

St. Joseph Early Childhood Center Parent Handbook



**St. Joseph Early Childhood Center
1901 Lincoln Avenue
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-341-2878**

Cell phone number: 715-347-5115

www.spacs.k12.wi.us

Updated: 5/10

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your child(ren) to St. Joseph Early Childhood Center. We look forward to sharing in your child's growth, development and happiness during their early years!

There are few decisions more important for a parent than who will care for and love their children. With this as our focus, we are excited about the opportunity to provide your child with a quality educational early childhood program in a Christian environment.

Experts agree that more learning takes place during the first five years than at any other period in life. Early experiences are vital to your child's growth and development.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information about our center's policies and services. We hope you find it helpful. If you have any questions or comments about the program, we welcome the opportunity to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,

Lori Shafranski
Director

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Our Philosophy

Our program has been developed to promote the spiritual, social/emotional, cognitive, and physical development of each child. We believe that each child is a unique individual and we gear our activities to interest and challenge the child at his or her ability level.

Our Program

St. Joseph Early Childhood Center is licensed to operate by the Department of Child and Family Services. Our compliance with all licensing requirements is monitored regularly. The program is open to children ages 6 weeks through 6 years of age. We are open Monday through Friday from 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM.

Our program is part of the Stevens Point Area Catholic Schools, operated by the Diocese of LaCrosse. Our website is www.spacs.k12.wi.us

Our Environment

Our environment contains the following elements to meet the needs of the children and promote successful experiences for them:

- *Child-sized equipment- to promote the children's comfort and ease of movement within the classroom.
- *Language arts materials- to promote listening, speaking and prewriting skills.
- *Sensory materials- to facilitate the growth of tactile, visual and auditory skills.
- *Materials for creative expression (art, music and drama)- to promote creative self-expression and appreciation of the creativity in others.
- *Pre-math and pre-science materials- to facilitate knowledge of numbers, sequence, measurement and experimentation.
- *Large-motor and small-motor materials- to promote the growth and development of hand-eye coordination and large muscle coordination.
- *Visual symbols of our Christian faith- to set a foundation based on Christian values.

Any terms or items stated in this handbook are under the control and discretion of the Center Director and the Stevens Point Area Catholic Schools. Items not specifically mentioned in this handbook are also under the discretion of the Center Director and SPACS.

Please note that this handbook is intended for the parents of children in our early childhood programs. Information that pertains to a particular program will be noted in the appropriate section heading.

Our Staff

Mr. Jim Dyer, SPACS President.....341-2445
Mrs. Lori Shafranski, Director.....341-2878
Mrs. Sara Groshek, School Administrative Assistant.....341-2878

Preschool Staff

Carrie Straw, Preschool Teacher

Child Care Lead Teachers

Brooke Vogt	2 ½ -3 year-old room
Melinda Whelihan	3-4 year old room
Lesley Lingofelt- Svihel	4 -5 year old room
Robin Werachowski	2 year old room
Sandra Niffenegger	Infant room
Jane Cotter	Toddler room

Child Care Assistant Teachers

Tanya Wierzba	Infant room
Mary Ann Woitzcak	Toddler room
Kris Reineck	Infant & Toddlers
Melinda Miller	3-4 year olds
Katie Johnston	2 ½-3 ½ year old room
DeeAnn Willner	2 year old room

Our General Policies

ADMISSIONS / WITHDRAWALS

A. St. Joseph Early Childhood Center has a **\$30.00 non-refundable registration fee** that is due before the child begins.

B. Holding fee-

- a. For 2-4 weeks prior to the start date the holding fee is \$100.00. The fee will be credited towards your first week of childcare fees.
- b. For more than 4 weeks prior to the start date the holding fee will be \$100.00 per month. The fee will be credited towards your first week of childcare fees.

The facility is open to children from all ethnic, cultural, racial, religious or special needs backgrounds.

Our childcare center is a state licensed facility with a capacity for 80 students.

Age requirements:

Infants & Toddlers-Children 6 weeks old to 2 years old are eligible for this program. Due to the limited number of slots available for infants and toddlers, our program will only contract service on a full-time basis.

Child Care - Children on the main floor of the childcare facility must be 2 years old. Part-time schedules are available for children ages 2-5 years.

Preschool- Students in the three-year- old programs must have attained the age of three by September 1st in order to be enrolled. They must be toilet trained.

