

St. Joseph Regional Catholic School



PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

“Grow Spiritually. Shine Academically. Serve Others.”

Welcome to the St. Joseph Community

Our Mission

St. Joseph Regional Catholic School serves the Catholic community in the Shoals area and welcomes those interested in a quality Christian environment. Our unique mission is an integration of faith and service with the learning process and life. We aspire to academic and moral excellence by promoting spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical growth in each student. These qualities will help our students to eventually take their place as responsible citizens within society in a contemporary world.

Our History

For over 100 years, St. Joseph School and Church have been educating students on “Catholic Hill” in Florence, Alabama. In 1898, a non-Catholic, Mrs. Lena Peters, donated the land to build a Catholic church and school and the land was named “Catholic Hill”. In the 1960’s, the school became a regional school, serving the three surrounding parishes in the Shoals: St. Joseph, St. Michael’s and Our Lady of the Shoals.

Immunization and Health Forms

Immunization records must be provided to the office prior to your child’s first day of school.

Age Requirements

Children must be three years of age and toilet trained by September 1st to be eligible for the preschool classes. Students will be placed in either the 3K or 4K program based on their age on this date.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Drop off begins at 7:40 am and ends at 7:55 am. Students should be prepared for school when they arrive each day, fully dressed. A teacher will come out to the car and walk your child into the classroom.

Pick up begins at 2:45 pm and lasts until 3:15 pm. A teacher will bring the students out to the car as their driver arrives. Students who have not been picked up by 3:15 pm will be taken to the cafeteria for EDP.

All pre-k guardians are provided two pick-up cards at the beginning of the school year (additional cards are available upon request). Please display this at pick-up every day, as this allows any teachers assisting with dismissal to quickly see the student's name that is being picked up. Only those on the authorized pick-up list will be permitted to pick-up unless prior notification has been given to the school. A person may be required to show a picture ID.

When dropping off and picking up your child, please do not park in the loading zone in front of the pre-K classroom. If you need to stop the car in order to buckle your child in, please pull to the side of the gymnasium in order to park.

Class Times

School begins at 7:55 am. If you arrive after this time, the student must sign in at the front office before coming into the classroom. The office will provide the student with a slip that must be given to the teacher at arrival.

Class begins promptly at 7:55 am. All students should be inside and prepared to start their school day by this time.

Dismissal begins at 2:45 pm and continues until 3:15 pm.

Curriculum

St. Joseph Regional Catholic School's Preschool program provides children with a variety of ways to learn and grow. These are just a few of the learning activities that are used to prepare each student for a lifetime of learning:

Hands-on Activities	Storytime	Art
Social-Emotional Learning	Centers	Music
Invented Spelling	Religion	Spanish
Sign Language	Fine-Motor	Science

Behavior Management

Behavior is handled positively with consideration given to the child's age and development. Positive reinforcement and redirection, along with consistent schedules and clear expectations are commonly used.

Each pre-k classroom is equipped with a calm down corner. This is a space for a child to go if they are feeling upset, mad, or overwhelmed. In this area, students have sensory tools, such as fidgets, squeeze balls, sensory bottles, family pictures, and even a fish aquarium to help them as they are learning to control their emotions in a positive way.

Teachers will communicate any concern or extreme behavior that may require is out of developmental norms is a consistent occurrence.

Naps

Students are provided a daily rest time. Send a small blanket or towel. A small pillow and/or a small sleep lovey are optional. No other toys should be sent to school. Blankets will be sent home on Friday to be washed and returned on Monday. Cots and cot sheets are provided by the school.

Clothing/Dress Code

Children must be dressed "to play" each day. Dancing, running, jumping, painting, playing outside, and sitting on the floor are all a part of learning in preschool. Students must wear comfortable clothing and tennis shoes. Students should not wear sleeveless shirts, shirts that expose their midriff, one-piece rompers, boots, or sandals. Any dresses or skirts should be worn with shorts underneath. Please be mindful of the length of both shorts and dresses as surfaces on the playground (slides, swings, seating, etc.) may get hot during the warmer temperatures.

Outside play is very important at this age. Children should be dressed, with seasonal appropriate clothing, including jackets in the winter. Please label all outerwear with a name. Rain jackets are part of the school supply list, so that type of jacket is not necessary on a daily basis.

Restrooms

Children entering our PreK program must be potty trained. It is important to dress your child in clothing that is easy for them to pull up and down such as elastic waist pants so that they can use the restroom independently.

Preschool children occasionally will have accidents. Please send two complete sets of clothes to school for this purpose, including socks, in a bag labeled with your child's name. If a child does have an accident and requires one of their extra outfits, please send a replacement outfit the next day. Depending on the type of accident, a parent will be contacted to assist in cleaning up and changing the child's clothing. Depending on the severity of the accident, parents may be required to take the child home to allow them to be properly cleaned with a bath.

Snacks and Lunch

Students are asked to bring a filled water thermos/cup daily. They are permitted to drink water throughout the day. Please do not put juice in their water thermos. If they need juice for snack or lunch, it should be sent separately. Children should bring a snack with them each day. Any breakfast needs to be eaten before school or wrapped to eat during morning snack.

Students may purchase a school lunch or bring their lunch. The cafeteria provides a balanced meal for lunch. If your child brings their lunch, please send a protein, fruit and/or vegetable, and carb. A sweet treat can be sent with lunch. Students may bring a drink or purchase a milk or juice from the cafeteria for lunch.

Monthly lunch menus are available on Ren Web and the online school newsletter. Paper menus will be sent home in the student's communication binder at the beginning of each month. If a student brings a lunch, teachers will not order a school lunch for them.

Birthday Parties

We love to celebrate each student at SJS. For students with a summer birthday, we can celebrate an early or late birthday, or we may celebrate their half birthday. A note will be sent home communicating the date we plan to celebrate your child. We kindly ask you to provide a store-bought sweet treat for all students on this date. If a birthday is to be celebrated on a different day, please let the teacher know as soon possible.

School Correspondence

All pre-k students will have a take-home communication binder. Teachers will load these binders at the beginning of the school year and the binders will travel to and from school daily. Teacher email addresses can also be found in these binders. Please check these binders daily for notes, artwork, and any take-home projects. In these binders, there will be a class schedule, lunch menu, and monthly newsletter. The monthly newsletters will detail letters, numbers, shapes, colors, and sight words we are learning, as well as learning themes, and special events.

In pre-k, teachers communicate with parents through the free communication app, Class Tag. Parents/guardians will be sent an invite for our classroom Class Tag at the beginning of the year. Please sign-up for this app as soon as you can. We use this to send reminders and share class photos.

Safety

All entrances are locked during school hours and will remain locked during school hours for the safety of our students. All visitors must report to the office before entering any other area of the building.

*The preschool is still considered part of St. Joseph School so all guidelines in the parent student handbook apply to the PreK students as well including but not limited to student illness, administration of medicine, school closings, attendance, academics, and student services.