

# St. James School

581 Valley Road  
Montclair, NJ 07043



*Grow, Explore, Discover, Imagine  
Together*

## Parent Handbook 2023-2024

Mrs. Ria Wolff, Director

Mrs. Erin Edwards, Assistant Director

Welcome to St. James!

Thank you for choosing St. James Preschool and entrusting your child's education to us.

## The St. James Mission

St. James is dedicated to developing the emotional, intellectual, social, and physical growth of our students. We believe that education is a cooperative effort among students, parents and staff, designed to stimulate the creativity and achievements of each child. Our teachers place emphasis on the process and the joy of learning and creating. We believe in the importance of the individual. We help each student to develop a positive self-image. We respect the dignity of each child. We believe that a young person learns from his or her total experience in the school setting. We feel that each child entrusted to us is important, and we consider it an honor and a privilege to be a part of their life.

This handbook is your reference guide regarding our school's policies and procedures. Should you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us by phone or email:

Main phone number: (973) 744-0105

Ria Wolff, Director: [directorstjamespreschool@gmail.com](mailto:directorstjamespreschool@gmail.com)

Erin Edwards, Asst. Director [assistantdirectorstjames@gmail.com](mailto:assistantdirectorstjames@gmail.com)

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## Philosophy of Discipline

*Positive Discipline* – We believe that discipline should be positive and caring. The goal of positive discipline is active engagement and the teaching of appropriate social behaviors by means such as role modeling by adults, praising children and reinforcing their positive efforts. We help our students develop kindness and empathy skills by example. “Redirection” and “gentle talks” are the most frequently used solutions.

If a child repeatedly chooses not to cooperate, or if their behavior is severe, disruptive or poses a physical danger to the other children or staff, the Director will call you to arrange a conference. Sometimes a joint effort by parents and teachers is necessary for a successful experience.

## Class Session Times and Lunch

Classes meet from 9:00 to 1:00 or 9:00 to 3:00 depending on age and class chosen. St. James now offers the option of before and after care. Before care is from 8:00 to 9:00 am and aftercare is offered from 3:00 to 6:00pm. Students must be picked up promptly.

\*Students should bring a lunch and snack that is nut free. Students that stay for aftercare should pack an additional snack for 3:00pm.

**\*The school is a nut-free environment. All snacks and lunches must be Peanut and Nut-Free.**

## Daily Schedule

Each classroom has an individual daily schedule that varies. Your child’s daily classroom schedule will be provided to you by their teacher.

Arriving on time helps your child settle into the classroom routine. When arriving late, your student does not have the opportunity to properly come in and participate in the morning activities and can make them feel uncomfortable.

## Curriculum

St. James utilizes Creative Curriculum® Gold by Teaching Strategies, an early childhood curriculum approved by the New Jersey State Department of Education. Creative Curriculum® is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. The Kindergarten and First grade follow the curriculum of the Montclair Public Schools in conjunction with the NJ Department of Education State Standards.

### *The Goals of our Curriculum*

Our early childhood program supports students in becoming enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and to think as well as verbalize their own thoughts. We work to help students become independent, self-confident, and inquisitive learners. We want children to learn at their own pace as individual learners. Our students practice good habits and develop a positive sense of themselves.

Our curriculum identifies goals in various areas of development:

- *Social* – to help students feel comfortable in school, trust their new environment, make friends, and feel they are part of the group.
- *Emotional* – to help students experience pride and confidence, develop independence and self-control, and have a positive attitude.
- *Cognitive* – to help students become confident learners by letting them try out their ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.
- *Physical* – to help students increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

The activities we plan, the way we organize the environment, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk with students are all designed to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give the students a successful start in school.

## Personal Belongings

Please label all coats, hats, sweaters, mittens, and other clothing generally removed at school. Please also label your child's lunch box and its contents such as thermos, water or juice bottles. Other children may have duplicates of what your child brings to school. Your child should not bring toys to school except for a special occasion or lesson by request of the teacher.

