

St. Mark Preschool Parent Handbook 2026-2027



**“And now abide Faith, Hope, Love, these three; but the greatest of
these is LOVE”**

1 Corinthians 13:13

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Welcome

We are pleased to have you and your child at St. Mark Lutheran Preschool. We are a non-profit organization sponsored by St. Mark Lutheran Church. We are a Christian preschool whose mission and ministry are to share the Gospel of Jesus with children of our community by providing a Christ-centered education. The Christ-centered environment provides your child with the opportunity to know and experience the unconditional love of Jesus through Bible stories, prayer, songs, and Chapel.

Research shows that quality preschool programs help a child succeed in future grades and that the first five years of development are the most formative ones in his/her entire development. Our qualified and caring staff provides quality experiences that will increase your child's knowledge, enhance his/her self-esteem, and aid in the development of social and educational skills necessary for future learning.

Family involvement and communication are essential to your child's success in our program. As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher. We provide many opportunities for you to participate both in the classroom and at home. This handbook has been designed to help answer any questions you may have in the future regarding our program's policies and procedures.

Lastly, thank you for allowing us to join in partnership with you during this wonderfully exciting time in your child's development!

The Staff at St. Mark Lutheran Preschool

Our Program and Philosophy

Mission Statement

St. Mark Lutheran Preschool exists to share the Gospel of Jesus with children of our community by providing a Christ-centered education.

Purpose

It is the position of St. Mark Lutheran Preschool & St. Mark Lutheran Church that all children need to hear and experience Jesus' love daily. We believe that each child is a unique and special gift from God that learns best about their world through play, exploration, and developmentally appropriate activities.

St. Mark Lutheran Preschool will strive to provide a warm and loving, Christ-centered environment where children can develop to their greatest potential-spiritually, socially, cognitively, emotionally and physically.

Our program philosophy incorporates the following principles:

We Believe . . .

- A young child needs to discover his/her own unique significance in God's world.
- Children should be given every opportunity to develop various gifts God has given to them.
- In helping children grow in heart as well as mind.
- Our program is a joint ministry that involves the child, the family, the staff, congregation, and the community.

We also believe children are competent and capable learners. We believe children learn by doing! Play is an integral part of the classroom, encompassing all your child's activities. Our classroom environments contain hands-on experiences for the children in the areas of: Christian Education, Music, Letter and Number Recognition, Perceptual Skills, Literature, Creative Movement, Art, Gross/Fine Motor Coordination, Character Building, Cooking, Social/Emotional Awareness, Math, Science and Language Development.

While our program revolves around your child's individual needs and interests, we believe that education should also include a focus on his/her relation to a community of others. Our curriculum emphasizes the development of your child's social skills, including building friendships, respect for others, conflict resolution, and advocating for one's needs and ideas. Our goal is to promote self-esteem and problem-solving abilities, which help children gain the confidence to face new experiences. Through developmentally appropriate practice, collaboration, observation, documentation, and planning, our qualified and caring teachers will respect and nurture the unique gifts and developmental levels of all the children in our care.

Spiritual Goals and Development

The children in our program will be . . .

Seeing, hearing, and experiencing God's love daily through:

- Weekly Bible Stories
- Daily Prayer
- Songs
- Weekly Chapel services
- Classroom Experiences

Our hope is that these experiences will allow the children to get to know God, understand that they can love God, and that they can talk to God anytime, anywhere.

The children in our program will know . . .

- That God loves them.
- That God created them as a gift.
- That they are unique, special & valued.

Through supporting and encouraging their individual differences, the children will see their ideas being valued, explored and documented in their classroom.

The children in our program will have . . .

an opportunity to share God's love with others.

Parents As Partners

Parents are welcome to take part in enrichment programs throughout the school year, and classroom observation is always encouraged. We invite you to support your child's learning by sharing your time, skills, or special talents. Volunteer opportunities may include preparing class snacks, reading to a class, helping with fundraising, or serving as a room parent.

Parent-teacher conferences and regular communication with staff are important ways to share information about your child. Families will also receive weekly Brightwheel updates with messages and photos. You are encouraged to contact your child's teacher or the Director through Brightwheel. Formal goal-setting conferences will be scheduled in October.

