

SAINT MARK Early Learning Center



PARENT
HANDBOOK
2020-2021

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SAINT MARK EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Mission Statement

At Saint Mark Early Learning Center, we consider it a privilege to guide your child, as they grow and develop through the most important formative years of their lives.

- ✿ We are dedicated to assisting families in all areas of their child's education: spiritual, mental, physical, social and emotional.
- ✿ Emphasis is placed on the whole child, and our goal is to provide experiences that will help the child develop to his/her full potential as an individual.
- ✿ To facilitate the understanding that all people are special to God.

SAINT MARK EARLY LEARNING CENTER WEEKDAY CHILDREN'S MINISTRY STAFF

Director of ELC:	Sandy Jenkins
Assistant Director ELC:	Amy Wykle
Administrative Assistant	Paula Hardy
Senior Minister:	Rev. Drew Clayton
Associate Minister:	Rev. Ryan Karr

Saint Mark Early Learning Center
2020-2021 School Year *Subject to change

August

- Tuesday 11 Parent Meeting Via Zoom Times/classes listed below
Infants 2:00-3:00 PM Toddlers 3:15-4:15 PM 2K 4:30-5:30
3K & 4K 6:00-7:00 (you must attend the meeting for each child, information
will be addressed to that specific age and classes)
- Wednesday 12 Meet the Teacher Day! See schedule below
A-C 9:00-9:15 am
D-G 9-15-9:30 am
H-Q 9:30-9:45 am
R-Z 9:45-10:00 am
You will be allowed to walk your child to their classroom and introduce them
to their teacher on this day. Facial coverings are required for all adults and
Covid protocol will be followed to everyone whom enters. The times will be
strictly adhered to. Everyone must enter at the main ELC entrance.
Admittance will be done in an orderly fashion with everyone maintaining a
6ft. distancing and maintaining a one-way flow. Once the bell rings you will
be asked to exit thru the double doors and through the sanctuary back to
your car. There will be staff members helping you along the proper path
thru the building.
- We ask that you provide a box of at least a 720 count wipes each semester. You may bring them both now or one now one in January. Or if you wish we can charge your Sandbox account \$30 that will cover your child for all year.
 - You may bring your designated box of wipes to the above-mentioned meetings. Or the first day of school
- Thursday 13 First Day for Students

September

- Monday 7 Labor Day Holiday – ELC Closed
Tues-Thurs 15-17 Picture Day-Schedule TBA

October

- 9-13 Closed for Deep Clean
Thursday 22 Children's Theatre at Saint Mark ELC 10 AM Fellowship Hall/PJ's -TBD
Thursday 29 Pumpkin Patch Day @ Saint Mark

November

- 2-6 Parent Teacher Conferences-2K-4K - TBD May be by phone or Zoom
Wednesday 11 Veterans Day- ELC Closed
Thursday 19 Thanksgiving Program 9:30 AM 3K & 4K Gym TBD
Wed.-Fri. 25-27 Thanksgiving Holidays- ELC Closed

December

- Thursday 10 Winter Fun Day wear your PJ's!
Wednesday 17 Happy Birthday Jesus Party

Thursday 18 Last Day for students Dismiss @ 1:00
20-January 5 Christmas Holidays ELC Closed

January

Wednesday 6 First Day of School for Students
Thursday 14 Western Day 3K-4K
Monday 18 Martin Luther King Holiday- ELC Closed

February

Thursday 11 Valentine Party
Friday 12-
Monday 15 Closed for Deep Clean
Monday 15 President's Day ELC Closed
Thursday 25 Children's Theater

March

Monday 1- Dr. Seuss Week More info to Come!
Friday 5
Thursday 11 Around the World Day
Monday 22-
Friday 26 Spring Break- ELC Closed

April

Thursday 1 Easter Parties (All Classes)
Friday 2- Mon. 5 Good Friday/ Easter – ELC Closed
Wednesday 14 Doughnuts for Dad 7-8:30 AM Fellowship Hall
26-30 Parent Teacher Conferences-2K-4K TBA

May

Wednesday 5 Muffins for Mom 7-8:30 Fellowship Hall
Thursday 13 4K Graduation & 2K & 3K Sanctuary at 6:00PM
Wednesday 20 End of Year Parties
Thursday 27 Early Dismissal 1PM

ENROLLMENT

Hours of Operation: 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM
 Monday through Friday
 Mother's Day Out 9:00 AM-1:00 PM
 Pre-School/Core Curriculum 9:00 AM-1:00 PM
 Before Care 7:00 AM-9:00 AM
 After Care 1:00 AM-4:30 PM

* We ask respectfully that you arrive by 4:20 PM our building closes promptly at 4:30.

APPLICATION

All application forms must be completed online:

<https://register.runsandbox.com?form=a21ad409-6e17-4057-bc57-d7e51cd0ebf6>

Names on the waitlist are eligible for the school year in which they are accepted. When a vacancy occurs, an administrator will contact the family. Families will be given 5 business days to accept or decline or move to waitlist placement. Application fees are non-refundable. Registration fee of \$175 must be paid online to complete enrollment.

ADMISSIONS

Applications are accepted throughout the year on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Registration forms must be completed online

<https://register.runsandbox.com?form=a21ad409-6e17-4057-bc57-d7e51cd0ebf6>

Please do not ask for exceptions!

