the bottle. If the recommended dosage states "consult a physician", a physician's note will be required.**

#### Prescriptions:

We will administer prescription medication as prescribed by a licensed physician with a signed medication authorization form. Medication is to be in original prescription container with child's first and last name, the date that either the prescription was filled or the recommendation was obtained from the child's licensed health care provider, the name of the licensed health care provider, the expiration date of the medication or the period of the use of the medication, the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication, and instructions on how to administer and store it. The name of medication and dosage area must be displayed on container. Any previously listed information that is not contained on the medication label must be documented thoroughly within the child's health record. A caregiver shall give or apply any prescription or nonprescription medication according to the directions on the original container unless authorized by a written order of the child's physician.

#### Sunscreen:

In order to protect against heat/sun injury, the program ensures that children have the opportunity to play in the shade. When in the sun, they wear family-provided sun-protective clothing, applied skin protection, or both. Applied skin protection will be either sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher that is applied to exposed skin by the staff. The sun protection will be provided by the family with written permission from the family on the appropriate topical medication form. The sunscreen must be added as a medication to the child's health record. Sunscreen will be applied by teachers.

#### Insect Repellent:

Bug sprays and insect repellents are provided by the family if desired. A permission to apply form must be received prior to applying any sprays or repellents. Sprays and/or repellents are applied by the classroom staff.

Topical nonprescription medication including, but not limited to, sunscreen and insect repellent, requires written family authorization annually. Topical nonprescription treatments can be stored in the child's classroom in a locked cabinet, out of the reach of children. Written authorization forms for topical treatments must be kept up to date in the classroom.

### **Parent Advisory Committee**

The concept of the parent advisory committee (PAC) is based on a belief in the importance of collaboration and shared leadership. Parents, administration, teachers and the community work together to offer support, expertise, and feedback on school policies and routines in accordance with McDonell Area Catholic Schools mission, vision, and values. The committee also plays a role in strategic planning and goal-setting for future improvements and development of the Early Childhood Program. Advisory committee members offer their experience and expertise to strengthen the decision-making process. The St. Charles Early Childhood PAC meets a minimum of four times a year, in January, March, June, and September. If events arise, the committee is given the authority to vote to add additional meetings to the annual schedule. This committee is not a governing board with member-held positions, rather it is a gathering of like-minded individuals invested in the quality improvement of the Early Childhood and Supers program at St. Charles. The committee has space

available for a six-member committee, not including the Director of Early Childhood and the Assistant Director.

### **Personal Days**

**Families are granted an allotted number of personal days per child per year based on their contracted schedule.** Personal days can be used as frequently as the family chooses, ie. to cover an unexpected change of schedule, sick days or emergency situations. To use personal days, fill out a personal day slip (**located next to the sign-in station**) and submit to the office or in the payment box. Personal day requests can be submitted via email also. The used personal days will be deducted from our personal day total, will be credited to your account and will show up on your statement on the next billing cycle.

### **Personal Items**

We request that ALL personal items remain at home unless there is a special show-and-tell event going on in your child's classroom. Misunderstandings and toys getting broken or lost can be very upsetting for a child. The program will not be responsible for lost or broken items brought from home. Special items for rest time are not included in this policy. It is acceptable for a child to bring a blanket or stuffed toy for rest time.

A child should bring a sleeping bag or mat for nap time. A blanket or small stuffed animal is welcomed. If left at school, the sleeping bag and blanket are stored and sent home for laundering weekly. **Please label all items.** The child will not be asked to share these items. **Nap items are stored in bags on each child's hallway hook. Please take these items home weekly and wash them.**

Please check your child's cubby or file at the end of each day for projects and notes. Any soiled clothing to be taken home will be bagged and placed on your child's hallway hook or in their backpack.