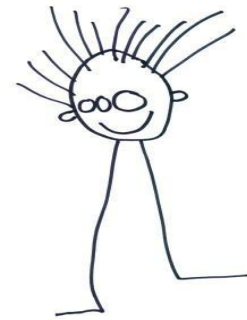
School Policies and Procedures

We offer half-day and full-day programs in a positive, nurturing, and inclusive environment where children can grow and learn in their own unique ways. St. Mark Lutheran Preschool operates on a non-discriminatory basis and provides equal treatment and access to all children regardless of sex, race, color, creed, or political belief.

We serve children ages 2–5 in all schedule options. Children must be at least two years old to begin at St. Mark Lutheran Preschool. To move into the Poppy Room for 3–4-year-olds, children must be independently toilet trained.

For your protection, state policy requires the following forms to be on file before the first day of class for each child enrolled:

1. Admission & Tuition Agreement
2. Identification and Emergency Information
3. Physician's Report of Health
4. Immunization Record
5. Consent for Medical Treatment
6. Child's Preadmission Health History – Parent Report
7. Parent's Rights
8. Personal Rights



*If I choose to withdraw from the program or change my child's 2026–2027 schedule, I must provide St. Mark Preschool with written notice at least 30 days in advance. If I do not provide 30 days' written notice, I understand that my account will be charged one month's tuition. If my child's schedule is reduced by hours or days, a one-time \$100 fee will apply.

Sign-in/Sign-out Procedures

Arrival and Sign-In

Each day your child attends preschool, please sign in using the Brightwheel tablet located on the porch. After signing in, help your child settle into play. The school opens promptly at 8:00 a.m., and a teacher will be there to greet you. If you have questions or special requests, please speak with your child's teacher. Allow a few extra minutes for a calm and positive goodbye.

Pick-Up and Sign-Out

Timely pick-up helps children feel secure and keeps the school day running smoothly. When you arrive, please sign your child out in the Brightwheel app before collecting your child and their belongings. Once your child has been picked up, they are under your supervision and are no longer the responsibility of the school.

Late Pick-Up Fees

If late pick-up becomes a pattern, a late fee will be charged for pick-up after 12:00, 3:00, or 4:00. The fee is \$5 for any portion of the first five minutes and \$2 for each additional minute. For example, a 10-minute late pick-up will result in a \$15 fee. Late fees are due with the following month's tuition payment.

If you know you will be late, please message us through Brightwheel so we can reassure your child and make any needed adjustments.

Authorized Pick-Up

Children will only be released to people who are authorized in writing by a parent or guardian on the emergency form. Authorized pick-up adults must be at least 18 years old. If your family participates in a carpool, please list each authorized carpool adult on both the Identification and Emergency Form and your Brightwheel account.

RHYTHM OF THE DAY

8:00 MORNING ARRIVAL

We arrived at school! A grown-up signs us in and we take our belongings upstairs to the baskets outside our classroom. We put away our lunches, water bottles and backpacks. We then go down to the playground and after a big hug and a kiss goodbye it is time to join our friends and teachers on the playground.

8:00–8:45 OUTDOOR EXPLORATION

We have lots of fun with the outside toys in the sand. We get to choose if we want to ride bikes, build blocks, play with sand toys, water toys or the big balls. Sometimes we dance and move to music or play games together. We spend time playing and exploring.

8:30 CHAPEL (ALTERNATING TUESDAYS AND WEDNESDAY)

Chapel with Pastor Joel in the church.

8:45 SNACK

During this time, we wash our hands and sit and eat with our friends at the picnic tables outside (for a healthy snack and to connect socially). This is also when we do our affirmations, sing our greeting song and read stories.

9:00–9:45 INDOOR EXPLORATION

This is the time when we get to explore the classroom. Paint, dramatic play, building, science, and sensory play are open for exploration. This is when we get to work and play together.

9:45–10:50 CHOICE TIME

We spend time playing and exploring God's beautiful world. We have 2 classrooms open and the playground for the children to choose where they want to spend their time exploring. During this time all ages are playing together.

10:50 CLEAN UP

During cleanup time we put away all the projects we have been working on. We make sure the all the toys are put back in their homes and all the dress-up clothes are hung up. We love to take care of our school.

11:00 AM

LUNCH (ALL CLASSROOMS)

During this time, we wash our hands and sit and eat with our friends inside the classroom for a healthy lunch and to connect socially.

