

St. Joseph Child Development Center Parent Handbook



Mission Statement

Giving children a home.

Philosophy

We believe children develop into strong, independent, self-confident individuals when given the proper opportunities to stimulate their growth socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. Children learn best by doing, becoming active thinkers and experimenting through play. Through play children have the chance to gain meaning from their environment. Offering children experiences that are appropriate for their particular development level gives them practice with their current skills, abilities and gently challenges them to a higher level.

Our program offers nurturing, professional care for your child, and is designed to help him or her develop a strong sense of self worth. We provide your child a warm, secure environment, filled with love, good physical care, and an atmosphere for learning.

We strive to provide the highest quality program possible for young children and their families. Our center is a comfortable place where children and families feel a sense of belonging. We welcome you to our family.

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COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA)
OF SERVICES FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN, INC.

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PARENTAL RIGHTS

Kentucky Administrative Regulation 199.898 gives specific rights for children in child care programs and their parents, custodians, or guardians. Those rights are as follows.

1. All children receiving child care services in a day care center licensed pursuant to KRS 199.896 shall have the following rights:
 - a. The right to be free from physical or mental abuse;
 - b. The right not to be subjected to abusive language or abusive punishment;
 - c. The right to be in the care of adults who shall meet their health, safety, and developmental needs.
2. Parents, custodians, or guardians of children have the following rights:
 - a. The right to have access to their children at all times the child is in care and access to the provider caring for their children during normal hours of provider operation and whenever the children are in the care of the provider;
 - b. The right to be provided with information about child care regulatory standards; where to direct questions about regulatory standards; and how to file a complaint;
 - c. The right to file a complaint against a child care provider without any retribution against the parent, custodian, guardian, or child;
 - d. The right to obtain information from the Cabinet for Health Services regarding any type of licensure denial, suspension, or revocation of an operator, and Cabinet reports that have found abuse or neglect by any child care provider or any employee of a child care provider. Identifying information regarding children and their families shall remain confidential.
 - e. The right to obtain information from the Cabinet regarding the inspections and plans of correction of the day care center within the past year.
 - f. The right to review and discuss with the provider any state reports and deficiencies revealed by such reports.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information concerning the children and families participating in any of our programs is kept in strict confidence. We ask that parents set up conferences to discuss concerns.

BRIEF HISTORY

The St. Joseph Catholic Orphan Society was founded in 1849 to care for the orphaned children in the Louisville community. The current building located in Crescent Hill was erected in 1885.

The St. Joseph Child Development Center was established in 1981. Since it began, this Center has enjoyed both rapid growth and an excellent reputation.

To aid in the understanding that must exist between administration, staff, and parents, the following policies have been established.

ANNUAL FUND RAISING EVENT

The second Saturday in August of every year the St. Joseph Catholic Orphan Society holds its one major fund raising event. The Picnic provides substantial subsidized funding each year for the Child Development Center. Tuition paid by parents does not cover the full costs of staffing, supplies, overhead expenses, food, and transportation of the Center. In order for us to maintain our excellent staff to child ratios, we need the support of the Picnic.

In recent years the level of parent participation on Picnic Day has been high. Parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer a minimum of two hours working in booths on that day to help raise these vital funding dollars.





ADMISSIONS

The Center accepts children from age six weeks through pre-kindergarten. Tours of the Center are given upon request. Enrollment is based on the availability of space, and a waiting list is kept for interested families when a space is not available upon request.

REGISTRATION

When an opening becomes available, arrangements may be made for registration. At that time the parent(s) and child (ren) will be introduced to the staff and spend more time in the classroom.

Registration and consent forms, immunization certificates and a registration fee are required at the time of enrollment. Registration fees are non-refundable.

