

St. Paul Early Learning Center Parent Handbook 2019-2020



5969 Highway 25

Flowood, MS 39232-7101

601-992-2876 Fax 601-992-9972

stpaullearningcenter@gmail.com

www.saintpaullearningcenter.com

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Paul Early Learning Center! In choosing St. Paul Early Learning Center, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education. This same commitment is anticipated as you entered into a partnership with St. Paul Early Learning Center ,

St. Paul Early Learning Center Parent Handbook reflects the policies of St. Paul Early Learning Center for the 2019-2020 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. Paul Early Learning Center during the **2019-2020** school year. Failure to uphold this agreement may result in your child's termination from the school.

The faculty and staff of St. Paul look forward to working with you to promote the growth and development of your child and a positive school experience.

Together let us pray that God will bless us as we work together to teach our children and help them reach their potential.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Henry, Director

Darlene Scanlon, Assistant Director

601-831-2068

601-613-1668

***Changes in the 2019-2020 Parent Handbook are highlighted and in bold type.**

Be it known to all that enter here, that CHRIST is the
reason for this school.

He is the unseen teacher in its classes.

He is the model of its faculty and the inspiration of its
students.

St. Paul Early Learning Center

St. Paul Early Learning Center is a total childcare and developmental center where each child is nurtured in a safe, loving, and stimulating environment. Our staff wants to direct the child to his/her ultimate potential –physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. St. Paul Early Learning Center opened its doors in 1990 and is a ministry of St. Paul Catholic Church and a part of the Diocese of Jackson.

Diocesan Schools Mission Statement

Catholic Education is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to his Church and is concerned with the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, aesthetic, and physical growth of each child. The goal of St. Paul Early Learning Center is to encourage and support each child to reach his/her potential in a multifaceted society.

Parents are the prime educators of children and it is St. Paul Early Learning Center's task to assist them in this work. St. Paul recognizes the differences in students' abilities and potential, and therefore strives to develop:

- Basic Christian attitudes and values
- A strengthening of character
- Integrity through self-discipline
- A desire for personal achievement and life-long learning
- A reverence for one's self, others and all creation

Non-Discrimination Policy

Educational Institutions in the Diocese of Jackson admit students of any race, color, gender or national origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students. Catholic schools seek primarily to serve Catholic parents who want a Catholic education for their children. Children of other faith traditions may be accepted if enrollment openings are available.

St. Paul Early Learning Center Mission Statement

“To provide a loving, nurturing and safe environment that promotes the spiritual and academic growth of the children in our community.”

To accomplish this, we at St. Paul Early Learning Center commit to:

Utilize a Catholic based curriculum to fully satisfy the intellectual and educational needs of each child in our care.

Retain a highly organized, trained and committed staff that successfully meets the emotional and physical needs of those in our care.

Conduct ourselves in such a way that each child knows that they are loved by God.

Work in unison with the congregation of St. Paul Catholic Church "To Live As the Body of Christ" through daily service and participation in the four pillars of hospitality, prayer, ministry and discipleship.

St. Paul Early Learning Center Advisory Council

Regular meetings of the St. Paul Early Learning Center Advisory Council are held on the third Wednesday of the month. The council operates under the policies in the Diocesan manual. It is a consultative council.

The council consists of the pastor, representatives from St. Paul Catholic Parish and parents of children who attend the Center.

St. Paul Learning Center follows the guidelines of the Mississippi Department of Education. (2004)

St. Paul Learning Center strives to maintain positive supportive relationships with all children. We base our educational program on the knowledge that young children learn as total persons, emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually, through a sequence of stages of development, but at individual rates, through all of their senses, through active involvement, through experiences, including play. (Mississippi Department of Education, 2004).