- ☼ All payments for Saint Mark ELC are **ONLY** payable online.
- ☼ INFANTS ONLY-August tuition as well as yearly supply fee is due June 15st. Failure to pay by June 15th will result in loss of child's enrollment.
- ☼ Toddler, 2K, 3K and 4K August tuition and the yearly supply fee is due July 15st.
- ☼ Failure to pay by July 15th will result in loss of child's enrollment.
- ☼ Tuition is due on the 1st of each month and is considered late on the 5th a fee of \$50 will automatically be added to your account.
- ☼ A two-week notice is to be given in writing should you need to withdraw. No fees are refundable.
- ☼ Saint Mark ELC welcomes all children and does not discriminate children of any race, color, creed, religion or special need. The placement of a child in a class is based on his/her age as of September 1st of the school year.
- ☼ 2K-4K will remain in the same class throughout the school year for which they are registered. They do not move up during the school year. Infants and Toddlers may be moved to the next class during the school year depending on developmental progress, class size and/or at the discretion of the Director. Parents will be contacted prior to moving a child.

REQUIRED FORMS

We are honored to be a DHR licensed facility and we adhere to all DHR policies and procedures. DHR requires the following forms be completed for each child. (All blanks must be filled in use N/A when applicable)

Required by August 1, of each school year:

- ☼ Alabama Immunization Form for your child to attend
- ☼ DHR required Enrollment Form-Online
- ☼ Signed Parent Agreement- Online
- ☼ Flu information sheet
- ☼ Permission for use of Hand Sanitizer

FEES AND TUITION

We are a self-supporting, non-profit organization and all fees are used to provide the best teachers, equipment and supplies possible. We do not receive funding from any outside a=sources, or from Saint Mark UMC.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------|
| ☼ Registration Fee-\$175/yr | Non-Refundable | Due upon registering |
| ☼ Waitlist Fee-\$50/yr | Non-Refundable | Due upon waitlisted |
| ☼ Supply Fee-\$250/yr | Non-Refundable | Due by July 15 st each year |
| ☼ Tuition | Non-Refundable | Due by 1 st of each month |
| ☼ August Tuition | Non-Refundable | Due by July 15 st each year |
| ☼ Covid Protocol | Non-Refundable | Due by January 15 th
(If needed) |

Class	Days	Monthly Fee 9-1	Monthly Fee 7-4:30	Additional Before Care 7-9	Additional After Care 1-4:30	Monthly Stay & Play 1-2 (3K/4K Only)	Due
Infants	5	\$750	\$950	\$100	\$125		***All Tuition is due on the 1 st .
Infants	4	\$675	\$875	\$100	\$125		
Infants	3	\$600	\$700	\$75	\$100		
Infants	2	\$425	\$550	\$75	\$100		
Toddlers	5	\$650	\$850	\$100	\$125		
Toddlers	4	\$525	\$725	\$100	\$125		
Toddlers	3	\$400	\$650	\$75	\$100		
Toddlers	2	\$300	\$575	\$75	\$100		
2K	5	\$550	\$725	\$100	\$125		
2K	4	\$525	\$675	\$100	\$125		
2K	3	\$500	\$650	\$75	\$100		
2K	2	\$475	\$575	\$75	\$100		
3K-4K	5	\$400	\$600	\$100	\$125	\$125	
3K-4K	4	\$350	\$550	\$100	\$125	\$120	
3K-4K	3	\$325	\$500	\$75	\$100	\$110	

Registration			\$175				Upon Registration
Wait List Fee			\$50				Upon Placement
Credit Card Fee (EBT/Debit no fee)			Amount	Bank	Charges		Monthly
Supply Fee			\$250				Due July 1-Per Year
Late Paperwork			\$50				After July 1
Change in Service			\$50				Upon Change
Late payment			\$50				After the 5 th of the month
Extra Curricular Fee			\$30	*Subject to	Change		Per Month
Late Pick Up Fee			See Late Policy				
Drop In Early Care 7-9	\$25						
Drop In After Care 1-4:30	\$25						
Drop in Day 9-1 only	\$50						
Extra Drop In Day 7:00-4:30	\$75						

Supplies

ALL CHILDREN ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE: One box 720 count baby wipes each semester. They are due on or before August 13th. You can order and have them delivered to the school, bring them in or if you wish we can charge you the one-time fee of \$30 for both semesters. Please drop them at the front office so that we can mark that you have provided wipes. It is also a good idea to write your child's name on them as well.

Mandatory Closure

If we must be closed for random inclement weather, medical reasons, facility reasons or any other unscheduled or scheduled days there is NO CHANGE IN TUITION AND DAYS CAN NOT BE MADE UP. For example: we have to be closed on a Monday and that is your regularly scheduled day you can not send your child on Tuesday to make up that day.

If for any reason any federal, state or local entities require the closure of Saint Mark, parents will be informed of the protocol of charges and payments due during the closure. One set policy cannot be made for every scenario that could or might occur. In all things we try to be fair and equitable in all situations to our families and staff.

