



St. Joan of Arc Pre-Kindergarten Handbook

587 Grattan Street

Chicopee, MA 01020

School Office: 413-533-1475

Business Office: 413-536-6038

Fax: 413-533-1418

Email: businessoffice@sjachicopee.org
www.sjachicopee.org



Two little eyes to look at God,
Two little ears to hear His Word,
Two little feet to walk His Way,
And one little heart to love Him-
All day.

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Welcome

We welcome you and your children to the St. Joan of Arc Pre-Kindergarten Program. We appreciate the confidence you have in our ability to teach and care for your most precious possession - your child. You are cordially invited to ask questions and make suggestions. The best assurance for the success of your child's experiences is the close co-operation, interaction, and understanding of both parents and staff.

Our curriculum has been planned for the children with the goal of helping them in their cognitive, social, physical, and spiritual development. This is accomplished by a well-rounded program of free play, structured class time, exposure to age-appropriate literature, science activities, religion, music and movement, and fine and gross motor activities. Active learning will be going on here (periodically) throughout the day. This handbook has been prepared in order for you to better understand our school as we work together to provide the very best for your children. We welcome your questions, comments, and suggestions. Please read this handbook in its entirety and keep it for future reference.

Mission Statement

St. Joan of Arc School, a ministry of St. Rose de Lima Church, is a school fashioned according to the will of God. We offer a faith-based education to boys and girls from prekindergarten to eighth grade. Here learning is rooted in Christian values. We the faculty, staff, and students teach and learn with compassion and direction, treat each other with respect and dignity, and celebrate with joy our potential for excellence.

Statement of Purpose

It is our purpose to provide each child with a caring environment where they will be able to learn, grow and flourish in all ways. It is our philosophy to accept children where they are and invite them to grow. We recognize developmentally appropriate activities and challenge children within the scope of age-imposed limitations with a curriculum rich in literacy and play. We tend to the “whole” child, respecting each individual and fostering their social skills, motor skills, listening skills, and employing methods to address multiple intelligences with a variety of mediums.

We currently accept all preschool-aged children who are fully toilet trained, from the age of 3 years and up, regardless of race, creed, national origin, or abilities if the school deems it is capable of addressing the needs of particular disabilities.

It is our goal to staff our classroom with the most committed and qualified people who share the program’s philosophy and implement it.

Once registered into the program, all children will be screened in August. Parents will complete a registration form and have current lead testing, physical forms, and proof of current immunizations and be in complete compliance with Massachusetts law before admittance. This school reserves the right to remove any child whose behavior threatens the group, either by consistent and unmanageable disruptions or physical assault, for the greater good. The principal would be consulted, and parents will be informed before such action is taken.

Child Guidance - Rules

Children are expected to follow the rules which will be consistently and kindly enforced. The following rules are of great import to the management of the group:

*No child should physically touch another child in a manner that said child is offended by.

Consistent and unmanageable disruptions will be tolerated only until it interferes with the learning, development, or safety of all children.

*Spitting (though it may occur) is not allowed.

*Biting (though it may occur) is not allowed.

*Hitting (though it may occur) is not allowed.

Child Guidance - Policies and Procedures

Our method of teaching the children self-discipline is to use positive reinforcement and re-direction. There is never physical punishment or any threat of physical punishment. Cooperation and frequent communication between parents and staff provide consistency and promotes a good self-image within the child. If behavior problems should occur that we consider to not being age appropriate and/or are unable to resolve the issues in question with the parents, we reserve the right to ask you to withdraw your child from our care. This is to ensure the safety and proper supervision of staff and all the children in our care, including yours. Please always feel free to set up conferences with your child's teacher if necessary. Good communication is of the utmost importance. We welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that are oriented towards a positive outcome for the child or children. Sensitive issues will be discussed in private, outside of regular childcare hours or over the telephone.

Children will be allowed to always use the bathroom; however, they are taught to ask permission in order that they are properly supervised. Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that they can manage when using the bathroom. (Belts and overalls are discouraged.)

No child shall ever be punished in any way because of a bathroom accident, and kindness and discretion will be used in such cases. Parents will be informed. A change of clothing should be on the premises.

