



ST CLARE
EARLY LEARNING CENTER
The Diocese of St Augustine

Wildlight, Florida

✝ www.stclareelc.org



DIOCESE OF
ST AUGUSTINE

The Catholic Church of North Florida

Family Handbook 2019-2020

St. Clare Early Learning Center
is operated as a ministry of the Diocese of St. Augustine.

MOST REV. FILIPE J. ESTÉVEZ

Tenth Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine

DEACON SCOTT J. CONWAY

Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of St. Augustine

Director of St. Clare II Early Learning Center

Center Manager of St. Clare Early Learning Center

WELCOME

Welcome to St. Clare Early Learning Center. This handbook has been written to describe our program, policies and the myriad of practical details that go into making each school day as happy and successful as possible. Please review it and keep it for reference, as it will answer many of your questions.

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are delighted that you have chosen our center to provide for the needs of your child. You and your family are encouraged to visit our center prior to the first day of enrollment to give our teachers, and your child, an opportunity to meet and become better acquainted. It will make separating on the first day a bit easier. On behalf of the staff of St. Clare Early Learning Center, thanks again for choosing us and allowing us to become a part of your family.

Table of Contents

Section 1 – About St. Clare ELC.....	6
<i>OUR PHILOSOPHY</i>	6
<i>OPEN DOOR POLICY</i>	6
Section 2 – Fees	6
<i>TUITION</i>	6
<i>MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNTS</i>	6
<i>LATE PAYMENT POLICY</i>	6
<i>REGISTRATION FEES</i>	6
<i>SUPPLY FEES</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<i>CHECKS AND RETURNED CHECK FEES</i>	7
<i>HOLIDAYS</i>	7
<i>ATTENDANCE</i>	7
<i>VACATION</i>	7
Section 3 - Attendance at St. Clare ELC	7
<i>ARRIVAL AT ST. CLARE EARLY LEARNING CENTER</i>	7
<i>SPECIAL REQUESTS</i>	8
<i>ABSENCES</i>	8
<i>ILLNESSES</i>	8
<i>TERMINATION/WITHDRAWAL FROM ST. CLARE ELC</i>	8
<i>PICK-UP POLICY</i>	8
<i>AUTHORIZED PICK UP/EMERGENCY PICK UP</i>	8
<i>ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR VPK</i>	9
Section 4 – Parent Involvement	10
<i>PARENT/GUARDIAN VOLUNTEERING</i>	10
<i>TAKE HOME ACTIVITIES</i>	10
<i>PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES</i>	10
<i>PARENT SURVEYS</i>	10
<i>PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES</i>	10
Section 5 – Health & Safety	11
<i>CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT</i>	11
<i>CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS</i>	11

<i>EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER</i>	11
<i>CHILD HEALTH SERVICES</i>	12
<i>CHILD HEALTH EMERGENCIES</i>	12
<i>INSURANCE/CHILD ACCIDENT PROCEDURES</i>	12
<i>MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION</i>	12
<i>CONDITIONS OF SHORT TERM EXCLUSION</i>	12
<i>NOTIFICATION OF ILLNESS</i>	12
<i>DRESS CODE</i>	13
<i>MEALS</i>	13
<i>DIETARY RESTRICTIONS AND ALLERGIES</i>	13
<i>DISCIPLINE RATIONALE</i>	14
<i>DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES</i>	14
<i>DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES</i>	15
<i>STANDARDS OF CONDUCT</i>	15
<i>VISITOR POLICY</i>	16
Section 6 – Classroom Activities	16
<i>CURRICULUM</i>	17
<i>FIELD TRIPS</i>	17
<i>TOYS FROM HOME</i>	17
<i>SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT</i>	17
<i>TRANSITIONING CHILDREN FROM CLASS TO CLASS</i>	20
<i>TRANSITIONING FROM PREK TO KINDERGARTEN</i>	20
Section 7 – Receipt Of Parent Handbook	21

Section 1 – About St. Clare ELC

OUR PHILOSOPHY

St. Clare Early Learning Center strives to provide quality childcare for children. We believe in providing programs that truly enhance the emotional, social, physical and intellectual growth of young children. We can do this through the efforts of our staff who are dedicated to upholding our high standards and who, most importantly, love children.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

St. Clare Early Learning Center maintains an open-door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parents will have immediate access without prior notice to the center.