- We maintain an environment of pleasant conversation, laughter, and excitement, rather than harsh, stressful noise or enforced quiet.
- We interact frequently with individual children. We express respect and affection for children by smiling, touching, holding, and speaking to children at their eye level throughout the day, and particularly on arrival and departure and when diapering and feeding very young children.
- We strive to be available and responsive to children. We encourage children to share their experiences, ideas, and feelings. We listen to children with attention and respect.
- We speak with children in a friendly, positive, courteous manner. We talk frequently with children. We ask open-ended questions. Most of the time, we speak with individual children, instead of to groups of children.
- We treat children of all cultures, religions, and ethnic groups with respect and consideration. We provide boys and girls with equal opportunities to take part in all activities.
- We encourage age-appropriate independence in children in many ways. We encourage children to select and pick up toys, wipe up spills, wash their hands, and learn to use the toilet.

- We support children in handling changes throughout the day, such as going from play time to nap time, by reminding them that it will soon be time to change activities.
- We encourage positive behavior by re-directing children from inappropriate or unsafe activities to appropriate activities. We strive to anticipate and “head off” behavior management problems. We use positive reinforcement. We encourage children. We do not compare or criticize children. We use clear and consistent rules. We do not use corporal punishment, frightening discipline techniques, or put-downs.

Licensing and Professional Memberships

St. Paul Early Learning Center is licensed by Mississippi Department of Health.

State Licensing

A license to operate a child care facility has been required by law in Mississippi since 1972. In the 1990 regular session of the legislature, the law was revised to provide regulation of child care up to age 13 for any part of a 24 hour day.

The new regulations which went into effect October 1, 1990, require that parents be informed with a summary of the licensing standards. These standards include the following:

1. Purpose of child care licensure
2. Legal authority, legal action and penalties
3. Types of licenses and their display
4. Inspections, sanitation
5. Food service, nutrition
6. Staffing ratio, number of teachers to number of children
7. Program of activities –daily schedules
8. Building and grounds requirements
9. Infant and toddler care and children with special needs
10. Night care
11. Facility policy and procedure
 - administration
 - personnel requirements
 - parental involvement
 - records and reports
12. Health and safety
 - staff and child health
 - excluding sick children and exclusion guidelines
 - medication records and documentation
 - discipline and guidance (corporal punishment prohibited)
 - transportation policies

A copy of the regulations is available to parents at their request for review.

Parent's Role in Education

Parental Cooperation - Diocesan Policy #5102.1

As the primary educators of their children, parents/guardians freely make the choice of a Catholic education for their sons/daughters. Registration in a particular Catholic school/center is an agreement by the parent/guardian to accept and abide by the rules and regulations of the institution and to support its philosophy of education.

A cooperative relationship between the school personnel and a parent/guardian is essential for the overall education of a student. It is critical that a cooperative relationship be maintained through constructive dialogue with the parent/guardian.

If a parent/guardian refuses to abide by the rules and regulations of the school, or by word or action is unsupportive of its goals, or otherwise fails to meet his/her obligations under school or Diocesan policies, the administration may require the parent/guardian to withdraw his/her child or children from the school community.

Additionally, parents/guardians will be held to the same standards of respect as students are in regards to their interactions with administrators, teachers, staff and students.

Hours of Operation

St. Paul Early Learning Center is open from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Children must be picked up by 6:00 P.M. There will be a \$1.00 charge for every minute the child remains at the Center after 6:00 P.M.

Children may not be dropped off between 11:00-2:00 except in the Nursery. We want the children to nap peacefully without disruption.

Children **should not stay** eleven(11) hours a day on a consistent basis.

In case of inclement weather that necessitates early dismissal and/or center closure, St. Paul Early Learning Center will follow the **Rankin County School District Emergency Plans. The Learning Center may also close at the Director/Assistant's Discretion if necessary. We will contact parents through text, telephone and/or email if it is necessary to close the Learning Center. We will also post information on Face Book and our website.** We use **ReMind** to send out texts in an emergency.

Holidays

St. Paul Early Learning Center will be **CLOSED** on the following days:

Friday, June 28th-**CENTER CLOSSES at Noon**

Thursday, July 4th

Monday, September 2nd-Labor Day

Friday, October 11th- Professional Development

Wednesday, November 27th -Professional Development

November 28-29th-Thanksgiving

December 23-26th-Christmas

December 31st- January 1st -New Years

Monday, January 20th-Martin Luther King Holiday

Friday, March 13th- Spring Break Holiday

Friday, April 10th - Good Friday

Monday, May 25th- Memorial Day

Tuesday, May 26th - Professional Development

Tuesday, June 30th - Center Closes at 12Noon

Last day for PreK5 Class

Ages

St. Paul Early Learning Center serves children two months (child must have immunizations) to five years of age.

