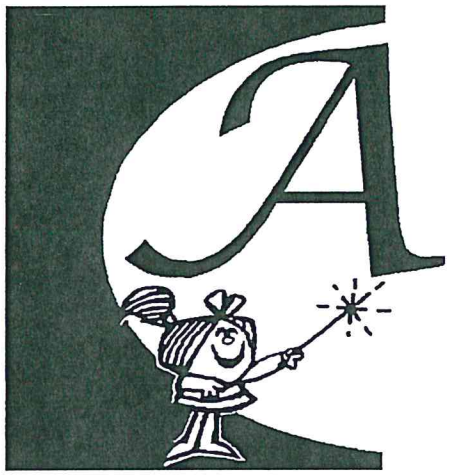

St. Angela Merici Preschool

2017-2018

Parent Handbook

20830 Lorain Road

Fairview Park, OH 44126

440-333-2126, Ext.155

preschool@samparish.org

St. Angela Merici Preschool Philosophy

The first years of life are of vital importance to a child's growth and development. Recognizing the child's absorption of every aspect of their environment, the basis for teaching our children, is to build on the universal principles of beauty, simplicity and order. Foundations are laid which influence the ability of a child to balance freedom with responsibility and help the child achieve the discipline necessary for a life of fulfillment and happiness.

Family relations provide a young child with the first and best model for developing attitudes, values and appropriate behavior. Preschool continues to build and expand on these values, introducing varied interactions with other adults and children, thus promoting ways for a child to understand and to relate to the world around him or her.

For over eighty years St. Angela Merici Parish and school have been at the forefront of Catholic education in the Diocese of Cleveland. We are honored and excited to further this mission with the addition of the St. Angela Merici Preschool program. Our program prepares the child to understand that discipline, obedience, and self-control are expected in a civilized society and are the basis for developing concern for others and a respect for human freedom and the pursuit of happiness.

Our preschool program strives to provide a creative learning environment for the young child. Interaction with other children and adults, in an atmosphere of Christian love and concern, promotes the healthy development of each child. In partnership with the parish community and the family, our preschool provides a Christian education in a Catholic atmosphere through which gospel values are presented, lived and fostered.

Preschool Goals

St. Angela Merici Preschool program assists the young child:

- To provide a living faith community in which the child can grow in continued awareness of being a child of God

- To prepare and provide a varied environment for the child to guide their interaction with that environment and give them freedom with responsibility. Understanding of the young child's thinking will be an essential tool facilitating the child's growth. Helping to guide an intensely curious "child explorer" is one of the main goals of our preschool.

- To use basic child development knowledge of the sequences of growth to individualize daily lesson plans to specific skills that the children can practice in the classroom.

- To set an atmosphere for child-initiated, child directed, teacher supported play allowing for a broad range of both spontaneous and guided learning.

- To provide methods that help children develop and gain mastery of skills through supportive interactions, stimulating questions and positive reinforcement.

- Respect and support of children's parents and families and a commitment to work as a team with parents building positive relationships and including parents in decisions about their children's education.

- Developing, organizing and presenting skill sequenced activities in the following categories: motor, perceptual, literary, memory and problem solving.

- Maintain a safe, clean environment with a rich setting of appropriate, concrete, hands-on equipment to facilitate a child's learning capacity.

We desire St. Angela Merici Preschool children:

1. To become lifelong learners and lovers of learning
2. To become creative and independent thinkers who can solve problems in more than one way.
3. To become decision makers
4. To experience the profound joy of living!

Programs

Three Year Old Program

- Meet on Tuesday and Wednesday (12:00-2:00 p.m.)
- Child must be 3 years old by Sept. 30th and toilet trained (No Pull-ups)
- Class size is limited to 14 children with one licensed teacher and one assistant

Four Year Old Program

- Meet on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday (9:15-11:30 a.m.)
- Child must be 4 years old by Sept. 30th.
- Class size is limited to 18 children with one licensed teacher and one assistant.

Pre- Kindergarten Program

- Meet on Monday, Tuesday Wednesday, Thursday (9:15-11:30 a.m.)
- Child must be 5 years old by March 1st
- Class size is limited to 20 children with one licensed teacher and one assistant.

Enrichment

- Meet on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (9:15-11:30)
- Child must be 5 years old by December 1st .
- Class size is limited to 20 children with one licensed teacher and one assistant.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to be both developmentally and age appropriate. Activities are designed to be multi-sensory and to enhance each child's physical, emotional, social and spiritual growth. Hands-on learning is vital and is encouraged through participation in art, music, religion, and play.