11:55 PICK UP

11:30 NAP TIME OR PLAY OUTSIDE

NAPPERS

This is when we get our beds ready for us to sleep, listen to peaceful music, quiet our bodies and sleep. At around 2:00 pm, as we wake, we begin to put our beds away and get ready for snack.

NON-NAPPERS

This is when we play outside and say good-bye to our friends going home at 12:00.

12:30 QUIET TIME

This is when we go inside our classrooms and have quiet story time, journal, yoga and listen to stories.

1:00 INSIDE EXPLORATION

This is when we explore the Poppy and Dandelion Rooms activities. We play, build, paint, draw, read and continue our day with our friends.

2:30 AFTERNOON SNACK

During this time, we wash our hands and sit and eat with our friends outside (for a light and healthy snack and to connect socially).

2:30-2:55 OUTSIDE & PICK UP TIME

We all gather outside on the playground and enjoy some time playing together. We all help clean up our playground and we say good-bye to our friends as a grown-up signs us out and we gather our things. It is time to go home!

3:00-4:00 AFTERNOON LATE PICK UP- WITH MISS CASSIE IN DANDELION ROOM

The playground will open promptly at 8:00 am please make sure your child is signed in by 8:30 am so that they can join their friends on the playground and settle in before heading up to the classrooms.

Tuition Payments

A \$275.00 non-refundable registration fee is charged annually. This fee must be paid in full to hold your child's place on the class roster. There is a \$40.00 fee for nap mats for children who nap. We have a tuition deposit which is due the first month of enrollment and it will be applied to your June tuition.

You may choose to pay your tuition payments by check, cash, or through our school's BW account. If you choose to use your credit card through BW app, they will add 3% to your tuition to cover the fees. If you use ACH through the BW app, they will add \$1 to your tuition to cover this fee. Your child's tuition will be the same every month & is due on the 10th day of each month (August-June). There is no deduction for holidays or absences.

All tuition is non-refundable. If tuition is not paid by the 10th of the month, a \$25.00 late fee will be assessed. If tuition is more than 2 weeks late, we will suspend care until the balance has been paid. Returned checks will incur a \$25.00 fee. A 30-day written notice will be required for any child dropping or reducing hours from their program. Tuition must be paid for this 30-day period. If no notice is given, an additional month's tuition will be added to your final bill.

If I choose to withdraw from the program or make changes to my child's 2026-2027 schedule, I must notify St. Mark Preschool in writing 30 days prior to the withdrawal or change in schedule. If a 30-day written notice is not given, I understand that my account will be charged one month's tuition. If a child's schedule is reduced by hours or days, there is a one-time fee of \$100.

Emergency Forms

Please be sure to keep your emergency form up to date. This form gives us permission to obtain medical care in case of an accident. There should be three local telephone numbers of people who are authorized to pick up your child if needed. When you change addresses or telephone numbers, or if your friends do, please be sure to make the necessary changes on the emergency form.

Sick-Child Policy

Our school is licensed to handle "well children" only. For the health and safety of the children in our care, please keep your child home if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100 degrees in the last 24 hours
- Sneezing, runny nose- clear or goopy/green, or coughing
- Weepy, watery, pink, or crusted eyes
- Vomiting w/in 24 hours
- Undisclosed Skin Rashes
- Diarrhea w/in 24 hours
- Possible Contagious Disease (Chicken Pox, etc.)



- Unable to fully participate in the program.

We will send your child home if they start exhibiting these same symptoms. You will be notified and expected to plan (this might include another adult or grandparent) for your child to be picked up within 30 minutes from time of contact with the school. It is the parents' responsibility to have a backup plan if the parents are not available to pick up their child. We are required to call people on the child's emergency pick up list if the child is not picked up by their parent. Your child will remain in the office until you arrive. ***If we have sent your child home for any of the above symptoms, they will need to remain at home from school the next day. Students need to be 24-hour symptom free to return to school.***

Please keep your child at home at the first sign of illness symptoms, not only to prevent the spread of illness to others, but also to assure that your child is not susceptible to another illness. When asked to take your child to the doctor, please request an authorization note to return to school.