No child will ever be deprived of food as a punishment. Nor will any child be forced to partake in any food that they dislike.

Positive reinforcement and education will be used to encourage proper behavior while the withdrawal of positive reinforcement or selective ignoring (of non-physical behaviors or continual disruptions) may be used to discourage inappropriate behavior.

Re-direction will be the **primary** course of action taken to steer children toward appropriate actions. Modeling and mutual respect is consistently used to foster positive behaviors.

Positive directives rather than negative speech will be used. When all else fails, a child may be separated from the other children for a few minutes in order to collect themselves and will then be re-integrated into the group.

Parents will be notified if a child fails to regularly follow the rules. This school reserves the right to remove any child whose behavior threatens the group, either by consistent and unmanageable disruptions or physical assault, for the greater good. Parents will be informed before such action is taken.

Eligibility

We currently accept all preschool aged children who are fully toilet trained, regardless of race, creed, national origin, or abilities if the school deems it can address the needs of disabilities. To enroll in the 3-year-old class, the child must be age 3 years by September 1st. To enroll in the 4-year-old class, the child must be age 4 years by September 1st. Any child entering later in the year will still need to meet that age requirement and may be subject to assessment by the teacher beforehand. St. Joan of Arc offers rolling enrollment based upon availability.

Any child may be subject to a trial period at the discretion of the teacher in cases where behavior, toilet training, or social maturity is in question.

Days/Hours of Operation

There are 3 program options:

Full time (8:30am-2:15pm): **5 days** (Monday – Friday)

Part time (8:30am-2:15pm):

3 days (Monday, Wednesday, Friday or requested days based on availability), **4 days** (requested days based on availability)

Tuition

*The annual tuition for the 5-day program: \$4,335.00

*The annual tuition for the 4-day program: \$3,998.00

*The annual tuition for the 3-day program: \$3,488.00

There is a \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee. Please note that Parish subsidies do not apply to Pre-Kindergarten students. Tuition Gift Certificates are available in the Business Office. Parents may pay in full or enroll in the FACTS Tuition Management program for tuition payments.

Before and After School Programs

Preschool students are eligible for before or after school care at an additional cost. Please download and complete the Before School and After School Program Registration Forms from the Parents Tab at www.sjachicopee.org to participate. Completed forms are to be dropped off in the main office prior to the first use of the program.

Designated Persons to Pick Up Your Child

People who are sent to pick up your child MUST have a picture I.D. They must be on the enrollment form "pick up list" and the parents, daily, must give written or verbal permission. We will **NOT** release a child to a minor under ANY circumstances. We will check your I.D. whenever there is any doubt, so please inform the people on your pickup list of this policy so that they will have their I.D. with them.

Curriculum

The curriculum at SJA Pre-Kindergarten is designed to be developmentally appropriate and incorporates the hands-on approach of each child using a variety of mediums. The curriculum of the pre-Kindergarten classroom has been designed in order to prepare the children for kindergarten socially, emotionally, and academically. Fine motor skills, basic concepts, creative abilities, art, crafts, and creations are just a part of our formal curriculum. We will have simple science experiments and learn about plant and animal life as well. Exploration and learning are ongoing through dramatic play, social activities, and language arts. Phonemic Awareness will be used to promote pre-reading skills and kindergarten readiness. Please be advised that coloring pages are sometimes available to be brought home or colored here at the school when children are in free play/child-choice activities. These are not a part of our **formal** curriculum.

This outline is a **broad** overview and may change the subject to student needs and developmentally appropriate practices. There are four evaluation assessments during the year – September, November, March, and May. Parents may have more conferences by appointment upon request.