Religion Readiness is an integral part of our preschool program. It is the development of a positive self-image in relationship to a loving God. Classroom prayer and prayer services prepare him/her to participate in the celebrations of the Church.

Art and Music activities are creative, full of self-expression and imagination. They center on the use of paints, crayons, play dough, rhythmic activities and rhythm instruments.

Play is the child's work! Opportunities for free, creative play are a daily part of the program. It is through play that creativity, socialization, and self-expression are developed.

Personal-Social Development is the primary goal for the young child entering preschool. A positive self-concept is essential to successful learning. Personal development includes knowing name, age, address, phone number and birth-date. Other areas include separating from parents, caring for belongings and respecting others. Social development includes sharing, following directions, participating in-group activities, and developing a positive relationship with teachers and peers.

Language is the development of listening, speaking, and thinking skills. Listening to and sharing stories, poetry, and finger plays enhance the love of language. An awareness of the written word is developed through alphabet activities.

Math Readiness is taught using both a "hands-on" approach and play experience. Mathematical knowledge will come from the understanding of colors, shapes and size differences, basic counting skills, classifying, forming sets, and recognizing numerals.

Motor Skills are a vital part of the preschooler's development and crucial to the learning skills s/he will need in the future.

Gross Motor skills are enhanced through large muscle activities of walking, climbing, running, jumping, hopping, and skipping. Dance, games, and organized play provide an outlet for rhythm and movement.

Fine Motor skills are developed and strengthened through manipulating clay, Hammering, painting lacing, and using scissors. These skills enhance reading Readiness.

Daily Schedule

Three and Four Year Old Programs

Arrival, Free Play time
Circle Time- whole group time
with Prayer, sharing, weather, etc.
Introduction of daily theme
Learning Centers/Skill Focused activities
Clean-up
Snack
Large Motor Activity
Show and Share/Story time

Pre-K and Enrichment Programs

Will follow daily routine as above M-W. The structure of the Thursday (PreK) class and Friday (PreK Enrichment) will primarily focus on Kindergarten readiness for the following school year.

The curriculum for the entire preschool program fully integrates the State of Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards. Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards illuminate the breadth of learning and development from birth to kindergarten entry that strengthens school readiness. An understanding of learning and development in each domain guides programs and teachers as they plan developmentally appropriate learning opportunities and environments for young children.

Entrance and Enrollment Policy

St. Angela Merici Preschool admits students of any race, sex, color, national or ethnic origin whose parents desire a preschool experience taught from a Christian perspective, to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies or other administered programs.

St. Angela Merici Preschool does give priority admission to families from St. Angela Merici Parish and preferred status (early registration) for Kindergarten enrollment.

Admission and Withdrawal Procedures

Registration Policy:

Applicants will be accepted in the following order:

1. Children currently enrolled in the preschool program.
2. Siblings of children already enrolled at St. Angela Merici School.
3. Children of registered and active parishioners of St. Angela Merici Church.
4. Children of registered and active parishioners of other Catholic parishes, if space is available.
5. All others interested in a Catholic preschool education and willing to participate in the full curriculum of the program.

Admission:

Admission to St. Angela Merici Preschool follows sequential steps:

1. Parents are encouraged to visit the preschool classrooms, meet the teachers, view the physical set-up of the classroom, view models of lesson plans and ask questions.
2. Registration forms for the upcoming/current preschool year will be distributed to interested parents.
3. In January, parents will return completed applications and enrollment fees. The Preschool Selection Committee will review all applications and children accepted into the St. Angela Merici Preschool will receive a written confirmation. Parents may request an additional conference/visit at any time during the registration process.

Withdrawal:

If, for ANY reason your child will not attend St. Angela Merici Preschool (following the registration/acceptance) in **September, 2017,** a parent/guardian must inform the preschool in writing or by speaking to the director on or before **July 1, 2017.**

If a parent decides to withdraw their child after preschool sessions have begun (for any reason) there will be no refund of the registration and equipment fee. Additionally, a fee of $20.00 per session will be deducted from the semester payment and that balance will be refunded to the parents. After October 15, 2017 there will be no refund of preschool tuition.

Staff: Class Size

Our teaching staff consists of three state licensed/certified teachers and three teacher assistants. The teacher must meet the academic qualifications for her position and must have a genuine love for and interest in children. Staff members must also have received state required training in child abuse, communicable disease and first aid. All staff are also trained/current in Child CPR/AED.

The 4 yr old/PreK (4 day)/PreK Enrichment (5 day) will maintain a maximum of 18 children with two teachers; the 3 year old program will maintain a maximum of 14 children with two teachers (in each classroom).