## School Clothing

*Play is the work of children* – Students should come to school wearing play clothes. They can get their clothing dirty with paint, glue and more. Students should wear shoes that have backs for running and climbing, sneakers are the best choice. **No flip-flops** or Croc-like shoes, please. In rainy or snowy weather, pack shoes to change into at school when students remove their rain/snow boots. **No pajamas, onesies, costumes, or headgear such as tiaras** (unless directed by the teacher for a special day).

*Independence is a gift* – For students using the bathroom independently, they should wear clothes that are easily handled for toileting. **Please, no belts, overalls, long skirts, tights or buttoned pants unless the child is able to fasten/unfasten by themselves to help with success in toileting.**

*Outside play is healthy for children, even if it is cold* – Please send a hat and mittens and multiple layers of clothing, if necessary. We do not go outside if it is under 32 degrees.

*Everyone has accidents!* Please send in a spare set of clothes, available at school at all times, in a labeled Ziploc bag. Include labeled with your child's name: a spare set of underwear, pants, a shirt, and socks. If your spare set is used, you must replace it when your child returns to school. Children grow, seasons change – please change out the clothes accordingly.

### **Note regarding Potty-training:**

All students aged 3 and up are required to be toilet-trained for school and to be able to use the restroom independently. We strongly encourage those students entering our Young 3's Classroom to have begun the training process. The staff will support your child in the process.

## Parental Notification/Communication

Every student should come to school each day with a backpack. Teachers will provide each student a folder for communication which will be sent home in their backpack.

Projects/paperwork are sent home throughout the week, except those which are being held for conferences and/or portfolios.

It is important that you check your child's folder and backpack each day for any important information from the school and teachers. Your child's teacher will send a weekly update newsletter about your child's class via Shutterfly. The school will also distribute a newsletter about school updates, activities and calendar events via email. Should you have a question or concern, and wish to reach a teacher or the Director, you may email or call the school office at the numbers and addresses on page one of this handbook. We will also be happy to arrange a mutually agreeable time to speak by telephone or conference. Your child's teacher will provide their classroom email address upon the start of the new school year.

## Student Records

All registration packet paperwork must be completed/submitted no later than the first day of school. If there is a change of address or phone number, emergency number, or pick-up authorization on your child's records, please notify the school in writing.

**Prior to the first day of school, the following forms need to be turned in (all can be found on our [website](#)):**

- Universal Health Record
- Authorized Persons to Transport Pickup
- Medical Emergency Contact form
- Student Profile
- Parent Signature Page
- Receipt of Information sheet (all items listed on the sheet are in parent handbook)
- Authorization to give medication (IF APPLICABLE)
- Allergy Action Plan (IF APPLICABLE)

### ***UHC (Health) Form and Immunization Records***

It is a state requirement that every year your child has on file at school a current (within one year of past well check-up) and complete health and immunization record. **The Universal Health Care** form and a copy of your child's **immunizations records** (available from your doctor) must be at school before or on the first day of school, and updated/submitted with each well-check. This form must be signed by a doctor and dated. Some medical practices have these available on their patient portal online for convenience. It is also necessary that the **Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment** (provided in your registration packet and available on our web site's Forms section "Emergency Contact") is completed and submitted.

We are required by the NJ Department of Health to report on the immunization records of our students. Additionally, a health representative from the town comes to audit our health records. Your child can not be permitted to attend school until these forms are complete and on file.

*Regarding documentation for your child's **flu vaccination**, which may occur after the school year has begun, please see the information below from the NJ Department of Health. The preschool is asking for this documentation **no later than November 15th**. Students who have not received the influenza vaccine and from whom the school has not received documentation of such may **NOT** be permitted to attend school after December 31, until after said documentation has been received (aside from a signed medical and/or belief exemption to mandatory vaccination).*

### **NJ State regulation for influenza vaccine:**

"The current seasonal influenza vaccine is required every year for those children 6 months through 59 months of age. Students who have not received the flu vaccine by December 31 must be excluded (not allowed to attend child care/preschool) for the duration of influenza season (through March 31), until they receive at least one dose of the influenza vaccine or until they turn 60 months of age."

## Student Evaluation

Should parents decide that they wish to get their child evaluated for health or developmental concerns they should contact the director, Mrs Wolff. Parents will contact the appropriate medical practitioner and an appointment can be arranged for a home/school assessment.

