

# St. Mary Magdalen Catholic School

Passionately Catholic & Academically Excellent

## Pre-School Handbook 2023-24

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*This is a fluid document which is subject to change as the need arises.*

## **Welcome to St. Mary Magdalen's Preschool Program**

In this handbook, you will find the guidelines for our Pre-K program. Please read and refer any questions or concerns to the Principal.

Our primary goal is to provide a socially, emotionally, and physically safe environment for all in our Pre-K classrooms and the school. We embrace the partnership between the home and the school and request that you monitor your child's health and well-being before coming to school. We will follow the health and wellness protocols listed in the school plan.

### **Arrival**

Pre-K arrival begins at **7:45 a.m.** School begins at 8 a.m. If your child arrives after 8 a.m., they must go to the main school doors and sign in. An aide will come to get them to walk to their classroom.

When dropping off, please follow the traffic pattern to the back of the school. Park in one of the parking spots and walk your child to the crosswalk. Be mindful of moving traffic in the parking lot. We suggest you hold your child's hand while moving through the lot. During the first month of school, students will enter the building through the doors by the Pre-K rooms and go directly to the classrooms. After this, students will enter the door by the gym for morning prayers. Teachers and staff members will be available along the path of the entrance door to your child's classroom for assistance. **Parents and visitors will not be permitted into the building at this time.** Children are not permitted in the building before 7:45 a.m.

### **Dismissal**

Dismissal will be at 2:45 p.m. each day. Children will be brought to the Pre-K door at the back of the building. Please park your car, turn it off, walk over to the blacktop, and the teacher will release your child to you. If you are **not** waiting for older siblings, please leave the parking lot with **caution**. If you are waiting for older siblings, your younger children must stay with you and not be running around on the sidewalk or blacktop. Children may not walk to the car unattended by an adult.

### **Parent and Teacher Communication**

All weekly memos will be sent through e-mail and/or notes in your child's folder. This folder will be taken home, checked, and returned to school each day. Teachers are not available by phone during school hours. Conference appointments should be made with the teacher if there are concerns. Please email the teacher with any concerns. If you have an emergency, please call the

main office. Conferences are not to be held when teachers are supervising children in the morning or at dismissal.

## **Supplies**

Each child will need:

- one lunch box (if staying for the full day)
- one book bag (big enough to hold a lunch box and folder)
- one 15 oz. to 24 oz. water bottle
- one small blanket (if staying to sleep, no pillows or sleeping bags, please)

Please make sure everything is **labeled**, which includes *any item* that may come to school with your child, including but not limited to clothing, book bag, water bottle, blanket, lovey, folder, lunch box, hats, gloves, etc.

We kindly ask that each child donate 2 paper towel rolls, 1 tissue box, 2 Lysol or Clorox wipes, and 1 hand sanitizer for the classroom. Thank you!

## **Rest Time**

Students will have rest time every day in the afternoon. Children do not have to sleep, but they must remain quiet for those who do. Each child will need a small blanket; please, no pillow or sleeping bag. Children may bring in one small lovey for rest time only. This lovey must be washable and will stay in the classroom weekly. Blankets and lovey will be sent home each Friday to be washed and should be returned on the next school day.

## **Toilet Training Policy**

Children enrolled in Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 **must be toilet trained before the beginning of the school year.** We realize “accidents” will happen. “Accidents,” by definition, are unusual incidents and should happen infrequently. By definition, toilet-trained preschool children:

- No longer wear diapers or disposable underwear.
- Can tell the teacher when they need to go to the bathroom.
- Can attend to their own hygiene; a teacher will assist when needed.

Please note if a child cannot take care of their bathroom needs, we will notify their parents, and the child will be welcomed back to the classroom when they are ready.

## **Bathroom time**

Children will attend the bathroom with their mini cohort for group bathroom time throughout the day and when needed. We expect children to walk to and enter the bathroom, privately attend to their bathroom needs, wash their hands with soap and water, dry their hands, and walk out of the bathroom.

## **Dress Code**

The students **must** wear the school uniform daily unless otherwise noted on the calendar. The Pre-K uniform is SMM gym shorts (warm weather) or sweatpants (winter) and an SMM gym t-shirt (short or long sleeve) or sweatshirt. Students must wear white, blue, black, or gray VELCRO sneakers.

## **Change of Clothes**

Please provide a change of clothing for your child to be kept in the classroom in case of an accident. The change of clothing does not have to be the school uniform. Please label all clothing and place it in a gallon-size plastic bag with your child's name on the outside.

## **Cold Weather & Winter Attire**

The Pre-K children will go outside, weather permitting. Therefore, they will need to wear jackets or coats depending on outside temperatures. If it is below 30 degrees, the children must have hats and gloves; however, scarves are optional.

## **Snack**

There will be one dry snack time each day at 10:00 a.m. Parents must send in a dry, healthy snack for their child. **We cannot PROVIDE AN ALTERNATE SNACK TO YOUR CHILD if they do not have one.** Children can drink from their water bottles during snack time. Parents should not send in juice or milk.

If your child is attending **C.A.R.E.S.**, you should pack another snack after school.

## **Lunch**

The children will be eating lunch at noon in the classroom. You must provide a healthy lunch for your child. We cannot provide an alternate lunch **if your child does not come to school with a lunch.** Please provide a napkin and utensils (no knives) for your child's lunch. Pre-K students are eligible to participate in the pizza lunch program on Wednesdays, which is our 8th-grade fundraiser. Pre-K students do not participate in the school's lunch program. We have found that they do not eat many of the offered meals and waste much of it because of the portion sizes.