Transportation

Parents and/or designated adults are responsible for dropping off and picking up their preschool child. Upon arrival, a member of the teaching staff will escort each child from their vehicle to the preschool wing, and at dismissal from the building to the vehicle. Car seat placement is to be on the passenger side for safe transport to/from the car line. There is no bus transportation or aftercare for the preschool children. **Please refrain from cell phone use during transition time of our car line.**

Attendance Policy

Parents are asked to notify the preschool (440-333-2126, Ext. 155) or preschool@samparish.org before 9:15 am any day their child will be absent from class. Please do not plan to have your child arrive more than five minutes before class begins and please be prompt in picking up your child at dismissal time. Thank you!

Parent Roster Information

A parent roster will be prepared for each class in the preschool program. Parents have the option of omitting their name and phone number from the list. Only the child's name will be listed on the roster.

Parent Visits

Although St. Angela Merici Preschool is considered a separate entity from St. Angela Day school, for the absolute safety of all children occupying the one building, strict guidelines will be maintained at all times. Any parent may visit any preschool session to observe their child, but when doing so must sign in at the main office first, and then report to the preschool wing. This assures that no one can freely access the classrooms or the rest of the building.

Special Dismissal

If a preschool student must leave before the end of the class session, parents are asked to present a note stating the reason for the early dismissal. The child must leave preschool only in the presence of his/her parents or another authorized person who will meet the child at the preschool classroom.

Discipline Policy

The cornerstone of our discipline policy is to always recognize the child's rights and use only appropriate discipline techniques and strategies for the preschool age child.

What does it mean to be a well-disciplined child? One answer might be that the child needs to be cooperative, knows how to get along with others and can work well with teachers and other children. This is accomplished when a child has well developed social skills. One of the main goals of our preschool is to accomplish this.

God gifts each child with his/her own uniqueness. We want to help the children in our preschool to grow in goodness and social awareness. Through discipline techniques, the teacher will attempt to help the child gain a social understanding of how his/her behavior affects others.

Our policy regarding discipline in the preschool classroom does not provide a rigid set of steps for carrying out discipline, but rather, allows the teacher a broad range of tools and methods to deal with discipline and each incident individually. These methods never include physical contact of the child and always keep the child's rights in focus.

We anticipate the ever-changing nature of the preschool child and utilize techniques of a very low profile correction, that is, a non-intrusive process of signaling a child that he/she is off task, without disrupting the on-going activities of classmates and with no guilt imposed on the child.

If a child's behavior is inappropriate and or/disruptive to the learning process (safety of the other children) a problem-solving conference will be scheduled with the parent.

Our policy on discipline fully recognizes that the young child is not born with the ability to get along with others or to cooperate in activities of give and take. The teaching methods in our preschool allow for a wide range of behavioral responses from the child and we will deem only the most serious, unusual or unsafe behavior a "true discipline problem" that requires an intervention.

It is also our policy to include a copy of our discipline policy in enrollment of each child for parents to read and sign as an acknowledgement they understand its content.

Health Procedures and Management of Communicable Diseases

We request that if your child has more than a runny or stuffy nose, s/he should **not** come to preschool. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent or guardian:

(a) Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four-hour period);
(b) Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;
(c) Difficult or rapid breathing;
(d) Yellowish skin or eyes;
(e) Conjunctivitis;
(f) Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness;
(g) Untreated infected skin patch (es);
(h) Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool; or
(i) Stiff neck; or
(j) Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.

A child with any of the following sign or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the director and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program shall be carefully watched for symptoms listed above as well as the following:

(a) Unusual spots or rashes;
(b) Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
(c) Elevated temperature; or
(d) Vomiting

Please follow these guidelines when your child is ill:

1. **Please keep your child home 24 hours after the break of a fever.**
2. **If your child is sick during the night or before preschool, please keep him/her home.**
3. **If you suspect a strep infection, please do not send your child to school until you receive the results of the culture.**

The child should be readmitted to school only if he is no longer ill and/or upon physician recommendation (written correspondence).

- Please inform the preschool if your child becomes ill with a contagious illness. A note will be sent home with the other children in the class to warn parents of contact and incubation of the communicable disease.
- Parents will receive written notice when a child has been exposed to a diagnosed communicable disease such as pink eye, ringworm, chicken pox, or lice.
- A mildly ill child will be isolated and evaluated by the director and day school clinic nurse
- No child may carry medication of any kind on their person.

- Prior to sessions beginning in the fall, parents/guardians will be asked to complete an emergency medical authorization form that will be kept on file in the clinic.

