



St. Joseph Christian School
Pre-kindergarten Supplement
to the
Lion Cub Student Handbook
2018 - 2019

Whooo
Knows What's Happening



in
Pre-kindergarten?

School calendar and supply lists are available at our website:
www.stjosephchristian.com

Welcome



We wish to extend to you and your family a warm welcome to St. Joseph Christian School's pre-kindergarten program! We will do our best to create a friendly and safe learning environment for your child.

This handbook is intended to provide important information about the pre-kindergarten program, and to help you understand its structure and purpose. Please read it thoroughly and keep it in a safe place for future reference. If you have any questions or concerns that have not been answered or addressed here or at our parent orientation meeting, please contact your child's teacher by phone or email.

Philosophy of Christian Pre-kindergarten

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" 1 John 3:1

We believe that God has given parents the responsibility to educate their children and rear them in the "fear and admonition of the Lord." As your delegated authority to work with you in this sacred endeavor, it is our privilege to share biblical truths as well as academic knowledge. The classroom provides a wonderful setting to apply and

practice these principles. In order to provide a well-rounded learning experience, we will incorporate Bible stories, memory verses, academic skills, structured learning center time, music, PE and recess. We look forward to your active participation in your child's education!



Whooo Wants to Grow as Jesus Grew?

We do! (According to Luke 2:52)

- **Academically** (in wisdom) - We will learn the alphabet and the phonetic sounds of each letter, as well as printing the letters. By learning the letter-sound combinations, we can begin to form words. Identification of the numbers 0 to 100 and the number concepts from 1 to 12, along with printing them will be learned. Colors, shapes and other concepts will also be a part of our learning.
- **Physically** (in stature) - We will have opportunities for both large and small motor activities, and we will practice good health and safety habits. There will be a learning center time and an outdoor recess both in the morning and in the afternoon. We'll also participate in PE twice a week!
- **Spiritually** (in favor with God) - Bible verses will be memorized and we will learn that the Bible is God's Word and everything in it is true. We will provide daily Bible lessons to learn about God and

the world He has made. A Christ-like character trait will be emphasized with each new unit. Once a week, we will join the kindergarten class for our own early childhood chapel where we will praise and worship God through songs, Bible stories, and activities.

- **Socially/Emotionally** (and man) - We will learn to understand our feelings as well as the feelings of others, accept authority from our teachers, follow directions and take initiative, wait patiently, play in a group while sharing and taking turns, and feel valued and competent as a unique creation of God. Each child will be taught that God has a plan for his or her life!

Our Objectives

- To create a dependable, trusting environment that encourages learning and provide a loving, warm atmosphere where children can celebrate their accomplishments.
- To provide guidance to help children develop positive relationships with adults and their peers balanced with age-appropriate expectations.
- To provide time and opportunity for children to learn to share, take turns, follow simple directions and practice problem solving.

- To provide sensory experiences that will challenge and stimulate children intellectually.
- To provide play experiences that will encourage the development of creative expression through music, art, nature, literature and games. Children learn best when engaged in active experiential learning environments.
- To provide activities that will enhance coordination and physical development.
- To provide opportunities to strengthen fine motor skills.
- To encourage verbal expression and communication with peers.

We hope that each child leaves with the belief that learning is fun!

Typical Pre-kindergarten Development

God has designed your child with a unique timetable for development. As concepts are introduced, students will master them at different rates. While encouragement is always appropriate, please relax and enjoy this special time, and let God work gloriously in your child according to His design. (For kindergarten readiness details please see the Lion Cub Handbook.)

Pre-kindergarten Schedule of Operation

The SJCS school calendar is available at www.stjosephchristian.com. School begins for all SJCS students, pre-k through twelfth grades at 8:00 a.m. daily.

- Full-day pre-k students will be dismissed at 3:00 p.m.; 11:50 a.m. on early out days.
- Half-day pre-k students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m.; 11:50 a.m. on early out days.