**\*\*Diapers and Wet Wipes for 18 months till potty trained should be supplied by the family for each of their children .**

### **Personal Safety Policy**

Children should not bring any unauthorized objects or substances to St. Charles Early Childhood Program. The family will be informed of any situations the Child is involved in that threaten the safety of that child or the other children at the Program. Knowingly possessing an unauthorized object/substance could jeopardize future attendance in the program. No weapons are allowed on school property at any time except by authorized law enforcement personnel. Suspension and expulsion are possible consequences for violations of this policy.

### **Photo Use Policy**

Throughout the school year, students and families are photographed or videotaped during classroom activities, special programs or events. The pictures are used to share McDonnell Area Catholic Schools (MACS) news and successes of your children. Photos would be used in newsletters, yearbooks, MACS promotional items, on the website, in social media, in local newspapers, etc. The Diocese of La Crosse may also use your child's photo.

**NOTE:** MACS and the Diocese of La Crosse reserve to the right to choose which photographs are used, when they are used and for what length of time they will be posted.

In order to be certain we do not infringe on the privacy of your child/family we ask your permission first. **You will be asked to sign a permission form before the beginning of each school year.**

Photographs of the children are taken in the classroom on a regular basis. We use photographs to document learning, to label a child's personal space or belongings and to help them understand classroom organization and routines. From time to time, we may have outside photographers in the program and pictures may appear in publicity materials, including TV ads, newspaper articles, and web materials. Family's permission for photographs is optional but is part of the enrollment process.

### **Programs**

St. Charles Early Childhood Program currently offers the following programs to meet the needs of our families.

Our Early Childhood Program (ages 18 months – 5 in pre-Kindergarten) runs year round. This includes a 2-year-old early preschool classroom, 3-year-old preschool classroom, and a 4-year old kindergarten readiness program. The BB4C classrooms are a public 4-year old kindergarten program in partnership with Chippewa Falls Unified School District.

Our Supers (school-age) Before/After School Program runs from September-June (last day of the school year). Our Summer Camp Macks Program runs from the second week in June through the end of August (up to the first day of school).

### **Registration Forms**

The following forms/requirements must be complete and submitted to the program *prior to* the child's first day of attendance:

- a. registration form and \$30 fee
- b. child enrollment form
- c. health history form
- d. emergency care plan
- e. health report with physician signature
- f. immunizations
- g. enrollment agreement form
- h. Family handbook signature page
- i. contract signed
- j. custody agreements (if applicable)
- k. intake information for children 2yrs & younger
- l. video/photo permission form
- m. pick up authorization form
- n. diocese field trip permission form
- o. getting to know your child form

### Rest Time

Children under the age of five (5) are required to rest at least 30 minutes each day if they attend for more than four hours. If a child does not fall asleep during that 30 minute period, teaching staff will provide them with quiet activities in a reasonably lighted area of the classroom until the lights are turned on. Young children really need this rest time to relax and unwind from their busy morning schedule. This quiet time enables them to have a more positive afternoon and be a happier child at home with you at the end of the day.

### Safety Procedures

#### Fire

Specific procedures are provided for the staff and Children to follow in case of a fire. Monthly fire drills are practiced. Exit route maps are posted in each classroom.

#### Injury

If a Child becomes injured while at the Program, the Child will be given appropriate first aid and an accident report will be completed. If it is the judgment of the staff that medical attention is necessary, the Family will be contacted. If the injury is of an emergency nature, the paramedics will be called to the Program and then the Family will be contacted. If the Child is provided medical care on an emergency basis or otherwise, the Family shall be financially responsible for such care and treatment.

#### Non-Weather Emergencies

Emergency procedures are in place for non-weather emergencies. In the event of an evacuation, the Children will be transported to a safe area. Procedures for handling emergencies are reviewed and available to all staff in an Emergency Procedure Manual.

#### Tornado/Severe Weather

Specific procedures are provided for staff and Children for severe weather warnings and are practiced. Children are escorted to the lowest level of the building and will remain there until it is safe to return to the classroom. Families arriving during any weather warnings are encouraged to remain in the building until the warning has been lifted.

### Sanitation

Toys and equipment are disinfected according to a scheduled rotation. Classrooms and bathrooms are cleaned and vacuumed daily or immediately, if soiled. Changing tables are washed and sanitized between use.

