

# ST. MARY SCHOOL

CHRIST CENTERED EDUCATION



## Preschool/ Kindergarten Parent Handbook

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## **Letter of Welcome**

Dear Parents,

We are pleased that you have chosen St. Mary School as your child's school. We consider it a privilege to share the responsibility of training your child. The Bible is our guidebook which serves as our set of rules and shows us how to live the Christian life. Our prayer for your family is that God's word will have a strong impact upon your life. Since school is considered an extension of home, it is imperative that parents create an atmosphere at home that is supportive of St. Mary School and its goals.

## **Affiliation**

We are part of the Coptic Orthodox Dioceses of California and Hawaii.

## **History & Philosophy**

St. Mary School was founded in 2005, with a philosophy to raise well-rounded Christian children. Trusting that the Lord Christ Himself is the center and the heart of a child from the early beginning, they will grow to become a positive addition to our community and society.

Our school philosophy is 'Christ Centered Education' where each child will participate in a developmentally enriched program that helps the child to grow spiritually, academically, intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically.

## **Mission Statement**

It is the mission of St. Mary School to educate and develop the whole person for the glory of God through adherence to Biblical principles. The school will strive to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to the highest gain of knowledge and skill.

St. Mary School desires to meet the needs of the whole child and to promote spiritual and moral growth, academic and intellectual progress, and physical and social development. Our emphasis is high quality education combined with the knowledge that God's principles are the confirming basis for our action and understanding. The school's goal is to reach the academic disciplines and independent study thoroughly. St. Mary School desires to send young people into the world who will be confident, devout Christian leaders.

Loving God, the Church, family and our country are the primary concerns of our pilgrim fathers in the education of our children. Students at St. Mary School will be taught of our nation's heritage, constitution and flag.

Teachers and Staff members function as role model for students. The professional preparation of the instructional staff is a part of the school's testimony and its commitment to parents to provide quality instruction for its students. We offer large and well-equipped classrooms, but we keep class sizes small in order to provide personal attention to each child.

St. Mary School has the responsibility to provide the best education possible. As Christian educators, we desire to teach each student to accept individual responsibility to God for their actions and to challenge them to glorify God in every facet of the child's life.

## **Statement of Faith**

We believe that the early school years play a very important role in one's life. Our goal is to provide a Christian environment for the children with a strong academic foundation. We believe that Christians should be imitators for Christ, hence providing Christian education and environment will greatly help to achieve this goal. We believe that love is the greatest commandment and the best way to teach it is to provide it for the little children, while providing best teaching practices.

Our Core Religious Beliefs could be summarized as:

- \* The Holy Bible is God's inspired words.
- \* We proclaim the Holy Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit) is one Godhead.
- \* We believe that Christ is the only begotten Son of God.
- \* We believe that Christ, the Son of God, came to the world, took flesh, crucified and died on the cross, resurrected and ascended into heaven. That He (Christ) will come again, to judge the living and the dead.
- \* We believe that our salvation is by God's grace and that one's faith should result in works and Christian life.

## **Student Goals of Understanding**

1. The Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God, thus developing attitudes of love and respect toward it.
2. To teach Biblical character qualities and provide opportunities for the student to demonstrate these qualities.
3. To teach the student to treat everyone with love and respect as unique individuals created in God's image.
4. Creative thinking and educational building blocks prepare them for the future.
5. To teach the student physical fitness, good healthy habits, and wise use of the body as a Temple of God.

## **Administration**

St. Mary School is a non-profit corporation (License # 197412741). The pastor, school board, and the administrator are responsible for setting all the policies of the school. The administrator implements these principles and policies in daily operations.

## **Preschool Hours of Operation**

Saint Mary School is open Monday - Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

## **Age of Children Accepted for Preschool/ Kindergarten**

Preschool is for children between the ages of 2 to 6 years old.

## **Food and Beverage Provisions**

St. Mary School will provide a morning snack, hot lunch and an afternoon snack.

## **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

St. Mary School admits students of any race, sex, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin. It does not discriminate based on race, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its education policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, athletic and other school-administered programs.

## **Admission Policy and Procedures**

Registration is based on the available spaces, the child's age and how the child fits into the academic and social development at St. Mary School. Each parent/guardian must fill out and sign a *completed* Preschool Application of Admission with all appropriate attachments and forms by the first day of school.

A pre-admission conference will be scheduled with the director. This meeting will give the parent/ guardian and child the opportunity to get acquainted with St. Mary School, the goals, philosophy, and policies of the program. It will also give Director of St. Mary School the opportunity to know the child and parent/guardian better.

## **Enrollment Procedures**

1. The completion and submission of the Preschool/ Kindergarten Application of Admission and payment of registration and supply fees (if applicable).
2. Full monthly tuition to be paid by the first day of school.
3. Signed Parent Handbook.

## **Tuition Rules**

Please see the tuition agreement in the enrollment packet for rules. Registration and supply fees are due yearly for each child and is due one month before the new school year.

## **Health - When to Stay at Home**

When students are ill to attend classes, arrangements must be made for the parents to come and get them. **DO NOT SEND CHILDREN TO SCHOOL WITH A FEVER OR COLD.** Good attendance is vital but not when it may jeopardize the health of others. If your child becomes ill at school, we will notify you as soon as possible. The best place for a sick child is at home, in the care of a loved one. If you think that your child may be ill, check with your doctor before sending him/her to school. Children should stay home 24 hours after the last episode. Some signs of illness are as follows:

1. Fever
2. Sore Throat
3. Rash
4. Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea
5. Red Watery Eyes
6. Facial Swelling
7. Flushed Face

The school will administer prescription medication prescribed by a physician only. A Consent for Administration of Medication Form must be completed and signed by the parent / guardian before any medication can be given to a child.