Children greatly benefit from an established routine in their daily schedule and arriving at school on time is an important part of that routine. Young children are often upset by arriving late and joining the class in a middle of an activity. Thank you for making every effort to be at school on time each day.



Whooo's Looking Forward to the First Day of School?

If you have a positive attitude and look forward to the first day of school, your child will probably do the same. Talk about pre-kindergarten with enthusiasm. Discuss questions or fears with your child well in advance. Share some of your "first day" experiences and build excitement by letting him or her join in the preparation by packing school supplies or picking out a new outfit. Above all, pray with your child and ask God to bless them and go before them as they move

into this new phase of childhood. Help your child know ahead of time what to expect regarding your separation from them on the first day.

Prepare your child to meet their teacher (and new friends!) on the lawn near the pre-k playground. Let them know that you will only stay a few minutes, maybe take some pictures and then say goodbye as they line up to enter the building, leaving them to enjoy their new school experience! **(Please refrain from coming inside with your child. Thanks in advance for helping us make this transition as smooth as possible for everyone.)**



Whooo Knows How to Come & Go from School?

First, please read the complete arrival/dismissal procedures in the Lion Cub Student Handbook.

All loading/unloading of pre-k students and their older siblings will be done in the circle drive near the pre-k classrooms on the east side of the building. Students may be dropped off as early as 7:40 a.m. We are blessed to have sixth grade volunteers (our Lion Cub Concierge team!) to help your child out of the car at the curb and guide them safely into their classroom. Because we need to keep the cars moving in the circle, **please refrain from talking too long or getting out of your car when dropping off your child.** If you do need to talk to the teacher directly about something important, you will need to park your

car in the parking lot and walk in with your child (please don't park in the loop).

When school begins at 8:00, the pre-k classroom doors will be locked (indicated by the red stop sign in the classroom window). If you arrive after 8:00, you will drive around to the west (office) side of the building and check in at the office where your child will receive a tardy slip. S/he may then report to class. (If you wish to walk to class with your child, you'll need to sign in outside the office and wear a name tag.)

Half-day students will be dismissed in the loop at 11:30 (11:50 on early out days). Should a student's ride not arrive by dismissal time, s/he will be taken to the office where the secretary will call the parents. There is no supervision for half-day pre-kindergarten students after dismissal.

Should you need to take your student out of school for an appointment, etc., you'll need to complete, sign, and return a prearranged absence form *at least one week in advance*. Forms are available at the website. When you come to sign the student out/in for an appointment, you must come in through the west (office) door. The pre-k doors will remain locked from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 a.m. and no one is admitted through them during that time.

At parent orientation, pre-k parents will be given a *Ride Authorization Card* listing persons who have permission to pick up students from school. Please return the completed card at back to school night. These cards hang by the door in the classroom for easy reference by the teacher. Any change from the student's regular dismissal routine will require that parents call the office or send a note with those details. This includes going home with a friend from class. To ensure the safety of our little ones, if your child is to be picked up by anyone not on the authorized list and that person is not known to the teacher, they will be asked to present a picture ID before the child will be released.

As you enter the circle drive for dismissal, always proceed slowly and cautiously, making two lines; Mrs. Dobbs's (room 101) pre-k in the outside (left or south) lane and Mrs. Price's (room 102) pre-k in the inside (right or north) lane. Please turn off your vehicle and do not block the crosswalk. When dismissing, teachers will lead the children down the line past each car. Parents, for safety's sake, *please do not call out to your child. Also, remain in your vehicle until your child comes to you.* As the teacher passes your car, you are then welcome to help your child into your vehicle. Some children worry when their parent isn't readily seen, and this system assures the children that everyone will safely reach their car eventually.

Students participating in the after-school program will remain in the classroom at dismissal time and then be escorted to the appropriate room for after-school care.



Whooo Knows What We Do Each Day?

This schedule reflects the general flow of a pre-k day. A schedule that includes more specific times will be given to parents after school starts.