## Snacks

St James is a **nut-free** school. Parents of all students are asked to provide a simple and nutritious snack each day for their student to have in the morning packed separate from lunch.

## Lunch

Please send your child's lunch in a lunchbox labeled with his or her name. We suggest a sandwich or main item, yogurt or fruit. Please do not send candy, soda, or glass of any kind. For more information on healthy meals visit <https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-myplate>. We strive for a "green" room so please use reusable plastic containers and thermoses rather than juice boxes and plastic bags. Each container should be labeled with your child's name. We **cannot** heat/microwave lunches. Lunch boxes are not refrigerated and will need an ice pack, if necessary. **PLEASE PROVIDE FORKS/SPOONS.**

## Birthdays

Birthdays are special! They may be celebrated at school if advance arrangements have been made with teachers. A favorite book can be sent in with your child, labeled and placed in a zip lock baggie. Parents may have their child bring nut-free store bought treats, that are wrapped in original packaging to be shared at this time. Please check food labels to ensure snacks are prepared in a nut-free environment. Personal gifts are not to be brought for a child's birthday. Birthday invitations are not to be distributed at school. No goody bags, please.

## Snow/Inclement weather days

School closings due to inclement weather will generally follow the Montclair Public School system. We reserve the right, however, to exercise our own judgment to cancel classes, in the interest of safety, even if the public schools remain open. Parents will be notified of school closings/delayed openings as expediently as possible via email by 7:30 am or earlier. For a



**closure**, school sessions *and* school-related activities such as after-school enrichment classes will be canceled for that day.

For a **delayed opening**, school will open at 10:30am for all classes. In the absence of an email notification due to power loss, parents should default to the Montclair Public Schools closures or delay decision. In the event that the preschool has opened and the weather becomes severe during school hours, the school may then be closed early at the discretion of the Director. Parents will be notified via email and cell phone for an early pick-up.

## **Absences**

Please report an absence by emailing the school assistant director Mrs. Edwards:  
[assistantdirectorstjames@gmail.com](mailto:assistantdirectorstjames@gmail.com)

If you have not contacted us by 10am we will reach out via email but will call after 3 consecutive days of absence. If your child is sick, it is helpful for us to be advised, in the event there are special precautions we should take for the health and well-being of other children and staff. For more information, please read our Management of Communicable Diseases Policy found on page 12. Please note that tuition is due regardless of your child's attendance in our program. *There will be no refund or credit applied to illness or other absences.*

## **Administration of Medicine**

St. James will administer an oral medication, in original packaging, only after receipt of written authorization from the **child's parent(s) and physician**. Medication is administered in accordance with the regulations specified by the State of NJ Manual of Requirements 10:122-7.5, a copy of the form needed can be found on the school website under Forms. We request that non-emergency medications be administered prior to arrival at school.

## **Emergency and Medical Treatment**

If your child becomes ill or needs medical care, parents will be notified. If parents cannot be reached, persons designated for emergency purposes will be contacted. In compliance with regulations of the State of NJ, a First Aid Kit is maintained on the premises and staff members are certified in pediatric First Aid, CPR, and AED.

## **Parking**

The parking lot at St. James is reserved for St. James church staff, School staff, and St. James church members only. Please do not park in church spaces or those assigned to neighboring businesses. Parents/caregivers must use street or municipal lot parking when dropping off and

picking up children. We encourage parents to form carpools for transporting children to and from school, updating your Authorized Transport/Pick-Up form as changes arise.

## **Drop off / Pick-Up Procedure**

All classes will be dismissed from the same entrance doors they use for drop off in the morning. School staff will dismiss directly to you or an authorized caregiver as per our Policy of the Release of Children found on page 13. For early or other pick up arrangements please email or call the school office.

## **School Hours/Late Pick-Up Policy**

Session times are noted on page 3. Parents must make arrangements to have children picked up promptly at dismissal time. Please note that if you are late more than 3 times you will be charged additional fees (\$5/every 5 minutes late) and/or dismissal from our program. (See expulsion Policy on pages 15). Late fees cover additional staffing costs incurred in these situations. If the school is not contacted by the parent or caregiver about a late pick-up and we are unable to reach the primary caregiver or guardian or authorized pick-up, the emergency contact will be called. If we are still not able to reach a designated caregiver or guardian or emergency contact, we will follow the procedures covered in The Policy On the Release of Children (page 13), as designated by the State.

