



HUMBLE TX

2017 - 2018

Early Childhood Handbook

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School exists to develop students who have academic strengths, strong moral values and a deeper understanding of their Catholic faith, so that they succeed as individuals who make wise choices, serve others and attain a deep relationship with Christ.

GOALS

- To establish a framework for teachers that correlates with current state and national standards.
- To equip students with the necessary skills and tools to interpret and express themselves proficiently in both written and verbal communication.
- To provide students with an awareness of the constantly evolving nature of technology in such a way that it is integrated into written and spoken English as well as the areas of mathematics, social studies and science.

ST. MARY MAGDALENE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

EARLY CHILDHOOD BELIEFS

- **We Believe** that parents are the primary educators of their children.
- **We Believe** that the school is in partnership with parents in the task of educating children.
- **We Believe** that early childhood is a special time for children and parents to experience the joy and wonder of discovery.
- **We Believe** that children should be in an environment that fosters love of God, love of self and love of others.
- **We Believe** that early childhood is a time of exploration in an environment of trust.
- **We Believe** that early childhood is a time of constant growth and development.
- **We Believe** that children develop at different rates and should not be compared with others.

The curriculum of St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School exists within a total Christ centered environment. This environment enables the community to live and model Catholic values. We believe in the dignity and uniqueness of each individual. Therefore, we strive to provide a curriculum that supports the development of the whole person, **mind, heart and spirit**. We believe that all learning experiences in our Catholic School form students in Christ to become life-long learners and productive citizens. Students in St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School will. . .

Use their Minds to. . .

- acquire the intellectual, moral, creative and organizational skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in high school and beyond
- articulate ideas clearly and effectively in oral, written, kinesthetic and artistic expression
- be effective communicators and critical thinkers with the skills necessary to interact justly in a global community
- use technology competently and responsibly

Use their Hearts to. . .

- act on gospel values and live generous lives of loving service
- show respect for others and understand the value of diversity and multiculturalism

- build community
- recognize the value of and participate in service for the good of the community
- live and act with reverence for the earth as God's creation

Use their Spirits to . . .

- recognize their call to holiness as prayerful individuals, who actively participate in their faith communities
- develop a personal spirituality based on a clear understanding of the Catholic faith and traditions
- proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- engage in the liturgy and sacramental life of the church
- come to know and love scripture
- recognize and use their God-given gifts
- achieve mental, physical, emotional and spiritual wellness

PRINCIPLES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Learning that Informs Developmentally Appropriate Practice

1. Domains of children's development: physical, social, emotional and cognitive are closely related. Development in one domain influences and is influenced by development in other domains.
2. Development occurs in a relatively orderly sequence, with later abilities, skills and knowledge building on those already acquired.
3. Development proceeds at varying rates from child to child as well as unevenly within areas of each child's functioning.
4. Early experiences have both cumulative and delayed effects on individual children's development and learning.
5. Development proceeds in predictable directions toward greater complexity, organization and internalization.
6. Development and learning occur in and are influenced by multiple social and cultural contexts.
7. Children are active learners, drawing on direct physical and social experience as well as culturally transmitted knowledge to construct their own understanding of the world around them.
8. Development and learning result from interaction of biological maturation and the environment, which includes both the physical and social worlds that children live in.
9. Play is an important vehicle for children's social, emotional and cognitive development, as well as a reflection of their development.
10. Development advances when children have opportunities to practice newly acquired skills, as well as when they experience a challenge just beyond the level of their present mastery.
11. Children demonstrate different modes of knowing and learning, and different ways of representing what they know.
12. Children develop and learn best when they have secure, consistent relationships with responsive adults and opportunities for positive relationships with peers.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival time is 7:40 A.M. Children should arrive no earlier, as teachers are preparing the classroom, may be in meetings, or may be elsewhere in the building. The K3 and K4 parents **must** “Park and Walk” their students into the school from the courtyard entrance. The classroom doors will be unlocked at the bell. Parents must stay with their student in the hall until the Teacher opens the door to the classroom. Please do not leave your child unattended within the building or outside the building while waiting for class to start. One Teacher from each K3 and K4 room will be on hall duty by their classroom. Students are to sit on the floor with their tote bags until the teacher opens the door. We encourage parents to leave as soon as the student enters the classroom. All doors to the school are locked at 8:00 A.M., and any student entering the building after that time must enter through the main entrance of the school. **Students must be signed in by an adult in the front office in order to be admitted to class. There will be no exceptions.**

All students dismiss at 3:20 P.M. Pre-K students without an older sibling will be dismissed from the **M to Z** side. Any PreK student with an older sibling in grades K5 through 8th will be dismissed with their sibling at the sibling’s designated area (**A to L**: front of school building; **M to Z**: circular drive at the courtyard of the church).

We ask that parents stay in their cars at pick up. The teachers will open car doors and help the children into the cars. Please pull forward to buckle your child in. It is very important for you to use the car line and **NOT** walk up to pick up your child. When parents walk up, it becomes difficult for teachers and staff to keep track of the children. Promptness at pick up is essential.

