ST. JOSEPH
SCHOOL DISTRICT







LAKE ELC HANDBOOK

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Welcome

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Saint Joseph School District! The early childhood teachers and staff are excited to get to know your family and to help your preschooler learn and grow. We hope that we can answer some of your questions with this handbook, but please know that this is just the beginning of communication between home and school. Your child's education will benefit as we learn to exchange ideas with one another.

If you have questions or concerns at any time during the school year, please reach out.

Toni Lynn Gardner

Principal - Lake Early Learning Center

St. Joseph School District

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The Saint Joseph School District Early Learning Centers follow policies included in the SJSD Parent and Student Handbook (Grades PreK-12).

Receipt of handbooks is acknowledgement of the recipient's responsibility to know and abide by the policies and procedures listed within the handbooks

School Information

Lake Early Learning Center

1800 Alabama Street
St. Joseph, MO 64504

816-671-4009



Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

(No Preschool on Friday)

Morning Session	7:45-10:45 AM
Afternoon Session	11:50-2:50 PM

Commitments

1. The Saint Joseph School District Early Learning Center is committed to providing experiences in an increasingly inclusive environment.

2. The Saint Joseph School District Early Learning Center recognizes that learning in the preschool years is unique and developmental. The staff begins by working to understand individual preschoolers' development, strengths, needs, and interests.

3. The Saint Joseph School District Early Learning Center educators are committed to providing learning experiences that allow preschoolers to learn actively, thoughtfully, and socially in an environment that is safe and allows for mistakes.

4. The Saint Joseph School District Early Learning Center educators honor parents/guardians as first teachers and are committed to working together to help the children in our care learn and grow.

Programming

Peer Programming:

Our district determines children eligible for peer placement programming by identifying preschool children most at risk of failing to meet the state's academic achievement standards based on multiple criteria. Children must participate in a district screening and be 4 years of age before August 1 to qualify as a peer. Peers may be placed in a full day or half-day classroom, based on availability.

Special Education Programming:

Young students who have identified developmental delays may be eligible to attend classes that provide early childhood special education. These children, age 3 through pre-kindergarten, demonstrate a need for Individualized Educational Programs. We offer a variety of classrooms with Early Childhood Special Education staff, and children are placed in classrooms based on their strengths, needs, and goals.

Enrollment

1. A birth certificate or other approved legal document, giving proof of the child's birth date, must be presented at registration. Registration materials must be completed before a child enters Saint Joseph School District preschool.

2. Children must be immunized according to state regulations before the first day of school.

3. We also require proof of residency in the Saint Joseph School District attendance area to register your child for one of our preschool programs.

Attendance

Showing up in preschool matters! Early education is so important to long term school success! At preschool, your child will build skills in literacy and math. They will learn to solve problems and make friends. They will become stronger and gain control of motor tasks. But your preschooler will only gain these benefits if they attend regularly.

Some absences are unavoidable. Children who are showing signs of illness SHOULD stay home from school. If you are having difficulty getting your child to school because of something besides sickness, please reach out to us. If we see that your child is frequently absent, we will reach out to you to find out if we can help.

Important Dates

Please try to schedule appointments/vacations around these:

- Tuesday, August 25: First day of Preschool
- Monday, September 7: No School
- October 27-28: Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Monday, November 2: No School
- November 25-27: No School, Thanksgiving Break
- December 21-January 4: Winter Break
- Monday, January 18: No School
- February 15: No School, Presidents Day
- March 16-17: Parent/Teacher Conferences
- March 22-29: Spring Break
- Tuesday, May 25: Last Day of Preschool

Transportation

Bus Transportation

- The Saint Joseph School District offers transportation to all preschoolers with First Student. To facilitate this process, children will be placed in sessions according to their home address.

- If there is a change in transportation information, this must be communicated directly to the school.

- If your child does not ride the bus for three consecutive days, regardless of the reason, you must contact First Student at 816-273-0041 to reinstate bus service.

Car Transportation

If you choose to transport your child to Lake Early Learning Center, you may park and walk your preschooler to the front door or wait in the drop-off line (see map below). When picking up your preschooler, we require that you park and walk to the door.



