

Parent Handbook



St. Joseph Early Learning Center

412 East Kellett St. ~ Martinsburg, MO 65264

573-492-6398

Mission Statement

St. Joseph Early Learning Center is called by its Catholic Parish Community to assist the parents of our community in the development and care of their children. St. Joseph Early Learning Center will plan and implement a program to enhance children's religious, social, emotional, and physical development. A safe, fun, loving atmosphere will be provided where children can grow and discover that people and the world are gifts from God.

Infant/Toddler Program- Infant Room (ages 6 weeks to 11 months) & One Year Old Room (12 months to 23 months)

Parents are asked to provide diapers, wipes, diaper rash cream (if needed), formula, baby food, and a change of clothes. Parents are welcome to bring any sort of lovey their child needs to sleep or calm themselves with. Swings, playpens, bouncy seats, stationary walkers, etc. will be provided.

Infants and toddlers will receive constant care and interaction from staff members to aide in children achieving age appropriate development stages. A daily sheet is used to record bottle feedings and diaper changes each day. We encourage the parents to look over the daily sheet to see how their child's day was.

St. Joseph Early Learning Center reserves the right to charge a "spot holding fee." When a spot becomes available, the director will contact the next family on the waiting list. If the child is not yet physically able to fill the spot (not yet born, not old enough to attend, etc.), the parents can request that the spot be held without a fee until another family is requesting the spot. In the event that another child is requesting to start, the family holding a spot will need to pay a "spot holding fee" to hold the spot for their child. The "spot holding fee" will be a one-time fee of \$100. A spot can be held for up to 6 months.

Preschool Program- 2 years to 5 years

Parents are asked to provide their preschoolers with a complete change of clothes (shirt, pants, socks, underwear). If a child is potty training, several sets of clothes will be needed. St. Joseph Early Learning Center will follow the parents' lead on potty training. Parents should inform the ELC when their child will begin potty training, along with specific potty training instructions.

The Preschool program is designed to meet the developmental needs of young children. It provides experiences that enrich and enhance each child's cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. Within the daily schedule, each child has opportunities to create, explore the environment, learn problem-solving and personal interaction skills, and learn concepts through first-hand experiences. In addition, children develop a positive self-concept through a balance of self and teacher-facilitated activities.

Opportunities for solitary play as well as group activities are provided. Activities focus on school readiness skills, arts and crafts, games, music, outdoor recreation, and storytime.

Discipline

St. Joseph Early Learning Center will first use a verbal warning with a child who disregards rules or disrupts the class. If disruptions continue, the child will be asked to sit next to a teacher while still involved in the classroom activity. If the child still is unable to follow the teacher's instructions, a "time-out" will result. Children in "time-out" will remain within sight of a teacher but separated from the rest of the children to be given a chance to calm down so they may rejoin the rest of the group.

If a child becomes a constant, daily disturbance to the classroom or repeatedly causes physical harm to others, and the staff feels it necessary, the parents will be notified of the child being placed on a probationary period. During the probation period, the child must show a significant behavior improvement in the classroom; if there is no significant improvement, the child will be dismissed from the Early Learning Center.

St. Joseph Early Learning Center will never use physical or verbal punishment as discipline. Children will never be humiliated, threatened, or frightened as punishment.

Religious Studies

Bible stories, activities, and prayer will be used daily in our curriculum.

Admission

St. Joseph Early Learning Center will admit children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. St. Joseph Early Learning Center will consider children for enrollment regardless of sex, race, or religion.

St. Joseph Early Learning Center requires the return of the enrollment form, immunization record, and birth certificate, as well as an enrollment fee of \$20.00 (per child) paid prior to the child's first day.

Arrival and Departure

Children will be greeted upon arrival by a teacher. Staff will sign the children in and out on the daily sign-in sheet. St. Joseph Early Learning Center will only dismiss children to parent(s), legal guardian, or an individual approved by the parent(s) or legal guardian. If an employee does not know the person picking up a child, a picture ID will be needed before the child is allowed to leave. For the safety of the children, children may not leave the building unless accompanied by an adult.

Fees and Payments

Each child is enrolled full-time, paying the weekly rate, even if the child does not attend every day. Rates are as follows:

Infant/Toddler Program

\$170.00 per week

Preschool and School Age (summer care)

\$160.00 per week

Payment is due the Friday before the week of service. If the weekly fee is not received by closing time the following Monday, there will be a \$5.00 late fee. Other fees may include a \$25 returned check fee, and a \$1.00 per minute late pick-up fee.

In the event that parents do not work during the summer months, for example, as teachers, and do not require child care, families will be required to still pay the weekly rate to hold their child's spot.

Hours of Operation and Holidays

St. Joseph Early Learning Center will open at 6:30 A.M. and close at 5:30 P.M. There will be no child care on the following days, however, payment is still required:

- *New Year's Day*
- *Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*
- *Good Friday and Easter Monday (the Monday following Easter Sunday)*
- *Memorial Day*
- *Juneteenth*
- *Independence Day*
- *Labor Day*
- *Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving*
- *Christmas Day and December 26th, the day after Christmas*

Vacation Week

Each child will be given a free week's vacation to be used in one calendar week.

The following criteria must be met in order to receive the discount:

- 1) The child has been enrolled for one year at the Early Learning Center.
- 2) Payment has been late no more than two times during the year.
- 3) The child is not present during the week of vacation.