If your child has a contagious illness, please notify us. We will in turn notify you if your child has been exposed to a contagious illness at school. Your child must be **symptom-free without medication for 24 hours to re-enter school.**

Naptime

A rest period follows lunch for children who stay past noon. If your child naps they will need to bring a small blanket and lovey if they choose to. We will provide a rest mat as well as a rest roll for each napping child. There is a \$40 fee for the purchase of the rest roll. We will send the rest roll home once a week for laundering.

Rest-time

A rest period follows lunch for children who stay past noon. Licensing requires us to provide a quiet 20 period in the early afternoon for a rest/quiet time. This will include a variety of restful activities such as yoga, story time, journaling, and quiet music. Please provide a beach towel for your child to use during this time.

Surveillance Cameras

Video cameras may be installed and used on St Mark Preschool's property primarily for the purposes of establishing and maintaining a safe and orderly environment, for identifying disciplinary issues, for minimizing theft and vandalism, and for enforcing school rules. Video cameras may be used in any place on the campus where public, students, and staff have no reasonable expectation of privacy, such as, but not limited to, entrances, hallways, classrooms, and office spaces. Footage from school cameras may be reviewed by school & church leaders and other authorities to better understand the circumstances of a concern or situation. Footage is not available for public viewing. The cameras are not in restrooms. If an issue arises that may warrant a parent to review specific footage, as per your FERPA rights (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act,) we will arrange a viewing of the necessary recording.

Immunizations

The following is a list of immunizations. These are required for preschoolers over the age of two:

VACCINE

DOSES REQUIRED

Polio	3
DTP/ DTap	4
MMR (measles, mumps, & rubella)	1 (given on or after 1st b-day)
HIB	1 (given on or after 1st b-day)
Hepatitis B	3
Varicella	1
TB is recommended	

DTP vaccine required. Other combination vaccines (DT and Td) do not count in meeting the state requirement. Inadequately immunized, susceptible children must either receive missing doses of DPT or obtain a valid medical exemption.

Medication

All medication must be in the original container with the child's name and date on the prescription label. No expired medications will be administered. Over-the-counter drugs will be administered only under a doctor's prescription. Parents must complete a medication form indicating dosage and length of time medication is to be given. Please speak to the director for ongoing and/or emergency medication authorization.

Allergies

To provide a safe environment for your child, please be sure to make the director and your child's teacher aware of any food allergies. If severe, talk with the staff about letting the classroom families know. Food allergies are posted in the kitchen and in each classroom. Please also report any allergic reactions to bee stings, insect bites, or medications.

Snack/Lunch

Parents will provide a daily snack and lunch for their child. Please pack their snack items in the snack bag provided and lunch in an insulated lunch box with an icepack inside. Pack the foods you know your child will eat; children can get stressed at mealtimes when away from their family. If you know they like what you pack, they will eat it when they are hungry. We will let children eat at non-mealtimes if they are hungry!

Toys

We recommend that all toys be left at home as the teachers will ensure your child has ample materials to work with while at preschool. This will prevent home toys from becoming lost and/or broken.

Pets

Family pets are not allowed on campus without prior permission of the director. This policy has been set to ensure the safety of our children.

Dress for the MESS

Please remember that this will be a time of play and exploration of new experiences for your child. To make this experience as meaningful as possible, please have your child wear . . .

- Play clothes that can withstand art projects and paint!
- Sturdy, low-heeled shoes with a closed toe that is secure behind the ankle. Velcro tennis shoes or Crocs are the easiest for the children to work themselves. They are allowed to go barefoot inside as well as outside.
- Clothes that are appropriate for the weather-we go outside in the rain and cold!
- Easy manipulated attire will enable your child to attend to his/her own toileting needs. (For example, belts sometimes make it tricky for children to get to the restroom on time. Self-sufficiency in this area is an important step in your child's development.)
- The students are permitted to take their shoes off while at school. We have assigned baskets for each classroom for the students to place their shoes. In case of emergency, we will take the basket of shoes with us and place them on your child when it is safe to do so.

Please be sure to always keep 2 sets of extra clothes at school. All clothing, especially jackets, should be clearly labeled with your child's name on the tag or inside the clothing.