FEE PAYMENT FOR CHILD CARE

Program participation fees are the sole support of the Early Childhood Center. Neither the school system nor the parishes subsidize our center. Rates are included in information given to the parents upon enrolling in the childcare center.

Hours of attendance are recorded in our computer *Time Clock* billing system located in the upper and lower hallways. Parents will be given a 4-digit code for privacy.

1. **All payments are to be made weekly.** If the account is not paid IN FULL in a timely fashion, a reminder note will go out to the parent. If it is still not paid IN FULL, childcare will cease until the account is paid in full. **After a two- week period, a \$15.00 late fee will be applied to the account each week until the account is paid in full.** The childcare director will hear special cases.

2. All payments are to be placed in the office in the designated Child Care payment box. Checks should be written out to SPACS (Stevens Point Area Catholic Schools).

3. Portage County Human Services offers assistance with childcare fees if the parents meet certain guidelines. Call 345-5350 for further information.

4. The parent is required to pay for the hours attending unless the childcare director receives written notice of change.

5. St. Joe's childcare operates from 6:30am to 5:30 pm. If your child is not picked up and out of the building by 5:30pm, a **\$1.00 late fee will be assessed for every minute after 5:30pm.**

6. A 10% discount will be given to families with more than one child enrolled in the center. The children must attend at least three full days per week to qualify. The discount is deducted from the older child's weekly fee.

FEE PAYMENT FOR PRESCHOOL

The Stevens Point Area Catholic Schools preschool program requires that tuition be made through the FACTS tuition system. The fee schedule will be given to the parent upon registration and is based upon the number of days that the child is in attendance in the preschool program each week.

SCHEDULE – CHILD CARE CENTER

A child will have a contract for service on file at the center. If a child's schedule changes, a new contract will need to be submitted and approved. All contracted services will be updated annually.

The childcare center is **CLOSED** on the following dates:

Beginning of the year-Staff Development days (3 days)

Thanksgiving Break (Thursday & Friday)

Good Friday

Independence Day

Labor Day

Christmas Break

Memorial Day

New Year's Day

On other days off during the school year, such as teacher in-services days, our **childcare center is open for business.**

During the summer months, the childcare center offers a **"Summer Adventure Series"** for children ages 6 weeks-5 years of age. School age children are invited to attend the "Summer Blast" program at St. Stanislaus School. This program runs from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day.

SCHEDULE-PRESCHOOL

The SPACS preschool program follows the school year calendar. You will receive a calendar during the first week of school. 3-year-old Preschool: Mon. & Wed. or Tues. & Thurs. from 9:00 am-11:30 am. A third day of preschool each week is offered on Friday for an additional cost. You may enroll your child for 3 days per week if you want. The time on Friday is 9:00-11:30.

INFANT AND TODDLER INFORMATION

Attendance: The infant and toddler center enrolls full-time children only.

Curriculum: The educational program is designed to provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences for the children throughout the day. Learning is enhanced in the following areas: large and small muscle development, arts and crafts, science, math readiness, self-help skills, emotional and social development. St. Joe's infant and toddler development center will use the *POCET* observation and checklist tool kit to prepare development guidelines and activities.

☺ Throughout the day, each infant and toddler shall receive physical attention such as being rocked, held, talked to, sung to, and taken on walks inside and outside the center. Getting ready for naps, eating, diapering, and toileting are all occasions when staff works on language development and other learning experiences.

☺ Children who are not yet walking will have the opportunity to move freely by creeping and crawling in a safe, clean, warm and nurturing environment.

Formula/Infant food: Parents are asked to bring a can of formula for their child. Bottles need to be labeled with the child's name. Parents will also be required to bring in other infant foods when needed.

Diapering:

Parents will provide diapers for their child. The center will provide wipes. Diapers will be checked every two hours, more often as needed. Parents who would like powder, lotion, or salve applied during diapering will need to fill out a medication form to keep on file.

Toilet training:

Training will be planned in cooperation with the parent, so the routine is consistent between home and school. Training will not begin on a child less than 18 months.

RELIGION PROGRAM

The Stevens Point Area Catholic School system views each child as a precious gift, given by God. The SPACS system acknowledges its responsibility, along with parents, for their child's nurture and care. The SPACS system carries out this mission by establishing and maintaining preschool and childcare programs that provide safe, secure, and a nurturing Catholic environment for children.

Daily prayer is included in the curriculum, along with the discussion of religious holidays such as Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. Our goal is to provide support to you as a parent as you begin your child's faith development.