The following is a list of the most common communicable diseases and their symptoms:

1. **Chicken Pox:** Feverishness…rash appears in the form of small pimples, which, in a day fill up with a clear fluid. Incubation period is between 14-21 days. Isolation period of at least 5 days from the time the rash appears.
2. **Measles (Rubella):** Head cold, feverish, water eyes, sneezing. Blotchy red rash appears on the forehead, face and body. Incubation period is between 7-14 days. Isolation period of at least 5 days from the time rash appears.
3. **German Measles (Rubella or 3 day measles):** Mild measles – blotchy, fine red rash on face and abdomen. Swollen glands particularly in the back of the neck. Incubation period 14-21 days. Communicable for 48 hours after rash appears.
4. **Mumps:** Fever, swelling on side of face and jaws as glands become swollen and tender. Incubation period between 12-26 days. Isolation period until swelling of glands has disappeared.
5. **Scarlet Fever and Streptococcal (sore throat):** Fever, headache, sore throat, vomiting. A fine rash appears with scarlet fever. Incubation period between 2-5 days. Isolation for 48 hours after start of antibiotic treatment. May be re-admitted to preschool upon receipt of a written statement that the child has been treated.
6. **Impetigo:** Blister-like lesions, which later develop into crusted pus-like sore, which are irregular in outline. Incubation period 2-5 days, occasionally longer. Communicable from onset of symptoms until sores are healed. Child will be excluded from school until adequately treated and sores are no longer draining.
7. **Conjunctivitis (Pink eye):** Redness and swelling of the membranes of one or both eyes with burning and itching, sensitivity to light, and a discharge. Immediate medical treatment needed. Exclusion from school until fully recovered. Communicable during the course of the infection and until discharges cease.

Preschool Parent Participation

St. Angela Merici Preschool recognizes the child's home environment and school environment are entwined and that working in a cooperative effort with parents is paramount to having a successful preschool program.

To facilitate this involvement, parents are always welcome to visit/observe during our preschool session. We hope, by involving the parents in their child's first introduction to learning that we might also help the parents in the following ways:

- They will understand their child's total development
- They can improve family bonding and communication
- Parents are afforded the opportunity to meet family members of other students

We hope to accomplish this by respecting and accepting parents, their interests, family values and life styles. Additionally, maintaining an open mind when interacting with parents and by sharing the child's accomplishments and how they are progressing. Our policies will include:

- Displays of child's work and bulletin boards for sharing information
- Notes and letters and e mail correspondence between home and preschool
- Being available for telephone conversations, parent teacher conferences (Fall and Spring)
- Social events, parent orientation and Open House
- Parent volunteers in the classroom or volunteering in ways that help the teacher and the children
- Random parent interest surveys

All preschool inspection reports/ODE compliance files are stored in the preschool wing. Any parent wishing to read these reports/files may do so by making an appointment with the preschool director. Having spoken to the classroom teacher, the director, the principal of the day school, parents/guardians may also contact the Ohio Department of Education ombudsman with any concerns or questions at 877-644-6338.

A classroom roster is available for any parent/guardian whose child is enrolled in the preschool program. Parent authorization is required to list any information other than the child's name. This information is indicated on the enrollment form.

Safety Procedures

Simple routines are established with the St. Angela Merici preschool children for walking through the halls, going to the lavatory, and entering and leaving the building. Fire, tornado, and lockdown drills are discussed and practiced with the preschool and SAM day school students. Most drills are given with advance notice so preschool students can be properly prepared by their teacher.

Preschool staff are current in safety protocol/in-service training afforded to the SAM dayschool staff including ALICE training updates.

St. Angela Merici Preschool

Behavior Management and Discipline Policy

The cornerstone of our discipline policy is to always recognize the child's rights and use only appropriate discipline techniques and strategies for the preschool age child.

What does it mean to be a well-disciplined child? One answer might be that the child needs to be cooperative, knows how to get along with others and can work well with teachers and other children. This is accomplished when a child has well developed social skills. One of the main goals of our preschool is to accomplish this.

God gifts each child with his/her own uniqueness. We want to help the children in our preschool to grow in goodness and social awareness. Through discipline techniques, the teacher will attempt to help the child gain a social understanding of how his/her behavior affects others.

Our policy regarding discipline in the preschool classroom does not provide a rigid set of steps for carrying out discipline, but rather, allows the teacher a broad range of tools and methods to deal with discipline and each misbehaving child incident individually.

We anticipate the ever-changing nature of the preschool child and utilize techniques of very low profile correction, that is, a non-intrusive process of signaling a child that he/she is off task without disrupting the on-going activities of classmates.