### School Family

*(From Conscious Discipline: [http://consciousdiscipline.com/about/the\\_school\\_family.asp](http://consciousdiscipline.com/about/the_school_family.asp))*

School climate impacts all achievement. The culture of a school can foster bullying, blame and cliques, or it can build cooperation, willingness and responsibility. Research and experience prove that we need to rethink the school culture if we wish to build successful and safe educational institutions. The **School Family**, built on a healthy family model, is the model for the development of positive social learning. The goal of a healthy family is the optimal development of all members. The School Family builds connections between families and schools, teachers and teachers, teachers and students, and students and students to ensure the optimal development of all.

These connections provide the three essential ingredients for school success:

- A willingness to learn: Without willingness, each interaction becomes a power struggle instead of a learning opportunity. The School Family brings all children, especially the most difficult, to a place of willingness through a sense of belonging.
- Impulse control: Connection with others is the construct that literally wires the brain for impulse control. Disconnected children are disruptive and prone to aggressive or bullying behaviors. External reward/punishment systems cannot improve a child's ability to self-regulate because they are not designed to teach new skills. The School Family uses connection to encourage impulse control while teaching self-regulation skills in context.
- Attention: Our attentional system is sensitive to stress and becomes engaged with positive emotions. The School Family reduces stress while creating an atmosphere of caring, encouragement and meaningful contributions. These components are essential for children to develop and apply sustained attention.

The School Family is created through routines, rituals, value development and loving guidance and supports the mission and vision of McDonell Area Catholic Schools.

### **Snow Days and Weather-Related Closings**

St. Charles Early Childhood Program **will be open** if the Chippewa Falls Public and McDonell Area Catholic schools are closed due to snow emergencies (**snowstorms**). In the case of extreme weather or either of these two things happen, we would be closed too:

- public transportation is not running
- UWEC or CVTC are closed

**Please tune into your local radio or TV station to determine if the schools are closed.** The following radio stations will carry the announcements: WBIZ (Z100), WIAL (I94), WWIB (103.7), WAXX (104.5), and B95 (95.1). Announcements will also be posted on the TV stations WEAU and WQOW.

Call the St. Charles Early Childhood Program at [715.723.2161](tel:715.723.2161) to see if openings are available if your child was not scheduled to attend that day. We will assess staffing needs by 10:00 am on a snow day to determine proper ratios of staff to children for the day, so children need to be accounted for by this 10:00 am deadline.

On days that school closes early due to bad weather, the program will be available until 4:30pm at Holy Ghost Supers and 5:00 pm at St. Charles Early Childhood (1 hour early release at each location) or until all children have been picked up. Families are encouraged to pick-up the children early to ensure that they get home safely. If school closes or releases early due to bad weather, any events that may be scheduled that evening will also be cancelled.

### **Staff**

All staff members maintain current CPR and first aid certification. All staff members are provided with information regarding child abuse prevention and detection. All staff are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. The staff is required to develop an individual professional development plan that includes but is not limited to monthly trainings on a variety of topics related to Early Childhood Education and program quality. This professional development plan is partially subsidized by the program to ensure that all staff has the opportunity to stay abreast of the most current research in early learning and best practices in child development programs.

There are a minimum of two staff in the Center at all times.

The staff to child ratios in the program are as follows:

18 months to 30 months: 1 adult to 4 children, maximum group size 8\*

30 months to 3.5 years: 1 adult to 8 children, maximum group size 16 children\*

3.5 years to 4 years: 1 adult to 10 children, maximum group size 20 children\*

4 years to 5 years: 1 adult to 13 children, maximum group size of 20 children\*

Supers (6 years to 12 years): 1 adult to 15 children, maximum group size 30\*

\*Group size does not indicate enrollment numbers, only the number of children in one classroom at any given time.