In situations where there is custody or domestic issues the following will apply:

- ◆ The center must be provided with the most recent certified copy of court order and any amendments to the order, i.e. custody order, restraining order, or a protection order from abuse.
- ◆ The center will follow the orders of the court. Deviations from the court order will only be made if there are written instructions from the custodial parent/s (joint custody will require both parent signatures).
- ◆ If there is not a copy of a court order or a copy has not been provided to the center, then both parents will have equal access to their child. By law the center may not deny access to a child by parent without a court order.
- ◆ If there is a verbal or physical conflict the Center will contact the police.

Section 2 – Fees

TUITION

Fees are based on reserved time and not on actual time that a child spends at the center.

There will be no reduction in the basic rate should a child not be in attendance at the center for the contracted time. Parents will also be billed for all days including holiday, sick, emergency closings, teacher training, and vacation days. Current tuition rates are posted on the website, in the back of this handbook as well as at front desk.

MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNTS

St. Clare Early Learning Center offers a discount of 10% for families with more than one child enrolling in our school. This applies to full-time, year-round enrollment only.

LATE PAYMENT POLICY

Weekly tuition is due on Monday of each week. If your tuition is not paid in full on Tuesday, a late fee of \$15 will be added to your child's account. If fees continue to go unpaid that week, your child will be placed on a DO NOT ACCEPT list Friday afternoon.

Monthly tuition is due on the 5th of the month. If your tuition is not paid in full, a late fee of \$25 will be added to your tuition. Every week that the tuition remains unpaid a \$10.00 fee will continue to be applied to your account.

REGISTRATION FEES

A \$100.00.00 non-refundable registration fee is payable at the time of enrollment and annually.

Registration fees are not refundable under any circumstances.

CHECKS AND RETURNED CHECK FEES

Checks are gladly accepted if they are drawn on a local bank and the date on the check is the same date the check is written. Postdated checks will not be accepted.

In the event your check is refused for payment or returned there will be a Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) fee assessed in the amount of \$40. Once a check is returned for NSF, checks will no longer be accepted as a form of payment at the center. In addition, childcare will be suspended until all fees are paid in full.

LATE PICK UP FEES

A late fee of \$5.00 will be assessed for children who are not picked up by closing time of 6:00 P.M. and an additional late fee of \$1.00 per minute. Services can be terminated if this continues to be a problem. If a child is not picked up by 6:30 PM and every attempt to reach an authorized adult has failed, St. Clare Early Learning Center will be forced to contact the sheriff's office to report child abandonment.

HOLIDAYS

The following are paid holidays recognized by the Center. Tuition does not change for weeks that include holidays. New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day. A Holiday Schedule will be posted in all classrooms and at the front door.

ATTENDANCE

Because you are paying for your child's spot in our program, full tuition is charged each week whether your child is present or not.

VACATION

Children are allowed to take one week vacation each year after completing one full calendar year. Tuition will be charged at 1/2 the normal rate for that week. Written notice is required at least one week prior to the planned vacation.

Section 3 - Attendance at St. Clare ELC

ARRIVAL AT ST. CLARE EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Please leave your cell phones in your vehicles and give your child your full attention during the transition from home to school. School Readiness Parents are required to sign their child into the center on the Center Parent Sign in Sheet located at the front desk. Parent must turn their child over to center staff before exiting the center.

To help decrease the spread of viruses, please assist your child in washing his/her hands when arriving in the classroom. Please do not sneak away, but help your child become engaged in the ongoing activities in the classroom. This may require planning a few extra minutes each morning but will greatly benefit your child's transition into the classroom.

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Parents must follow the policy for Administering Medication if the child is to receive medication during the day. This should be taken care of during arrival time. Parents are requested to notify the teacher or Director if there are any special needs or instructions for the child's day.

Special requests must be submitted in writing and may include but are not limited to health issues, family situations, alternative pick up person, early pick up time, or any other issues the center should be aware of to best meet the individual needs of the child.

