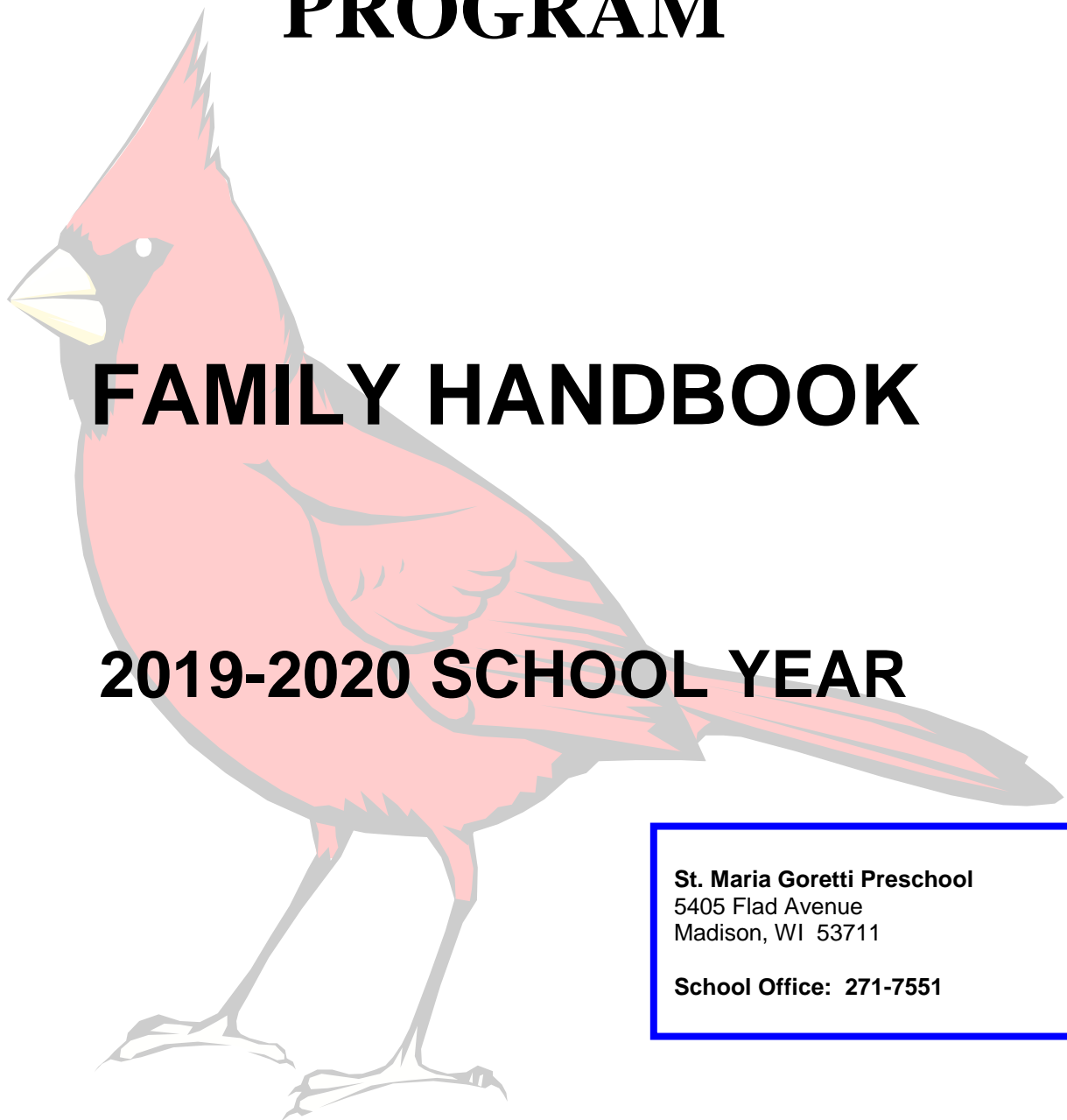


ST. MARIA GORETTI EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

St. Maria Goretti Preschool
5405 Flad Avenue
Madison, WI 53711

School Office: 271-7551

INTRODUCTION & WELCOME!