Arrival Time/ Table Activities: Children arrive and are greeted at the door by their teacher or an aide. Children are encouraged to independently put bags away, hang up jackets, take their folders out, and sit at the table for an activity.

Circle Time: Children are encouraged to welcome each other to school, say the Pledge of Allegiance, pray, sing songs, share announcements, and do group activities.

Instructional Time: Children will be engaged in phonics lessons and activity books at their table.

Center Time: Children will have free and structured play at learning centers in the room. These purposeful centers are focused around the "theme" and will provide opportunities for the children to explore concepts that have been discussed throughout the units. Students are encouraged to engage in learning according to their own interests and

learning levels. The areas are changed frequently to reflect themes and stimulate interest.

Morning Snack Time: Children participate in serving themselves a small morning snack, which incorporates measuring, counting, making choices, and having conversations at the table.

Outside Recess Time: Children will go outdoors if weather permits, to socialize, and engage in active play. This includes running, climbing, and the use of equipment such as balls and hula hoops.

Circle Time: Children gather on the floor to listen to a book, discuss theme related activities, perform finger plays, and sing songs.

Instructional Time: Children will be engaged in math lessons and activity books at their table.

Circle Time: Children will hear the Bible story and recite the Bible verse, and discuss a Christian character trait.

Transition Time: Children who are half-day will prepare to go home. They are encouraged to put papers in their "Home" folders and pack their backpacks. The other children will help clean up the room and wash the tables.

Prepare for Lunch: While the half-day children are dismissed, the other children will wash their hands and prepare for lunch.

Lunch and Clean up Time: Children get their lunches, whether they brought it or bought it. This is a great time for social interaction and to practice good manners.

Rest Time: Children relax their minds and bodies through soothing music and quiet time.

Wake up Time/ Story Time

Outside Recess Time

Arts/Craft Time Children will be engaged in an art project/craft that reinforces something learned that day.

Center Time: Children will have free and structured play at learning centers in the room.

Good-Bye Time: The day's activities are reviewed and highlights of the next day's activities are shared. Independence in packing backpacks and dressing skills is stressed.

Dismissal Time: Children will be walked out to their cars. Children in the after-school program will be taken to the appropriate room.

Whooo Knows Our Classroom Rules?

“Do unto others what you would have them do unto you.” Luke 6:31

-  Talk quietly and always speak the truth
-  Look at the teacher
-  Listen and follow directions
-  Raise our hands to speak
-  Walk when inside

Discipline

See the Lion Cub Student Handbook.

Whooo Knows What to Wear?



God is glorified when we conduct ourselves in good taste and modesty and when our dress is appropriate for the occasion.

The pre-k dress code is designed with the active routine of school life in mind. **Please do not send your child in clothes that could become “ruined.” We use markers, paint, etc. on a daily basis.**

A change of clothes should be in your child’s cubby at all times. Please label the spare pants, shirt, underwear and socks with your

child's name. Place the spare clothes in a gallon sized zip-lock bag with your child's name written on the bag.

Points to remember:

- Please avoid clothing with logo, advertising, team and character-wear (like Disney, Marvel, athletic teams, etc.).
- Belts not required.
- Ball caps/hats are not acceptable.
- Consider wearing shorts under skirts/dresses for modesty while playing/sitting on floor.
- Dress students in layers to keep them comfortable as classroom temperatures are cool (68-72 degrees) and students warm up at recess.
- The teacher may announce days when students will have an opportunity to dress in a special manner to coincide with something they are studying (Hats for the letter "H") or for school spirit week, etc. Parents may check the teacher's weekly letter for information about special dress days.

