

# faithful beginnings

at St. Michael Catholic School

## Preschool Handbook 2017 - 2018



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# Introduction

## Mission Statement

Dedicated to spiritual growth, academic excellence, and social development, the mission of Saint Michael Catholic School is to prepare our students to live the Gospel message in an ever changing and diverse world.

## Philosophy

- Helping students learn and live the Catholic faith in an environment where Christian values are taught and modeled.
- Respecting the dignity of individuals regardless of race, gender, economic, or religious background.
- Creating a joyful, secure environment, where children are loved and nurtured. Students, parents, and staff work together in a Christian community of faith to support the rules and policies of St. Michael Catholic School.
- Implementing curriculum and assessment through Creative Curriculum and the Early Learning Scale which meet the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards, understanding that these standards are a flexible guideline because child development evolves differently for each child.
- Development of self-control, self-esteem, individual responsibility, and cultivating socialization skills

## **Parent Aware**

Parent Aware is part of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and is a rating tool for selecting high quality childcare and early education in Minnesota. Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School is proud to have a 4 star rating, which is the highest possible rating.

Rated programs have:

- Volunteered for extra, in-depth training
- Devoted themselves to strong, caring relationships with each child
- Adopted the latest approaches to keeping children's learning on track
- Committed to daily activities and routines that help children learn

## **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

NAEYC accreditation is the gold standard for early childhood programs across the country. Families of young children who attend NAEYC-accredited programs can be confident that they deliver the highest quality early care and education.

## **Licensing Information**

Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School is licensed by the Department of Human Services through the State of Minnesota. Faithful Beginnings is licensed for preschool aged children 33 months to five years. Hours of operation are from 7:30-5:00, Monday through Friday.

## ADMISSION

No child shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, sex, religion, creed, color, or national origin. Admission requirements and enrollment procedures are as follows:

- We accept children who are age 33 months by September 1<sup>st</sup> through age five.
- Classes are filled in the following order: 1) current students returning and their siblings; 2) St. Michael Catholic School families; 3) members of the parish; 4) non-parish members and parish members who missed the enrollment priority registration date deadline.
- If the class is full when a parent calls, the child's name will be put on a waiting list and vacancies will be filled as they occur.
- Children must be toilet-trained, able to go into the bathroom alone, and attend to normal hygiene tasks.
- Registration for preschool begins February 1<sup>st</sup>; notice is put in the church bulletin, St. Michael Catholic School News Notes, and on the school website. All registration is done online at [www.saintmpl.org](http://www.saintmpl.org), click on Admissions.
- Registration fees (non-refundable) and tuition fees are listed on the website.
- Early Learning Scholarship Program (tuition assistance) is available to qualified families. More information can be found at [education.state.mn.us](http://education.state.mn.us), search: Early Learning Scholarship Program, or call Think Small at 651-641-6604.

After your registration has been accepted you will receive several forms to complete. The following forms are due by Meet Your Teacher Night (end of August):

*Immunization Form	Release Form
**Health Care Summary	Emergency Form
Release of Information Consent Form	Copy of Birth Certificate
Handbook Agreement Form	

\*Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School enforces a NO SHOTS, NO SCHOOL (or proof of exemption) policy, so please make note of the immunizations required for preschool. Your attention to the health care needs of your child will help us provide a healthy environment for all.

\*\*Before a child is admitted to Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School, or within 30 days of admission, proof of a current physical examination of the child signed by the child's source of medical care is required.

## TUITION

The tuition rates for the 2017-2018 school year are as follows:

	<u>Half-Day</u>	<u>Full-Day</u>
2 days	\$1,600	\$2,600
3 days	\$2,300	\$3,800
4 days	\$2,850	\$4,800
5 days	\$3,250	\$5,600

Half-day tuition includes one snack. Full-day tuition includes early drop-off, morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack. **All full-day students are required to use the school lunch program.** Families will submit lunch orders one week prior.