*Late students* - If you are running late and staff members have gone to their classrooms, students may not be “dropped off” at the school entrance. Press the buzzer to gain entry. All school doors are locked for security purposes.

## **Communication Policy**

Our director and teachers are available to discuss your student’s progress. Your child’s success is of the utmost importance. Appointments can be easily scheduled via email and phone. Conversely, the school may ask for a conference whenever there is an issue that needs to be reviewed. Clear, honest, communication is key to effective and positive parent-teacher relationships.

## **Evacuation Procedures**

In the event of a fire drill, students will line up outside the building to a predetermined location. In the event of an emergency where the children need to be evacuated from the building, they will be evacuated to a location that will be communicated to parents. Student’s parents, guardians,

or emergency contacts will be notified via telephone numbers provided by parents on the Emergency Contact form.

## **Parent Participation**

We welcome parent participation at St. James. Parents are invited to be guest readers, to share an activity, share a hobby, talent, cultural heritage or vocation with their child's class. To schedule your participation, please email your child's teacher. We also have an active Parents Organization.

## **Home Language Policy**

St. James Preschool values our students' families. We respect those who have a primary language that is not English at home. We ask that families share words in their language that will assist the teacher during the school day for the child's comfort and familiarity. The teacher will attempt to label various classroom materials in the child's home language. Families are encouraged to bring in books, games and music from their country and an interpreter to help with communication with the school.

## **Parents Organization**

The St. James School Parent Organization is a diverse group of parents who are dedicated to the support of our school. They work throughout the year to maintain a strong sense of community, supporting the Director and teachers, and help plan activities that support the school. You will hear more from the Parents Organization as the year progresses, and may be asked to serve on committees focusing on social, fundraising, and volunteer activities.

## **Helping Children With Separation**

Every child is different. Some children, no matter the age, experience separation challenges when they start school. Here are some helpful tips to address this.

1. Start with a warm-up: Most children take a little time to get used to a new situation, so we may see some tears on the first day at a new preschool. Before the school year starts try small *see-you-laters*, such as walking the dog while your partner is in charge, or heading out for a short errand on your own. Graduate to leaving your child with a sitter, at first for short periods of time and then gradually increasing the time away. Helping them see that your bye-bye doesn't always mean an extended separation.

2. Visit the school before the first day: Introduce your child to the school. Take pictures of the front of the building, visit the playground and participate in a zoom or in person meeting

introducing your child to his/her teacher. You can show the pictures a few times before school starts and remind your child of his/her teacher's name.

3. Read about it: Even though it may feel like your child is the only one barricading himself against the preschool doors, you're not alone. Reading classic books that tackle school separation anxiety, like Anna Dewdney's *Llama Llama Misses Mama* or Audrey Penn's *The Kissing Hand*, will not only give you and your little one a way to talk about how it feels to be apart, but it can spark new ways to deal with it. Once your sweetie knows the story, try telling them each morning, "I always come back, just like Mama Llama does."

4. Send the right signals: How parents say good-bye can determine their toddler or preschooler's reaction. So as tempting as it may be, don't wait for your child to get distracted and then sneak off without a hug and a kiss. For some kids, looking up to find that you've already gone can leave them feeling even more alone. Instead, keep your good-bye **short** and to the point with a quick hug, a peck on the cheek, and a "See you soon!" Even body language can convey that you're just as sad as they are, so stand up straight and smile. It's your way of saying, "You're going to have an awesome day!"

5. Never sneak away: Your child won't be happy when they figure out you're gone.

6. Never make promises or bargains you can't keep.

7. **Don't** say you'll be sitting on the bench outside if you won't.

8. Keep things stable: Don't introduce any other new thing into the routine. Solidify the rest of your morning routine by making a picture chart that shows exactly what they'll be doing to get ready for school. If anything will be different about preschool, warn your child in advance. Showing them that some things never change will help them handle transitions at school.