The St. Charles Early Childhood program makes every effort to keep staff assigned to the same classroom on a consistent basis so the children and families are familiar with their teachers and assistant teachers. Teaching teams are established and documented in a Early Childhood Classroom Staffing Plan. The same lead teacher, assistant teachers and classroom aides will be scheduled on a consistent basis to support consistency of care for the children. Staff daily schedules will also be as consistent as is reasonably possible. Classroom aides may work in a substitute or support staff position in any classroom in need of extra staff.

### **Supervision Policy**

Children are appropriately supervised at all times. Teaching staff positions themselves within the group to see as many children as possible. Toddlers and twos are supervised by sight and sound at all times. Preschool children and Super Kids are supervised by sight and sound unless using the restroom. Preschool children and Supers use the restroom one at a time, by themselves if they are able to do so; however, a staff person will remain nearby and provide supervision by sound.

All teaching staff supervising a group of children will have an accurate and updated attendance sheet that has the following information:

- a. names of children in the group,
- b. time that the child joined the group,
- c. time when a child leaves the group (or is picked up)
- d. an accurate running total of the group size.

#### **Bus Supervision**

School personnel will supervise students waiting for buses. Supervision on board the buses is the responsibility of the bus company. Riding the bus is a privilege. Families will be notified by the bus company and/or the St. Charles Administrators if a child's behavior is unacceptable. All students will have an opportunity to meet with the bus company staff to review the PBIS model (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) and expectations for riding the Chippewa Yellow Buses at the beginning of the school year.

## Technology

The St. Charles Early Childhood Program uses a research-based philosophy when defining the role of technology in early learning. When the integration of technology and interactive media in early childhood programs is built upon solid developmental foundations, and early childhood professionals are aware of both the challenges and the opportunities, educators are positioned to improve program quality by intentionally leveraging the potential of technology and media for the benefit of every child. Technology and interactive media should not replace other beneficial educational activities such as creative play, outdoor experiences, and social interactions with peers and adults in early childhood settings. Educators should provide a balance of activities in programs for young children, and technology and media should be recognized as tools that are valuable when used intentionally with children to extend and support active, hands-on, creative, and authentic engagement with those around them and with their world. *(From the NAEYC Position Statement on Technology in Early Learning <http://www.naeyc.org/content/technology-and-young-children>)*

## Tobacco and Alcohol Use

No smoking or alcohol consumption is allowed in school buildings. Exception for alcoholic beverage consumption on school premises or at school-sponsored activities may occur only when specifically permitted in writing and approved by the school administrator or president and when such use is consistent with state law, local ordinances, and school policies.

## Vandalism Policy

Our goal is to be respectful of our buildings, furnishings and supplies. Students will be taught how to care for materials and supplies. Teachers will also inspect materials before they are checked out to students. If a student breaks, damages or vandalizes (writes on, carves into, etc.) anything at school, families will be notified and repairs or replacement fees will be expected. Please discuss this policy with your child to help keep our buildings, furnishings and supplies in good condition. We are proud of our schools!

## Volunteer Opportunities

All families are encouraged and welcome to volunteer or observe at any time. Parents, guardians and family members are greatly valued as partners in the education of their children. We encourage you to become involved in the many different areas of school life. The best early learning programs are a result of the commitment and dedication of a village, the result of teamwork between families, program administration, teachers, community members, and alumni. One of the best ways to offer support and build the program quality is to share our talents and expertise toward the common goal of the best education and care for our children. **We strongly encourage each family to volunteer time annually.** A volunteer logbook is kept in the Early Childhood office to track this contribution of time and effort.

If you plan to volunteer at school, please remember **that you MUST complete the diocesan Safe Environment Volunteer Questionnaire, a Basic Criminal Background Check and Verification of Family Safe Environment Training by the end of September.** This is required by the Diocese of La Crosse **BEFORE** you can be a volunteer. We highly value your role in the educational process and look forward to our partnership with you.