DROP IN DAYS

*When space is available, we will accommodate "drop ins"

*This year it will be more important than ever that these things must be scheduled- We are starting the year with full classes so we may not be able to readily accommodate drop-in days as in the past.

*To schedule please message us in your Sandbox Portal 24 hours in advance. DO NOT text or ask your child's teacher. This must be done through the office.

*No drop in's during the month of August.

SAFETY

STAFF:

We require that our faculty be responsible and loving people with a broad knowledge in child development. We require that they exhibit Christian convictions.

It is our objective to employ highly qualified staff who love working with children. We seek staff members with a background in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, professional certification, or proven experience teaching preschool children. We require that staff exhibit Christian convictions in everything they do.

STAFF TO CHILD RATIO:

Infants	1-4
Toddler	1-6
2's	1-7
3's	1-11
4's	1-12

CENTER SECURITY:

The Early Learning Center is located in the Children's building of Saint Mark United Methodist Church. Doors into the ELC require a code for access. For the present time you must call the office for access 205.822.1312. This is due to the new Covid protocol, no one is allowed to enter the building other than students and staff of Saint Mark.

DHR SIGN-IN POLICY:

- Children must be signed-in daily on class sign in sheet. Children must be left in direct care of a teacher no child may be left unattended. We must have the full signature of the adult who delivered the child to the center. **Children may not write on the sign-in form.** Children must be signed in & out by a parent or other adult listed over the age of 18. a
- Saint Mark will not release children to a person who is visibility impaired due to a suspected medical condition, alcohol consumption, substance abuse, prescription drugs or other causes. In the event the parent or legal guardian is impaired, the Director will call someone designated on the release form.
- Please end all cell phone calls before entering the campus so that your full attention can be on the parking lot and your child.
- When parking to come to the building, park in a designated parking space only.
- Turn off your car and lock it. Do not leave it running.
- Do not leave children of any age unattended for any reason.
- Saint Mark is not responsible for any personal items left in your vehicle.
- All children are to be brought to their designated area. Please make this transition time quickly.

AUTHORIZATION FOR PICK-UP:

Parents must list those persons that have permission to pick up their child from Saint Mark. Anyone other than parents must be listed on the registration form along with a telephone number. Any person not recognized will be asked to show their drivers license for identification. It is a good practice for the parent to notify the staff and Director when other persons are expected to pick up the child. We also need to know if anyone is not authorized to pick up for any reason such as the other parent etc. If this is the case, we must have a copy of the divorce decree or custody letter stating that they are not allowed to pick up. This must contain a judge's signature and time stamp. Legally we can not keep a parent from picking up a child unless we have that documentation on site.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES 2020/2021: (Subject to change)- Covid Protocol as Of August 2020

- All parents (except infants) are to go through the car-pool line. (Teachers will be present to walk your child to their class) There will be no admittance into the building.
- Please check your child's temperature before coming to school.
- The parent will sign in their child-full signature, answer all health-related questions and a temporal temp will be taken on the child and recorded. If the child has a temp of 100.4 they will not be allowed to stay at school. If a child has a temperature between 98.6-100.3 parents are to make an action plan in case pick up is deemed necessary during the day. **Parents must inform the person in charge at the time of drop off whom to contact in case the child needs to go home. NO CHILD MAY BE GIVEN ANY MEDICATION TO REDUCE FEVER PRIOR TO COMING TO SCHOOL!**
- All staff members will also be screened daily upon arrival and wear facial covering.
- Random checks will be conducted during the day and for anyone suspect of having a fever.
- Wearing of facial mask by adults is required. Children 2 and older can wear facial mask if parents desire. We can not be held responsible for lost mask. Please label mask with the child's name. And practice with your child how to put the mask on and to leave it on. We cannot be held responsible for lost mask and constant reminders to keep them on.
- Once the child is signed in make your good-byes quickly and they will be escorted by a staff member to their class. We are to keep contact inside the center to students and staffing only.
- All door handles and handrails will be disinfected every 30 minutes.
- If anyone is found to be positive for Covid- 19 or any other communicable disease you will be informed via the parent portal. That person will self-quarantine for 14 days or until cleared by a negative test. If a person knowingly has been exposed you are to self-quarantine for 14 days or a negative test results is provided. This does not mean the whole school will shut down unless asked to by health officials.
- If your child departs for the day at 1PM you will follow the same morning routine. You will go thru the carpool line and your child will be brought to you. We will help get them settled in the car but it is your responsibility to make sure your child is adequately buckled up and ready to travel. You may pull over to a parking space and check prior to leaving. This is highly recommended. Saint Mark and its staff can not be held responsible for making sure that a child is buckled in properly this is the parent's responsibility.