ABSENCES

Parents are requested to notify St. Clare Early Learning Center if a child will not be in attendance that day. This notification will assist us to more effectively maintain appropriate child staff ratios. Parents are requested to notify the center if their child is ill. This notification will assist the center to track any illnesses that may occur at the center. Information regarding illnesses will be shared on a need to know basis.

ILLNESSES

Parents are requested to notify the Center Director if their child has a communicable disease so that parents of children in the classroom/center may be notified. Only information about the communicable disease will be shared. The center will follow the center's Confidentiality Policy and procedures.

The center conducts a health check on each child upon arrival to the classroom. A child may not be accepted into the center if staff deems the child is too ill to attend or is contagious.

TERMINATION/WITHDRAWAL FROM ST. CLARE ELC

The center reserves the right to terminate childcare services at any time, with or without cause. Child Care services may be terminated for willful destruction of property, if the child poses a threat to the safety and welfare of other children in care, physical or verbal abuse by the parent upon the Center Staff, insufficient funds that are not repaid promptly, refusal to follow center policies.

Two weeks written notice is required from parents that are withdrawing their child from the center. Parents are responsible for any fees if proper notification is not provided. Any past due balances are due on last day of enrollment. Balances remaining after 30 days will be referred to the center's collection agency.

If a child is absent for two consecutive weeks, without proper notification to the office, the child will be considered withdrawn from the program and the reserved classroom space will be filled. All tuition and any related charges are due and payable during this two-week period. To re-enroll, normal registration/supply fees will apply. The child will then be considered for enrollment upon space availability.

PICK-UP POLICY

School Readiness Parents or authorized adults are required to sign the child out of the center on the Center Parent Sign In/Out Sheet located at the front desk. The parent or authorized adult is responsible for supervision of the child once the child has been signed out of the center and must walk their child to the car. Parents are requested to handle any center business (payment, conferences with director, etc) prior to checking the child out of the center.

AUTHORIZED PICK UP/EMERGENCY PICK UP

Only authorized persons listed on the Authorized Persons for Pick Up form are permitted to have access to your child and to remove your child from the center. The following procedures apply:

- ◆ It is the responsibility of the registering parent to notify the center in writing of all persons authorized to pick up your child from the center.
- ◆ Parents are required to complete the Authorized Persons for Pick up and emergency form at time of enrollment. Only persons listed on this form will be permitted to remove the child from the center.
- ◆ Persons on the authorized list but are unfamiliar to the staff will be required to show proof of identification with a picture I.D.
- ◆ Changes/updates to the Pick-Up list must be made on the original DCF form located in the office.
- ◆ Individuals must be at least 18 years of age in order to sign a child in or out of the center.
- ◆ In an emergency, the center will contact the parents first. If the center is unable to reach the parents, the staff will call the persons on the listed form until someone is reached.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that an authorized person is available to pick up the child on time.

If a parent or authorized adult appears to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs the staff will attempt to contact the other parent or authorized adult on the pickup list. St. Clare Early Learning Center does not have the right to deny the parent access to their child, but the staff will contact the police immediately if the center is not able to contact the other parent or authorized adult to pick up the child.

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR VPK

Child must arrive in the VPK classroom no later than 9:00 AM daily. Child must participate in VPK activities until 12:00 PM daily. Children who arrive late or leave early will be counted as absent on the VPK attendance form.

Parents must call the center if a child is going to be late or absent. If a child is absent for five consecutive instructional days, he will be dismissed from the VPK program. Absences and tardiness may be excused under "extraordinary circumstances" if appropriate documentation is provided.

These include:

- a) Hospitalization of the child, his parents or guardian (must provide a doctor's note).
- b) Illness of the student or the illness of the parent or guardian that requires the ill person to remain at home (must provide a doctor's note).
- c) Death of a member of the student's, parents' or guardians' immediate family (obituary or death certificate required).
- d) Court ordered visitation (court documents must be provided).
- e) Parent or guardian's military deployment (military documentation must be provided).

A child may not miss more than 26 days per year for illness. A child may not miss more than 35 days per year regardless of circumstances. Parents must complete and sign an attendance verification form EACH month.