Admission Requirements

Before admission to the St. Paul Early Learning Center, the following must be on file in the Office:

- Application or Enrollment Form
- Infant Information Form or Child History
- Parent-Center Agreement
- Account must be current to register your child each year.
- Immunization Record with address and dates of Immunization and the name of the health provider.

The Immunization Record must include address, dates of each Immunization and the name of the health provider. The Center will need additional statements each time a child receives boosters and other immunizations. Parents are responsible for keeping immunizations current and providing the up-to-date form to the Center. The following immunizations are required:

Number	Vaccine
Four (4)	HIB
Four (4)	Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis (DPT)
Three (3)	Polio (OPV)
One (1)	Measles
One (1)	Mumps
One (1)	Rubella

Financial Obligations

The cost of educating a child at St. Paul Early Learning Center is accomplished through tuition payments, parish support, and fund-raising. Tuition provides the main source of income for the school's operation.

St. Paul Early Learning Center strives to allocate and manage every dollar in a way that assures the viability of the school while bringing maximum benefits to the student. Budgeting is the key to good stewardship and proactive planning is imperative. Given the impending increase in minimum wage, there is a possibility tuition may increase during the school year.

Registration Fee

A **non-refundable** registration fee of \$100.00 is paid to hold the child's spot upon acceptance. **Registration for the 2020-2021 school year is due April 1, 2020. This fee is \$100.00.**

Tuition Payment/Policy

Tuition payment effective July 1, 2019:

Infants-Older Infants.....\$730.00

Creepers –Toddlers.....\$710.00

Twos-Fives.....\$680.00

Sibling Discount.....\$10.00

- The tuition set forth in your enrollment agreement is due and payable on the first day of each month. St. Paul Early Learning Center uses automatic withdrawal. An authorization agreement is included in the registration packet.
- There **will not be a** discount or reduction for days in which the Center is closed due to holiday, staff development days or inclement weather.
- Tuition is due whether or not your child is present or not each day of that month. If you choose to remove your child from the Center for the summer months, your child may lose his/her spot.
- **A charge of \$30.00 will be assessed for insufficient funds.**

- Any account becoming thirty (30) days past due could result in the cancellation of your child's enrollment at the Center. Habitually late tuition payments violate the enrollment agreement and will result in the removal of your child from the Center.

St. Paul Early Learning Center is a non-profit organization. It is imperative that tuition is paid in a timely manner in order to keep tuition affordable and provide excellent care and nurturing for your child through competent and professional staff in addition to maintaining a safe, clean, and cheerful facility.

Supply/Capital Contribution Fee

There is an annual supply fee of \$150.00 per child. This fee will be withdrawn on August 16th, and a Capital Improvement fee of \$100.00 per child due in January 17, 2020. These fees are automatically withdrawn, mandatory and non-refundable.

Fundraising

The St. Paul Early Learning Center host an annual Golf Tournament each year. We ask all parents to participate either by playing in the tournament, donating a prize, or volunteering to help. Proceeds from the fundraiser will go to a specific, predetermined project. **The St. Paul Early Learning Center 2019 Golf Tournament is September 6th at Bay Pointe Golf Club.**

Withdrawal and Disenrollment

St. Paul Learning Center requires at least two (2) weeks' notice if a child is withdrawing from the Center.

For various reasons, some children and/or families have difficulty adjusting to the child-care environment. In such cases, St. Paul Learning Center may ask you to withdraw your child. If this should happen, you will receive at least two-weeks notice in order for you to make other arrangements for your child's care.

Medication Policy

St. Paul Learning Center staff, with written permission from the parent will:

- Give one (1) breathing treatment per day, per child
- Administer over the counter anti-gas medication and teething medications to infants.