9. Expect regression: Your child might be great the first week and drag their heels the second, or they might be completely potty trained but start having accidents.

10. Be understanding: Say "I hear you saying you feel sad."

11. Avoid Comparing Your Child to Others: Don't chastise your child and say, "Mara doesn't cry when her mom leaves." Honoring your child's process is the best way to make the transition to preschool as smooth as possible, don't worry -- eventually your child will outgrow the separation anxiety.

12. Make it work: Sometimes, the only thing that can pull you away from your little one is the fact that you have to get to the office. Work with the teachers. Together you can come up with a morning role to help with separation. Becoming a helper might make them feel more in control of their life at school, which can give them the confidence to move on with their day without you.

13. Checking up: You can phone the school or email to check on your child. You will be called if deemed necessary. It is extremely helpful for parents to develop a team approach with their child's teacher who has experience helping children separate from family members and learn how to self-soothe.

14. Have a memento to take to school: Let them take a small transitional object to school. Maybe a note from you or a stuffed animal to help with the first few days of transition. Any item coming from home must be placed inside a zip lock baggie and labeled with your child's name.

15. Shake off the guilt: Your child will stop crying a lot sooner than you think. Come up with a mantra such as, "This is the best place for [your child's name]" or "Bringing [your child's name] here is the right decision" to remind you of why being apart is good for both you and your child.

Resources include: Parents Magazine, Ronnie Koenig "Goodbye without tear" online blog. NYT "Ten Ways to Ease Your Child's Preschool Separation Anxiety (and Yours)", Hope Reeves, 9/11/13 online blog.

## **Breastfeeding Policy**

Breastfeeding is supported at St James Preschool. Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk. Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided a private and sanitary place other than a bathroom, to breastfeed their babies or express milk. We have a room set aside on the Prek side of the building, the Assistant Directors office. This area provides an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, table or stand and nearby access to running water. Additional information on the benefits and the supports for breastfeeding families can be found at the CDC website [www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding)

## **Your Child's "Medical Home" What you need to Know**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) and the National Center for Medical Home Implementation (NCMHI) [www.MedicalHomeInfo.org](http://www.MedicalHomeInfo.org) want children, youth, and families across the country to know **that Every child and youth deserves a Medical Home.**

A **Medical Home** is not a place, it is the way care is provided to your child/youth and your family. In a Medical Home model, doctors and their patients/families partner together to provide comprehensive care to children, making sure both their medical and non-medical needs are met.

A **Medical Home** means that  
Your pediatric team....

- Knows the health history of your child/youth
- Listens to your concerns and needs, as well as those of your child/youth

- Follows up with any other health care providers your child receives care from, when necessary
- Respects and honors your culture and traditions
- Treats your child/youth with compassion and an understanding of his/her strengths
- Creates a trusting, collaborative relationship with you and your child/youth
- Support youth as they transition to adulthood

You and your child/youth....

- Are comfortable sharing concerns and questions with your pediatric team and other healthcare provider
- Routinely communicate your child/youth's needs and family priorities to your pediatric team

## **Tuition**

**Please refer to the tuition grid for exact payment information; we do not bill and late charges may apply. Checks or cash may be submitted to Bettylou O'Dell who is located in the church office, or to the school office. For questions regarding tuition, please contact Bettylou directly ([odell.bettylou@gmail.com](mailto:odell.bettylou@gmail.com)).**

**In the event of withdrawal, St. James will refund based on our ability to fill the vacancy from our wait list. The initial deposit is not refundable for any reason.**

## **Policy on the Management of Communicable Diseases**

**As required by the Office of Licensing, if a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, the child should not attend the center. If such symptoms occur at the center, the child will be removed from the group, and parents/caregivers will be called to take the child home.**

- **Severe pain or discomfort**
- **Acute diarrhea**
- **Episodes of acute vomiting**
- **Elevated oral temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit**
- **Lethargy**
- **Severe coughing**
- **Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin**
- **Red eyes with discharge**
- **Infected, untreated skin patches**
- **Difficult or rapid breathing**
- **Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes**
- **Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding**
- **Mouth sores with drooling**