- No child may be placed into a car without a proper car seat. We ask that once your child is loaded that you pull forward to a parking spot and check to make sure your child is restrained properly. Saint Mark is not liable for proper placement in car-seats.
- In the afternoon the parent will check into the front office and a staff member will bring your child to you. You are to remain socially distanced during this time.
- INFANT PARENTS- Are to enter the designated door only. If you have older children you are to drop them off in the carpool line first then drive back around, park and bring your infant into their classroom on the lower level. If you are comfortable with your infant being taken to their room via wagon, we will be happy to do that. You must leave them restrained in their car seat.
- All students are to have a medication form on file so that we may use hand sanitizer under strict teacher supervision during the school day. (not for infants)
- We will not be using water fountains. Each child is to bring a water bottle daily to school that will fit in their cubby. No more than 7.5 inches tall.
- This year we are asking for children to use their favorite back pack. We request FULL size no mini's so that their lunch box and all items will fit neatly and be able to be zipped so that nothing will fall out during transportation to school and home! Please label so that it is easily readable/recognizable. This is also important for the older children so that they can learn the school skills of packing and unpacking their own back pack. I would recommend a back pack that can be of heavy-duty material that can be laundered or a vinyl that can be wiped down and cleaned frequently. This will be the responsibility of the parents.
- Our building will be totally cleaned and sanitized prior to the start of school. And deep cleaned every three months. Carpets have been professionally cleaned and a special Covid protectant has been used; the rooms will be cleaned daily in addition to the protocol of the teachers.
- We have hired staff whose sole responsibility is cleaning and disinfecting and sanitizing.
- We have hired a nurse whom is in charge of taking temperatures and will also assist in making sure protocol is followed.
- Morning carpool will be daily 7am-9am. There will be no building access via the front office during this time. All administrative personnel will be assisting with child intake.
- Each day we will intake students at the "kitchen entrance- we are going to call this entrance #1" to the school beginning at 7 am. This is a process and the first few days expect delays! We will get faster as the days go by but please make allowances at the beginning. There will be staff there to take the child's temperature which will be recorded, you will sign the child in and be asked the following protocol questions- please make yourself familiar with the following list because you will also be answering to the best of your knowledge to be true and correct and signing as to such.
 - Has the child had any sign of illness, fever, shortness of breath, cough or any other signs of illness?
 - Has the child or anyone in the family been around anyone know to have or suspected of having the covid virus or any illness or exhibiting any of the following symptoms : a new cough, high temperatures, shortness of breath, sore throat, sneezing and runny nose, temporary loss of smell?

- Has the child had any fever reducing medication PRIOR to coming to school for any reason?
- Has your household continued to maintain covid guidelines by minimizing travel and staying in your area?
- If the child has a temperature of 98.6-100.3 a plan of pick-up is in place prior to the parent leaving-Whom will be picking up the child within 30 minutes of a call from the center?
- No child shall exit the car until their temperature is taken and questions answered and they are signed in by the parent. A Staff member will take them out of the car.
- The children 2 and under will get a free ride in a cool wagon to their classroom where a staff member will take them to their class and sign them into their classroom. All 3K and 4K students will be accompanied by a staff member and will take them and sign them into their classroom.
- All wagons will be sanitized between each transportation of a child.
- Upon arrival of every student and staff member hands will be washed.
- If you arrive after carpool is over you will have to walk your child to the main entrance of the ELC and wait until a staff member can do your intake outside of the building-no parents will be admitted to the building.
- It is highly recommended that you arrive on time.
- If your child will be leaving at 1 PM they will be brought to the kitchen entrance at 12:55 pm maintaining 6ft social distancing and supervised by staff. Your child will be brought to you and you will sign your child out for the day.
- If your child will be leaving at any time after that you will check in with the office, stand on a square on the sidewalk and a staff member will bring your child to you. You will then sign your child out for the day.
- IF there is torrential rain you will proceed around to the other side of the building and we will receive the children at that entrance that is more covered from the elements. We will call this entrance #2.
- All infants will enter through their own private school entrance-covid protocol will be followed. IF you are comfortable you may also drop your infant in carpool. If you bring your infant in the allowed entrance you cannot enter the room.
- There will be minimal if any interaction with other classes at the beginning of school. We hope that this will change as the year progresses. The 3K and 4K classes have been assigned a cohort or buddy class These classes share restrooms between the classes and will buddy at other times when necessary. The 2K and younger will be self contained.
- We will maintain one-way traffic in the halls.
- Outside play will be conducted and encouraged. The playground will be sanitized at the end of the day. We are hoping to also have other outdoor opportunities daily, weather permitting. We are working on an outdoor classroom.
- All door handles and hand rails will be disinfected every 30 minutes.
- Specials for the older children will continue-the specials teachers will come to their classroom.