Events

The preschool hosts several events outside regular school hours. During these events, children are expected to follow the same rules used during the school day. Parents are responsible for closely supervising their children, and the preschool is not liable for children before or after regular preschool hours

Emergency Preparedness Policy

As required by the State, we regularly practice earthquake and fire emergency procedures as part of our safety program. Emergency food, water, and first-aid supplies are kept on site. The Center also maintains an Emergency Plan to help ensure children are safe and cared for during an earthquake or other natural disaster.

*The American Red Cross recommends listing an emergency contact who lives outside California in case of a major disaster. If extended family members use the same contact, this can help keep in-state phone lines available during an emergency.

Protocol for a Natural Disaster

In the event of a natural disaster, the teachers and each classroom have an extensive evacuation plan. The evacuation plan is available in the office. If an evacuation becomes necessary, we will begin the following:

1. Students would be gathered at St. Mark Lutheran Church lower parking lot.
2. Parents would be notified to pick up
3. Supplies would be taken with us such as water, snacks, blankets etc.
4. Parents would pick up and sign out at St. Mark Lutheran Church lower parking lot.

If the center remained closed during a natural disaster or Covid-19 outbreak there would not be a reduction in tuition. If, however, we need to close for an extended period, more than 2 weeks, tuition would be suspended.

Behavior

Our program helps children build relationships with God while developing important social skills, including friendship, respect, conflict resolution, and self-advocacy. We support children in growing their confidence, self-esteem, and problem-solving abilities.

We use guidance-based discipline that emphasizes active listening, positive redirection, and respectful problem solving. As children mature, they are encouraged to use words, creativity, and negotiation to resolve conflicts with minimal adult intervention unless support is needed.

When inappropriate behavior occurs, we consider each child's age and developmental stage. If redirection is not effective, a brief separation may be used to help the child calm down before rejoining the group

Challenging Behaviors

Partnership with Families

St. Mark Lutheran Preschool works collaboratively with families to address ongoing behavioral concerns, including biting, aggression, or other behaviors that may affect the safety and well-being of children or staff. If a child shows persistent challenging behaviors or signs of heightened stress, parents will be contacted to schedule a conference.

Support Plan and Observation

If concerns continue, the Director may ask that the child be picked up or remain home for the remainder of the day or week. Continued enrollment may require parent consent for observation by a behavior specialist and active participation in recommended supports or interventions.

Enrollment Considerations

Families are expected to participate in any recommended assessment or support plan. If a family declines assessment or recommended intervention, or if safety concerns remain unresolved, the child may be asked to take a temporary leave or enrollment may be discontinued.

Our goal is always to partner with families in a supportive, respectful way so each child has the best opportunity to grow, develop self-regulation skills, and participate safely in the preschool community.

Siblings

Supervision During Drop-Off and Pick-Up

When siblings accompany a child to preschool, parents are responsible for closely supervising them during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. Siblings are expected to respect preschool property and follow preschool rules while on campus. Teachers need to remain focused on their classes and are not able to supervise siblings at the same time.

Playground Safety

The playground climbing structure is licensed only for children ages 2–5. For safety and licensing reasons, younger or older siblings may not play on the structure.

Tax Information

If at any point your family needs receipts from the office for flex plans, you will find them on your **Brightwheel** account. Full year tax documents are available, as well. Our FIN #95-1996044

The Preschool Board

The Preschool Board consists of church members and includes our Pastor and church members as well as parents. The board oversees the operations of preschool and meets once per month to vote on any new policies, approve the annual budget, and ensure the integrity of the preschool philosophy. The Preschool Board supports the preschool by listening to the needs of the preschool and collaborating with St. Mark Lutheran Church to help meet these needs.

Scholarships/Discounts

There are scholarships available based on need. Please inform the Director if you have a financial need and the Preschool Board will decide based on the availability of funds for any given school year and the families' need.

The two other discounts available to St. Mark families are a 5% sibling discount and a Church member discount, each family will be awarded the largest one of the preceding scholarships and/or discounts if they qualify.

Our Curriculum

We incorporate developmentally appropriate practices with an anti-bias curriculum in **our** daily program. Through careful observation and anecdotal record keeping, our teachers intentionally plan activities designed to foster your child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. We do this through activities that foster communication, problem solving, creativity, and conflict resolution. Our goal is to encourage children's curiosity about the world at their own unique developmental pace. Each day of a child's life is viewed as one step leading towards growth and development of a healthy, intelligent, and contributing member of society.