Thank you for your choice of the St. Maria Goretti Catholic Early Childhood Program! This *Family Handbook* is provided to familiarize current and potential families with our school. You may find that it is a helpful resource for questions you may have about daily school procedures, staff, parish life, school curriculum, etc.

If, at any time, you have questions or concerns, please call us at our school office, (608) 271-7551, or visit our web site, www.stmariagoretti.org (click on the “school” link). We are happy to assist you!

God’s blessings to you and your family,

Mrs. Elizabeth Young, SMG Principal

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

Our parish family is called to grow in faith and love. We desire to be in union with Jesus Christ and one another. We will accomplish this mission through worship and prayer, education and evangelization in our community and world. With St. Maria Goretti as our patron, we strive to follow her life of forgiveness and holiness. May we pursue this mission faithfully, encouraging others to join us in discipleship for the Lord.

ST. MARIA GORETTI SCHOOL STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The faculty and staff of St. Maria Goretti Catholic School share in the teaching ministry of our parish, to bring Christ's message to our students.

We believe that every child is a unique creation of God, worthy of the opportunity to develop to his/her fullest potential in a safe and caring environment.

We will provide our students with prayer and worship experiences, high academic standards, service opportunities and guidance and support toward healthy personal growth.

We recognize and value the partnership that parents and teachers have in the successful education of all students.

As members of the St. Maria Goretti Catholic School Community, we embrace these responsibilities of our teaching ministry.

SCHOOL MOTTO

*Living in Faith
Growing in Character
Loving Each Other*

***This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
"St. Maria Goretti School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies and financial aid programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs."***

EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM

I. EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Our preschool is a comprehensive early childhood education program for children ages 3 and 4. Research shows that young children learn best through active, hands-on learning experiences in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment. Children have many opportunities to be actively engaged in the learning process through a curriculum that provides age-appropriate activities. The curriculum promotes the early development of the whole child in these areas of learning and growth: spiritual, intellectual, social, physical, emotional, pre-reading and language. The curriculum is designed to help children develop and maintain positive self-images, develop their own abilities to create, to learn and to explore. SMG Early childhood-8th grade is accredited by the Wisconsin Religious Independent Schools Accrediation (WRISA).

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- We will provide a spiritual environment that provides preschool age-appropriate religious education and prayer.
- We will provide a program that is safe, nurturing and caring that will encourage ~ independence, choice making and positive self-esteem.
- We will provide an environment that provides a variety of experiences and materials focusing on pre-reading skills and concepts, writing skills, math and science manipulatives, creative arts, dramatic play, and activities to enhance social and emotional growth (individual, small-group, and large group activities), and fine-motor and large motor physical activities and skills.

- We will provide a program that allows each child to reach her/his maximum potential in the areas of physical, social/emotional, and cognitive and creative development.

III. STUDENT OBJECTIVES

PHYSICAL

- Your student will improve their fine and large motor skills using a variety of manipulatives.
- Your student will gain an awareness of their body through basic physical fitness and creative movement experience both indoors and outdoors.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

- Your student will gain a stronger self-image, independence and initiative through recognition of personal achievements, acquisition of new skills and child directed play experiences on a daily basis.
- Your student will gain a greater respect and tolerance *for* others through large and small group activities as well as cooperative play experiences.
- Your student will learn to express emotions in a constructive manner through a variety of enrichment activities.

COGNITIVE

- Your student will enhance language skills through exposure to finger plays, songs, music, books, self-expression, creative dramatics and storytelling.
- Your student will experience a multi-sensory approach to pre-academic skills through developmentally appropriate readiness (language arts, math and reading) and enrichment (art, music, science, social studies and computer) activities.
- Your student will demonstrate an understanding of new concepts through activities involving experimenting, problem solving, observation and discussions.

CREATIVE

- Your student will be able to develop and express their creativity daily through self-expression in art, music, dramatic play and language activities.
- Your student will participate in planned and spontaneous activities that support her/his imagination and creative thinking.

TUITION

Two-day tuition: \$235/month for 9 months = \$2,115.00

Three-day tuition: \$300/month for 9 months = \$2,700.00

Tuition is due no later than the 10th of each month. A late fee of \$10.00 will be imposed on payments received after the 10th.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Parents are required to provide any information pertaining to their child's special learning needs with the Application for Enrollment. SMG Early Childhood staff and administration will assess whether or not our program can meet the child's learning needs.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

It is necessary that students be regular and punctual in attendance. Early Childhood begins at 7:50 A.M. to 11:30 A.M.