## APPENDIX

### Additional Enrollment Requirements

- Toddlers who are enrolled into St. Charles Early Childhood Program must be at least 18 months old.
- Preschool children must be potty trained to enroll in a three-year-old program.
- There is no birthday cut-off for the four-year-old pre-K program. BB4C students must be four years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Supers must be in kindergarten to qualify for the School's Out program (before and after school, days off school). For Summer Day Camp enrollment, children going into five-year kindergarten.

### Assessment Procedures & Confidentiality

Children will be assessed within their natural classroom environment. Whenever possible, assessments will be included in the natural flow of the child's day. Teaching staff will embed assessment-related activities in curriculum and in daily routines. Children will be assessed by teaching staff with whom they are familiar and work with on a regular basis.

Assessment methods may include:

- Family intake surveys
- Observations
- Checklists
- Work samples
- Photographs

Assessment information will be kept confidential and inaccessible to unauthorized individuals. Assessment records are stored in the classroom. Families can view a child's assessment data upon request. The following people will have access to a child's records:

- Teaching staff who work with the child
- Director
- Families
- Others, as authorized by the child's family

St. Charles Early Childhood Program staff will assist families with the referral process to outside agencies if needed. With your permission, staff can provide contact information, collect data to be shared, or speak directly to professionals in other agencies.



## Breastfeeding

Because breastfeeding has been shown to be the superior form of infant nutrition, providing a multitude of health benefits to both infant and mother, and because breastfeeding mothers need ongoing support from Early Childhood professionals to provide their milk for their babies, St. Charles Early Childhood Program subscribes to the following policies:

- The St. Charles supports and accommodates breastfeeding.
- If a mother prefers, she is more than welcome to nurse her child at the Center. Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk. Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area provides an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water.
- Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies. The childcare center is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers, including providing an opportunity to breastfeed their baby in the morning and evening, and holding off giving a bottle, if possible, when mom is due to arrive. Artificial baby milks (formula) and solid foods will not be provided unless the mother has requested. Babies will be held closely when feeding and bottles will never be propped.
- Staff shall be trained in handling human milk. *Universal precautions are not required in handling human milk.* All staff will be trained in the proper storage and handling of human milk, as well as ways to support breastfeeding mothers.
- Expressed breast milk must be brought to the Center in ready-to-feed bottles or cups labeled with the child's full name and the date of collection. Expressed breast milk will be stored in the refrigerator for no more than one day or the freezer for no more than three months. Expressed breast milk will be discarded at the end of a feeding.

## Child Guidance & Biting

In accordance with state regulations, in an effort to guide children to positive behavior, we may:

- Model appropriate language and actions.
- Give gentle reminders of the rules.
- Provide all children with safe spaces to calm down.
- Redirect the child to another activity.
- Reassure the child when she is upset and help her use words to express her feelings.
- Ask the child to discuss feelings and problems with us.
- Work with the child to decide on better choices.
- Listen to the child's point of view and try to help him solve his problem.
- Facilitate the children to work out their differences as independently as their development allows.

Conflicts are viewed as learning opportunities for children to develop skills such as cooperation, negotiation, and communication with the person involved. However, if we are unable to resolve a particular conflict we will follow these steps:

- A child may not be allowed to participate in a particular activity for a period of time.
- Conference with families to discuss further action.
- A behavior plan and Individual Support Plan may be compiled collaboratively with families, teachers and management.
- Families may be expected to remove the child from the program for the day.

The following means of punishment are prohibited:

- Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or other forms of corporal punishment.
- Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him.
- Mental or emotional punishment.
- Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Confining a child in an enclosed area.

A child may be withdrawn from the program for behavior or conduct at the discretion of administration.

### **Biting**

Dealing with biting is a sensitive issue for the children involved as well as those caring for and teaching children, but the way a teacher reacts is a critical element in controlling biting in the preschool or daycare environment. Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children at the program is our primary concern.