By addressing the disruptive behavior, not the child, our goal is to have children feel accepted as people when confronted with their negative behavior, instead of feeling belittled and infused with guilt feelings.

The general principles embraced at St. Angela Merici Preschool recognize that:

1. Children want to be well behaved
2. Children want to be accepted and respected
3. Children want to please adults
4. Children require instructions about acceptable classroom behavior
5. Children need time to develop their autocracy and self control
6. Children do not expect absolute perfection from their teacher (or their parents)
7. Children respond to gentleness and kindness
8. Children eventually learn that rules are designed for the overall good of the group
9. Children learn from their mistakes

We will utilize techniques of re-direction, separation from problem situations, talking with child about the situation and praise for appropriate behavior. Setting class rules and explaining to the child why rules are necessary will help our children begin more adult-like thinking. Consequences of behavior will be emphasized as a positive teaching method for discipline.

In compliance the Ohio Department of Education Revised Code #3301-37-10 (Behavior Management and Discipline), St. Angela Merici Preschool will adhere rigidly to the following policies:

A. A preschool staff member in charge of a child or group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.
B. The preschools actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:
    1. There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.
    2. No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.

3. No physical restraint shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
4. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or a similar cubicle.
5. No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, and derogatory remarks about himself or his family or other verbal abuse.
6. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat a snack or for toileting accidents.
7. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame or frighten a child.
8. Discipline shall not include withholding food or toilet use.
9. Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
10. The preschool shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from all abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

If a behavior is inappropriate and/or disruptive to the learning process or safety for the other children in the classroom, a problem solving conference will be scheduled with parents and follow this sequence:

a. Define the problem - the teacher will give a clear statement of the problem to the parents.
b. Generate solution - parents will be encouraged to come up with a creative list of solutions that might be helpful in re-directing their child's behavior.
c. Evaluate the solutions - both teacher and parents will discuss the merit of their suggested solutions and decide if the solution is acceptable and will help correct the behavior.
d. Implement the solution - the teacher and parents will decide and agree upon what role each will take in carrying out the solutions and commit themselves to the actions required.
e. Evaluation - a later follow-up conference will occur to evaluate the effectiveness of the solution and what benefit it has provided to the child.
f. Follow-up - if the undesirable behavior continues and constitutes a disruption to the teaching process and/or the other children, the parents will be asked to remove their child from the preschool.

Our policy on discipline fully recognizes that the young child is not born with the ability to get along with others or to cooperate in activities of give and take. The teaching methods in our preschool allow for a wide range of behavioral responses from the child and we will deem only the most serious, unusual or unsafe behavior a 'true discipline problem' that requires intervention.

It is our policy to include a copy of our discipline policy in enrollment of each child for parents to read and sign as an acknowledgement they understand it's content.

It is our policy that each new staff member of this preschool shall receive a copy of this policy. At orientation day, the new staff member(s) shall review it with the director of the preschool and sign an acknowledgement they will comply fully with each policy stated.

Healthcheck services are available for families that are eligible for Medicaid. Healthchek is Ohio's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program. It is a service package for babies, kids, and young adults younger than age 21 who are enrolled on Ohio Medicaid.

The purpose of Healthchek is to discover and treat health problems early. If a potential health problem is found, further diagnosis and treatment are covered by Medicaid.

Healthchek covers ten check-ups in the first two years of life and annual check-ups thereafter and offers a comprehensive physical examination that includes:

- medical history
- complete unclothed exam (with parent approval)
- developmental screening (to assess if child's physical and mental abilities are age appropriate)
- vision screening
- dental screening
- hearing assessment
- immunization assessment (making sure child receives them on time)
- lead screening; and
- other services or screenings as needed

If your children are enrolled on Ohio Medicaid, Healthchek services are available to them. If you are younger than age 21 and are also enrolled, you can receive Healthchek services, too.

If you are interested in more information about this service, please visit:
http://medicaid.ohio.gov/FOROHIOANS/Programs/Healthchek.aspx

Preschool Policies Approval

The written policies guiding the St. Angela Merici Preschool were approved and adopted by the board of directors on June 10, 2004 at their board meeting. These policies include staff, cumulative records, developmentally appropriate program planning, health and safety, developmentally appropriate materials and equipment, admission, attendance and discipline, selection and use of developmentally appropriate materials, equipment and resources that meet the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of the preschool child, management of communicable diseases and transportation. These are on file in the preschool classroom as well as listed in the St. Angela Merici Preschool Handbook.