- Our DHR/Saint Mark ratios are under what is recommended for children per classroom.
- When possible within the temperature required by DHR and the health department, - we will open the windows in the classroom. Between 68-82 degrees.
- There will be random child and staff temperature check throughout the day. These will also be recorded. But at any time if illness is suspected we will then assess the person for illness.
- If a student, teacher, or staff member tests positive for SARS-CoV-2, those in the same cohort/group should also be tested and remain at home until receiving a negative test result or [quarantine](#). This helps prevent a disruption to the rest of the school and community by limiting the exposure. If a person is exhibiting signs and symptoms of illness, they will be requested to seek medical attention and self-quarantine for 14 days at home. They must obtain an all clear from a doctor to return. There will be no reduction in tuition due to the mandated self-quarantine.
- There will be no extra circular classes this year at Saint Mark. (karate, dance or Chinese). If the situation returns to normal possibly we can offer these in January.
- Any item/toy that has been placed in the mouth will immediately be placed in the class bucket that will be cleaned and disinfected prior to coming back into the classroom.
- All toys and learning/teaching items will be rotated and cleaned at the end of the day.
- All items will be covered when not in use.
- We will not use the water fountains-Each child is to bring a labeled water bottle no taller than 7.5 inches tall to keep in their cubby for easy accessibility to water anytime they need or want water during the day. If they run out the teacher will refill it for them. We ask not for just a bottle of water, I ask that it be a bottle that closes and that they can access and recloses. It needs to be clearly labeled with their name. It will go home every day to be cleaned and returned the next day. It would be best if it had a protected top or cover.
- Lunches will take place in the child's classroom as usual.
- All staff are required to wear mask. Mask for children 2 years and older is at the discretion of the parent AND SUPPLIED BY THE PARENT.
- If your child will be staying for aftercare you will be required to supply a nap mat. We kindly request that it be one that the blanket and pillow are all attached together. These must fit in the bag provided by the ELC (24"x 32"). This will ensure that they stay clean and sanitized. They will be placed in the bag every day after nap time and no longer stored on the cot itself. Every Friday the mat will be sent home in the bag to be cleaned and must be returned in the bag. Please do not send extra blankets, pillows or stuffed animals. All stuffed animals have been removed from the classrooms.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION:

If we need to evacuate Saint Mark campus, we will notify parents of our location via the Sand Box parent portal. It is your responsibility to make sure that your phone numbers and contact stay up to date at all times.

INCLEMENT WEATHER:

*In case of inclement weather, Saint Mark ELC will make the decision to close. Parents will be notified via the Sandbox portal. We typically follow the lead of Vestavia City Schools however Saint Mark reserves the right to dismiss at its discretion.

*Please do not call the office during inclement weather. We are in our designated safe place and there is not a outside line in that location. If we are under a tornado warning and you show up to pick up your child, you must stay until the warning has been lifted.

Health**PERSONAL HYGIENE:**

All possible provisions have been made to assure that children and teachers follow appropriate rules of personal hygiene. Teachers will use gloves at all times when changing diapers or assisting older children in the restroom. Antibacterial soap is used for hand washing before meals and after toilet use. Disposable paper towels are used for drying hands. Saint Mark is a smoke-free and fragrance-free environments/campus.

MEDICAL RECORDS/IMMUNIZATIONS:

All children are required to have a current State of Alabama immunization form. When your child's form expires you are responsible for obtaining an updated form within 30 days. After 30 days you will be charged a late paperwork fee of \$50.00 per month. After 60 days your child will no longer be allowed to attend Saint Mark ELC.

CHILD ILLNESS POLICY:

DHR states that a child who is ill should not attend school. "Determination of illness may be based on: the child's inability to participate in school activities, signs of serious or contagious disease or condition, such as but not limited to fever, diarrhea, vomiting, unexplained rash, scabies, head lice." Saint Mark reserves the right to send a child home for any reason when illness is suspected.





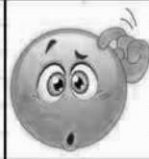


If your child is sent home at any time during a school day, they may NOT return the entire next day. **Please do not ask to make exceptions to this rule!** Example: If your child leaves on Tuesday at ANY time they may not return on Wednesday at all. They may return on Thursday PROVIDED they have been symptom-free for 72 hours (without medication) This is a new rule set forth by the CDC. Due to the new Covid-19 protocol this will be strictly enforced. It is recommended that you always bring a doctor's return to school note when sent home from school upon return.

In addition, we have these guidelines for parents:

- **Fever is considered 100.4 or higher.**
- **Do not give your children medication for fever then send them to school.**

- Children should be fever free 72 hours before returning to school without medication.
- A child with a bad cold should not attend. Green runny nose, coughing and sneezing.
- Any child who has vomited or had diarrhea within 24 hours of school time should not attend. They must be symptom free without medication for 24 hours prior to returning.
- Any child with a suspected concussion should not attend.
- Any child treated for head lice must have no evidence of nits in his hair in order to return.
- If your child can not participate in their daily routine of activities such as going outside, they must stay home. There can be no special accommodations of “sting indoors or with another class”
- The ELC reserves the right to send any child home at our discretion based on inability to participate in school activities.
- A child may not attend the day after any surgery. We require a return to school form from their doctor upon returning after surgery, being put to sleep etc.
- It is best to obtain a doctor’s excuse for return to school.

Please refer to the chart on the next page for any questions you may have.

I NEED TO STAY HOME IF...						
I HAVE A FEVER	I AM VOMITING	I HAVE DIARRHEA	I HAVE A RASH	I HAVE HEAD LICE	I HAVE AN EYE INFECTION	I HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL
						
Temperature of 100.4 or higher	Within the past 24 hours	Within the past 24 hours.	Body rash with itching or fever.	Itchy head, active head lice.	Redness, itching, and/or "crusty" drainage from eye.	Hospital stay and/or ER Visit
I AM READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL WHEN I AM....						
Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication i.e. Tylenol, Motrin	Free from vomiting for at least 2 solid meals	Free from diarrhea for at least 24 hours	Free from rash itching, or or fever. I have been evaluated by my doctor if needed.	Treated with appropriate lice treatment at home and proof is provided to nurse.	Evaluated by my doctor and have note to return to school	Released by my medical provider to return to school.