ENROLLMENT AND TERMINATION POLICY

Enrollment is at the discretion of St. Joseph based upon the best interests of the child, the expectation that he/she will benefit from the program, and the welfare of other children enrolled. Enrollment will be without regard to race, sex, creed, religion, or national origin. The Director reserves the right to discharge the child if the parent/guardian expresses ongoing and highly critical input about the Center, staff, etc. or creates a hostile work environment for the staff. The Director also reserves the right to transfer a child from one classroom to another for social and/or educational reasons that are in the best interest of the child. Children will not be enrolled into the new school year until all past due balances are cleared.

The Enrollment Agreement remains on file at St. Joseph so long as the subject child remains actively enrolled at the Center and is available for inspection by the parent or guardian at any time. A new enrollment form must be completed and turned in to the Director during the August registration period each year the child remains enrolled in the Child Development Center. A full year's enrollment agreement period is for fifty-two (52) weeks. There are no unpaid vacation weeks. There will be an annual enrollment fee of \$75 per child per year, as stated on the fee schedule. A one time only supply fee of \$150 will be charged for a new infant entering the program for the first time.

Enrollment information must be kept current. The parent/guardian is required by state law to update information furnished herein as necessary, with changes initialed and dated by the parent and the Director.

It is mandatory that you give a two-week written notice to the Center before terminating childcare services. The final two weeks tuition must be paid at the time the notice is served. Verbal notices are not acceptable. If your child is not going to attend during the last two weeks, fees are still due and payable regardless of attendance.

STATE STANDARDS

The state minimum standards provided by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health Services and Cabinet for Families and Children Services regulating child care operations within the state is available at St. Joseph for review by parents. Although St. Joseph Child Development Center is committed to accreditation staffing ratios, it will at no time fall below state minimum standards.



ATTENDANCE AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. However, if children need to be dropped off up to a half hour early or picked up between 5:30 and 6:00 PM please call to make arrangements. **The late room is for occasional, emergency use only.** Please try to establish consistent hours of attendance for your children, as routine and continuity help children feel secure in an environment.

Breakfast is served at 8:30 A.M. If you arrive late, be prepared to stay with your child until he/she has completed breakfast. Arrival by 9:00 A.M. will ensure that your child will benefit from all the learning opportunities available at the Center. If your child is going to be absent or will be arriving late, please call and inform us as soon as possible, so that staff can make appropriate adjustments. Do not allow your child to bring food to the Center.

The late fee for children not picked up by 6:00PM is \$1.00 per minute per child. At that time children are taken to the Director's office. These fees will be due at the time the child is picked up. The employee time clock will be used to determine the number of minutes that will be billed. Excessive late pick-ups may result in parents being asked to withdraw their children from the Center.

If the Center is not notified and an authorized person does not pick up a child by 6:00 P.M., we will try to contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) or an authorized person listed on the child's registration form to locate an escort for the child. Should this attempt prove unsuccessful and a parent has not contacted the Center by 7:00 P.M., the Center will contact Child Protective Services and the child will be taken into their custody.

SECURITY

Children are never released to anyone other than parents unless the person appears on the child's authorized escort list. Any escort other than parent or guardian must present a picture ID to the receptionist and receive a dismissal slip to be given to the teacher. An escort must be at least 16 years of age.

St. Joseph is now protected by advanced electronic surveillance both inside classrooms and outside the building. Parents are welcome to view the video monitor in the lobby at any time.

TUITION AND FEES

The tuition amount for the Child Development Center (CDC) is set and approved by the Board of Directors of St. Joseph Children's Home. **THIS AMOUNT INCREASES AS OUR COSTS RISE.** St. Joseph's agrees to give notice of rate changes as stated in the enrollment agreement. The CDC does not have drop in rates.