ATTENDANCE TRACKING

Tracking child attendance is very important for safety reasons as well as ratio management. If your child is scheduled but is going to be absent, please notify the Center before 9:00 am. If we have not been notified by 9:00 am, contact will be made with the parents as to the child's whereabouts.

CLOTHING

Children need to be dressed appropriately for play. It is for this reason that we ask the following:

- Your child should have two extra sets of clothing in case of spills and accidents. All clothing needs to be **clearly marked with your child's name**. We cannot assume responsibility for unmarked clothing.
- Children should wear shoes that allow them to run and play safely on the equipment. **The most appropriate footwear is tennis shoes**. If your child is coming to school in shoes other than tennis shoes, please bring a pair along for them to change into before heading outside. All sandals must have a back strap.
- No "make-up" items may be worn, including shiny or colored lip-gloss. If the child needs to have lip moisturizer for the winter months, please send along a colorless product. Please put it in a plastic baggie with your child's name on it and give to your child's teacher.
- Children should dress appropriately for the weather. Children do go outside on a daily basis, except when it is raining or below zero.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

As part of the learning experience, the children in the program share all toys and educational materials. The program has an ample supply of equipment and materials.

We cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to any personal toys. Toys and items of value should be left at home. Please help your child understand why it is not wise to bring items that they may not wish to share with the group. It is acceptable for a child to bring a blanket or stuffed toy for rest time.

Each child will be assigned a mailbox in the classroom for projects, notes and the childcare bill. Children will also be assigned a hook for their coat, backpack and/or bag.

WITHDRAWAL/TERMINATION

When parents decide to terminate their childcare arrangement, a two-week written notice to the Director is required. You do not have to provide written notice if your child is leaving due to starting kindergarten. Personal days may not be used during the two-week notice. In the great majority of cases, termination of care by a parent is due to reasons such as relocation, child entering school, etc. We also recognize that not every situation is appropriate for every child. If, for any reason, the program is found to be unsatisfactory for a child, we will make every effort to discuss this with the parents in order to determine the cause. Whenever possible, we will work together to make the necessary adjustments. If this is not possible, the parent and/or the program may choose to terminate the arrangement on a timeline that is in the child's best interest.

The center reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment immediately for the following reasons:

- Failure to pay fees.
- Failure to submit required forms and information.
- The child's behavior is hazardous to self or others.
- The child's disruptive behavior continues regardless of guidance approaches.
- Lack of cooperation from parents with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences.

- Abusive behaviors by parents toward their child or other children, program staff or other parents (including foul language).

ABSENCES & VACATIONS

Each child is allowed a certain number of “Personal Days” per year, for which no fee is charged when the child is not in attendance. Parents are responsible for payment of any nonattendance days beyond the number of personal days allocated. Parents need to indicate the use of personal days by filling out the “Personal Day Request” form located next to the check-in computer.

CUSTODY/GUARDIANSHIP

According to the policies for the Stevens Point Area Catholic Schools in the La Crosse Diocese regarding proof of guardianship of children:

“In any situation where there is a custody agreement, the schools need to obtain that portion of that agreement that stipulates custody and any other pertinent information for the school.” DSP 5302

It is our policy to remain neutral in all custody matters. Furthermore, the Center may not serve as a visitation site. As a condition of enrollment, a copy of the signed custody decree that indicates who has primary placement of the child, a copy of the current custody agreement, and a copy of the visitation schedule must be on file in the Center. Parents are to notify the Center immediately of any change in the order. This notification must be in the form of a signed court order.

In the event that a parent chooses to enroll a child without including the child’s other biological parent on the authorized pick-up list, the enrolling parent must provide a copy of an official court document which indicates that the non-enrolling parent is not authorized to pick up the child (e.g. current restraining order, sole custody decree, divorce decree stating sole custody). Absent that document, the Center does not have the authority to restrict the non-enrolling parent from picking up the child, and we may release the child to that parent, provided the non-enrolling parent has legal documentation stating his or her paternity or maternity of the child. This confidential information will remain in the child’s file.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline procedures at the Early Childhood Center will involve helping the child react to his/her environment in a positive manner. When inappropriate behaviors arise, often all that is needed is a positive redirection to another activity. At other times, a gentle reminder or ignoring the behavior is all that is needed. A “cool down” time will be used when other methods are unsuccessful. This means that the child will sit quietly with a teacher away from the group and discuss the incident in question. Setting up limits and enforcing them will encourage a good rapport among children and staff.

STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

We believe licensing and regulations of standards are in the best interest of all children. These standards relate to staff, health and safety procedures, the building, nutrition, child-to-teacher ratios and record keeping. We are subject to inspection by state and city health, fire and licensing officials.

INSURANCE

St. Joseph Early Childhood Center does not carry a general health and accident insurance policy covering children. Parents are responsible for all medical costs incurred with respect to their child/children while attending our program.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records of all children are confidential. Persons having access to these records shall be the parent or person authorized in writing by the parent to receive the information, SPACS and center administration, and the child's teacher.

INTERGRATION OF SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN INTO THE PROGRAM

Our program is committed to providing quality care to all children. If a child who is enrolled in the program has a special need, the program will make every effort to accommodate those needs within reason. While working with various county agencies, this information will be shared with staff assigned to care for that child through parent conferences on a regular basis.

Our Safety Policies

KEYLESS SECURITY SYSTEM

St. Joseph Early Childhood Center has a keyless entry security system. Each family will be issued two entrance fobs that will allow you to enter the building at any time during our hours of 6:30 am- 5:45pm. If you lose or misplace your fob you will be billed \$25.00 for a replacement.

ARRIVING AT THE CENTER

The following are important regulations regarding the child's entering and leaving the premises:

Please accompany your child into the classroom. This provides a smooth transition and allows you a brief exchange with the teacher to convey information about your child and to learn of the day's plans. Our responsibility begins when you place your child in the care of our teachers.

When the center first opens for the day and attendance is low, children are frequently gathered in one room before they move on to their respective classrooms. Likewise, at the end of the day as children are picked up, remaining children might be gathered in one room.

Because we schedule staff hours around the hours of the children, it is very important for parents to adhere to their contracted arrival and departures times. (see Attendance Tracking)

COMPUTER CHECK IN/OUT SYSTEM

When you and your child arrive at the program, please use the computer in the lower level or the computer on the main floor to check your child in each morning and check out at the

end of each day (as well as for doctor appointments, etc). The center director or administrative assistant will show you how to use this system. If a parent forgets to check their child in or out, please contact the school office as soon as possible. **A \$5.00 fee will be assessed after every third missed login.**

RELEASING A CHILD

If someone other than the child's custodial parents or guardian will be picking up the child from the Center, prior authorization must be made in writing. The parent or guardian is the only person who can authorize the center to release the child to another individual. Parents are required to provide the name of a least one other adult who has permission to pick up the child in case of an emergency. This authorization is given on the enrollment form and should be updated in writing periodically. Persons on the authorization list must be at least 18 years and be able to supply documentation of their identity. A staff person will ask for proper photo identification before releasing a child to someone other than his/her custodial parent or legal guardian.

VISITING THE CENTER

Parents with children enrolled in the program may visit the center at any time during our hours of operation.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

A top priority of our center is to provide a safe environment for parents to leave their children. In order to ensure that our center is a safe place, we have written policies and procedures for dealing with emergencies. We schedule, carry out, and document fire and tornado emergency drills. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Management Plan's Surveillance Reports and Training Reports for St. Joe's are available for view in the office. Interested persons should Gregg Hansel at St. Stan's or St. Steve's to review the plans

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS / SNOW DAYS

When the Stevens Point Area Public and Private schools announce a closing due to inclement weather, **St. Joe's preschool classes will be cancelled.**

***Childcare will remain open unless the weather is very hazardous and then a decision will be made to close the center for the day. Parents will be notified. If the weather worsens throughout the day, the center may close early for safe travel.**

Should weather conditions or other unforeseen events necessitate the closing of school, notification will be made on local radio stations including:

WSPO 1010 AM, WSPT 98 FM and WIZD 99.9 FM.

Wausau TV channels 7 and 9 as well. Also visit our web site: spacs.k12.wi.us

FIELD TRIPS

Parental permission for 'walking' field trips are given out at the beginning of the year and apply only to destinations within walking distance of the St. Joe's Early Childhood Center.

Childcare parents sign the bottom of the enrollment form for permission. Once signed, this form will be valid all year. No child will be able to participate in a field trip until the enrollment sheet is signed.

Field trips that require the center to contract for a bus as the mode of transportation will require a Diocese of LaCrosse permission form that must be filled out and returned to the center before the child will be allowed to participate. If a fee is involved as part of the field trip, parents will be required to pay in advance for their child.