- **Use EpiPen as needed.**

St. Paul Learning Center staff will not administer any other kind of medication. Parents may come to the Center at any time to administer medication to their children

Child Health and Safety Practices

Children have adult supervision at all times.

No photographs will be made of a child, except by Center staff for instructional or public relations purposes, without written authorization by the parent or guardian.

The Center will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding suspected abuse and neglect of a child.

Center staff will not divulge information about the health, development, residence, or family of a child to any non-center employees without the permission of the parent or guardian.

Any food allergies must be noted on the enrollment form completed by the parent and given to the Center. All immunization policies of the Mississippi Department of Health are strictly enforced.

If a child becomes ill, parents are asked to come immediately for the child. Parents are asked to keep children at home if illness is suspected. If a child has a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or flu like symptoms, **please keep your child home for twenty four hours symptom free. If your child has a contagious illness, please bring a doctor's excuse that clearly states when the child may return to daycare.**

St. Paul Learning Center reserves the right to request that a child be examined by a physician for any illness that may be contagious to others.

If your child has a communicable disease, the Center should be notified as soon as possible. Upon the child's return, the Center must have a statement from the doctor stating that the child is no longer contagious and can return to day care. The child must be FREE of symptoms like fever, (without fever-reducing medication) diarrhea, etc. for 24 hours before returning to the center. If your child has a temperature of 100.5

degrees, you will be asked to come get your child. If a child has a loose stools or if the director/assistant director deems it necessary, you will be asked to come get your child.

Contagious conditions such as head lice, pink eye, ringworms, impetigo, etc, require treatment before the child will be allowed to return to the Center. **If you find lice, please call the Center before bringing your child to school.**

Parents must apply sun block during outdoor play before coming to the Center in the morning. Center staff will apply in the afternoon, if requested.

Please call the Learning Center if your child will be absent or **send a Remind message to the teacher.**

Please notify the Office and **teacher** of changes in contact information.

Parents are required to sign their child in/out of the Learning Center.

If parents are divorced or separated, legal custody papers are required.

Parents/Guardians/Grandparents/Babysitters, please approach the pick-up area cautiously. Speed limit is 5 miles.

Curriculum

St. Paul Learning Center has **eight** classrooms: Infant Room, Older Infant Room, Creeper Room, Young Two/Toddler Room, Older Two Room, PreK3, PreK4, and PreK5. Our mission at St. Paul Early Learning Center is to teach the whole child , for the children to learn through play and to know that God loves them.

Infant Room/Older Infant Room

We help the infants develop by using activities to progress in eight key areas – communication, gross motor, fine motor, intellectual, discovery, social, self-help, and pretend. We use Beautiful Beginnings Curriculum.

We offer a variety of toys, books, games, and objects to explore. Caregivers sing, read, and talk with the infants in addition to providing basic care and play. Children also spend time outside. Television is not allowed in these rooms.

Creeper Room

Children in the Creeper Room continue to discover and learn about the world around them and focus on the seven areas of development begun in the Infant Room. Activities to build communication, gross motor, fine motor, intellectual, discovery, social, and self-help skills are utilized. Children enjoy playing on the playground several times a day. They transition from cribs to sleeping on mats. Learning Biblical characters through songs, reciting nursery rhymes, responding to commands, enjoying books, and problem solving are a few examples of the activities the creepers do. Television time is limited and used only in conjunction with the theme for the day.

Toddler/Two Year Old Rooms

The Toddler/Two year old classrooms encourage experiences that encourage learning through guided play and active discovery. Children explore activity centers that include dramatic play, manipulative area, music, science, art, blocks, language, sand and water. Children learn about Jesus through prayer, song and Bible stories. They enjoy gross motor activities on the playground and the gym. Television time is limited and used only in conjunction with the theme of the day.

PreK 3, PreK4, PreK5 Year Old Rooms

The pre-kindergarten classrooms' learning goals continue to build on language development through listening and understanding, speaking and communicating; literacy through phonological awareness, book knowledge and appreciation, print awareness and concepts, early writing and alphabet knowledge, math through number and operations, geometry and spatial sense, patterns and measurement, science, creative arts, music, along with development of self- concept, self-control, cooperation, social relationships, knowledge of families and communities, and opportunities to develop different approaches to learning and physical health.