MEDICINE:

- It is not our policy to administer medicine. However, if a child has a chronic condition and requires medicine please notify the Director for the correct procedure.
- **Medicines, bug repellent, hand sanitizer sunscreen, chap stick etc. should never be sent in a child's bag or lunchbox. All medicines must be hand delivered by the parent to the office.** (Or to the person in charge at Carpool)
- If there are any contagious diseases reported to us we will inform the parents of the class. Such as strep, chicken pox, flu, covid etc.
- We ask that if your child does contract an illness please let us know so that we can inform the other parents. We never give names or details of illness to others.
- DHR prohibits us from applying sunscreen, bug repellent, chap-stick or hand sanitizer. However due to the new Covid-19 regulations Saint Mark ELC will use hand sanitizer and a medication form must be signed by the parent.

ACCIDENTS/MEDICAL EMERGENCY:

If your child becomes ill at school, we will call a parent or designated caregiver. If you cannot be reached, we will move down the child's emergency list. Please make IMMEDIATE arrangements to pick up your child.

If you plan to be unavailable while your child is at school, notify someone on your emergency list and send a message through the parent portal. If a parent cannot be found in an emergency, it can be frightening for your child.

In the event of an accident or illness requiring immediate emergency care, we will call 911, followed by the child's parents. If the child requires ambulance transportation an ELC staff member will accompany the child. Accidents and emergencies will be documented with an Incident report. A copy will be sent home to the parent, and an additional copy will be filed.

HEADLICE:

The Jefferson County Department of Health has issued the following advisory concerning treatment for head lice:

“Even though it is sometimes difficult and time consuming, all nits must be removed to insure complete treatment. Lice products do not kill all the nits (do not be fooled by manufacturer's claims to the contrary) and survivors will hatch into crawling lice within 7-10 days. This causes a continuing cycle of lice infestation.”

If your child needs head lice treatment, he or she may not return to school with nits in evidence in his/her hair. Following nit removal, a daily check is advisable for at least 10 days following treatment. We will work with parents to keep all children lice free.

If a child is found to have head lice, we will send a letter home to each parent in the child's class.

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FOOD AND SNACKS & POLICIES

We ask that you try to make your lunches as healthy as possible. No fast food lunches are allowed. **Saint Mark is a nut free facility.** This includes tree nuts, peanuts, and hazelnuts. Some of our children have severe allergies, and it is our policy that we do not permit the use of peanut butter or nuts of any kind for lunches, snacks, crafts or in-class cooking. If sending Lunchables for your child, be sure to remove any peanut butter candy/cookies that may be included. If you use a peanut butter substitute, it must be labeled otherwise it will be assumed it is peanut butter.

The school provides mid-afternoon snacks and water for children that are in after care. Please send only one dessert in your child's lunch. Our policy is that one dessert is eaten last after eating a healthy lunch.

- If your child arrives by 7:30 am you may bring your child's breakfast to school.
- Jefferson County Department of Health requires that "potentially hazardous" foods be refrigerated until lunch. These foods will not be refrigerated after lunch.
- Under direction of the Fire Marshal we are not allowed to heat food for children.
- When sending a sandwich, please cut it in fourths or in half so they can handle it easily.
- All foods need to be cut prior to sending them to school. (veggies, cheese, meat, fruit)
- We do not allow carbonated drinks of any kind. If your child has a "lunchable" please remove any carbonated drinks. According to the USDA food guidelines, a child must have milk with lunch. We request that you provide milk (ex: milk box). We will place your child's milk box or Sippy cup of milk in a refrigerator.
- Please plan for your child's lunch to be as convenient and neat as possible. If they need forks or spoons please supply them. If you send food in a thermos please send a small bowl or plate, so that they can have easy access to it. No glass containers are allowed.
- Opportunity for drinking water is provided throughout the day.
- No candy, gum, popcorn or medications should be in a child's lunchbox or school bag.

Cooking for instructional purposes IS allowed and will be conducted as part of Saint Mark curriculum and activities

PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING! Please make sure your child's name is clearly marked on their lunch box and each container. Saint Mark is not responsible for any lost items.

NAP/REST TIME

DHR requires to have a designated nap or rest time, the child does not have to sleep however, they are required to rest.

Toddlers-4K are required to provide a "Nap Mat/Napper". You will be provided a large plastic bag that closes. You are required to take the Nap Mat/Napper home every Friday and wash

and return it to school on Monday in the plastic bag. Children are allowed a blanket if there is not one attached to the nap mat and must remain the bag as well as a special lovey they need for nap. These items will only be available during nap/rest time.

Naps:

Toddlers & 2's – 1:15 to 3:45

3k & 4K 2 – 3:30

Children will be required to keep their shoes on during nap for quick exit if an emergency arises. Snack is served after nap.

CLOTHING/SHOES/ACCESSORIES

Children are required to wear play clothes. We are not responsible for any damage to children's clothing during the day.

We encourage independence in our children and a child can better attend to their own bathroom needs in garments that are easy for them to handle alone.

Children that are toilet training should wear bottoms that can easily be pulled up and down by the child. (no bubble suits, overalls, belts, long dresses or tights). When toilet training, we require pull ups with the side access Velcro. We can not wash any soiled clothing.