*By accepting placement in preschool, you are signifying acceptance of our arrival/drop-off policy.

Curriculum

Emerging Language & Literacy Curriculum

The Emerging Language & Literacy Curriculum prepares preschoolers for success in kindergarten and gives them a strong foundation in oral language and literacy. This program not only addresses all developmental domains with theme-based units, children's literature, multisensory activities, scaffolded instruction, and parental involvement but also creates an engaging environment with activity and play-based learning.

Sample Daily Schedule

7:45 Arrival/Family Meeting (discussions, planning the day, movement & music, shared reading & writing)

8:15 Learning Centers (creating, building, experimenting & investigations, cooking, puzzles & games, pretend play, independent reading & writing)

9:15 Snack Time (self-care, conversation, counting, learning a bout nutrition)

9:30 Shared Storybook (story, conversation, literacy)

10:00 Gross Motor (group games, environmental math, exploration & experimentation, movement, socialization)

10:30 Closing (discussions, reflections on the day, distributing items/newsletter, music & movement)

Conscious Discipline

The Saint Joseph School District Early Learning Centers follow the Conscious Discipline approach to integrate social emotional learning, discipline, and the growth of self-regulation in children. Self-regulation is very important for learning. Conscious Discipline training helps teachers work with children to develop self-regulation skills. Our teachers use Conscious Discipline's five-step process and 'Feelings Buddies' in the classroom to help children reach self-regulation.

*When you visit your child's preschool classroom, be sure to check out the Feelings Buddies.

Here are the five steps for self-regulation:

- I Am: the child recognizes that he is triggered and finds a safe space. For young children, sometimes the 'safe space' is the teacher.

- I Calm: the child begins to calm herself and identifies the feeling she is experiencing.

- I Feel: The child selects an appropriate Feelings Buddy, names the emotion, and works to help the Buddy regulate his emotion. The child develops positive self-talk.

- I Choose: The child chooses a strategy to make himself feel better.

- I Solve: The child identifies some lifelong problem-solving skills

Preschool Essentials

Being Safe

When picking your child up early, you must sign him/her out from the school office.

We will have regularly scheduled safety drills, such as fire drills, at preschool.

In case of an accident or illness, we may call home. Please make sure that we have current contact information and multiple current emergency contacts.

Physical aggression toward students or staff, including hitting, pushing, or other unsafe physical behavior, will not be tolerated. Incidents may result in a conference with the principal and parent/guardian, along with consequences such as loss of privileges, in-school support strategies, suspension, or dismissal from the program.

Birthday Treats

We cannot have birthday parties at school, but we want to celebrate your preschooler's special day! Please chat about treats beforehand with the teacher.

Family Involvement

Family Involvement activities will be planned throughout the school year to engage your family in preschool learning on a regular basis.

Clothing

Your preschooler should wear casual clothes that may get messy with paint or clay.

Send your child to school with a jacket or coat if it is chilly. We may go outside (even for just a bit) when it is over 20 degrees.

Shoes should be comfortable and safe.

Please do not send your child to school in flip flops or high heels.

Please put your child's name on hats, gloves, coats, and backpacks.

Please do not send a toy to school with your child. We do not want a special toy to become lost or broken.

Please send an extra set of clothes to school to be kept in your preschooler's backpack/cubby.

Parents As Teachers

Parents are a child's first and most influential teachers. Parents As Teachers (PAT) help families lay a strong foundation for a child's future success in school.

PAT Services

Personalized home visits can start before a baby is born! A certified parent educator, specially trained in child development and eager to help families give children a great start, provides home visits. The SJSD Parents As Teachers program prioritizes children Birth-3 Years for this service.

Group meetings with other parents provide opportunities where families can share parenting experiences, gain new insights, and talk about topics that interest them.

Regularly scheduled playgroups.

Periodic screenings are conducted to better understand your child's strengths and needs. This is especially important if you suspect developmental delays.

A referral network helps families find special services, if needed, that are beyond the scope of PAT.

For More Information Contact: 816-671-4018