The medication must be in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's name, physician's name, type of medicine, and the dose. A medicine measuring cup or dropper is required. All items must be placed inside a labeled Ziploc bag.

The School will record the time and dose of the medication to inform Child's parent / guardian daily when the medication has been given.

## **Services to be Provided if a Child has a Medical or Dental Emergency**

In case of an emergency such as a child becomes ill or sustains an injury more serious than a minor scratch, the child's parent/ guardian will be immediately notified.

If the parents or guardian cannot be reached, the next person on the child's Health and Emergency Form will be contacted.

St. Mary School will arrange for obtaining medical treatment of any child if necessary, without specific instructions if the child's parent / guardian cannot be reached and if the nature of the illness or injury should not be delayed.

In case of serious injury or illness, 911 will be called.

## **Custody-Parent Visitation Rights**

In most cases, when parents are divorced, both mother and father continue to have equal rights to their children. However, if you have legal papers that limit the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitation, please provide a copy to the school. Unless this information is in the child's file in the school office, equal rights will be provided to both parents.

## **Attendance**

A child who misses a day of school misses a day of learning. We encourage parents to send their children to school daily unless the child is ill.

We prefer students to be here before 9:00 am so that they do not miss calendar time which is valuable to their learning. As well, we do not want them to miss the education program which proceeds after the calendar time. This will also teach students good time habits and allow them to adjust to a school routine.

When a student is absent, a telephone call in the morning is appreciated.

Any time a child is gone for more than two weeks without payment of the regular monthly fees or written notice, the child is dropped from the enrollment list and the vacancy may be filled. In order to be re-enrolled, an opening will have to be available, and a new registration fee paid.

## **Vacation Policy**

Each family is allowed up to two weeks of vacation time per year, for which no fee is charged. This request must be made at least two weeks in advance, in writing (vacation forms available in the Administration Office).

## **Special Events / Holiday Closings**

Tuition will remain the same during periods that contain closings for holidays (see attached Special Events and Holidays Calendar). Designated holidays are subject to change. Please watch for notices when the holidays are approaching.

## **Sign In/Out Procedures**

In order to provide a safe learning environment, all children must be signed in and out on the school's roster daily. As per the State of California, fines of up to \$50 per day can be assessed if a child is not properly signed in or out.

The parent / guardian shall sign his/her legal name.

If the child is removed from school during the day and returns the same day, the child must be signed out and back in.

Only those individuals designated on the child's Enrollment Form will be allowed to pick up the child.

To authorize release of a child to a person not listed in the Enrollment Form, a request by the parent or guardian must be made in writing to the school. A telephone call will not be accepted.

An unfamiliar individual must present photo I.D. to verify their identity.



## **Discipline Policies**

We view discipline as a positive experience that can shape and model young children into successful students and responsible future citizens.

### **Types of Discipline Permitted:**

When unacceptable behavior is about to occur / is occurring, ***the staff will use:***

- \* Redirection: Substituting a positive activity for a negative activity.
- \* Distraction: Change the focus of the activity or behavior.
- \* Active Listening: To determine the cause of the behavior.
- \* Time Out: Separation from the group when less intrusive methods have been tried and the behavior of the child is dangerous to himself/herself or the other children. In the event that time out is used, the child will remain in sight and hearing of the staff. The child will separate from the group for few minutes according to his/her age.

### **Types of Discipline *NOT* Permitted:**

- \* Any form of discipline or punishment that violates a child's personal rights.
- \* No Corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, threat, mental abuse or other actions of a punitive nature including but not limited to: interference of function with daily living including eating, sleeping or toileting; or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
- \* It is not permitted at any time to lock a child in any room, building or school premises.
- \* Any of the above is not permitted regardless of the authorized representative consent or authorization.

## **Contact with the Child's Parent / Guardian**

- \* If redirection, distraction, active listening and time out are used and the child's conduct presents any health or safety hazard to himself/ herself or to other children, the school will contact the parent / guardian.
- \* The Director will observe the child and record any incident or accident that may happen, after the third incident the Director will have a conference with the parent / guardian, at which the child will be expelled.

## **Grounds of Dismissal**

Any offense during the probationary period may result in the termination of the child's enrollment at St. Mary's School.

## **Reasons for Termination**

- \* If the child's behavior presents a health or safety hazard for himself / herself or to other children.
- \* If the child is left after the school closing time which is 6:00 pm more than 5 times in the school year calendar.
- \* If the parent / guardian has been charged a late tuition fee more than three times during one school year calendar.

## **Clothing Requirements**

Students should be dressed in clothing appropriate for active play. Accordingly, open-toe shoes and sandals are not allowed as they may cause a safety issue.

## **Share Days**

Children may bring a special item to school on 'Show and Tell' days. Your child's teacher will designate this day. Please help limit:

- \* One Item Only
- \* Guns or war related items are not suitable
- \* Items arrive and leave the school in a box or a bag
- \* Items must be taken home the same day
- \* Please do not bring expensive games (i.e.: hand held devices, game boys, Nintendo DS etc.)

## **Birthday Parties**

We will be happy to celebrate your child's birthday in School. Prior arrangements must be made with your child's teacher. Please bring store bought treats only, no homemade items please.