*****Please use caution when driving in the parking lots!*****

PROGRAM VISITATION / PARTICIPATION

You are encouraged to visit and/or participate in the program, but all volunteers/visitors to a classroom must be VIRTUS trained. We ask that you sign in at the front office and obtain a visitor’s badge before coming into the classroom. We also ask that you assist the children in maintaining composure. For more information on how you can become involved, please ask your child’s teacher. If you wish to observe, please call the office to set up an appointment 24 hours in advance. Again, you must be VIRTUS trained. It is to your child’s advantage to give him/her a few weeks to adjust to the new routines of the classroom before visiting.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We invite you to become an active part of the program, once you have completed VIRTUS training. You may want to share a special talent or experience with the children in a learning center, make some items for the classroom, share some ideas or just read a story to the children.

CLOTHING

The children will have the opportunity to paint and participate in art activities daily. Please send your child in comfortable, casual clothing which will allow him/her freedom from the worry of “getting dirty.” All girls must wear bloomers or modesty shorts under skirts and dresses.

It is essential that adequate outerwear be worn during the cooler seasons, as the children will continue to play outside regardless of the temperature (within reason). Please send a change of clothes for your child. Each piece needs to be clearly labeled with his/her name and placed in a large Ziploc bag.

All children must wear tennis shoes and socks to school. Tennis shoes will allow the children to walk and run safely on the playground as well as in music/movement class.

Pre K-4 will begin attending Mass on Wednesday’s after Christmas break. Please send your child in proper attire for Church.

The children will be given a tote bag to carry their things to and from school. Please leave all backpacks at home.

NAPTIME

The school provides a nap mat for each child. Please send a small blanket for your child to use during naptime. When choosing a blanket, keep in mind the children have to share a cubby and will need to be able to put the blanket in their tote bag to go home.

RESTROOMS

All children must be fully potty trained and able to use the restroom independently. Restrooms are located within your child’s room. The children are free to use the restrooms as needed. Teachers will also take their class as a group for scheduled restroom breaks.

TOYS FROM HOME

Our pre-school program offers many exciting learning activities on a daily basis. Please keep all personal toys at home.

CONFERENCES

The conferences scheduled on the school calendar will not include Pre-K. The children will still be dismissed early as shown on the school calendar. We will give you the dates for the Pre-K conferences as soon as possible. Teachers will post a sign-up sheet outside their classroom door when nearing those dates. If you wish to schedule a conference other than those dates, please feel free to contact your child’s teacher.

DISCIPLINE

The teacher will seek to maintain discipline by preventing problems through effective planning, reinforcing appropriate behavior, and consistently dealing with misbehavior through positive child guidance techniques.

FIELD TRIPS

We will be taking at least one field trip during the school year. All children attending a field trip must have a signed permission slip on file. Each child must wear his/her spirit shirt and be secured in a proper car seat or booster to be able to participate. Teachers will send a note home prior to field trips with the details.

At times, parents will be needed to transport / chaperone the field trip. In order to attend the field trip, you must have VIRTUS training completed. Please refer to the school newsletter for dates of VIRTUS training. Parents choosing to drive children other than their own must have a driving record on file plus a copy of their current driver's license and insurance card. No siblings may go on field trips.

SNACK TIME

From time to time, the children will make their own nutritional snack as part of our learning activities. The recipes will be passed on to you so you can make them at home. It is amazing what they eat when they take part in the making of the treat!

Pre-K 3 will parents will need to supply their child with a healthy snack daily.

Pre-K 4, we ask each family to take turns weekly supplying a "healthy" snack to share with the class. Your child's teacher will contact you when it is your family's turn to bring in a snack. Please remember nothing elaborate is necessary. Below are some suggestions for appropriate and nutritional snacks:

APPROPRIATE SNACKS	SNACKS TO AVOID
String cheese	Cookies
Fruit	Soda
Mini bagels & cream cheese	Cupcakes
Yogurt	Chips
Trail mix	Red drinks
Fruit breads	
Popcorn	
Graham crackers	

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

If your child's birthday falls within the school year, we try to make the snack schedule so your child can bring in something special such as a cake or cupcakes. School birthdays are usually

held at 2:30 P.M. Please speak to your child's teacher for additional information. Occasionally, parents like to provide birthday goody bags. If you would like to do this for the entire class, please prepare the bags in advance, and your child may pass them out at the end of the day. Children who have a summer birthday are welcome to celebrate their birthday at some point throughout the school year. We want every child to have an opportunity to have a special day with his/her friends. Your child's teacher can help you decide when the best time to celebrate will be.

To protect the feelings of the children, invitations for parties may not be passed out at school unless **ALL** children in the class are invited. Students may not receive flowers, candy, balloons or any other items or services at school, except for NJHS fundraisers.

Any parent who chooses to attend a birthday celebration MUST be VIRTUS trained. There will be NO exceptions made. No siblings may attend a birthday celebration held during the school day.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

There are four classroom parties scheduled during the school year. Classroom parties will begin an hour prior to the end of the school day. The parties are:

- **Halloween** – students will be able to dress in appropriate costumes
- **Christmas** – students will exchange books
- **Valentine's Day** – card exchange where **all** students receive Valentines.
- **End of the Year**- Awards ceremony and lunch

Any parent who chooses to attend a classroom party MUST be VIRTUS trained. There will be NO exceptions made. No siblings may attend classroom parties.

Room parents will work with the teacher to organize parties. When more than one class exists on a grade level, the room parents must coordinate parties.

PreK HANDBOOK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We have received a copy of the 2017-2018 PreK Handbook, containing the operating procedures and policies of St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School. We have reviewed the contents of the PreK Handbook. We agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained in the PreK Handbook.

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

Family Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____

Received by:

SMMCS Staff Member

Date