These forms will be distributed on the last instructional day of each month and must be signed and returned to the office the same day. Children who do not meet attendance requirements will lose VPK funding. The child may be allowed to remain in the classroom but will be required to pay full tuition.

Section 4 – Parent Involvement

PARENT/GUARDIAN VOLUNTEERING

St. Clare Early Learning Center has an Open-Door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parents are not only welcomed, but also highly encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom.

All visitors are required to sign in at the front desk before proceeding to the classroom. The Discipline Policy (see 5.15 & 5.16), Standards of Conduct (see 5.17), and Visitor Policies (see 5.18) will apply to all volunteers at all times. Siblings of children in the program may not attend when a parent is volunteering in the classroom.

Parents may be asked to help with certain tasks such as cutting out items for the classrooms, sharing information about their job or hobby or culture, chaperoning on field trips, donating items, and reading to a group of children.

TAKE HOME ACTIVITIES

Although St. Clare Early Learning Center does not assign “homework” for preschoolers, we do send home suggested activities to enhance the learning taking place in the classroom.

PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES

All parents/family are invited to attend scheduled formal parent/guardian/teacher conferences to review child's progress and needs and set goals for the child. Conferences will be scheduled two times throughout the year for infants, toddlers, and preschool children. Other conferences may be scheduled as needed or as requested by parent or teacher.

PARENT SURVEYS

St. Clare Early Learning Center is interested in your feedback. Anonymous parent surveys will be distributed at least once per year. Your responses will ensure we are meeting the needs of our families.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We believe that parents have rights and that their concerns are reasonable and important.

A Healthy Learning Environment

- Parents have the right to know that their child will be safe at school, both physically and emotionally.
- Parents have the right to know that all children will be treated fairly, regardless of race, creed, national origin, economic status, gender, or age and that each child will be treated as an individual.
- Parents have the right to know that the staff is experienced and trained in child development.
- Parents have the right to know that any negative or cruel behavior among students or between students and staff will not be tolerated.

Clear, Courteous Communication

- Parents have the right to be treated with courtesy by all members of the staff.
- Parents have the right to participate in meaningful parent-teacher conferences to discuss

their child's school progress and welfare.

- Parents have the right to visit schools and classes.
- Parents have the right to know that they can approach a staff member with a concern and that the staff member will listen carefully and will do everything possible to address the issue

Information on School Policies

- Parents have the right to information on academic requirements of the school program.
- Parents have the right to inspect their child's record and respond to any statement.
- Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal school policies.
- Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal administrative decisions.

Your Responsibilities are to

- Be involved in your child's education and learning;
- Let the teacher know you are concerned and interested in your child and his progress;
- Set goals with the teacher and share in decisions about your child's care;
- Share information about the child and home that may affect behavior;
- Discuss problems and concerns with the teacher first;
- Show appreciation for teachers;
- Continually upgrade your parenting skills and understanding of children;
- Volunteer to assist the teacher in some way;
- Follow the childcare program's policies and reread contract and parent manual regularly;
- Keep your child home when sick unless sick care is provided;
- Read to your child and spend time talking and playing together.

Section 5 – Health & Safety

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

St. Clare Early Learning Center has the responsibility for the prevention, identification, and reporting of child abuse and neglect (sexual, physical, emotional). Under Florida Law, cases of possible child abuse and neglect are reported immediately to the Department of Children and Families. The abuse hotline is 1-800-96-ABUSE.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

The Center maintains the policy of that all records of children and families are confidential.

EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

If the threat of a natural disaster such as hurricane, tornado, flooding, etc., is imminent, we will follow the St. Johns Public School System for closure guidance. Once the storm passes and is out of the area, we will assess the center for damage and re-open as soon as possible.

The following steps must be confirmed before opening the center:

- The center must have power and any physical damage must be repaired
- There must be available staff in the center to provide appropriate and required staff to child ratio.

Parents are responsible for childcare tuition even in the event that the center is closed due to natural disaster.