PETS

For the health and safety of children and staff, pets are not allowed in school.

Our Health Policies

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

We adhere to state regulations regarding health and immunization records for your child. Each child shall have a physical examination not more than six months prior to or later than 30 days after admission to the program. Please note that health examination forms must be updated every six months for children under the age of 2 and every two years for children over the age of 2.

MEDICATION

The health and safety of the child is our primary concern when administering medication. We adhere to state regulations and procedures to ensure that your child receives the proper dosage of medication. All medication is stored away from children. **Please do not leave medications of any kind in your child's diaper bag, or backpack.** We must have a signed Medication Authorization Form for all medications (both prescription and over-the-counter). All medications are stored in the center office. We cannot administer any medication that is expired, not in its original container, or without an updated and signed medication form. Please make sure a measuring device is included with the medication.

We will administer medication as prescribed by a licensed physician. Written permission must be secured from the child's parent or legal guardian. Prescription medication must be presented in its original container with a label bearing the child's name, dose to be given and the number of days to be administered.

Over-the-counter medicines will be treated in much the same way. We cannot administer any over-the-counter medication on an "as needed" basis. Oral over-the-counter medication such as aspirin, ibuprofen and cough medicine will only be administered with the written permission and instructions of the parent. Medication must be in its original container and have the child's name on it. A medication form must be filled out each time the medication is to be used. Over-the-counter medications may only be administered for the time limit listed on the container and for no more than the dosage recommended. If the recommended dosage states, "consult a physician", a physician's note is required.

Topical lotions and ointments can be administered with the written consent and instructions of the parent. All containers need to be clearly labeled with the child's name. Expired medications will be sent home.

SPECIAL NEEDS & MEDICAL CONDITIONS

We must be informed of special needs or medical conditions that impact your child's health, well-being, or involvement in activities. Parents are responsible for keeping this information current. The program provides appropriate forms to be completed by a physician and parent when certain medical conditions are present. To meet the specific medical needs of children with severe allergies, seizures, or special medical conditions, the administration must be informed prior to enrollment and proper paperwork be completed by the parent.

ILLNESS

State licensing regulations prohibit us from caring for even mildly ill children. Children with a contagious disease or fever may not attend the center. If your child becomes ill while at the center, you will be notified and asked to pick your child up from the center within one hour. If we are uncertain of a rash or other unexplainable condition, a doctor's note will need to be issued stating the condition is not contagious before your child may return to the program.

Any child experiencing the following symptoms or who is unable to keep up with the group will be sent home:

- *A fever of 101 degrees
- *Diarrhea 2 times
- *Vomiting
- *Contagious skin or eye infection
- *Profuse bodily discharge of any kind

If your child is sent home because of illness, he/she must be free of any of the above symptoms for **at least 24 hours before returning to the center.**

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

Parents need to notify the program immediately if their child has been diagnosed with any communicable disease. State law requires that we notify parents of children who become exposed to certain contagious diseases. This is done through a notice posted by the classroom.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

A public health nurse serves St. Joseph Early Childhood Center. The nurse will review the immunization records of all the children to make sure we are in compliance with the childcare state regulations. Parents who are not current with immunizations will be notified.

INDOOR ROOM TEMPERATURE

The center will remain in compliance with state licensing regulations for a minimum indoor temperature of 67 degrees Fahrenheit. Air conditioners will be used throughout the center in the event that the indoor temperature exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

MEALS & SNACKS

The program provides breakfast at 8:30 AM, lunch from 11:15 AM-11:45 AM, and an afternoon snack for all children who are able to eat table foods. All meals are prepared at St. Joe's. All food groups are represented and available to the children. The menus include a diversity of food types.

A monthly menu is given to parents and is posted at the center. If a child has food allergies, the center must be notified in writing including the symptoms resulting from the allergy and the remedies and precautions to be taken. We follow USDA Food Program Guidelines for Child & Adult Care Food Programs.

Students in the childcare program will receive breakfast, snacks, and hot lunches. This will continue during the summer months. On field trip days the parent will need to bring a cold lunch. Lunch menus are posted in each classroom as well as the cafeteria for parents to see. Any changes to the menu will be posted. Staff will sit at the table with the children and meals will be served with time allowed for socialization.

BIRTHDAY TREATS (Childcare parents): When supplying treats for your child's birthday classroom, you will need to bring in a wrapped store-bought treat. The child cannot pass out homemade treats.