If your child will not be attending school, please call the school office at (608) 271-7551 by 8:15 AM.

The preschool program will run concurrently with the K-8 school calendar.

DAILY SIGN IN SHEETS

Each parent (or car pool driver) is to sign their child in and out and make any special notes in the space provided. If any unauthorized person will be picking your child up (one not listed on the emergency card or enrollment information), the authorization must be given to the teacher by phone or note AND written on the sign in sheet. The sign in sheets are taken with a staff member in case of classroom evacuation along with the children's emergency forms.

VACATIONS

We encourage families to plan vacations at times that coincide with the school vacation schedule. Please inform the preschool teacher of circumstances necessitating a vacation during school days. Also, parents are to inform the early childhood teacher if they will be out-of-town and their child/ren remains in the care of another adult. Please leave names, addresses and phone numbers of the adults responsible for the care of your child/ren. We also request emergency contact information.

CONFERENCES

First semester conferences with all parents are scheduled after the first quarter. Second semester conferences remain optional for the teacher and parents. Contacts with the home, if needed, are made through notes or phone calls. A requested conference will be scheduled at any time throughout the school year.

When an individual concern arises, the first step for the parent is to contact the teacher. If satisfaction is not reached, then parents are to contact the principal who will help work out an acceptable solution.

PRESCHOOLERS' BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

We encourage and celebrate a classroom in which our students will be engaged, active and safe. Our students are encouraged to make positive behavioral choices. We expect students to:

- Assist in making simple class rules using positive language.
- Show respect for all members of the school community - self, teachers, principal, staff, volunteers, parents and other students.
- Respect the property of others.
- Be aware of appropriate consequences for unsafe behavior.
- Use their words to resolve conflicts.
- Learn to resolve their own conflicts as long as they are not potentially dangerous to others.
- Act in a manner that is appropriate for a Catholic school.

TERMINATION PROCEDURE

A child may be terminated from our program for the following reasons:

- The school and or staff are unable to meet the needs of the child.
- The inability of the child to control unwanted behavior that affects the safety of the other children or teaching staff (biting, kicking, excessive hitting, etc.)
- Failure to submit required health forms within the expected time schedule (or any state forms).
- Failure to pay tuition in a timely manner.

Feel free to discuss any of these issues with the Early Childhood teacher if you have concerns prior to enrollment.

TRANSPORTATION

St. Maria Goretti does not provide transportation to and from school. Parents are welcome to set up car-pooling between families. Anyone car-pooling must include those names on their child's emergency form under "**authorized individuals to pick up my child.**"

DROP OFF/PICK UP

The early childhood doors will remain closed until class begins so the teachers can prepare for the day. If you arrive early, please wait in the atrium area by the school entrance.

SCHOOL DISMISSAL

At the end of the school day the children are instructed to sit by the cubbies until their parents or other designated person arrives. Once you greet your child, please have your child stay with you. It is very easy for your child to wander off in the cafeteria, hallways or leave the building while you are talking or getting their art work. Please have your child stay with you. You are responsible for your child at this time.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are curriculum-based activities and are educational to the topics the children are learning. A permission slip, signed by a parent/guardian, must be returned for each student who will be participating in a field trip and must be turned in to the Preschool Director. Transportation will be provided by bus or parent volunteers/chaperones. It is the responsibility of the Faculty and Parent Chaperones to supervise the school children during these trips: therefore, younger siblings may not attend. Chaperones will be required to complete a "Volunteer Driver Information Sheet", providing drivers' license, vehicle and insurance information. All Chaperones must have completed the Virtus Program, "Protecting God's Children"

APPOINTMENTS

The value of conferring with teachers cannot be over-emphasized but a teacher may not be interrupted during class except in an emergency. If you wish to confer with a teacher or with the principal, please make an appointment by calling the office during the school day and that person will return your call or send an email to the teacher.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of sickness, your child will be taken to the school office. The parent or the emergency contact will be contacted. **You must ensure we have current phone numbers and contact people other than yourself on the emergency card.**

In case of **minor injury** such as cuts or scrapes, we will apply appropriate first aide. Parents will be told the day of injury and an incident report will be sent home, and kept on file in the preschool.