| <u>Clothing item:</u> | <u>Color:</u> | <u>Style:</u> | <u>Not acceptable:</u> |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Shirts/Blouses | Any | Button-down Polo T-shirt | Logos, ads, team or character-wear; sleeveless/spaghetti |
| Sweaters/ Sweatshirts | Any | Pullover Cardigan | Hoodies |
| Acceptable shirt/blouse must be worn underneath sweaters/swtshirts | | | |
| Pants | Any | Jeans Slacks | Athletic |

| | | |
|---|------------------|----------------------|
| Shorts | Jeans Walking | Athletic |
| Short length 4" above kneecap or longer | | |
| Skorts/Capris | Any | Athletic |
| Skort length 4" above kneecap or longer | | |
| Dresses/Skirts/Jumpers | Any | Sleeveless/spaghetti |
| Length 4" above kneecap or longer | | |
| No part of tummy/back may be exposed. | | |
| Shoes | Any | Any closed style |
| Sandals, Mules | | |
| Velcro closures make preschool life easier! | | |
| Socks required. | | |
| Heels no greater than 1". | | |



Whooo Knows What We'll Eat?

Snacks

Pre-kindergarten students will enjoy a healthy snack mid-morning each day. Parents are asked to provide these snacks on a rotating schedule (provided in the "yellow pages" folder).

When it is your turn you will:

- See your turn scheduled on the yellow paper.
- Watch for your child to bring home the "Snack Sack" the Friday before your scheduled week.

- Send enough snacks in the Snack Sack on Monday for the whole class for the entire week.
- You may send different kinds of snacks, as long as there is enough of the same snack for each child on a given day (keep in mind, portion sizes will be small - $\frac{1}{2}$ piece of fruit, $\frac{1}{2}$ breakfast bar, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry cereal; so, one box of cheese crackers, for example, will go a long way!)
 - **Please do not divide snacks ahead of time**; we will learn by measuring in class!
 - Only unopened, prepackaged, store-bought (not homemade) snacks may be served.
 - Healthy snacks only; breakfast bars, popcorn, cheerios, crackers, string cheese, fruit, etc.
 - Avoid excessively sweet or sugary items.
 - No messy snacks.
 - No snacks which require forks or spoons (like applesauce).

We will drink water with our snack.

Lunch

Full-day pre-kindergarten students will bring their lunch to school and eat in their classroom under the direction of the teacher. Student

tables are cleaned before and after eating with disinfectant cleaner. Students are required to thoroughly wash hands before eating.

Hot lunches (i.e. pizza, hot dogs, etc.) may be available on certain days of the week, after the Labor Day weekend. Specific information regarding hot lunch choices will be made available shortly after the beginning of the school year. Students who wish to purchase a hot lunch must bring the exact money (we do not make change) in a sealed envelope marked with their name, what they are ordering, and amount enclosed. **Please do not send lunch money and milk money in the same envelope because it goes to two different offices.** Orders for hot lunches will be taken by 8:30 each morning.

Pre-kindergarten students do not have access to a refrigerator or a microwave. Parents must pack an icepack with things that need to be kept cold; things that need to be kept warm must be in a thermos.

If a pre-k student forgets their lunch, we will call a parent. If the parent is unable to bring a lunch to school, peanut butter and crackers will be provided.

Milk

White or chocolate milk is available for purchase at a cost of .50 per carton. We use a "milk punch card" system; here's how it works:

- Each milk punch card is \$10; good for 20 milks.

- Always send exact money (we do not make change) in a Ziploc bag that includes a note with your child's name, number of punch cards you wish to buy (\$10 each), and amount enclosed. **Please do not send lunch money and milk punch card money in the same envelope because it goes to two different offices.**
- We will keep the card at school to use, one punch per milk purchased, and send it home when all the punches are used so that you will know it is time to buy a new card.

Please alert us to any milk allergy or restriction in choice of drink; otherwise your child may choose each day.



Whooo Loves Recess?

Please dress your child adequately to play outdoors, according to the weather. *We will* have outside recess in cold weather and mittens and hats will be needed. Children need fresh air playtime, and we will follow school guidelines regarding time spent outdoors.



Whooo Needs Rest?