CHILD HEALTH SERVICES

St. Clare Early Learning Center is required by the Department of Children and Families to have on file for each child a Physical and an Immunization Record. You have ten (10) days after enrollment to bring in the original forms: Physical Examination – Form 3040 and Immunization – Form 680

CHILD HEALTH EMERGENCIES

In the case of accidents and incidents, staff will contact parents and complete an incident report in which both staff and parents sign. This serves as documentation that parents were informed of the accident/incident and any necessary follow-up. It is very important that you make sure that your child's teacher is aware of changes in phone numbers or emergency contact persons. Please keep this information up to date.

INSURANCE/CHILD ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

We take all pre-cautions to ensure the safety of your child while under our care. However, in the event that a child is hurt at our center, the following procedures will be followed:

- An accident report will be filled out by the child's teacher and depending on the type of injury, the parent may be called.
- The parent will be asked to review the accident form and provide a signature. A copy will be given to the parent.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

All medication administered by the center staff must be authorized by the child's parent or guardian by first completing an Administration of Medicine form. Only medicine that has been prescribed by a doctor may be given at the center. All medicines must be in the original container.

If non-prescription medication is to be given, a note from the physician, stating the name of the medication and the dosage instructions, must be attached. Staff will inform parent/guardian immediately of any noticed side effects or changes in behavior.

Parents are strongly encouraged to give all medications at home. If this is the case, please notify your child's teacher so that any behavioral changes and/or allergic reactions may be noted.

Medication will be stored in a locked secure area inaccessible to children. NO MEDICATION MAY BE PLACED IN THE CHILD'S CUBBY/BOOKBAG OR LEFT UNATTENDED IN THE CLASSROOM.

CONDITIONS OF SHORT-TERM EXCLUSION

A child will be placed on short-term exclusion, which may include non-admittance, when the illness and/or injury is contagious and/or poses a significant health and/or safety risk to other children and staff.

NOTIFICATION OF ILLNESS

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to inform staff if their child becomes ill from a

communicable disease and of any other health/safety concerns.

If a child appears to have a communicable disease, teaching staff should isolate the child away from the other children and immediately contact the child's parent/guardian.

Children will not be allowed to return to the center until all symptoms have ceased. Depending upon the condition, children may not be allowed to return to the center without a physicians' authorization.

Parents/Guardians will be asked to immediately pick up their children if the following signs, symptoms, or conditions are present:

- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion. Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100⁰ F or higher taken under the arm or 101⁰ F taken orally.
- Diarrhea - runny, watery, or bloody stools.
- Vomiting - two or more times, vomiting that contains blood, or vomiting followed by severe cramping.
- Severe coughing - child gets red or blue in the face or to make a high-pitched whooping sound after coughing.
- Eye discharge - thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, or pink eye
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Ear Discharge
- Untreated infected skin patch(es)
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool and yellowish skin or eyes.
- Head Lice (including nits)
- Conditions that commonly require parameters from a physician detailing when a child may return include, but are not limited to, chickenpox, strep throat, scabies, impetigo, meningitis, and Hepatitis A.
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than staff can provide without jeopardizing the health and safety of the other children.
- Any other unusual signs, symptoms, or conditions.

DRESS CODE

We request that children arrive at school in comfortable, easy to launder clothing. While we make every effort to protect their clothing, children can experience accidental spills during planned activities. Please label all clothing items with the child's first and last name.

For the safety of the children, we do not allow open-toe shoes, flip flops, or sandals either in the classroom or during outdoor activities.

In case of accidents, we request every child keep a change of clothes at the center. Label each item with the child's first and last name and place the items in a sealed bag in the cubby.

MEALS

A morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack are provided for all children. In order to ensure the health and safety of all children, food items, purchased or from home, may not be brought into the classroom to be eaten, except for special classroom events. This will help us prevent children with allergies from being exposed to foods which could be harmful.

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS AND ALLERGIES

Please discuss any special dietary needs for your child with the director. Modest accommodations will be made for children with food allergies or who require specific menu items for cultural reasons. Children with severe allergies, staff should contact director for further guidance.