## · **Stiff neck**

**Once a child is symptom-free for 24 hours or has a health care provider's note stating that the child no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, the child may return to the center unless contraindicated by the local health department or Department of Health.**

**For the health of the other students and staff, please do not send your child to school with a runny nose or cough. Your child must be fever-free and/or not have vomited for 24 hours prior to returning to school. A child on antibiotics may return to school after 24 hours on the antibiotic. If you do not want your child to play outside, please do not send your child to school that day.**

### ***Excludable Communicable Diseases***

A child or staff member who contracts an excludable communicable disease may not return to the center without a health care provider's note stating that s/he presents no risk to himself/herself or others. This includes such illnesses including, but not limited to, influenza, strep throat, chicken pox, lice, coxsackie, etc. **We ask that you kindly inform us if your child contracts any of these diseases or contact illnesses so that we may take precautions to prevent further spreading.** If we know that a student is exposed to any excludable disease at the center, parents will be notified in writing, with anonymity for the ailing child.

### ***Communicable Disease Reportable Guidelines***

Some excludable communicable diseases must be reported to the health department by the center. The Department of Health's Reporting Requirements for Communicable Diseases and Work-Related Conditions Quick Reference Guide, a complete list of reportable excludable communicable diseases, can be found at:

[www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable\\_disease\\_magnet.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable_disease_magnet.pdf).

## **Policy on the Release of Children**

Each child may be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access, to a child by a court order, the center shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child at the time of the center's daily closing, the center shall ensure that:

1. The child is supervised at all times;
2. Staff members attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
3. An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his/her parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the center, the staff member shall call the *24-hour State Central Registry Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873)* to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick-up the child.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appears to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the center shall ensure that:

1. The child may not be released to such an impaired individual;
2. Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
3. If the center is unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member shall call the *24-hour State Central Registry Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873)* to seek assistance in caring for the child.

## **Social Media, TV and Technology Policy**

This social media and technology policy applies to families of students, members of staff, committee members and volunteers at St. James Preschool.

This policy includes, but is not limited to, the following technologies:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)
- Blogs and/or micro-blogging (i.e. Twitter)
- Discussion forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (i.e. You Tube)
- No TV will be used in the classroom

*As part of our duty to safeguard children, it is essential to maintain the privacy and security of all our families. We therefore require that:*



- No photographs taken within the St. James School setting, or at school special events with the children, are to be posted for public viewing. (This excludes those photographs taken by staff for the children's portfolios).
- No public discussions are to be held, or comments made on social media sites, regarding St. James School, students, staff or related committees, or that could be construed to have any impact on the schools reputation, or that would offend any member of staff working at, or families of students .
- In order to ensure professional boundaries, St. James School staff and volunteers should not accept personal friend invitations from families or care-givers of children that attend St. James School.
- Any use of the St. James School name or logo for branding or titling pages, blogs or other similar elements of social media must be approved, in writing, prior to use. Requests for prior consent to use such names or logos are to be made to the school Director. Permission to use the St. James School name or logo may be revoked at any time, at the sole discretion of the school.
- Students do not use TV, tablets, or computers in the classroom. Staff members use Ipads for lesson planning, photographic records of student skills and for reference purposes.

Any member of staff, volunteer or student family found to be posting remarks or comments that breach confidentiality, or that are deemed to be of detrimental nature to St. James School or other employees or families, or posting/publishing photographs of the setting, children or staff, may face disciplinary action in line with St. James Preschool disciplinary or expulsion policies. Any comment deemed to be inappropriate is to be reported to the St. James School Director. Any action taken will be at the Director's discretion.

*General guidelines for using social media:*

- Remember that no information sent over the web is totally secure and as such, if you do not wish the information to be made public, refrain from sending it through social media.
- Maintain professionalism, honesty and respect.
- Apply a 'good judgment' test for every social media post you make.

## **Student Assessment Policy**

The school uses various assessment strategies/interventions to determine the development of each student. The staff addresses the different areas of the child's development through the curriculum learning goals. If the school staff identify challenges, they will take the following steps:

1. Contact the parents and work with the student and their family. They will create a plan to be used to better serve the children in the classroom and request that the child's pediatrician is notified and asked for recommendations.
2. If strategies are not successful, the family together with the school can contact the child's home district for additional information.
3. St. James will offer assistance in conjunction with any outside interventionist per administration approval.