REST TIME

State licensing requires children to rest at least 30 minutes each day. Young children really need this rest time to relax and unwind from their busy morning schedule. This quiet time enables them to have a more positive afternoon and be a happier child at home with you at the end of the day. Parents are required to provide a **2-inch thick vinyl mat**. Children may bring **one** soft item to rest with. Parents are also required to bring a **small blanket** for your child. These items need to be marked with your child's name. The childcare center sanitizes the sleep mats weekly. Parents are required to take home the blanket and soft sleep item every Friday to be washed and brought back on the following Monday.

BITING

One of the center's most difficult jobs is to have to inform a parent that their child has been bitten. You have entrusted us to care, nurture, and protect your child. How could this occur in a quality program? The reality is biting does happen in any program caring for infants and toddlers. When it happens, and sometimes continues, it can be very stressful for children, parents, and staff. Parents of a child who is bitten may feel frustrated and angry. Parents of a child who bites may feel helpless, embarrassed, or frustrated.

Every child in the infant and toddler classrooms is a potential biter or will potentially be bit. It is important to understand that because a child bites, it does not mean that the child is "mean" or "bad" or that the parents of the child who bites are "bad" parents or they are not doing their job as parents to make this stop happening. **Biting is purely an indication of**

the developmental age of the child. It is developmental phenomenon and can be tied to children's ages and stages.

Every child is different. Some bite more than others and some may not bite at all. Group care presents challenges and opportunities that are unique from home. The children are surrounded by many others for hours at a time. Even though there are plenty of toys and materials available for all the children, two or three children may want that one particular toy. The children are learning to live in a community setting. *Biting is not something to blame on the child, parents, or caregivers.* There are many possible reasons as to why an infant or toddler may bite:

- *Exploration:* Young children explore by putting things in their mouths. At times a child will "accidentally" bite when an arm, shoulder or finger is close to their mouth. These children are often surprised when the bitten child cries.
- *Teething:* Children seem to bite more frequently when they are teething. Infants and toddlers' mouths hurt and they need something or someone to chew on.
- *Impulsiveness and lack of control:* Babies bite just because there is something there to bite. It is not intentional to hurt, but rather exploring their world.
- *Making an impact:* Sometimes children will bite to see what reactions happen.
- *Excitement and over-stimulation:* Simply being very excited, even happily so, can be a reason a child may bite. Very young children don't have the same control over their emotions and behaviors as some preschoolers do.
- *Frustration:* Frustrations can be over a variety of reasons- wanting a toy someone else has, not having the skills needed to do something, or wanting a teacher's attention. Infants and toddlers are simply lacking the language and social skills necessary to express all their needs, desires, and problems. Biting will often be the quickest and easiest way of communicating.
- *Stress & anxiety:* Even young children feel stress and react to the experiences of events or situations happening around them (i.e. separation from loved ones, a new baby, lack of sleep, toilet learning).

When a child bites for the first time, it often "comes out of the blue" thus making it hard to prevent. We carefully supervise and play with the children thus stopping many bites before they occur. We have duplicate toys so children will not compete for an item. Activities are balanced to provide active and quiet play to help release frustration. We maintain low ratios and watch for signs of tension or frustration on children. Parent communication at drop off time is essential to help us predict a child's mood or likelihood of biting. Please be sure to let us know if your child is on medication, teething, didn't sleep or eat well, is going through any changes at home, or seems out of sorts. Teachers try to minimize the behavior by:

- Letting the biting child know in words and manner that biting is unacceptable.
- Avoiding any immediate response that enforces the biting, including dramatic negative attention. The teachers will tell the child that "biting hurts" and the focus of caring attention is on the bitten child. The biter is talked to on a level that he/she can understand. The teacher will help the child who is biting work on resolving conflict or frustration in a more appropriate manner.
- Examining the context in which the biting occurred and looking for patterns. Was it crowded? Too many toys? Was the biting child getting hungry/tired/frustrated?

- The teachers will confidentially keep track of every occurrence, including attempted bites, and note location, time, participants, and circumstances.
- The teacher may also “shadow” a child who has a tendency to bite. This involves staying very close to the child to try and prevent biting.
- Teachers may also consider changes to the room environment that may minimize congestion, commotion, or competition for toys and materials.

When a child has been bitten, we comfort that child immediately and wash the bite with soap and water, then apply a cold compress to minimize swelling and bruising.