Early drop-off is available each day from 7:30-8:30. There is a daily fee of \$6 for half-day students. After school care is offered from 2:15-5:00 and there is a \$12.25 daily charge to attend.

### **Payment Plans:**

Once registered, the St. Michael Catholic School technology coordinator will send a tuition agreement form. The agreement will have the options available for payment plans which include: one payment, two payments, four payments and ten payments. Payment plans that extend past two payments are subject to an agreement processing fee.

### **Tuition Assistance:**

Early Learning Scholarship Program (tuition assistance) is available to qualified families. More information can be found at [education.state.mn.us](http://education.state.mn.us), search: Early Learning Scholarship Program, or call Think Small at 651-641-6604.

### **Late Fees:**

A \$5 fee will be charged to your TADS account for late pick-ups. This includes pick-ups for half-day, full-day and after school care.

# Curriculum

## Creative Curriculum

“The Creative Curriculum for Preschool features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills (Teaching Strategies, 2003).”

## Objectives for Development and Learning

### Social-Emotional

- Regulates own emotions and behaviors
- Establishes and sustains positive relationships
- Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations

### Physical

- Demonstrates traveling skills
- Demonstrates balancing skills
- Demonstrates gross motor skills
- Demonstrates fine motor strength and coordination

### Language

- Listens and understands increasingly complex language
- Uses language to express thoughts and needs
- Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills

### Cognitive

- Demonstrates positive approach to learning
- Remembers and connects experiences
- Uses classification skills
- Uses symbols and images to represent something not present

### Literacy

- Demonstrates phonological awareness
- Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
- Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
- Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
- Demonstrates emergent writing

### Mathematics

- Uses number concepts and operations
- Explore and describes spatial relationships and shapes
- Compares and measures
- Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

### Science and Technology

- Uses scientific inquiry skills
- Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things
- Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks.

### The Arts

- Explores visual arts
- Explores musical concepts and expression
- Explores drama through action and language

### Social Studies

- Demonstrates knowledge about self
- Shows basic understanding of people and how they live
- Demonstrates simple geographical knowledge

## **ASSESSMENT**

We use a variety of assessment tools including the Early Learning Scale, observations, work sampling and developmental checklists in order to continuously monitor and support your child's development. Constant interaction with the children allows teachers to appropriately assess their skills and developmental levels as well as their interests and needs. Our curriculum and activities are then modified based on these assessment results to meet the needs of individual children. Our assessment results also indicate areas where we will plan program improvement.

## **Classroom Information**

### **Daily Schedule**

Each classroom has the following activities as part of our daily routine:

- Morning Meeting
- Choice Time
- Snack
- Outdoor Time
- Small or Large Group Activity
- Read Aloud

The schedules vary by classroom and are posted on our preschool parent board. They also provide time for transitions and is flexible based on the needs of the children. Weekly lesson plans are also posted on the parent board.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Students will need parental transportation unless there is an existing bus stop and space allows. Students must be four years of age or older to ride the bus. A new bus stop will not be added for preschool students; however, they have the option to go to the nearest existing bus stop. If you are providing your child's transportation, to help ensure the child's safety, please drop your child off in carline if you are arriving between the hours of 7:20am and 7:40am (early drop-off) or 8:25-8:35 for the preschool drop-off. Parents are more than welcome to drop off or pick up their child at the classroom as well. Details will be provided at the Orientation Conference.

## **ABSENCES**

If your child will be absent, please email your child's teacher.

## **CLOSINGS/BAD WEATHER**

Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School follows the Prior Lake-Savage Schools (District #719) on all school closings or delayed start times. Check local news for school delays and closings. If school is delayed in opening, the ½ day Preschool will not be in session.

## **COMMUNICATION**

It is our goal to keep parents/guardians informed on a consistent basis through newsletters and calendars sent via email. Hard copies may be provided upon request. Please check your child's schoolbag each day for notices. You may contact the teachers to leave a message or make an inquiry. PreciouStatus is used in each classroom to provide photographs, reminders and videos of

your child's day.

Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School fosters open communication. The following guideline for grievances needs to be used to address concerns and solve problems.

1. The parent meets with the teacher. The discussion is documented. If the issue is not resolved;
2. The parent meets with the Early Childhood Director. If the issue is not resolves;
3. The parent meets with the principal. The principal will then set up a meeting with the teacher, parent and principal. The discussion is documented. Students will be involved at the discretion of the principal. If the issue is not resolved;
4. The parent contacts the chairperson of the St. Michael Catholic School Advisory Council, who informs the Communication Committee of the Council. A member of the Communication Committee sets up a meeting with the parent and principal/teacher to listen and see if all procedures have been followed.
5. The parent may request in writing to begin local conciliation if the concern is not resolved.

## **CONFERENCES**

Scheduled conferences are available to parents during the school year. Parents will be notified of the dates and scheduling arrangements. Additional or alternate conferences may be arranged with the teachers. Assessments detailing intellectual, physical, social and emotional progress will be given to parents at least twice a year.

### **Orientation Conference**

Orientation Conferences are conducted before the first day of school. Students will meet the teachers to establish a comfort level in the school setting. Parents will have the opportunity to ask questions and to describe their child and identify any special concerns. Paperwork will be reviewed with parents to ensure the preschool has all necessary documentation for licensing requirements.

### **Fall Conference**

Fall conferences will take place in October. These conferences are to share observations and highlights of the beginning months of preschool

### **Late Winter/Early Spring Conference**

Second quarter conferences take place in February. Reflections on the school year and placement for the following year take place at this conference.

## **DRESS CODE**

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing. Children will often play outside, weather permitting, or inside on the floor. Try to provide clothing that can be easily managed as they will be encouraged to be independent and will be using the bathrooms by themselves. Please label hats, coats, and mittens. We encourage children to wear comfortable but sturdy shoes; sandals are not safe for running and climbing.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Parents are responsible for making sure the emergency contact information is current. Please notify the preschool teacher if any information changes including address, telephone numbers, physician, or any other information on the registration form.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All personal records of children and families are kept in the strictest confidence. Information pertaining to admission, progress, health or discharge of a child shall be confidential, unless we have written permission for disclosure from the parent or guardian. A child's personal records will be kept in a locked, secured location in their classroom.

## **EMERGENCY AND ACCIDENT POLICY**

Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School will keep a record of emergencies, accidents and injuries that occur. Emergency and accident policies will be in compliance with the state licensing guidelines along with monthly fire drills and tornado drills.

## **FAMILY NIGHTS**

Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School will offer different themed family nights. These experiences will expose the students to new and different real life experiences outside the regular classroom. These events also promote community building within the preschool program. The dates are posted on the school calendar.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parents of enrolled students are always welcome to visit our school – we have an open door policy.

There are many opportunities to participate at preschool. Your teacher will notify you of schedules once school begins.

We feel that this is a special time for you to spend with your preschool child. If you spend time in the classroom, we ask that you not bring younger siblings. All parents/adults who volunteer to work directly with our students are required to have the Essential Three required by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. The office staff will provide you with the proper forms.

## **PARKING**

Our parking lot is very busy at times and we ask that you supervise your children closely. Please only park in designated school parking spaces. There is no parking on Duluth Avenue in front of the school.

## **PERMISSION**

Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School will get written permission from parents/guardians before a child will be allowed to participate in any research, experimental procedures, or public relations activity involving their child.

## **PETS**

We ask that you notify us ahead of time if you would like to bring a pet to school. This will enable us to make the necessary arrangements for children with allergies.

## FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL - SEPARATION

The first day of school is a big step in every child's life. It is their first step towards independence as they encounter new friends, experiences and feelings. Some children are excited and eager to begin; others are hesitant and perhaps fearful. It is important to start the year with the expectation that your child can be left with the preschool staff. We have found that the longer the parents/guardians prolong their separation the more difficult it is for the children to adjust to the classroom setting. It is normal for some children to cry and cling to parents/guardians as you prepare to leave them at school. This usually lasts for a short time until the child becomes engaged in the classroom activities.

## WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENT

If a child needs to be withdrawn from Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School, two weeks notice is required so that another child can fill the vacancy. Should more notice be possible, it would be appreciated. Tuition will then be pro-rated based on the number of days attended in the month of withdrawal.

## BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Students of Faithful Beginnings at St. Michael Catholic School will be treated with equal respect, consideration, and love in a nurturing environment. In the event of unacceptable behavior, children will be cared for in a Christ-like manner by:

- Quietly discussing with the child the inappropriate actions
- Acknowledging the child's feelings or actions and explaining acceptable behavior
- Positively reinforcing the child's good behavior
- Redirecting the child
- Consistency on the part of the teacher(s)
- Scheduling a parent conference for recurring behavior concerns
- If child's behavior is unusual and persistent, it will be documented in the child's file, along with communication to the parent(s)

Children will be expected to:

- Respect God, themselves and others
- Respect the property of the school and property of others at school
- Treat others as they would want to be treated
- Exhibit appropriate behavior for school

## BIRTHDAYS

We will celebrate birthdays and half-birthdays. You will be notified of the date of the birthday celebration. If you choose to send a birthday treat, please notify the teachers in advance. Birthday treats **MUST** be commercially prepared, and peanut-free and healthy. **Cookies, cupcakes, cake, etc will not be accepted.**

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. A Physical and Immunization Record is **required** before your child may enter Preschool. Each child is required by state regulations to have on file a health statement, which includes a record of up-to-date immunizations and the signature of the child's source of medical care. If a child's health care summary (including immunizations) is not complete at the time of enrollment or by the first day of classes the child cannot be

admitted. Each child who has not had a physical examination within the last year must have one before entrance into preschool. These documents are kept in a secured location. From time to time there may be unvaccinated children that attend our program due to Minnesota exemption rules.

2. If your child is ill, PLEASE do not send him/her to preschool. Children should be fever-free without Tylenol or other fever reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school. If a child becomes ill while at school, the child will be separated from the class and made comfortable until a parent can be contacted to pick up the child. If we are unable to reach a parent, we will contact the person(s) listed on the emergency form.
3. Please notify either St. Michael Catholic School absentee hotline at 952-447-2230, or your child's teacher, if your child will not be at school for any reason. If the school is not notified, we will attempt to contact a parent to verify the absence.
4. Notification must be made to the school within 24 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, when a child is diagnosed by a child's source of medical or dental care as having a *contagious reportable disease* specified in part 4605.7040 (see [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us) search part 4605.7040) or lice, scabies, impetigo, ringworm, or chicken pox. The school will give a notice to the parents of exposed children the same day a parent notifies the center of a child's illness or condition.
5. In the event of a serious injury, staff will call 911 for emergency services and contact the parent(s). Other injuries will be handled by the teaching staff and the parent(s) will be contacted for further instructions.
6. Please inform the school of any allergies that your child may have, and what treatment is required in the event of a reaction.
7. Teachers, assistant teachers, and aides are qualified in First Aid and CPR.
8. Hospitals in closest proximity to St. Michael Catholic School are St. Francis Regional Medical Center in Shakopee and Fairview Ridges Hospital in Burnsville.
9. Please notify the preschool staff of any changes in guardianship and/or custody of a child.
10. To help ensure the child's safety, please follow school drop-off and pick-up procedures. If carline is missed, please walk your child into the classroom. If someone other than the designated person will be picking up your child, please inform us each time, unless it is a permanent arrangement. Staff may ask to see a driver's license if we do not know the individual.
11. The release form signed at the beginning of the year acts as a release for any public relations or advertising by the preschool.
12. As a child care provider/preschool, we continually monitor the development of all children in our care through ongoing observation and recording. We want the best outcomes for all children. Child care providers/preschools are considered a primary referral source for early intervention under federal IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) special education law. We are required to refer a child in our program who has been identified as having developmental concerns or a risk factor that warrants a referral as soon as possible, but in no case more than seven days after the identification. While this is a mandate, we want to keep open communication with parents and caregivers about their child and any concerns we have before a referral is made. We can assist the parent with the referral or partner with them in the referral process.