DISCIPLINE RATIONALE

Discipline is the effective management of children's behavior with the goal of self-disciplined children. The management technique to be used in any particular situation will be based upon consideration of the particular situation and the individual child. All staff, volunteers, and parents will use the positive guidance methods listed below:

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

1. Plan ahead to prevent behavior problems. Anticipate problems that may occur and provide intervention or directions in advance. (Ex: Limit number of children in centers. Have activities prepared so children do not have to wait.)
2. Establish clear and simple rules that are age appropriate. Consistent reminders help reinforce limits. Rules should be stated in a positive way. (Ex: If a child is running, say, "Please use your walking feet. Running feet are for outside", instead of "Don't run!")
3. Be a model for the desired behavior. Treat all children with respect and politeness. (Ex: The teacher has a leaky paint container in her hand. She needs to get to the sink. She asks the children who are in line at the sink if she could please use the sink out of turn, rather than simply cutting in front of the children. They agree, and she remembers to thank them.)
4. Help children to learn problem-solving skills. Give them the language they need to communicate feelings and needs to others appropriately. Work with them to come up with solutions to conflicts.
5. Give hugs and caring. The key to discipline is establishing a nurturing relationship with each child. Children need to know they are accepted and loved no matter how they behave.
6. Reinforce positive behavior. Remember to focus on the specific behavior you wish to see repeated. (Ex: "Jessie, you have worked so hard to put all the blocks neatly on the shelf. Fantastic job!")
7. Overlook small annoyances. Sometimes when a behavior is overlooked, not reinforced by attention, it disappears. Unless the behavior is aggressive and someone is in danger of getting hurt, the teacher/caregiver might be wise to let the children work out the problem on their own.
8. Offer positive alternatives to a negative behavior. If a child's behavior is unacceptable, suggest alternative choices. (Ex: If a child is throwing blocks, the teacher intervenes by telling the child that blocks are for building. If the child wishes to throw something, he/she can throw a bean bag, or a ball.)
9. Re-direct or divert the child. Substitute an appropriate activity for the unacceptable one. Some behaviors that are inappropriate are temporary, or situation specific. In these cases, it is best to alter the environment by redirecting the child to another activity. (Ex: Two children who are good friends have begun to get irritated with each other. Intervene before things get out of hand by engaging them in a new activity.)
10. Help children see behavioral consequences. Since young children are self-centered, it is hard for them to see beyond their own needs. Help them to move from thinking only of themselves, to thinking of others by analyzing the consequences of their actions. Discuss

their behavior in a non-judgmental way and encourage them to think about its impact on people, objects and events.

11. Provide renewal time. When a child is too upset to talk or listen, it may be necessary to remove the child from the situation for a period of no more than 2 minutes. The teachers stay with the child to discuss what happened and to help the child regain composure.
12. Implement Behavior Intervention Policy when necessary.

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

1. Time out. There will NOT be any identified space, or chair, reserved for “time out”. Children are not to be isolated indefinitely due to behavior problems. Time out may be used only if stipulated in an individual child’s behavior plan by a licensed mental health consultant.
2. Physical punishment. The use of physical force with children is prohibited. This includes pulling by the arm, grabbing children by the arm/shoulders/neck, hitting, pushing, shoving, etc.
3. Threatening. Children will not be threatened with physical punishment, or with a phone call to parents.
4. Ridiculing or Degrading. There will be no name-calling, belittling, or comparison to other children.
5. Withholding of meals, snacks, or water. Children will not be denied food, water or any other basic need as a means of discipline.
6. Denying a rest. Children will not be denied rest as a means of discipline.

In the event that a child is exhibiting extreme challenging behavior, follow the Behavior Intervention Procedures:

- Provide renewal time.
- When a child is too upset to talk or listen, it may be necessary to remove the child from the situation for no more than 2 minutes. The teacher is to stay with the child in the classroom to discuss what happened and the help the child regain composure.
- If necessary, the child may be removed from the classroom if two staff are available to remain with the child at all times.
- If the child is unable to regain control within 30 minutes, the parents or authorized persons may be contacted to pick up the child.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

St. Clare Early Learning Center has guidelines of acceptable conduct that all parents, volunteers and visitors must abide by while on premises. It is expected that all parties will follow these guidelines and sign this form. We strive to provide a safe learning environment for you and the children. Volunteering in the classroom is strongly encouraged however; the “Standards of Conduct” must be adhered to at all times.

- Respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family. Refrain from stereotyping on basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability.
- Follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and other staff members.
- Supervise children at all times. Children will not be left alone or unsupervised while in the center or under the centers care.

- Use positive methods of child guidance. Any use of corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse or humiliation is prohibited. Methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as a punishment or reward, time out or the denial of basic needs are prohibited.
- Refrain from the use of any threatening physical contact or verbal abuse towards individuals connected with the program, other parents or volunteers.
- Refrain from smoking on the premises and during all center or parent activities. St. Clare Early Learning Center adheres to a "Smoke Free Environment."
- Refrain from illegal activities while on the premises or in attendance at center activities. St. Clare Early Learning Center prohibits theft, firearms, alcohol, explosives and illegal substances on the premises and during all center or parent activities.
- Refrain from harassment. Any cause of disharmony of any kind will not be tolerated.

VISITOR POLICY

All volunteers and visitors shall check-in at designated area for check in and obtain permission for the visitation and a visitor's pass. Visitation by a non-enrolled child unaccompanied by his/her parent(s) or legal guardian is prohibited unless prior approval has been granted by the Center Director.

Only persons with legal authority to do so shall be allowed to question a child on the property without the consent of the child's parents or legal guardian.

Because staff, children, and parents should at all times feel that the school and work environment is safe and not hostile, all visitors to the property shall comply with all policies while on property and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is not disruptive, threatening or abusive.

- Any parent, volunteer or visitor who is disruptive, threatening or abusive will be asked to relocate to a location in the facility where children are not present and where the matter can be discussed and resolved in a professional manner.
- If the person refuses to relocate or continues to act in an inappropriate manner, the person will be asked to leave the premises. If the person refuses to leave, staff will notify appropriate law enforcement personnel. Should the person subsequently return to the property and again act in a manner that is disruptive, threatening or abusive or if the initial incident is so extreme that the teachers are concerned about the person returning to the facility, the person shall be informed in writing that he/she may be prohibited from returning to property.
- Any person who believes that he/she has wrongfully been asked to not return to the property, must first leave the property as requested, but may subsequently appeal the decision in writing to the Center Director.
- A final decision will be made, and the person will be notified in writing that he/she may not return to the property except under expressed conditions.
- Notwithstanding the above, center personnel shall always have the authority to notify appropriate law enforcement personnel should any person or property violate criminal statutes.

This policy shall be posted in a place clearly visible to all.

Section 6 – Classroom Activities

CURRICULUM

Preschool teachers will use the Nemours Learn Every Day for Preschool and Bright Start curriculum to plan specific activities that promote school readiness. The curriculum will be based on helping children to attain positive school readiness outcomes.

Infant/Toddler teachers will use Nemours Learn Every Day for Infant/Toddlers, Foundations for Success and a variety of Infant-Toddler curriculum resource books to plan appropriate activities for children.

Other approved curriculum resource books will be used to supplement the curriculum.

FIELD TRIPS

Beginning at age three, field trips are used to enhance the children's learning opportunity. They are a great way to extend the curriculum and provide children with hands-on experiences. Teachers have specific goals and objectives when planning a field trip. Parents will be provided at least two weeks' notice for each upcoming field trip. Each child must have a signed field trip permission slip in order to attend each trip.

TOYS FROM HOME

To prevent special toys from being lost or broken, we ask that toys not be sent to school with your child. On certain days throughout the year, we allow children to bring personal items and/or toys to share during a special part of the day's activities. Your child's teacher will inform you about these "Show-N-Tell" days.

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

Screening is a process to determine whether or not a child has any developmental concerns that may require further evaluation and follow-up. Screenings conducted at the center may include vision, hearing, speech/language, nutrition, dental, and overall development. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire will be used at least once per year. Parental consent forms for screening are included in the registration packet.

Parents will be informed in writing of results of screenings. At home activities may be recommended based on the results of the screenings. If further evaluation or services are needed, parents will be referred to the appropriate agencies or to their personal pediatricians. Additional screenings and parent conferences will be utilized as a means of follow-up on screenings that result in referrals to outside agencies.