It can be frustrating for the parents of children who have been bitten that we are unable to “fix” the biting child quickly or terminate care. We try and make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and balance our commitment to the family of the biting child with that of the other families. Confidentiality is also practiced with biting. We cannot tell a parent who bit their child. Most children soon stop biting. After all efforts have been used to control the behavior, it may become necessary to remove the biting child from the program, either for a short period of time or permanently.

Communication Policies

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

The foundation for good parent-teacher-school relationships is frequent and open communication. The Parent Newsletter and the weekly letters from your child’s teacher are major means of communication between school and home. The Parent Newsletter is printed twice a month on Thursday. It will go home with the oldest child in the family. Your child will receive it on their day of attendance closest to the Thursday of printing. Information included may be items relating to school, reminders of upcoming events, changes in schedules, policies or procedures, and other pertinent information. Infant and toddler parents will have a chance to meet with their child’s teacher every 3 months for an update on their child’s progress.

At St. Joe’s, program information is provided by the preschool and childcare teachers on a weekly basis. If a need arises, the staff will provide parents with daily verbal or written communication about their child’s day. You can check out our web site at: ***spacs.k12.wi.us*** and contact your child’s teacher via e-mail on the web site.

Parents are welcome to communicate with childcare staff via email or phone. All staff are given an email account through the Stevens Point Area Catholic School website. Staff members may take phone calls from parents during the day when their schedule permits. If a staff member is unavailable, parents may leave a message and staff will return the phone call at their earliest convenience.

PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences are an ideal time to check your child’s progress, behavior, attitude, and other aspects of your child’s growth. Conferences are planned for the fall and spring, but parents are encouraged to keep in contact with your child’s teacher throughout the year. Please remember that at this early childhood level we will not be giving your child a formal assessment or “report card.” If at any time during the year a parent would like to set up a conference, one will be arranged.

- Infant and Toddler parents will have the opportunity to update their child's Intake form every 3 months and discuss their child's development.

MEDIA

School grounds are private property. The media is not allowed unless invited by school personnel. If you would like to exclude your child's picture or name from press releases, please indicate this on the form you will be receiving at the beginning of the school year or upon registration in the childcare program. We will keep a list on file in the office.

Additional Information

CAMPBELL SOUP LABELS

MILK MOOLA CAPS

KIDS, CAPS & CASH

KEMP'S NICKELS FOR SCHOOLS

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

St. Joe's collects all of the above. Please drop them off at the school office.

SAMPLE SCHEDULES PRESCHOOL

The teacher distributes the preschool schedule.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE--CHILDCARE

6:30-8:00	Free play (children arrive)
8:00-8:30	Story time
8:30-9:00	Breakfast
9:00-9:30	Outdoor Activity
9:30-9:45	Group Time (prayer, calendar, weather, story/song or finger play, discussion)
9:45-11:00	Small Group Activity Time
	*Learning Centers such as: math/manipulative, art projects, skill-building activity, science, block building, fine motor skills and dramatic play
	*Journal writing
	*Snack
	*Outside/Large Motor activity
11:00-11:15	Bathroom break/hand washing
11:15-12:00	LUNCH
12:00-12:30	Outside time
12:30-1:00	Bathroom break
1:00-2:45	Quiet Time

2:45-3:00	Bathroom break/hand washing
3:00-3:30	SNACK
3:30-4:00	Exercise time/Outdoor time
4:00-4:30	Story time/Games
4:30-close	Child initiated activities

STEVENS POINT AREA COMMISSION ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The Stevens Point Area Commission of Catholic Education consists of the following parishes: St. Joseph, St. Peter, St. Stanislaus, St. Stephen, Newman University, St. Bronislava, and St. Mary's in Custer. They oversee the policies and procedures of the Stevens Point Area Catholic Schools. They meet on a monthly basis to discuss matters of concern to the schools.

St. Joseph Early Childhood Program Receipt of Parent Handbook

I verify that I have received the St. Joseph Early Childhood Center Parent Handbook and that I have read and agree to abide by all of the regulations, policies, and procedures. I understand that this handbook is a guideline, and it should not be construed as a contract between St. Joseph ECC parents/guardians, or any other person. St. Joseph ECC is committed to reviewing its policies continually and reserves the right to review and change its policies at any time.

Parent/Guardian

Date

Please sign and return to St. Joe's.
Thank you!