## **ILLNESS**

A child with any of the following conditions **MUST** be removed from school:

- Reportable illness of condition specified in part 4605.7040 (See [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us) search part 4605.7040)
- Chicken Pox until the child is no longer infectious or until the lesions are crusted over.
- Vomited.
- Has had three or more abnormally loose stools.
- Contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye.
- Bacterial infection and has not completed 24 hours of antibiotic therapy.
- Unexplained lethargy.
- Lice, ringworm or scabies that is untreated or contagious.
- 100-degree F. axillary or higher temperature before fever-reducing medicine is given.
- Undiagnosed rash or rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition.
- Significant respiratory distress.
- Not able to participate in activities with reasonable comfort.
- Requires more care that the staff can offer without compromising the health and safety of the other children.

## **MEDICINE POLICY**

For prescription medications (includes epi-pens, allergy medication) to be administered, we will follow written instructions from a physician or dentist before administering. Signed authorization from the parent or guardian is also required. The pharmacy label on a bottle constitutes the prescription.

- Medications must be kept in their original container and be properly and legibly labeled with the child's full name and current prescription information.
- Medications will not be given after the expiration date.
- Parents must state dosage, time and duration the medication is to be given.
- Parents should inform staff the last time the medication was given.
- Medication will be given in private.
- Staff will document each time the medicine is given.

## **MALTREATMENT OF MINORS MANDATED REPORTING POLICY FOR DHS LICENSED PROGRAMS**

### **Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect**

- Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

### **Where to Report**

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at (651) 431-6600.
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within

a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 952-445-7751 or local law enforcement at 952-440-3555.

- If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at (651) 431-6500.

### **What to Report**

- Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556) and should be attached to this policy.
- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

### **Failure to Report**

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

MN Department of Human Services Division of Licensing November 2014

## **MALTREATMENT OF MINORS MANDATED REPORTING POLICY FOR DHS LICENSED PROGRAMS continued...**

### **Internal Review**

When the facility has reason to know that an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment has been made, the facility must complete an internal review within 30 calendar days and take corrective action, if necessary, to protect the health and safety of children in care. The internal review must include an evaluation of whether:

(i) related policies and procedures were followed; (ii) the policies and procedures were adequate; (iii) there is a need for additional staff training; (iv) the reported event is similar to past events with the children or the services involved; and (v) there is a need for corrective action by the license holder to protect the health and safety of children in care.

### **Primary and Secondary Person or Position to Ensure Internal Reviews are Completed**

The internal review will be completed by Preschool Director. If this individual is involved in the alleged or suspected maltreatment, School Principal will be responsible for completing the internal review.

### **Documentation of the Internal Review**

The facility must document completion of the internal review and make internal reviews accessible to the commissioner immediately upon the commissioner's request.

### **Corrective Action Plan**

Based on the results of the internal review, the license holder must develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan designed to correct current lapses and prevent future lapses in performance by individuals or the license holder, if any.

### **Staff Training**

The license holder must provide training to all staff related to the mandated reporting responsibilities as specified in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556). The license holder must document the provision of this training in individual personnel records, monitor implementation by staff, and ensure that the policy is readily accessible to staff, as specified under Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.04, subdivision 14.

**The mandated reporting policy must be provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment in the child care program and must be made available upon request.**