Children at every age level will be assessed using an on-going child observations and portfolio assessment for the purpose of identifying developmentally appropriate learning outcomes met throughout the year and creating individualized learning goals based on the results of the observations and assessments.

Each child must have a portfolio which includes a sampling of the child's progress. Depending on the age of the child, these samples may include Ages and Stages Questionnaires, literacy and numeracy assessments, artwork, dictation, writing samples, pictures, anecdotal notes, photos, etc. Portfolios for infants and toddlers may also include copies of daily notes, growth charts, and other developmental checklists. Portfolios are to be shared with parents during scheduled parent conferences.

Teaching staff will use a variety of strategies to promote and support children's learning and developmental progress based on the observations, individualization, and ongoing assessment of each child. Information will be gathered from teachers and parents.

Screening Procedure

- Parental consent forms for screening are included in the registration packet. Teachers will obtain a copy of the consent form prior to administering screenings. This copy will be kept in the child's portfolio.
- The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) will be used at least once per year for all age groups. Teachers will complete and score the ASQ. Parental input may also be used to complete the ASQ. The scored ASQ will be kept in the child's portfolio.
- Parents will be informed in writing of results of screenings either through a letter sent home by the center director or through written documentation of a parent-teacher conference where results were shared.
- At home activities will be recommended based on the results of the screenings.
- If further evaluation or services are needed, parents will be referred to the appropriate agencies or to their personal pediatricians.
- Additional screenings and parent conferences will be utilized as a means of follow-up on screenings that result in referrals to outside agencies.

Accountability Procedure

- In order to prevent the misidentification of children:
 - Children's first and last name and date of birth will be on each ASQ screening.
 - Documents within the portfolio will also include children's first and last name and date of assessment.
- In order to provide proper follow up for children with concerns:
 - Summary sheets of all children screened will be given to the director.
 - Children in need of follow up will be highlighted on the summary sheets.
 - The director will review the screening tool for each child identified as in need of follow up.
 - The director will re-score the instrument to ensure accuracy of scoring.
 - The director will review the results with the parent and may rescore instrument based on parental input.

Assessment Procedure

- Within 45 days of the start of the school year, teaching staff will do an initial assessment for each child using an approved developmental checklist or assessment instrument.
- Based on parent information, screenings, and initial observations, goals will be made for each child based on their individual needs.
- Teaching staff will conduct teacher-directed small group learning centers daily that will focus on these individualized goals. Progress of goals will be documented.
- The ongoing assessment of each child will be recorded and updated at least twice per academic year. Each time an update is made new goals and plans will be made, based on the children's individual needs. Plans for individualization will be kept with the current lesson plans.
- Portfolios will be maintained for each child. Teachers will gather evidence of children's

progress in these individual files. Things to be included in the portfolios may include

literacy and numeracy assessments, artwork, anecdotal notes, writing samples, daily notes, photos, growth charts, etc. These items should be dated and include a statement concerning what objective the child achieved.

- Assessment results will be shared with parents during Parent-Teacher Conferences at least twice during the school year. Optional letters with results may also be shared.
- At the time of a child's transition to the next class, the teacher will pass the portfolio up to the next teacher.
- At the time of a child's transition to kindergarten, the teacher will send the portfolio home.

TRANSITIONING CHILDREN FROM CLASS TO CLASS

If it becomes necessary during the year to move a child up to the next class, St. Clare Early Learning Center will strive to make as smooth a transition as possible for the child, the parents, and the teachers. Parents will be informed both verbally and in writing. The child will transition slowly over the course of a few days.

TRANSITIONING FROM PREK TO KINDERGARTEN

In May or June of each year, St. Clare Early Learning Center will provide activities to aid in the smooth transition of preschool children to kindergarten. These activities may include one or more of the following: the distribution of kindergarten registration and transition packets, a graduation ceremony, a visit to a nearby Catholic elementary school, and a mini workshop for parents.



ST CLARE
EARLY LEARNING CENTER
The Diocese of St Augustine

Section 7 – Receipt of Parent Handbook

(This page to remain on file in the center.)

I have received a copy of St. Clare Family Handbook and agree to abide by the policies.

Parent of _____
Child's Name

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Director Signature _____ Date _____