Our goal is to help your child become confident and curious about the world around them. To accomplish these goals, we create activities for your child that emphasize and develop the following four skills.

We emphasize **language development** in a wide range of areas, including art, dramatic play, music, dance, literature, and science. Personal communication between student and teacher is strongly encouraged.

Your child will develop **decision-making** skills, such as predicting, classifying, analyzing, and evaluating through a variety of tasks. The children are given many opportunities to make choices and follow through with their own decision, both individually and in a group setting.

Giving children the opportunity to develop their own intellectual curiosity stimulates **creativity**. We encourage children to find alternative solutions for their own problems. By participating in and planning their own classroom activities children develop the beginning level of curiosity.

Social awareness of the needs of others, and social problem-solving skills are continually addressed during the program. We encourage the children to find positive solutions to their conflicts by verbal resolution.

Reggio Emilia

Background

The Reggio Emilia Approach is an educational philosophy focused on preschool and primary education. It was started by the parents of the villages around Reggio Emilia in Italy after World War II to eliminate fascism. The destruction from the war, parents believed, necessitated a new, quick approach to teaching their children. They felt that it is in the early years of development that children are forming who they are as an individual. This led to creation of a program based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community through exploration and discovery in a supportive and enriching environment.

The Approach

The Reggio Emilia approach to teaching young children puts the natural development of children as well as the close relationships that they share with their environment at the center of its philosophy. Early childhood programs that have successfully adapted to this educational philosophy share that they are attracted to Reggio because of the way it views and respects the child.

Partnerships

Parents are a vital component to the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Parents are viewed as partners, collaborators and advocates for their children. Teachers respect parents as each child's first teacher and involve parents in every aspect of the curriculum.

Emergent Curriculum

An emergent curriculum is one that builds upon the interests of children. Topics for study are captured from the talk of children, through community or family events, as well as the known interests of children (puddles, shadow, dinosaurs, etc.). Teachers work together to formulate hypotheses about the possible directions of a project, the materials needed, and possible parent and/or community support and involvement.

Long Term Projects

Projects, also emergent, are in-depth studies of concepts, ideas, and interests, which arise within the group. Projects begin with teachers observing and using open-ended questions about a topic of interest. Based on the children's responses, teachers introduce materials, questions, and opportunities that provoke children to further explore the topic.

Throughout a project, teachers help children make decisions about the direction of study, the ways in which the group will research the topic, the representational medium that will demonstrate and showcase the topic and the selection of materials needed to represent the work. Long-term projects or *progettazione*, enhance lifelong learning

Hundred Languages

As children proceed in an investigation, generating and testing their hypotheses, they are encouraged to depict their understanding through one of many symbolic languages, including drawing, sculpture, dramatic play, and writing. Revision of drawings (and ideas) is encouraged, and teachers allow children to repeat activities and modify each other's work in the collective aim of better understanding the topic. Teachers foster children's involvement in the processes of exploration and evaluation, acknowledging the importance of their evolving products as vehicles for exchange.

Collaboration

Collaborative group work, both large and small, is considered valuable and necessary to advance cognitive development. Children are encouraged to dialogue, critique, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and solve problems through group work. Within the Reggio Emilia approach multiple perspectives promote both a sense of group membership and the uniqueness of self. There is a high emphasis on the collaboration among home-school-community to support the learning of the child.

Teacher's Role

The teacher's role within the Reggio Emilia approach is complex. Working as co-teachers, the role of the teacher is first and foremost to be that of a learner alongside the children. The teacher is a teacher-researcher, a resource and guide as she/he lends expertise to children (Edwards, 1993). Within such a teacher-researcher role, educators carefully listen, observe, and document children's work and the growth of community in their classroom and are to provoke, co-construct, and stimulate thinking, and children's collaboration with peers. Teachers are committed to reflection about their own teaching and learning.

Documentation

Documentation of children's work in progress is viewed as an important tool in the learning process for children, teachers, and parents. Pictures of children engaged in experiences, their words as they discuss what they are doing, feeling and thinking, and the children's interpretation of experience through the visual media are displayed as a graphic presentation of the dynamics of learning.

Environment

Within the Reggio Emilia schools, great attention is given to the look and feel of the classroom. Environment is considered the "third teacher." Teachers carefully organize space for small and large group projects and small intimate spaces for one, two or three children. Documentation of children's work, plants, and collections that children have made from former outings are displayed both at the children's and adult eye level.