Statements reflecting tuition and other fees will be available to the parent/guardian upon request. **TUITION IS DUE AND PAYABLE ON MONDAY OF EACH WEEK.** In order to ensure the receipt of proper payment, the CDC requires enrollment in our automatic withdrawal program within thirty days of your child's first day of attendance. Each Monday your specified checking/savings account will be debited a pre-determined amount for tuition. In the event of two returned payments, the CDC reserves the right to require cash payments to be made each Monday by the close of business. There will be a \$25.00 late fee assessed to your account along with a \$36.00 service charge for any returned checks. These fees are subject to change depending upon the charges imposed by our financial institution. If you are unable to have payments received directly from your account you must submit a written letter requesting to pay each week in cash. Permission will be granted based on the CDC Program Director and Executive Director's approval.

Failure to pay weekly tuition by Monday of each week will result in your child's termination from the CDC. **YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THE CDC ON TUESDAY.**

For a detailed explanation of tuition and fees, see the contract signed at the time of enrollment.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

St. Joseph Center employs a well-qualified and experienced staff. The average length of employment for our teachers is eleven years. All of our staff receive on-going training in early childhood development through various agencies and colleges such as University of Louisville, Jefferson Community College, Morehead State University and 4-C's (Community Coordinated Child Care). We have staff in each classroom trained in CPR and first aid.

Volunteers assist in classrooms as part of the service hours for school. These students from various schools including Trinity, St. Xavier, Sacred Heart and Assumption High Schools are a great asset to our program.



DAYS OF OPERATION

Days of operation are Monday through Friday throughout the year except for New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. For any of these holidays that might occur on a weekend, the Center will be closed on the Friday preceding or the Monday after the actual holiday. **There is no reduction in tuition for these holidays.** The Center will also be closed on the Friday before the St. Joseph Annual Orphans Picnic.

ITEMS FROM HOME

We ask that you not let your child bring toys, chewing gum, candy, or money to the Center. We also recommend that your child not bring other personal items to school either because they are too easily lost or misplaced. **Toys will only be permitted on "Show-And-Tell" Day.** War toys (guns, swords, or related items) are never permitted.



SAFETY RULES

To ensure the safety of our children and friends, please obey the posted 10 mph speed limit while on our grounds. This is strictly enforced. We encourage the use of seat belts and/or appropriate child car seats while driving to and from school. Do not leave keys in your car's ignition or leave your car running while unattended in the parking lot! Do not park in the turning circle (around the flag pole). Do not drive your vehicle around to the rear of the building where the playgrounds are located.

Smoking is not permitted in any of the outside areas used by the children or in the building at any time. We also ask that you avoid throwing cigarette butts on our property.



HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATIONS

Your child's current immunization record must be provided upon enrollment. A written physician's statement is required if your child has any health problems, allergies to any food/milk that the Center may serve, breathing machines, religious exclusions, limitation of physical activity, etc. Verbal communication of such medical conditions is not sufficient. These forms should be updated as change occurs in your child's condition.

Should your child become ill during his/her day at the Center, you will be notified immediately. Illness can be any of the following, but not limited to: three loose bowel movements within one hour, vomiting, unusual behavior, fever over 100 degrees, rash, coughing excessively. As the Center is not equipped to care for sick children, you will be asked to make arrangements to have your child picked up as soon as possible. Until you arrive, your child will be isolated from the other children in a supervised area, to prevent the further spreading of illness. **Your child may not return to the Center for 24 hours unless otherwise noted from a physician in written form.** Children who are sick should not be brought to the Center and should not return until they have been symptom free for at least 24 hours unless otherwise noted from a physician in written form. All notes from physicians must specify the exact date on which a child may return from an illness and also should state the illness the child has had, as well as any requirements to be followed after the illness. We have a specific form that you may give to your physician in instances such as the aforementioned. Please see your child's teacher in order to obtain one.

We cannot overemphasize the importance of keeping your emergency phone numbers up to date in case of illness or injury.

Teachers will administer medication to non-infectious children in attendance, but only with daily written permission from the parent or guardian in the form of a drug waiver. Drug waivers are available in the child's classroom. All medications must be clearly labeled in the original containers, and be prescribed for the intended user only. In other words, we cannot give your child medication prescribed for a sibling. The amount you specify on the drug waiver and the dosage listed on the medicine container must be consistent.