The Year at a Glance

Pre-K 4yr Program Year at a Glance

9/5	All About Me / Rules & Procedures			
	<i>Themes</i>	<i>Lively Letters Letter Sounds</i>	<i>Handwriting & Numbers</i>	<i>Sight Words</i>
9/11	Apples	P & B	Bb & 1	
9/18	Fall	T & D	Dd & 2	
9/25	Five Senses	F & V	Jj & 3	
10/2	Fairy Tales	K & G	Kk & 4	
10/9	Health	Qu	Pp & 5	
10/16	Space	th & TH	Tt & 6	
10/23	Ocean	A	Vv & 7	
10/30	Halloween	O	Zz & 8	
11/6	Dinosaurs	M & N	Ff & 9	
11/13	Thanksgiving/Gratitude	L & R	Ll & 10	
11/20	2 Day week, continue from previous week.			
11/27	Advent	U	Mm & 0	
12/4	Story of Creation	S & Z	Nn & 11	

12/11	Christmas	sh	Rr & 12	
12/18	Christmas	ch & J	Ss & 13	
12/25	VACATION WEEK			
1/2	New Years	I	Xx & 14	Sight word 'a'
1/8	Snowmen / Winter	W & H	Cc & 15	Sight word 'I'
1/15	Arctic Animals	X	Gg & 16	Sight word 'in'
1/22	Weather	Y	Hh & 17	Sight word 'is'
1/29	Catholic Schools Week	E	Qq & 18	Sight word 'it'
2/5	Feelings / Emotions	C	Ww & 19	Sight word 'do'
2/12	Valentines / Friendship		Yy & 20	Sight word 'go'
2/19	VACATION WEEK			
2/26	Dr. Seuss		Aa & 21	Sight word 'to'
3/4	Pets		Ee & 22	Sight word 'be'
3/11	St. Patrick's		Ii & 23	Sight word 'me'
3/18	Zoo		Oo & 24	Sight word 'and'
3/25	Transportation		Uu & 25	Sight word 'the'
4/1	Spring		26	Sight word 'big'
4/8	Easter		27	Sight word 'for'
4/15	VACATION WEEK			
4/22	Earth Day / Recycling		28	Sight word 'can'
4/29	Butterflies / Insects		29	Sight word 'get'
5/6	Community Helpers		30	Sight word 'here'
5/13	Farm			Sight word 'said'
5/20	Father's Day			
5/27	Summer			
6/3	GRADUATION			

Pre-K 3yr Program The Year at a Glance

9/5	All About Me / Rules & Procedures		
	Themes	Lively Letters Letter Names	Numbers
9/11	Apples	Bb	1
9/18	Fall	Dd	2
9/25	Five Senses	Jj	3
10/2	Fairy Tales	Kk	4
10/9	Health	Pp	5
10/16	Space	Tt	6
10/23	Ocean	Vv	7
10/30	Halloween	Zz	8
11/6	Dinosaurs	Ff	9
11/13	Thanksgiving/Gratitude	Ll	10
11/20	2 Day week, continue from previous week.		
11/27	Advent	Mm	0
12/4	Story of Creation	Nn	1
12/11	Christmas	Rr	2
12/18	Christmas	Ss	3
12/25	VACATION WEEK		
1/2	New Years	Xx	4
1/8	Snowmen / Winter	Cc	5
1/15	Arctic Animals	Gg	6
1/22	Weather	Hh	7
1/29	Catholic Schools Week	Qq	8
2/5	Feelings / Emotions	Ww	9
2/12	Valentines / Friendship	Yy	10
2/19	VACATION WEEK		
2/26	Dr. Seuss	Aa	0
3/4	Pets	Ee	1
3/11	St. Patrick's	Ii	2

3/18	Zoo	Oo	3
3/25	Transportation	Uu	4
4/1	Spring		5
4/8	Easter		6
4/15	VACATION WEEK		
4/22	Earth Day / Recycling		7
4/29	Butterflies / Insects		8
5/6	Community Helpers		9
5/13	Farm		10
5/20	Father's Day		0
5/27	Summer		
6/3	GRADUATION		

Arrival/Departure

Please be sure that your child is received by the teacher or the aide inside of the classroom for the first week. Please drop your child off at the visitor's door. This is for their safety. As you pick up your children, you are responsible for your child's actions and safety.

It is quite normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents or to cry at drop-offs. Please try to keep your drop-off brief as possible as the longer you prolong the departure the more difficult it becomes for your child. A cheerful smile, a hug and a kiss goodbye with a reassuring word that you will be back are all that is needed. In our experience, children are often busy, involved and distracted in less than 5 minutes! Please aim to be brief at pick-up/dismissal times as well.

If you feel you need additional time to speak to the teacher, please call to make an appointment for a conference.