## **Expulsion Policy**

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we must expel a child from our program, either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) to prevent this policy from being enforced.

The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this center:

### Immediate Causes for Expulsion:

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children

### Parental Actions for Child's Expulsion:

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Verbal abuse to staff.
- Other serious infraction

### Child's Actions for Expulsion:

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/ angry outbursts.
- Physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Biting.
- Other (ie: excessive scratching).

### Schedule of Expulsion:

If, after the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/ guardian may work on the child's behavior, or to come to an agreement with the center. The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion period and the expected behavioral changes

required for the child or parent to return to the center. The parent/guardian will be given a specific expulsion date that allows the parent sufficient time to seek alternate child care (approximately one to two weeks' notice depending on risk to other children's welfare or safety). Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the center.

*A Child Will Not Be Expelled If a Parent or Guardian:*

- Made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements.
- Reported abuse or neglect occurring at the center.
- Questioned the center regarding policies and procedures.
- Without giving the parent sufficient time to make other child care arrangements.

*Proactive Actions That Can Be Taken to Prevent Expulsion:*

- Try to redirect a child from negative behavior.
- Reassess classroom environment, appropriateness of activities, supervision.
- Always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Praise appropriate behaviors.
- Consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Give the child verbal warnings.
- Give the child time to regain control.
- Document the child's disruptive behavior and maintain confidentiality.
- Give the parent/guardian written copies of the disruptive behavior that might lead to expulsion.
- Schedule a conference including the director, classroom staff, and parent/guardian to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
- Give the parent literature of other resources regarding methods of improving behavior.
- Recommend an evaluation by professional consultation on premises.
- Recommend an evaluation by the local school district study team.

**St. James reserves the right to not renew a student's application**

**Department of Children and Families  
Office Of Licensing (OOL)  
INFORMATION TO PARENTS**

Under provisions of the *Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers {N.J.A.C. 3A:52}*, every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents and staff this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families. In keeping with this requirement, the center must

secure every parent and staff member's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing (OOL), Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member.

Parents may view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf> or obtain a copy by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJDCF, Office of licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application, or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1 (877) 667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention, too.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the OOL's Inspection /Violation Reports on the center, which are available soon after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the OOL's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken

against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review or you can view them online at:  
[https://www.data.nj.gov/childcare\\_explorer](https://www.data.nj.gov/childcare_explorer).

Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the OOL for the children 's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD,) P.L 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10 :5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey, Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514- 0383 (TTY).

Our center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at <https://www.cpsc.gov/recalls>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at (800) 638-2772.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating, or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the *State Central Registry Hotline, toll free at (877) NJ ABUSE/(877)*

652-2873. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to: [www.state.nj.us/dcf/](http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/).

## **PARENT-SCHOOL Health Agreement**

The relationship between St. James School and our parents should be one of honesty, positivity, safety and best practices. The teachers and administrators of St. James School are committed to providing a safe school environment for your children.

This agreement will serve as a guideline for creating the most effective relationship between the school and parents, in an effort to support the students' continued growth and education.

Parents can expect St. James School to:

1. Ensure the proper screening procedures are followed regarding observing students for visual signs of illness at the door and hand washing procedures when entering the building.
2. Sanitize and disinfect surfaces and toys daily utilizing only CDC approved products.
3. Communicate to parents of illness in the classroom with respect to individual privacy, i.e. Coxsackie, Covid, etc.
4. As CDC guidelines change or addendums are added, parents will be notified.
5. All CDC, Office of Licensing and Health Department regulations and requirements will be adhered to.

St. James School will respectfully expect parents of students to:

1. Monitor your children for any signs of illness and adhere to the “keep your child home” standard if sick or showing signs of illness.
2. Notify St. James Preschool if your child is ill immediately.
3. Practice and reinforce at home, proper hand washing techniques and hygiene skills.
4. Comply with St. James’ requirements, health policies set forth in this agreement for the safety of the students, staff, and families.