We will not give over-the-counter medicine for over three days unless a physician prescribes it for a specific time period. Over-the-counter dosage cannot exceed what is on the medication label. If your child is younger than the age specified as appropriate on the label, a doctor's prescription is necessary in addition to the drug waiver signed by the parent.

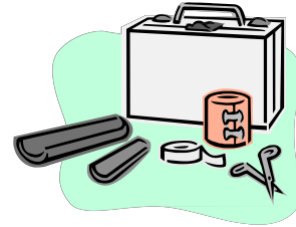
Medical waivers need to be signed daily, and all medicine should be handed to the teacher directly. If the teacher is not in the classroom, please put the medication in the **designated area** in your child's classroom. At no time should you leave medicine in an area accessible to a child. St. Joseph is required by state regulation to keep all medicine out of children's reach in a locked container or cabinet.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event that a child becomes seriously ill or injured while in the Center's care, Emergency Medical Technicians will be contacted in addition to the child's parents. If the EMS feels that the child requires a hospital visit and the parent is unable to be reached or cannot arrive in a short period of time, a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital. We also have staff trained in CPR and First Aid.

INCIDENT REPORTS

Occasionally children get slight bruises or scrapes while playing. Staff are trained in pediatric first aid to apply in these matters. Parents receive an Incident Report for any injuries. If any accidents happen away from school, please notify the teacher at the time you drop off your child.



We do have incidents of **biting**, which is normal child development, in infant and toddler classrooms. We want to reassure you that staff members make every effort to make sure biting does not occur frequently. Staff must keep the names of children involved confidential.

DISCIPLINE

The Center uses a positive approach to discipline. Children are encouraged, directed, or re-directed as necessary. In the rare occasions that a child does not accept direction or re-direction, "time out" is used. During "time out" a child must refrain from his/her present activity for up to one minute for each year of the child's age and sit quietly. This is always in the presence of the staff. We encourage the children to solve their own problems with guidance from the teachers.

While in the Center's care, no children will be subjected to any method of physical punishment. There will be no disciplinary measures associated with toilet training, food, or sleep.

CHILD ABUSE

All teachers, child care workers and administrative staff of the Center are required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services, in accordance with Kentucky administrative regulations.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

St. Joseph Child Development Center has an active Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). The purpose of the Committee is to assist the CDC director in providing a quality program on a break-even cost basis. The Parent Advisory Committee members provide a liaison between the parents and the Center. Meetings are held monthly. We recruit new members annually.

VISITATION

The Center not only welcomes but also encourages parents and guardians to visit the Center at any time during the course of the school day. Please come unannounced to observe or participate in the program. Visits to classrooms other than your child's room, however, must be arranged, so that you may be properly introduced to those teachers. Visits to these rooms are encouraged, especially when your child is due to be moved there.

COMMUNICATION

It is very important that we keep open communication with you. We need to know your expectations of the Center, and you need to know our expectation of you. It is very important for you to remember to schedule a time to consult with your child's teacher.

Short informal chats with your child's teachers are encouraged at pick up and drop off times. They are valuable to parents, child (ren), and staff. However, please keep in mind your child's teacher is also caring for other children at these times as well; and it may not be possible for the teacher to talk at length.

Teacher/parent conferences will be scheduled twice yearly--once during the first six months of your child's attendance in the new classroom, and again in the last six months to assess progress and development. If you would like a conference in addition to the scheduled times, feel free to contact us.

A monthly newsletter is published by the Child Development Center, and the agency has a quarterly newsletter. The quarterly newsletter involves all the programs within the agency.

There is a parent bulletin board in the main lobby, outside the Director's office, and individual class bulletin boards at each room. Please be aware of them and read them regularly.

CLOTHING

We encourage you to dress your child in clothes that are comfortable, practical, and safe for running and climbing. Please keep a complete change of clothes in our child's cubby, so we are prepared for spills or toilet accidents. It would be wise to mark these articles with your child's name or initials.