## **Recess**

Weather permitting, students have outside recess each day. The children will play on the playground, blacktop, or grass areas. Parents may donate outside items for communal class usage. These items will stay in a mesh bag at school and are cleaned between each usage.

Decisions to have outside recess during cold weather depend upon the temperature and the wind chill factor. Children should always dress for outside recess. As needed, parents should

apply sunscreen to their children before coming to school. Students can also bring a hat, but no sunglasses, please.

## **School Communication**

Communication is essential and builds a positive relationship between home and school. Several modes of communication exist in our school to help keep parents informed of activities and upcoming events.

Please check the school website at [smarymagdalschool.net](http://smarymagdalschool.net) for a monthly calendar of events and other essential information for families, especially on the Parent Portal page.

The **HAWK HERALD Newsletter** is sent via the **FACTS Communication** System on the 15th and 30th of each month, which is the primary means of communication from the administration.

Communication Envelopes will also go home from the office with any printed forms or papers that must be returned to school the following day. It is sent home with the youngest family member in the school.

## **Classroom Rules**

During the first week of school, we will review the rules for our classroom, the hallways, and the playground.

<b>Classroom</b>	<b>Hallways</b>	<b>Playground</b>
Morning routine	Walking in line	Taking turns
Keeping hands to oneself	No pushing	No pushing
No shouting	No talking	Help one another
Raising hands	Holding doors	Be respectful of the playground area

Cleaning up	Everyone will be first and last in line at some point	How to use the play equipment properly
Going home routine	Greeting teachers	Everyone plays

**Classroom Behavior Management**

Saint Mary Magdalen students are expected to follow the classroom rules and teachers’ directions. They are encouraged and expected to be kind to one another. Naturally, such expectations are not always met, and children are given gentle reminders as needed. When reminders are insufficient to correct the behavior or if it is of a “serious” nature, the child will be removed from the group until they are ready to rejoin the class. If necessary, we will contact the parents.

**Safety Drills**

We have three types of safety drills that we practice with the children: Fire, Lockdown, and Shelter-in-Place. These drills are never a surprise; we always assure the children they are safe.

**Holiday and Birthday Parties**

We feel it is important to celebrate children's birthdays in special ways. If a parent or grandparent would like to come in for their child’s birthday to read a book, please make arrangements with the teacher for the day and time. A book can be sent in with your child to donate to their classroom library to be read for their birthday.

*St. Mary Magdalen School’s Birthday/Holiday Celebration Policy*

We would like to be able to celebrate birthdays, holidays, and special occasions with treats. However, in doing so, we must also follow health and safety protocols in terms of allergies. Only the foods below are permitted to be sent in for **morning snacks** for students’ birthdays. Treats are **not** to be distributed during lunch periods. Any store-bought or homemade treats other than those listed will not be served and will remain in the main office until picked up at the end of the day by a parent.

If your child has a documented allergy but does not like or cannot have the items on this sanctioned list, you may send in snacks labeled clearly with their name to be kept in the teacher's closet and provided during celebrations.

It is not mandatory to send in treats. All students' birthdays will be announced in the morning, along with a birthday prayer. In addition, to honor your child's birthday, you may consider:

- Donating a book to the library or the classroom. The librarian will place a label inside the book cover noting the donor family's name and reason for the donation.
- Donating a board game or card game to the classroom for indoor recess.
- Donating a suitable outdoor item for play during recess.

We thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation with this policy.

- Haribo gummy bears
- Smarties
- Dum-dum lollipops
- Ring pops
- Skittles (not recommended for grades Pre-K – 2)
- Starburst
- Swedish Fish
- Sour Patch Kids
- Made Good cookies
- Oreos
- Chips Ahoy (no tree nuts or peanuts, but do contain dairy)

## **Illness/Absence**

Parents must call the school office by 8:30 a.m. and leave a message if their child will be absent from school. Please refer to the plan and directives from Mrs. Bonsall, our school nurse. Upon return to school, a parent must also send in a note. If a child is absent for more than three consecutive days, a doctor's note and a phone call to the school nurse are required. If you are keeping your child home because they are showing symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with the virus, **the school nurse MUST be notified.**

## **Medication**

Please refer to the school website's Nurse's News or the Parent & Student Handbook for more information regarding our medication policies. Students may not keep any medicine in their possession at school, including cough drops, inhalers, or EpiPens.

## **Head Lice**

There are millions of cases of head lice in our country every year. Both adults and children can get head lice. All head lice need is human contact to survive. However, lice will not survive after

two days without it. Please keep your child home, provide treatment, and notify the school nurse if your child contracts a case of head lice.

### **Emergency Closing**

Our school follows the RoseTree Media School District for school closing due to weather or other emergencies. The school will also send a *Parent Alert for any emergency closings*.

If there is a 1-hour delay, the class will begin at 9 am. If there is a 2-hour delay, the class will start at 10 am.

### **Tuition Policy**

Tuition accounts are set up prior to the school year. There are no refunds for days absent or a change in dismissal times. There is a two (2) month early withdrawal fee for any student withdrawing from the school program.

If you have any questions or concerns throughout the school year, please send in a note or email the classroom teacher, and they will get back to you as soon as possible.

We look forward to a great year and thank you for your cooperation. May God bless you and your family!

Respectfully,

The Pre-K Team and Administration