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at the program:

1. The biting will be interrupted with a calm but firm "Stop! Biting is not okay. Biting hurts. It is never okay." Staff will remove the biter from the situation.
2. The bitten child will be comforted. Treat them appropriately, as the wound dictates (ice, band aid, etc.) The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and water. If developmentally appropriate, have the biter aid in this process to reinforce kindness, reconciliation, and empathy.
3. After the child has a brief conversation with teachers about acceptable and unacceptable social behaviors and treatment of their peers, the biter will be given something to do in a calm, quiet space. Every effort is made to ensure that it is understood biting does not get them attention, but the praise and positive attention will be given when the child is not making an inappropriate bid for that attention.
4. The families of both children will be notified of the biting incident. Accident and Incident forms will be filled out. The incident will be recorded in the classroom notebook.
5. Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.
6. The bitten area should continue to be observed by families and staff for signs of infection.
7. Teaching staff will then observe the children to note any negative behavior patterns or repeated biting incidents. Every effort will be made by all teachers and members of administration to act proactively to prevent biting from occurring. The best tool to prevent biting is to know the children and scenarios that may incite biting. If there is a history between two specific children or if one particular child is going through a biting phase, there will be constant monitoring of those situations.

**Waiting List Procedure**

Families who are currently enrolled in the program will be given priority for re-enrollment. Remaining spaces will be filled on a first come-first serve basis according to the date of enrollment. If the program is full when a family inquires, the child’s name(s) will be put on a waiting list and the family notified as vacancies occur.

Open slots are first available to children already attending the program before being made available to families on the waiting list. Waiting list children who have siblings attending the program have priority at the top of the waiting list, in order of earliest submission to latest.

To be placed on the waiting list, family will need to fill out a waiting list form and submit a \$30 family registration fee. Upon receipt of the registration fee and waiting list form, the child will be placed on the bottom of the waiting list. If a waiting list child moves to the next classroom waiting list, they will be added to that classroom based on the date their waiting list form was submitted.

When a slot becomes available, the program will call the first person on the waiting list and offer them the spot. If the first person on the waiting list is unavailable, we will leave a message. If the person declines or we do not receive an answer by the end of the business day, we will call the next person on the waiting list and repeat the process until the spot is filled.

The waiting list family who wishes to enroll their child must agree to enroll their Child within two weeks of the notification of the opening.

**Who’s Who in the Office**

Our goal in the school offices is to serve our school community in a kind, caring and friendly way. Please feel free to call or email the school with any questions or concerns that you have. When you call or stop in, you can expect to be greeted by one of the following:

- Jamie Dodge.....Director of Early Childhood
- Natalie Lilla.....Assistant Director of Early Childhood
- Nicole Lietzke..... Early Childhood Administrative Assistant
- Justin Langel.....St. Charles Facilities Management

**Early Childhood Staff**

\*\*There are staff bios posted in the office of our teachers. Please stop by and get to know the teachers a little better.

**Thank You for choosing the  
St. Charles Early Childhood Program.**



### **PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**

In signing this agreement, the family agrees to all policies and procedures outlined herein. Family agrees to assume all responsibilities and risks of injury related to Child's presence on the premises of the St. Charles Early Childhood Program and the McDonnell Area Catholic Schools, the use of its equipment and facilities, and Child's participation in all Program activities whether on its premises or at another location and for myself and my heirs and assigns to hereby waive, release and agree to hold free from all claims for damages the St. Charles Early Childhood Program and McDonnell Area Catholic Schools, its officers, directors, members, volunteers, employees or agents.

Family has met with the Director to review this Agreement, as part of the St. Charles Early Childhood Program Family Handbook. Family agrees to read and comply with all rules outlined in said Family Handbook. Family further agrees to the responsibility of seeking out further explanation of any rule in said Family Handbook from a St. Charles Borromeo Early Childhood Director, employee or agent.

Family has read this Agreement and understands its terms, understands that he/she has given up substantial rights by signing it and has signed it freely and voluntarily without inducement, assurance or guarantee and intends that their signature is a complete and non-conditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by the law.

### **St. Charles Early Childhood Program Statement of Compliance**

I have read, understand and agree to comply with the terms and conditions outlined in the St. Charles Early Childhood Handbook.

Family Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Children enrolled in the program: \_\_\_\_\_