For children being potty trained, please ensure that your child wears clothing that he/she can easily get on and off. For older children, clothing that will easily accommodate quick, easy, and independent toilet access is encouraged. Because of rocks and climbing equipment, closed toe, flat shoes are also encouraged, and sandals are discouraged.

OUTSIDE PLAY

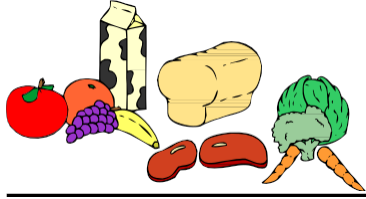
We will take your child (ren) outside daily (weather permitting), including short periods during winter months. If, for some reason you desire for your child to stay in on a particular day, you must so stipulate in writing for that day. Please dress your child appropriately with proper outer garments for the current temperature and shoes that will allow for running and climbing.

TRANSPORTATION

Field trips are taken by the older age groups, usually four years and older. Notice is posted for parents well in advance of the excursion. The group's staff to child ratio is maintained on field trips. Parents are welcome to join us on these excursions.

Transportation for field trips is provided by licensed public transportation. Parents may transport their own child with prior written notice to the Center.





MEALS AND SNACKS

The Center provides breakfast, lunch and snacks for the children in attendance. Weekly menus are posted in the reception area and in classrooms. Infant formula is not provided; therefore, parents are asked to provide this if their child does not drink cow's milk. State regulations prohibit our staff from preparing bottles for infants. Parents must prepare bottles at home. The only exception is that we are allowed to thaw breast milk and pour into a bottle at feeding time. The Center will provide cereal and jar food for infants when parents give approval.

Meals are served "family style," allowing children to have second servings if desired. Children are encouraged to eat a little of each of the foods served; however, they will not be required to do so. Any child who has food allergies, is a vegetarian or had dietary restrictions because of religious reasons must have a physician's statement on file. Lunch is served from 11:30 am to 12:00 pm, and afternoon snack follows naptime. **Parents may be asked to supply a sack lunch occasionally as needed.**

Those desiring to bring treats for special occasions may do so. However, the Center's snack must be served first. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher first and bring only food items commercially prepared from a licensed food vendor. **State regulations prohibit us from giving homemade food items to children in our care.**

IN-HOME BABYSITTING

In-home babysitting is not a service of St. Joseph Child Development Center. If you arrange for a staff member to provide care of your child off-premises, the staff member undertakes such service on their own behalf and not as our employee. St. Joseph staff members are selected and retained only on the basis of their fitness for rendering childcare services in a controlled and fully supervised childcare program. St. Joseph offers no assurance of the fitness of its staff members for performing these and other services in an environment not professionally supervised (transporting your child, or caring for them in your home), and none should be implied or inferred under any circumstances.

PROCUREMENT FEE

A procurement fee of \$1,000.00 will be charged if you hire a faculty member away from St. Joseph during your child's enrollment or within 12 months of withdrawal from the Center.

SMOKING ON CAMPUS

St. Joseph Children's Home is committed to ensuring the health and safety of everyone on campus. Although we are not a total smoke-free campus, we are striving to limit the amount our children in all our programs are exposed to cigarette smoke, lighters, cigarette butts, etc., both from a health and a safety standpoint. Therefore, smoking is only permitted in personal cars. Smoking outside of your car is not permitted, nor is bringing cigarettes, lighters, or any other tobacco paraphernalia into the building. This includes not disposing of cigarette butts in the parking lot or anywhere else on campus.



We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for choosing St. Joseph Child Development Center as your childcare provider. It is our utmost intention to provide quality childcare while offering a stimulating, diverse learning program. Should you ever have any questions about any aspect of our program, please feel free to ask our Center director. Each time you come to our Center, we want you to feel confident knowing that your children are our first priority. Thank you again.

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