Arrival: Pre-K drop-off is between 8:15AM-8:30AM. Before School Program is available for care before 8:15AM.

Dismissal: Options are listed below.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| *Option 1: 2:00PM-2:15PM | Valet Pickup in the Trilby Lot |
| *Option 2: 2:38PM | Percy St. dismissal escorted by older sibling |
| *Option 3: 2:25PM-5PM | After School Program |

- Please communicate your dismissal preference on provided **Dismissal Forms**.
- Valet Pickup- the children will be waiting inside the Trilby door. We will open the door to dismiss your child upon your arrival until 2:15PM.
- In the event of unforeseen circumstances that delay your arrival past 2:15PM. your child will return to the classroom. At 2:25PM, your children will be sent to the After School Program in the cafeteria.
- If you arrive at the After School Program before 3:00PM, please ring the bell at the cafeteria door in the Trilby lot. If inclement weather, the After School Program is held in the school cafeteria. Use the cafeteria door entrance. Ring the doorbell for access to the cafeteria.
- If there is any change in dismissal (i.e., early dismissal, change from one form of dismissal to another, someone else is picking your child up), please complete **Dismissal Change Form**. If you are unable to send a note or Dismissal Change Form, call the office at (413)533-1475.

TARDINESS

A student is considered tardy if he/she arrives after 8:25 AM. If a child comes in late, he/she must be signed in by a parent or guardian and give reason for the tardiness. Children will not be permitted to attend for the day if arrival is later than 11:00AM.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION ANNOUNCEMENT & DELAYS

Please pay attention to Channels 40 & 22 for a “NO SCHOOL” announcement. *School cancellation due to extreme cold temperatures will be at the discretion of the school Principal.* Otherwise, SJA will follow the same school closing policy as Chicopee Public Schools. Students are not to be brought to school at regular opening time if school has been delayed for one or two hours. The Before School Program start time will also be delayed. No one will be at the school to let the students into the building or to supervise them. If a storm begins during a school day and poses safety dangers, the City of Chicopee will make the decision for early dismissal. Every effort will be made by SJA school to notify parents/designated caretakers.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Half Day Policy: On early release days, Prekindergarten students are dismissed at 11:00AM. There is no After School Program on early release days.

If a student who must leave the school grounds at any time during the school day must have a written request or in-person request from the parent or legal guardian. This request for early dismissal should be sent to the teacher who will then forward the information to the office. Parent/guardian, coming for this child, must sign out the child at the time of dismissal. Students must report to the office then be escorted to the parent or guardian.

Backpacks

Each child should bring a full-size backpack to school. The child’s first and last name should be labeled on the backpack. It should be able to accommodate a 9x11 folder.

Clothing/Personal Belongings

Washable play clothes and tennis shoes (sneakers provide the best traction) are the most suitable. No light-up shoes are allowed. We respectfully ask that you avoid belts, overalls or other types of clothing that your child may have difficulty with when toileting; this is to promote independence and prevent as much ‘interference’ as possible. Please be aware that children will frequently be working with non-toxic paint as well as playing outdoors and therefore, it is advisable to dress in play clothes, suitable for the weather.

All children are expected to be FULLY toilet trained. However, accidents can occur and so we ask that you supply an extra set of clothing and shoes in a bag labeled with your child’s name on the outside. All toileting accidents will be handled with both discretion and compassion. If accidents become frequent or regular, it is possible that you will be asked to remove your child from the program if it is determined that he/she is not toilet trained. You are asked to refrain from bringing in toys from your home unless it is a scheduled Show ‘N Tell day. This can create sharing difficulties within the group.

Full Time Enrollments/Attendance

Your paid fees have ensured your child a slot during the days and hours you have indicated on the enrollment form. Your fees will remain the same regardless of your child's attendance. All children will be charged the usual fee even if their day falls on a holiday, they regularly leave early, or are absent. Just as you are charged for your Cable TV bill monthly regardless of how much you use it, the same holds true here. There are no make-up days for holidays or snow days.

All students are invited to participate in school events and programs, such as special presentations, field trips, and photo day. If the activity is planned for a day your child is not regularly scheduled to attend school, they may switch days in order to attend.