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS GOING TO BE ABSENT FROM PRESCHOOL?

Call the school at (760) 231-1917 and leave a message before school begins or message us on Brightwheel and cc your child's teacher. Please include the reason for your child's absence. Thank you.

WHAT TYPE OF EDUCATION/CREDENTIALS DO THE TEACHERS HAVE?

The levels of education vary at St. Mark we have teachers with Bachelor's Degrees, AA Degrees in Early Childhood Education and degrees in process. One thing every member of St. Mark staff participates in is annual continuing education, multiple years teaching experience and the entire staff is First Aid/ CPR certified.

HOW CAN I PREP MY CHILD FOR HIS/HER FIRST SCHOOL EXPERIENCE?

Set up a regular routine. Make sure your child wakes up at the same time each day and has a healthy breakfast. During breakfast, talk to your child about preschool and what is expected for the day. At drop off, assure your child of the time and who will be picking them up!

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD CRIES AT DROP OFF?

This is normal at the beginning of the school year. We have found that the home visits help to alleviate nervousness and/or separation anxiety. If your child is anxious, please tell him/her that you will stay for a few minutes. Give a hug and a kiss and then leave. Stick to this! The teacher will help you set up a routine that will work for you and your child. When a child is upset, it is usually only a few minutes until they settle down after the parent leaves. We will be forthcoming if your child has an unusual amount of stress.

CAN PARENTS VOLUNTEER?

YES! Volunteers usually begin in October. This gives the children/teachers the opportunity to build rapport and trust with one another before any additional adult participates in the classroom.

WHEN CAN I MEET WITH MY CHILD'S TEACHER?

Come and meet them at the Open House/Orientation held in August before the school year starts. You are welcome to visit the school with your child during our normal business hours to get them familiar with our school and their teachers. You will have a formal meeting in October at the Parent/teacher goals conference in early October. Please try to limit the chatting at pick up time, the children that remain deserve their teacher's attention. Messaging your teacher and director on BW with concerns enables them to answer during their planning time.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ANOTHER CHILD HURTS MY CHILD?

When a child hurts another child, he/she is trying to communicate something. The teachers will take this opportunity to explore the situation and find out what occurred and will give each child the tools to solve problems more constructively in the future.

If either child displays behavior that is harmful (physical or verbal) to peers or staff, then a behavior report will be filled out documenting the incident. After two behavior reports are filed, we will request a meeting with the parents to discuss strategies to better guide the child to more appropriate behavior and support for you and your family. If the behavior still does not improve, the preschool reserves the right to reevaluate the enrollment status of the child.

WHO FILLS IN WHEN MY CHILD'S TEACHER IS ILL?

Our Floater teacher will fill in for all absences. The Director will also fill in if we have more than one absent teacher.

WHEN IS CHAPEL?

Chapel takes place in the Church Sanctuary alternating between Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 8:30 am. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend at any time. *This schedule is subject to change without notice.

BIRTHDAY TRADITIONS AT ST. MARK?

A birthday story will be sent home prior to your child's birthday to be shared with the class during the morning meeting. Children are welcome to bring a class treat; we ask that it is a healthy treat. Check with your child's teacher to find an appropriate school treat. Please make sure they are individually wrapped.

IF THE PRESCHOOL IS NON-PROFIT, WHERE DOES MY TUITION GO?

Tuition covers preschool costs such as teacher's salaries, payroll taxes, teacher benefits, preschool supplies, hardware/software costs, playground materials, utilities (trash, water, heating, cooling), yard maintenance, cleaning services, etc. Tuition does not cover all costs required to run this preschool. We have 1-2 fund raisers per school year.

Signed Confirmation Form

State Licensing requires that all parents read and understand the policies and procedures contained in the Parent Handbook. Please sign below and return to the office.

The nearest local office responsible for Day Care Licensing is:

Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing
7575 Metropolitan Dr. Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Please sign and return this lower portion

St. Mark Lutheran Preschool has provided me with a Parent Handbook, also available online @ stmarkpreschool.org

Child's Name _____
(Please print)

I have read and understand the procedures and policies that are stated in the handbook.

_____ Parent/Guardian Name
(Please Print)

_____ Date _____
Signature