The prekindergarten classes participate in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd religion program. This program focuses on the values of contemplation and enjoyment of God.

Children usually stay in the same classroom for a school year but sometimes it is necessary to move to the next class during the school year. Parents will be notified and the children will transition to the next class the week before they move- up.

The PreK5 class has a graduation program at the end of May. On that day in May the class is dismissed after the program.

The school year ends for the PreK5 class on the last day of June.

Discipline

Discipline is a form of guidance. Its purpose is to help the child learn acceptable behavior through understanding rather than force. The child's age, intelligence, emotional make-up, and his/her past experience will be considered when re-directing and guiding the child's behavior. Encouragement and praise of good behavior will be used. If a child's behavior is endangering himself/herself or others, time out will be used until the child has gained his/her self-control. When a child is removed from the group for disciplinary reasons, he/she will always remain within sight of a staff member.

Behavior guidance for individual children can include the following measures:

- Positive guidance in the form of **encouragement**, such as "Ride around the table" instead of "Don't bump into the table."
- Positive guidance in the form of **choices** for children, such as "Would you like to go to the block center or the art table?"
- Positive guidance through **directions that are brief**, such as "Toilet time now" rather than "Well, you played a long time; you should go to the toilet. Come on! We'd better hurry."
- Positive guidance through **a quiet, confident voice** rather than a raised voice.
- Positive guidance through **encouragement** rather than comparison of individual children, such as "Let's try to pick up the blocks together" instead of "Johnny, can you pick up more blocks than Mary?"
- Positive guidance through the **redirection** of children to give them ways to play appropriately with others.
- Positive guidance in the form of a few clearly stated class rules that are consistently enforced. "**Be safe. Be kind. Be neat.**"
- **Informal discussion with parent or guardian** about ways to encourage positive behavior at home.
- **Informal discussion with parent or guardian and child** about positive and negative behavior.
- **Formal conference** with parent or guardian.

We will try all means to work with you and your child to encourage positive behavior and to protect the safety of your child and others. If any child's behavior endangers the child or others, we will institute the following if there are:

- Three or more documented incidents of violence toward other children
- Three or more documented incidents of violence toward adults
- Three or more documented incidents of self-endangerment behavior

Parents will receive written notification at the time of the incident. After the third incident, the St. Paul Early Learning Center will send a written request to the parent requesting a mandatory meeting with the teacher and director to discuss referral to First Steps Early Intervention Program or an alternative.

Based on the First Steps' assessment and input from the St. Paul Early Learning Center staff, a plan will be developed and implemented. If the Center is unable to successfully meet the child's needs, a written notice to the parent, signed by teacher and director, recommending a transfer to another school that would better serve the needs of the child will be given. A two-week notice will be given to the family.

Communication

St. Paul Early Learning Center makes a great effort to communicate regularly with parents through the daily activity sheet. **Teachers of PreK3, PreK4, and PreK5 send out "weekly notes" to tell parents about the curriculum for the week.** A monthly newsletter and calendar is sent out at the first of the month to inform parents of activities and events. Information about the St. Paul Early Learning Center can also be found at **www.saintpaullearningcenter.com and on our Face Book page.**

Parent Teacher Conferences

St. Paul Early Learning Center schedules two parent conferences a year. The first conference will be in the fall and the second one in the spring. Parent-teacher conferences may be requested any time. Please call the office and we will arrange the time.

When Parents Have Questions or Concerns:

- A. The teacher should be contacted at school first if the problem pertains to classroom policy or issues related to their child's learning.
- B. If the problem has not been resolved after discussing it with the teacher, or if the problem pertains to general school policy, the director should be contacted.

C. The director can refuse to discuss a problem concerning a teacher unless the teacher has first been consulted.

D. If there are still concerns, the parents, director and pastor will meet.

REMIND

The school will utilize the **REMIND program** to alert parents in case of emergency or other special circumstances as needed.