In the event of a **serious injury**, calling 911 will provide emergency help. Every effort will be made to notify you of the emergency contact. A staff person will be with your child at all times until help arrives. Be sure to designate a choice of hospitals if you have one on your child's emergency form.

In the event of **injury during a field trip** or other off site activities, the same above procedures will be followed.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

When morning weather conditions are such that the school might be closed, listen to the radio and television reports. If the Madison Public Schools are closed, St. Maria Goretti School will also be closed. If severe weather conditions develop during the day, listen to the radio and television for announcements. Parents may pick up their children early after contacting the school office. Children will not be released early from school without parental consent. If for some unforeseen reasons (no heat, water pipe breaks, etc.) school needs to close, our emergency contact system, Red Alert, will contact parents for immediate pick-up of children.

SCHOOL SECURITY

A Safety Manual with specific procedures is located in the school office. A review of all procedures is conducted annually. The following security measures are currently in place at St. Maria Goretti School:

- Established drop off and dismissal traffic patterns are in effect.
- Front doors will remain locked until 7:30 a.m. when appropriate supervision is in the building.
- A FIRE EVACUATION PLAN specific to each classroom location is posted by the exit.
- Tornado, fire drill, bomb threat and other types of building evacuation procedures are in place with specific codes. A mutual agreement exists between Orchard Ridge School and St. Maria Goretti Catholic Parish School to share each other's facilities in the event of an emergency.
- Procedures are in place in the event of a playground emergency.
- Our students use the Buddy system whenever outside the school.
- Teachers never leave students unsupervised. If they need to excuse themselves they have another teacher supervise.
- We always have more than the legal requirements for field trip chaperones.
- Room parents make emergency calls when needed.
- We have established a visitor sign-in and sign-out in the school office.

SICK CHILDREN

Ill children should not be brought to school. This includes children with fevers, diarrhea, and vomiting or colored discharge from the nose or eyes. **Children need to be symptom free for 24 hours to return to school.** The teachers will make a quick health assessment as children arrive and those who appear ill will be sent back home.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

The school Principal along with the Early Childhood teacher will be responsible for making all child abuse/neglect reports to the necessary authorities. The staff involved with the child reports to principal and together must report to proper authorities.

CONFIDENTIALITY

A parent upon request has access to all records and reports maintained on his/her child. Persons having access to your child's records will not disclose personal information regarding your child or your family situation without your written consent.

CUSTODIAL ISSUES

All parents who have restrictions for non-custodial parents, need to inform the Early Childhood teacher of those restrictions and keep the school informed at all times of any changes. We will only release children to those individuals that have the proper authorization. Every effort will be made to keep both parents informed of preschool happenings as long as we have current addresses/phone numbers. If there are additional specific issues pertaining to the custody of your child, such as sole custody, limited access or restraining orders, copies of these court documents must be on file in the school office.

MEDICATION

Under no circumstances will the school give prescription or over-the-counter medicine to any preschool child. If your child requires prescription medication that must be given during school hours, you must come to school yourself or give medication prior to start of school.

All parents must indicate allergies to medications on their child's emergency form.

Any special medicines for allergies that may be needed for life/death situations may be kept at school only with authorization by the principal.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

We will be required to notify the Health Department of any child having a communicable disease. Parents in the center will be notified and exposed children will be watched for symptoms of the disease. A child may be re-admitted without statement from a physician if the child has been absent for a period of time equal to the longest normal incubation period of the disease as per licensing regulations.

SNACKS

Parents will be asked to sign up to bring nutritious low salt, low sugar mid-morning/mid afternoon snack items on a weekly basis. We are a “**nut free**” classroom. **Please do not bring in food products with nuts.** St. Maria Goretti will provide milk. Any child allergic to milk or those not wishing milk will be offered water.

A detailed list of healthy snack examples will be provided in your orientation package. This list can also be found in the preschool classroom, and on the preschool website under “Snack sign up”. Snack time can be a great learning experience for the children to help develop self-help skills along with manners and learn about healthy snacks. It is also a good social experience for the children and staff. The preschool staff will be seated with the children at snack time.