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement winter weather, every effort will be made to keep the Early Learning Center open. However, if the teachers are unable to travel because of the weather, the ELC will close. Notification of the ELC's closure will be announced through parental contact.

Weather

The St. Joseph Early Learning Center believes that time outside is a great opportunity for learning and exploring. Our children go outside into our well-equipped playground every morning and afternoon, in a variety of weather conditions. If individual children become uncomfortable or are not dressed appropriately for the weather, they may be taken inside, but the rest of the group will remain outside for their full play period.

We keep water cups outside and encourage the children to drink frequently.

Outside time is an opportunity for active, noisy, rowdy play. It may include water play, sand play, snow play, art and nature activities, as well as imaginative play and opportunities to run, climb, and shout. We have soft surfaces and playpens for infants to explore and for new walkers to test out their skills.

We will not go outside if the **REAL FEEL** temperature is above our policy guidelines. The guidelines are as follows:

Infant to 11 months

Low: 50 degrees Fahrenheit

High: 86 degrees Fahrenheit

One to 5 years old

Low: 40 degrees Fahrenheit

High: 90 degrees Fahrenheit

Sickness

The St. Joseph Early Learning Center adheres to the guidelines set by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in order to keep both children and staff safe from contagious and preventable illnesses.

A staff member of the Early Learning Center (ELC) will contact the child's parent or emergency contact and expect the child to be picked up if they show signs of the following symptoms:

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| Fever of 100.4 degrees or more | Non-identified rash |
| Vomiting | Difficulty breathing |
| Diarrhea | Drainage of ears |
| Blood in stool or urine | Infestation (lice, scabies, or bed bugs) |
| Complaints of pain or persistent crying | Unusual lethargy |

Eye infection or skin infection (Ex: Staph or MRSA) as follows, but not limited to; inflammation at the affected area and/or yellow/green drainage at the affected area that has not been cleared and/or treated by a health care provider.

Sick children may also include a child that is showing signs of COVID-19, Strep Throat, Tuberculosis, Chickenpox, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis A, RSV, Influenza, MRSA and Staph skin infection, and any other contagious rash or disease. Children who are showing signs of the listed illnesses may require a physician's note for readmittance.

Children are not allowed to attend the Early Learning Center if they have had fever, vomiting, or diarrhea within the past 24 hours. If a child has any of the above illnesses, they must be symptom-free before returning to daycare. If the child is taking antibiotics for an illness, the child may return after the initial 24 hours of beginning the antibiotics as long as their temperature is below 100.4, no longer contagious, and is otherwise feeling well enough to participate in the daily activities. Given the circumstances of the child's illness, the ELC director may request a return to daycare note from the child's primary care provider.

All children and staff found to have evidence of lice, bed bugs or scabies infestation will be excluded from daycare attendance until treatment and removal have been performed. A staff member of the ELC will examine the child before returning. If evidence of lice, scabies, or bed bugs is present at the examination, the child must leave for additional removal. A note then will be needed from a physician or a county health department will be needed for clearance back to the Early Learning Center.

In the case that there is a contagious disease outbreak noted within the Early Learning Center, parents of children in contact with said illness will be notified to watch for signs and symptoms in an attempt to stop the spread of the contagious disease/illness.

Please notify an Early Learning Center's caregiver if you have given your child any over-the-counter medications such as cough or cold medicine.

If a child requires a prescription medication to be administered while in attendance at the Early Learning Center the parent must provide a signed written permission form as well as detailed instructions on administration of prescribed medication.

Accident, Injury, or Incident

Parents/guardians will be notified if an Early Learning Center provider observes changes in the child's health or if a child experiences an accident, injury, or incident. The following notification will occur:

Accident, Injury, or Incident: child's parent/guardian will receive a written report that includes the time, date, nature of the incident/accident, and first aid or action taken. Staff will then discuss with the parent/guardian at pick up, and care provider and parent/guardian will sign the report.

The Early Learning Center makes every effort to provide children with a safe environment through supervision and childproofing of the childcare area. However, minor bumps, scrapes, and cuts are inevitable. If something should happen to a child while at the Early Learning Center, the appropriate first aid will be given and an accident form will be filled out and signed. Staff at the Early Learning Center will maintain First Aid and CPR training.

If any major injury or medical problem occurs, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately. If an Early Learning Center staff member cannot contact the parent/guardian, the staff member will then contact the emergency contact numbers supplied to the daycare in the child's file. If necessary and in emergency cases, 9-1-1 or the poison control center will be contacted prior to the parent/guardian in an attempt to seek emergency medical attention as soon as possible.

Notice of Withdrawal

Parents must notify St. Joseph Early Learning Center two weeks before the child's last day. Unless such notification is given, the parents are responsible for payment for the child's scheduled days.

Staff

St. Joseph Early Learning Center will employ an experienced staff who must pass a criminal and abuse screening through the state of Missouri. In addition, each staff member will be required to attend twelve clock hours every year of child care workshops or classes.

We provide children with a developmentally appropriate early childhood education in a loving environment, which inspires confidence, respect, honesty, and a lifelong love of learning. We will encourage and model a loving relationship with God to help the children grow in their faith and enable them to become caring members of our community and the world. Our teaching staff serve as positive role models and provide care that is supportive, nurturing, warm, and responsive to each child's individual needs.

Children are a gift from God. We will strive to provide an environment where your child can grow and develop in a fun, loving, and safe environment. Thank you for choosing us to provide care for your child.