Put your child's name on all clothing, coats and other belongings to help ensure their safe return. All children will play outside each day that weather permits, so dress them accordingly.

- Parents are required to furnish the school with a "change of clothes", including socks, underwear, shirt and pants. These also need to be upgraded as they grow throughout the year. All clothes will be returned at the end of the year.
- Extra shoes would be nice if they are toilet training.
- It is recommended that all girls wear shorts underneath their dresses.
- **Children must wear athletic shoes. Due to Covid it is suggested that they wear athletic shoes with Velcro closures or the slip-on type.**
- Children are not allowed to wear any jewelry, scarves, sunglasses or other accessories.
- We are not responsible for children's hair bows, personal items or face masks.

POTTY TRAINING POLICY

Children in 3K and 4K are required to be potty trained.

The policy concerning the 3K & 4K:

1. Children are never allowed to wear pull-ups or diapers.
2. Any preschooler can regress for a short time because of life changes, emotional concerns or physical problems.
3. If a child that we know has been successfully potty trained begins to have accidents, we will work with the parents to help the child find success again.

4. If a child must return home to potty train, monthly tuition must be continued to be paid. If a parent wishes to hold a place for the child at Saint Mark while he/she is not in school, the parent must continue to pay tuition monthly.
5. Children may be asked to leave Saint Mark if they are not potty trained.

ADJUSTMENT PERIOD

Starting school for the first time often causes anxiety for children. We will work with you and your child to make this adjustment period a positive experience. We recommend that you give your child at least one month to adjust to the early education center experience. It is usually the parent who has the hardest time adjusting, please do not linger, the longer you do, the longer it takes them to calm down. Please be assured that we will call you if your child cannot be consoled.

PROGRAM

CURRICULUM:

Our goal is to provide young children with a program that is developmentally appropriate. Children learn best through exploration at their own pace. The program is designed to meet their cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs through a balance of structure and discovery. Children need opportunities to explore their environment and to be guided by teachers who understand child development.

Along with letter and number recognition, literacy, colors, and shapes, our program also considers mealtime, outside time and rest time as parts of the curriculum. Opportunities for learning happen when children interact with each other, use their imaginations, complete a task, follow directions, and use good manners. Learning happens all day, every day in many different ways. We want the children to be fully engaged in their world by asking questions and sharing their thoughts and ideas in a safe nurturing environment.

Saint Mark incorporates a balance of planned activities designed to help children progress toward meeting developmentally appropriate goals, as well as improvised activities that emerge from the children's interests or from unexpected experiences. Throughout the day, our teachers observe and document the children's learning to create plans that will continue to meet each individual child's needs and encourage them to explore and meet new goals. Our goal is to give children a foundation that will foster a love of God and learning.

ASSESSMENT:

All children are assessed through observations of peer interactions and play, developmental checklist, and portfolios of their work. Areas of assessment include: socio-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, math, science, technology, social studies, creative expression, and health and safety. This information is shared formally twice a year during

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parent/teacher conferences. This process encourages parents and teachers to develop a plan that will best meet the needs of the child. It will be sensitive to the family's values, culture, identity, and home language.

If, through the above-mentioned process, teachers suspect a developmental delay or other special need, the teacher will communicate the concern to the Director. The administrator will observe the child, document the findings, and meet with the teachers to discuss the concern. A meeting will then be scheduled with the family to share the concern in an honest and supportive manner. We will suggest future steps and assist the family by providing information and resources for further assessments. If we feel that we do not have the best environment for the child's learning we will work with the family in providing resources and information of other centers in our area that will best fit the needs of the child.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: There will be no extra classes this year due to the Covid restrictions.

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

Child guidance has an important place in the program at Saint Mark. Parents and teachers will work together to be consistent and effective in training children to make appropriate choices in a classroom setting. We have developed a formula that is appropriate in shaping and encouraging responsible behavior. First, we will communicate to the child, by name and about the choice they made, and try to redirect their focus. Secondly a hand on the shoulder is a gentle reminder of choices. The time out will be either in the class, or if the behavior has warranted, the child may be in time out, in the office. If needed, the parents will be called for a conference.

DISMISSAL:

Saint Mark reserves the right at any time to suspend or permanently expel a child from enrollment.

STAFF BEHAVIORS THAT ARE PROHIBITED:

- ⊗ No Saint Mark staff shall discuss or disclose personal information regarding children.
- ⊗ Physical or aversive punishment
- ⊗ Withdrawal of food, nap, or bathroom opportunities
- ⊗ Abusive, profane, or derogatory language, including yelling or belittling
- ⊗ Any form of public or private humiliation
- ⊗ Any form of emotional abuse

BITING:

In the case of biting, every effort is made to ensure the safety of every child. Biting is typical for toddlers and children whom are not yet verbal. When biting occurs, the following steps will be implemented:

- ☼ When a child bites they will be isolated. The bitten child will be given First Aid. Also, a report of what action was taken will be provided to the parent of the biter and to the parent of the child that was bitten. If the bite breaks the skin, the parents will be notified. A report will be given to the biter and child that was bit.
- ☼ If the biting persists, we will then have a mandatory conference with the parents and a prevention plan will be set in place.
- ☼ If the biting still persists the parents will be required to attend a parenting class on biting. (The fee for this class is \$50.00)
- ☼ If the biting still persists, it will be at the discretion of the Director but may result in dismissal of the child.