Food preparation will be an important part of our curriculum. We will be preparing some snacks of our own. If it is your turn to bring snack, please check with the Early Childhood teacher to find out how many children we will be serving and if there are any foods you might want to avoid due to food allergies.

Also, all parents must indicate food allergies on their child's emergency form.

MILK PROGRAM

There is a milk program for students in grades PreK-8. Since orders are placed in advance, payment must be made for the year. An informational letter is sent home at the beginning of the year. 1% White milk will be offered 5 days a week.

CLOTHING

"Learn by doing" will be a fun and messy adventure in our classroom. Please dress your child in easily washable, comfortable clothing that allows for freedom of movement. Most of our art supplies are washable, but there are no guarantees paint will wash out. We will have smocks available.

Please bring an extra set of clothing (remember to change for seasons) for any unforeseen accidents. Extra clothing should be kept in the child's backpack.

All children need to be dressed appropriately for outdoor play. Weather permitting, we will be going outside regularly. During winter weather, we will provide large motor activity inside.

TOYS FROM HOME

We prefer that children not bring toys from home as these often get lost, broken and are often difficult to share. We prefer the children become acquainted with the vast assortment of education materials/manipulatives accessible to them at the center. Anything of educational interest pertaining to our units of study are welcomed in our classroom.

Please know that we do not allow play guns or play weapons to be brought to school. There will be an opportunity for each child to experience some type of show and tell.

SPECIAL EVENTS

We ask that siblings not accompany you to preschoolers special events. While we respect that childcare can be a challenge, it is sometimes valuable for parents and/or grandparents to share with your child some uninterrupted quality time together. There will be one all- family event held at the end of the year where siblings are more than welcome to join us. More information on this event will be available at a later time.

CELEBRATIONS

All students are invited to share a birthday treat with their classmates and teachers on their special day. We will have special times dedicated to celebrate summer birthdays if you wish.

For parties outside of school, we trust parents' common sense in their decisions, with their child, regarding inclusion of classmates.

VOLUNTEERS

We enjoy having parent volunteers spend time with us or to help collect materials for special projects. I will let you know of volunteer opportunities through our monthly newsletter or through class emails. Family members are always welcome to spend time with us cooking, sharing a special interest, or expertise , to read a book etc.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

St. Maria Goretti School is a non-smoking environment.

Handicapped parking areas as well as the striped area adjacent to these spots are for handicapped individuals or emergency situations only and not for general use. *Please respect these needs and the messages you give your children by your example.*

PARENT BOARD

There will be a Parent Bulletin Board inside the classroom with important information for you. Please review this periodically.

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS & RIGHT TO PRIVACY

During the course of a school year, individual students and student groups are occasionally videotaped and/or photographed in the classroom situations, during fine arts performances, and on field trips etc.

The resulting photo and /or video may be used in a variety of ways to promote the school, to instruct students or staff members, or to orient new parents, staff, and students. The final product could also take a variety of forms: photo displays, slide presentations, newspaper articles, pamphlets, video programs, school yearbook, school website and social media.

No last names of students will be used on any of these websites. A last initial may be used for information posted on the SMG website and Teacher Page in the event there are multiple children with the same first name.

Pursuant to the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act and State Statute 118.125(1)(d), any parent/guardian or eligible student (18 years of age or older) may inform the school of their desire that their child not be photographed or videotaped. If this is your desire, please send a letter indicating such to St. Maria Goretti School, Attention: The Principal.

PARENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

You must sign and return the Parent Handbook agreement form stating you have read this handbook and agree to abide by all policies.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to ask our Preschool Staff. We are very excited you have chosen our preschool program and are anxious to know you and your child!!!

St. Maria Goretti Early Childhood PARENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

The St. Maria Goretti Catholic Parish School Preschool Handbook is meant to inform parents of all policies and expectations. By signing this agreement, I verify that I have read the handbook and agree to abide by its contents.

PARENT SIGNATURE _____

CHILD'S NAME _____

CHILD'S CLASS _____

TODAY'S DATE _____ (return by the first day of class)

Agreement was accepted by Joan Kerman, Teacher, St. Maria Goretti Early Childhood for the 2019-2020 School year on:

_____ Print Name

_____ Signature