Preschool Medical and Health Issues

Massachusetts school immunization requirements are created under authority of 105 CMR 220.000 Immunization of Students Before Admission to School. **Requirements apply to all students including individuals from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of an academic visitation or exchange program. Requirements apply to all students, even if they are over 18 years of age.** Please be advised that parents are expected to inform the teacher in writing of ANY allergies, asthma, or medical conditions.

Attendees less than 2 years should be immunized for their age according to the ACIP Recommended Immunization Schedule. Requirements listed in the table below apply to all attendees greater than 2 years. These requirements also apply to children in preschool classes called K0 or K1.

Hib	1-4 doses; the number of doses is determined by vaccine product and age the series begins
DTaP	4 doses
Polio	3 doses
Hepatitis B	3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
MMR	1 dose; must be given on or after the 1 st birthday; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	1 dose; must be given on or after the 1 st birthday; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

Unimmunized students are required to provide a statement from a physician stating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for a student and must be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

Religious exemptions (statement from a student, or parent/guardian if the student is <18 years of age, stating that a vaccine is against sincerely held religious beliefs) should be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

Immunization records are to be kept on file at the school. These records are required on your child's first day of school. It is the responsibility of the parents to update these records when they expire (annually) and to provide the school with a current certificate. All immunizations must be current and documented by your pediatrician. This includes: DPT, POLIO, MMR, TB screen, and Hib vaccine. Lead testing is mandatory in accordance with state law.

Illnesses

Your child should **not** attend on days which they may have any contagious infections which include, but are not limited to: flu, pink eye, COVID, Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease, or other conditions causing a discharge from the eye, severe colds (such as those producing colored discharge or with fever), chicken pox, mumps, measles, diarrhea, ring worm, head lice, fever of 100.1 degrees or greater. We respectfully request that you plan to keep your child at home when they are ill. **Children are to be kept out of school for a period of 24 hours after the illness has resolved and they are medication-free.** Not only do sick children run the risk of infecting others, but their own immune system is in a compromised state.

For the health and safety of the other children, if a child arrives in the morning with an illness, a parent or designated adult may be called to pick the child up. A Doctor's statement may be necessary in some cases in order for your child to return to our care.

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue

- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Children who come to the school and are later found to be mildly ill (i.e., cold without fever, general malaise, bellyache, etc....) will be tended to and will be offered a quiet place on a mat or cot and any drinks or refreshment that may be appropriate. The school nurse will call the parent or guardian to advise.

Injuries and Other Emergencies

Minor cuts and abrasions suffered while at the school will receive proper care from the school nurse; specifically, they will be washed with soap and warm water and properly bandaged. Treatment will be logged, and the teacher will tell you how and when the injury occurred. I also am required to log any injuries I observe on your child which have occurred outside of my care. I have current certification in both First Aid and children’s CPR.

Allergies

Please notify the teacher and the aide in writing if your child has any allergies whatsoever. These will be posted on the teacher’s desk for safety purposes, in case of emergency, or in the absence of the teacher so that a substitute teacher may be informed. The teacher can take no responsibility for any allergic reaction the parent has not notified them of, both verbally and in writing.

Birthdays and Special Occasions

We will be happy to help your child celebrate his or her Birthday! In the Pre-Kindergarten classroom, all children will choose a prize from the treasure box. Parents are encouraged to send in a store-bought special treat on that day to celebrate.

Breakfast and Lunch

Free breakfast is provided in the classroom every morning. A free hot lunch is provided, and a menu will be sent home. Please make your child’s lunch selections and return the form. This is very important to the smooth transition we need at lunchtime. Cold lunches should be marked with your child’s name and left on the shelf in the hall above the hooks.

Breakfast is FREE

Hot Lunch is FREE

Snacks

An afternoon snack is planned every day. Please send a snack for your child in a bag labeled with the child’s first and last name. You may also send your child in with an individual snack. **Please notify us IN WRITING** if your child has ANY food allergies whatsoever.

Snack suggestions include the following: canned juice, spring water, string cheese, cereal bars, raisins, goldfish crackers, grahams, saltines, pretzels, crackers and cheese, granola bars, etc. PLEASE REFRAIN from any nut products – thank you!