HITTING/ROUGH PLAY POLICY:

No child should ever be afraid to come to school because he fears another child. Therefore, we have a hitting and rough play policy.

- ☼ During the day if a child has been corrected 3 times for hitting or playing roughly, they will then be removed from class to the office.
- ☼ After the child returns to class if the behavior continues the parents will be contacted.

PARENT/STAFF RELATIONS

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY:

All children's records shall be kept confidential or discussed with any one other than the parent or administration.

SMOKING POLICY:

Saint Mark United Methodist Church is a non-smoking campus. Smoking is never permitted on the grounds or in the building.

FIREARMS POLICY:

No firearms are allowed on the campus of Saint Mark unless you are a member of the police department.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY:

Children will have an opportunity for appropriate amounts of active play each day. Children who are here for 4 hours will have at least 30 minutes of active outdoor or gym play daily. Those who are here from 7:00-4:30 will have at least 60 minutes of active play daily.

COMMUNICATION:

- ☼ Daily reports are available online through the Sandbox portal.
- ☼ Each child is to bring their full size back pack to school each day along with their folder each day to carry art papers, notes, etc.
- ☼ The teachers will send home a weekly newsletter containing specific class information for each class.
- ☼ One of the most important forms of communication is through your Sandbox portal. You may send messages to the teachers and or the Director.

OFFICE COMMUNICATIONS:

The optimal way to communicate with the administration is through the parent portal. You may also call during program hours with and questions or concerns.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**INFANTS:**

Because breast milk is recommended as the best source of nourishment for infants, breast feeding is encouraged and supported by Saint Mark. We have a nursing room provided for convenience and privacy. It is highly advised that infants receive their first feeding of the day at home before center arrival. According to Health Department regulations bottles must be identified with the child's name. Stored breast milk must also include the date of storage and the child's name. All bottles must be pre-made at home. We are not allowed to mix bottles. We **do not** warm bottles in a microwave. We use a crock pot for this purpose. Infants will be held for bottle feeding. Once they can hold their own bottle that is allowed. Infants will not be placed in a crib with a bottle. If not consumed, formula will be discarded within one hour unless refrigerated and any leftover will be discarded at the end of the day. If baby food is provided by the parent, all containers shall be labeled with the child's name. No previously opened containers can be accepted. All opened containers will be sent home or discarded at the end of the day. Remember no glass containers are allowed.

Each infant has their own crib to sleep in. Sheets are changed weekly or when soiled. We feed and nap based on the infant's individual schedule.

Parents should provide Infants and toddlers with bibs for feeding.

BABYSITTING:

Saint Mark hires employees based on their education and expertise within a supervised and managed environment. Center management, therefore, cannot be responsible or held liable if parents hire Saint Mark employees for privately arranged child care outside the scope of its employment. Staff are allowed to transport children enrolled in the program only if they are listed on the parents designated list. While parents may feel comfortable approaching their classroom teachers to babysit, it is prohibited that your child's actual teachers be asked to babysit as this often diminishes the student/teacher relationship that teachers work so hard to establish in the classroom.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES:

All the children enjoy sharing their birthdays with the class. Please discuss with your child's teacher an appropriate time to celebrate. Please keep refreshments simple. Small cupcakes or cookies are best. No homemade items are allowed all food items must come from a bakery such as Publix, Edgars etc. **NO GIFTS!**

Children cannot go to another class party for any reason during the school year. This includes sibling birthday parties. Parents are responsible for cleaning up afterward.

Please do not bring or send party assistants to the classroom (i.e. clowns, Elsa/Batman impersonator, etc.) These disrupt the class schedule and often frighten young children. These should be reserved for your own personal parties outside the school setting.

VISITATION: Is not allowed due to Covid Protocol

- Due to Covid-19 protocol this may be limited or not available at a given time.

VOLUNTEERS: Will not be allowed due to Covid Protocol

- Due to Covid-19 protocol this may be limited or not available at a given time.

SOLICITATION:

Saint Mark ELC may not be used as a setting for solicitation.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

Many young children do have an object of special attachment, such as a blanket or stuffed toy. This can help to ease the transition from home to school. Teachers will help other children to understand and respect such feelings, and once a child is settled the item will be placed in their cubby. Teachers will do their best to keep up with children's belongings, but cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage of personal possessions. Labeling of all personal belongings helps to avoid loss.

Children are requested to leave toys, gum, candy, money or other valuables at home. We also ask that you refrain from sending your child with special jewelry except those of religious purposes. These are a potential choking hazard to them and the other children. Please discourage your child from bringing toys or other "prized" possessions to school except on special occasions planned by the teachers. Such highly valued items are often difficult to keep up with, may get broken and are very hard to share. We cannot be held responsible for any personal items that are lost or damaged

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Our program complies with non-discrimination laws covering hiring of staff, enrollment of children, and termination of staff and children.

If anything in this handbook is unclear to you or if any of your questions have not been covered, please call or come in to see the director. We want to make sure that you feel comfortable about your child's safety and well-being while he/she is at school.