General Information

Arrival and Dismissal

Parents are asked to accompany their child to and from the classroom each morning and afternoon. Parents/Guardians are required by the Mississippi Department of Health to sign their child in and out each day. Parents/Guardians are asked to sign their whole name. No abbreviations, please. A child will be allowed to leave with persons other than parents only if the person is listed on the enrollment form or direct permission is given in writing by the parent. A photo i.d. is required if the caregiver does not know the person picking up the child.

We respectfully request parents/guardians refrain from using their cell phones during arrival and dismissal. We want focused attention on the child and his/her needs.

Please do not block the drop off or pick up line or double park. If you are on your cell phone, kindly park in a parking spot instead of the drop off/pick-up line.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a special day in the life of a child and we invite parents/guardians to celebrate in the following ways:

- Check **in advance** with your child's teacher about the day. Birthday refreshments are served at afternoon snack time.
- You may supply refreshments such as cookies, donuts, or individual ice cream cups. **Please do not send cupcakes.** Birthday treats must be **store bought** with the ingredients listed.
- Invitations to a party outside the school must be given to all the children in the class or if it is a girls' party, all the girls must be included, a boys' party, all the boys..

Clothing

Children in all classrooms should wear comfortable, washable clothing that they can manage easily and shoes appropriate for outside play. **Please do not allow your child to wear flip-flops. Each child needs at least two seasonally appropriate changes of clothes.** All clothes should be labeled with your child's name.

Emergency

If an emergency were to occur and St. Paul Early Learning Center needed to evacuate, we would relocate to Highland Bluff Elementary School, 5970 Highway 25, Brandon, MS 39232,(across the street from St. Paul Learning Center) or Circle of Friends, 602 Luckney Road, Flowood, MS, 39232.

Field Trips

St. Paul Learning Center children in the two, three and four year old classes take **one** field trip in October and **possibly one field trip at the end of the school year in June for Family Fun Day.** Parents provide transportation and must accompany their child on the field trip. St. Paul Learning Center does not provide care on the morning of the field trip if a parent chooses for his/her child to not attend the field trip.

Food

We are a peanut-free center.

Parents of children in the nursery and older infant room are responsible for providing baby food, formula, juice and milk. All baby food and bottles must be properly labeled with the child's name. Parents should bring written instructions concerning feedings.

Children in the Creeper, Toddler, Two, Three and Four year old classrooms are served breakfast, lunch, and two afternoon snacks. **Children should not bring food or drink from home into the St. Paul Early Learning Center in the mornings.** The monthly breakfast and lunch menus are posted on the bulletin boards in the entrance to the Center and in the cafeteria. Menus are approved by the Mississippi State Board of Health –Division of Child Care Services. Enrollment forms require parents to list all food allergies.

Room Mothers

Room mothers are assigned to each classroom. **We have a Room Mother Coordinator for the Learning Center.** Room mothers help communicate with fellow parents about the St. Paul Early Learning Center activities, organize monthly birthday treats for teachers, parties for the classes and special events.

Rest Time

The St. Paul Learning Center has rest time after lunch until 1:30-1:45 P.M. each day. Infants sleep in their beds and older children sleep on mats. All children (except nursery children) will need a sheet and blanket to use at rest time. Please label these items with your child's name. Children are allowed to bring their special stuffed animal to sleep with during rest time. We ask parents to take these items home every Friday to wash and return on Monday morning. **Please do not bring your child to the Center during rest time.** The Nursery children are excluded from this request.

Toileting Practices

Potty training begins in the two year old classrooms. Parents and teacher will work together to decide when the time is appropriate.

At St. Paul Early Learning Center, we know that toilet accidents are natural events in the lives of young children.

We never criticize or punish children for toilet accidents.

We help children with toileting and toilet accidents without talking about the accidents. For example, we might say, "Johnny, let's get some dry clothes now," instead of "Johnny, you've wet your pants! We have to change your pants right now!"

Toys/Jewelry

St. Paul Early Learning Center provides a variety of toys and games in each classroom. We ask that children **not** bring toys and/or jewelry from home to the St. Paul Early Learning Center. **We do not allow children at the Center to wear teething beads.**

Disclaimer

St. Paul Early Learning Center reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time. Parents will be given prompt notification.