Your child is expected to lie quietly during rest time. We understand there are times when doctor appointments are inevitable during the day. We ask that you try to

make your appointments so that they do not interfere with our preschool day. There are many early dismissals throughout the school year that you can take advantage of to schedule appointments. *However, if it is necessary to pick or return your child during the day, we particularly ask that you avoid doing it during rest time.*

If your child is used to sleeping with a small blanket, you may send one to school for rest time. Your child will leave it in their cubby until it is time to rest. We will send the blankets home every other Friday for you to wash and return on the following school day.

Toileting Needs

All children must be potty trained to attend the SJCS pre-kindergarten. We understand that occasional accidents are normal at this age, but your child must be able to use the bathroom and care for their own toileting needs and not need diapers or pull-ups.



Parent/Teacher Communication

Communication between school and home is essential to your student's success! Parents are strongly encouraged to establish a habit of thoroughly reading the teacher's notes:

DAILY:

Each day, your child will bring home a folder (provided by the school) in their backpack. The folder contains a "Keep It At Home" pocket on one side where we will put things for you to keep at home and a "Bring It Back" pocket on the other side where you will put signed items and notes you wish to return to us. Please check your child's folder every day. Look for notes, papers, student's work etc. that may be in the folder.

During naptime each day, your child's teacher will send a short email to all parents letting you know of the happenings of that day.

WEEKLY:

We will email a classroom letter each Friday highlighting news about what we have learned, upcoming events and supplies we may need for the next week's lessons. Parents also receive a weekly email from the school office which contains important school-wide announcements.

MONTHLY:

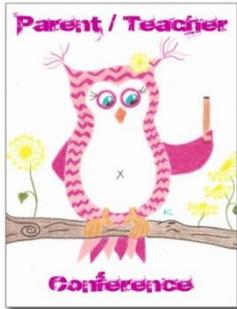
At the beginning of each month, we will send a calendar of events.

If you still have questions, please feel free to contact your child's teacher with a handwritten note or by email (preferred).

Assessment

Informal assessment is constantly going on in the classroom, especially in the first month. This will help the teacher meet specific needs that may not be addressed in the regular curriculum. At the end of each quarter, a screening will be done to ensure progress and identify areas where children need extra help. These assessments, along with a list of objectives, will help both parents and teachers determine kindergarten readiness.

Student work will be kept in a portfolio throughout the year to be sent home at the end of each quarter for parents to view, and discussed with parents during conferences. The portfolio is a purposeful, carefully selected collection of a student's work and related material that represents the student's activities, accomplishments, and achievements in one or more school settings. It documents the stages of learning and provides a progressive record of student growth. Please return your student's portfolio the following week.



Parent/Teacher Conferences

School-wide parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year in October and March. These are important times to ask questions and to see your child's progress and every family is asked to attend. A reminder will be communicated through the teacher's weekly letter and the school's email announcements. Appointments may be made by calling the office.

Parent Visitation/Participation

We strive to keep classroom interruptions to a minimum and since even a brief visit disrupts continuity of thought, especially for younger students, we ask that parents show respect for teachers and students by **refraining from visiting the classroom unless previously arranged with the teacher. No drop-ins please.**

Occasionally, a parent may need to bring a forgotten item (backpack, lunch, etc.) *Please leave these items in the office.* The secretary will see that they are delivered to your student.

Our pre-kindergarten will offer a variety of special classroom activities and celebrations which parents are invited (encouraged!) to attend. Your support of school activities makes your child feel important and sends the message that you value school. By reading the

daily, weekly, and monthly letters, you can find out when special activities are taking place and make plans to join us!

We may also ask for volunteers throughout the year to help with various classroom activities and projects. You may want to volunteer to be a guest speaker if you have something you can add to a specific topic we are learning.

Always remember when visiting school, you must enter the building through the west (office) entrance, sign in, and receive a visitor badge. For security purposes, this badge must be worn at all times. (If you forget, you may be stopped and asked to return to the office and sign in. We take our students' safety very seriously!)

Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF)

Each parent who enrolls their child(ren) at SJCS becomes a member of SJCS's Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF). The PTF Room Parent (see Lion Cub handbook), is a parent volunteer who will need your help to

- organize a "class get together" before the end of first quarter.
- organize class parties for Christmas and Valentine's Day.
- assist the teacher with any additional parties, field trips, and classroom needs (like washing toys, preparing art supplies, etc.).



Illness/Emergency Information

The office will contact you if your child becomes ill at school. If we cannot reach you, we will use the emergency contacts that you have provided. **Please contact the office immediately with any changes in phone numbers/address.** If for some reason an emergency should arise, we must be able to contact you quickly.

Children showing any of the following symptoms should not be brought to school or if at school, will be sent home:

- Fever of 100 or more degrees during the past 24 hours
- Complaints of stomach ache, pains, or vomiting
- Diarrhea (2 loose stools will result in your child being sent home)
- Infection or redness in eyes, ears or throat
- Any unexplained rash or contagious skin infection
- Severe cold symptoms, chronic cough, or croup
- Headache, earaches, stiff neck or general discomfort
- Unusual behavior such as excessive crying, loss of appetite or listlessness

Germs are easily spread among young children. Children are more at risk of spreading or contracting illnesses than adults because they are constantly hugging and touching each other and the toys they share. To maintain a healthy classroom environment, please exercise

good judgment in keeping your child home when ill. **Your child must be fever-free (without medication) and free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Please see the Lion Cub Handbook for information about how medication is handled at school.



Whooo's Having a Birthday?

Birthdays are special occasions for younger children.

If your child wishes (this is optional), s/he may bring in small gifts or store-bought treats to share with the class on his/her birthday or half birthday. Because we want half-day students to join in these celebrations, we will sing "Happy Birthday" and pass out gifts/treats at snack time. Please be mindful of our healthy snack guidelines and avoid sending excessively sugary birthday treats (cupcakes/cookies with thick icing for example).

Field Trips

Pre-kindergarteners will enjoy a couple of theme related educational field trips each year. Due to the unique circumstances of transporting pre-k aged children, we ask that you please carefully note the following:

- Each pre-k student will be transported to/from a field trip by his/her parent. For liability reasons, carpooling is not allowed and we will not ride busses.
- We will provide plenty of notice so that you can make arrangements. If a parent cannot go, you may have a family member drive as long as you notify us with the necessary information ahead of time.
- You may not send your child with another parent in the class.
- In the unlikely event that parents absolutely cannot make arrangements to go, the student will have to miss the field trip.
- Siblings will not be allowed to go on field trips.

Please see the Lion Cub Handbook for additional information about school field trips.



Holiday Parties

Pre-kindergarten through sixth grades celebrate Christmas and Valentine's Day with a class party. Our room parent will plan the parties and may ask you to help. Your child's teacher may also ask for help with our commemoration of Easter. These classroom parties provide an opportunity for students to enjoy celebrating with classmates, and parents are welcome to attend (watch the weekly letter from your student's teacher for specifics). However,

we do ask that parents not bring younger siblings to classroom parties. Classroom space is limited, and, more importantly, it is nearly impossible for parents to share this special time with their student if they are supervising younger siblings.

Parents should be aware that it is very awkward for teachers/room parents when a parent or two ignore this direction and show up at a class gathering with younger siblings in tow. **Thank you** in advance for making other arrangements for your littler ones during classroom parties.

Christmas Program

Pre-k students will participate in the elementary Christmas program. You will be contacted about any costumes or props needed. You will also be notified well in advance of the date of the program.



Whooo Knows How to Say, "Great Job?"

The Last Day of School

There will be a formal presentation of awards on the last day of pre-k. A short program will be performed and a reception held in their honor. If for any reason, it seems your child would benefit from another year of pre-k, s/he will still participate in the festivities with no mention made of the next year.

THANK YOU for entrusting your precious little one to us for their early education! We consider it a privilege and blessing to share this experience with your family!