



ST JOHN PAUL II
EARLY LEARNING CENTER
The Diocese of St Augustine

127 Stone Mason Way, Bldg. 100
Ponte Vedra, Florida 32081

904-800-2445 † www.stjp2elc.net

Family Handbook
2022-2023

Our Mission Statement

The mission of St. John Paul II Early Learning Center is to serve God by providing His children with a quality education in a positive, nurturing community while also teaching them to love Jesus and the Catholic faith.

St. John Paul II Early Learning Center
is operated as a ministry of the Diocese of St. Augustine.

MOST REV. Erik Pohlmeier

Eleventh Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine

DEACON SCOTT J. CONWAY

Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of St. Augustine

Caroline Vickery

Center Director

Christina Carolino

Center Manager

WELCOME

Welcome to St. John Paul II 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 positive and successful as possible. Please review it and keep it for reference, as it will answer many of your questions.

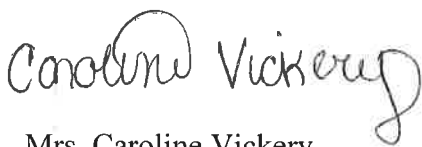
A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to St. John Paul 2 Early Learning Center! We are delighted that you have chosen a commitment to the Catholic education.

The Family Handbook reflects the policies of St. John Paul 2 Early Learning Center for the 2022-2023 year. Please read this document carefully, then print and sign the agreement in the back of this book and return to the main office. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. John Paul 2 Early Learning Center during the 2022-2023 year.

On behalf of the staff of St. John Paul II Early Learning Center, thank you for choosing St. John Paul 2 Early Learning Center and allowing us to become a part of your family.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Caroline Vickery". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Mrs. Caroline Vickery

Table of Contents

Our Mission Statement.....	2
Section 1 – About St. John Paul II ELC.....	6
<i>OPEN DOOR POLICY.....</i>	<i>6</i>
Section 2 – Fees.....	6
<i>TUITION.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNTS.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>LATE PAYMENT POLICY.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>REGISTRATION FEES.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>CHECKS AND RETURNED CHECK FEES</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>HOLIDAYS.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>ATTENDANCE</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>VACATION.....</i>	<i>7</i>
Section 3 - Attendance At St. John Paul II ELC.....	7
<i>ARRIVAL AT ST. JOHN PAUL II EARLY LEARNING CENTER</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>SPECIAL REQUESTS.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>ABSENCES.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>ILLNESSES.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>TERMINATION/WITHDRAWAL FROM ST. JOHN PAUL II ELC</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>PICK-UP POLICY.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>AUTHORIZED PICK UP/EMERGENCY PICK UP.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR VPK</i>	<i>9</i>
Section 4 – Parent Involvement	9
<i>PARENT/GUARDIAN VOLUNTEERING</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>TAKE HOME ACTIVITIES</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES</i>	<i>10</i>
Section 5 – Health & Safety	11
<i>CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER</i>	<i>11</i>

<i>CHILD HEALTH SERVICES</i>	11
<i>CHILD HEALTH EMERGENCIES</i>	11
<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>	14
<i>STANDARDS OF CONDUCT</i>	14
<i>VISITOR POLICY</i>	14
Section 6 – Classroom Activities.....	14
<i>CURRICULUM</i>	14
<i>SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT</i>	15
Section 7 – Receipt Of Parent Handbook, Releases & Statutes	16

Section 1 – About St. John Paul II ELC

OPEN DOOR POLICY

St. John Paul II 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 by using the security system.

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 a 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 Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.

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 attend 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 and the main office. We accept check and credit/debit cards for registration fees and tuition payments.

MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNTS

St. John Paul II Early Learning Center offers a discount of 10% for families with more than one child enrolling at the ELC. This only applies to full-time, year-round enrollment only.

LATE PAYMENT POLICY

Monthly tuition is due on the 1st of the month and is considered late if not paid by 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 \$200.00 non-refundable registration fee is payable at the time of enrollment and annually. Registration fees are nonrefundable.

CHECKS AND RETURNED CHECK FEES

Checks are gladly accepted if they are drawn on a local bank and the 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 and an additional late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed for children who are not picked up by 5:30 P.M. for full or part-time students and 12:05pm or 3:05 for VPK Half-Day or Lunch Bunch students. Services can be terminated if this continues to be a problem. If a child is not picked up by 5:45 PM and every attempt to reach an authorized adult has failed, St. John Paul II Early Learning Center will be forced to contact the Jacksonville 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 main office.

ATTENDANCE

Because you are paying for your child's spot in our program, full tuition is charged each week.

VACATION

Children are allowed to take one week vacation each year after completing one full calendar year. Written notice is required at least one week prior to the planned vacation.

Section 3 - Attendance at St. John Paul II ELC

ARRIVAL AT ST. JOHN PAUL II EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Please bring your child(ren) directly to their classroom. If a parent wishes to speak with a teacher, he/she must schedule a conference. We ask that all children be dropped off no later than 9:00am. If you need to do a late drop-off, please call the main office.

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 the 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 member, 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. John Paul II Early Learning Center if a child will not be in attendance that day. This notification will assist us to maintain appropriate child staff ratios more effectively. 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 Director if their child has a communicable disease so that families 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. JOHN PAUL II ELC

The center reserves the right to terminate childcare services at any time, with or without cause. Childcare 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, or refusal to follow center policies.

Two weeks written notice is required from the parent(s) 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 the 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 main 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

The parent or authorized adult is responsible for supervision of the child once the child has been signed out of the center. Parents are requested to handle any business matters (payment, conferences with the Director, etc.) after checking the child out of the ELC.

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 the people 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 registration form on file in the office.
- Individuals must be at least 18 years of age 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. John Paul II Early Learning Center does not have the right to deny the parent access to their child, but the staff will contact the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office 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 earlier than 8:45 AM and no later than 9:00 AM daily. Child must participate in VPK activities until 12:00 PM daily.

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/she will be dismissed from the VPK program. Absences and tardiness may be excused under "extraordinary circumstances" if appropriate documentation is provided. These include:

- Hospitalization of the child.
- Illness of the student or the illness of the parent or guardian that requires the ill person to remain at home.
- Death of a member of the student's, parents', or guardians' immediate family.
- Court ordered visitation.
- Parent or guardian's military deployment.

A child may not miss more than 26 days per year for illness. A child may not miss more than 35 days per year. 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. John Paul II 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 always apply to all volunteers. Siblings of children in the program may not attend when a parent is volunteering in the classroom.

TAKE HOME ACTIVITIES

Although St. John Paul II 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 toddlers and preschool children. Other conferences may be scheduled as needed or as requested by parent or teacher.

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 equal.
- 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 their child’s class.
- 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.

Section 5 – Health & Safety

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

St. John Paul II 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 Diocese of St. Augustine Office of the Superintendent 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. John Paul II 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, if 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 will be called.
- The parent will be asked to review the accident form and provide a signature.

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.
- 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)

- 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.

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 the 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 situation will be based upon consideration of the situation and the individual child. All staff, volunteers, and parents will use the positive guidance methods listed below:

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

1. Plan to prevent behavior problems. Anticipate problems that may occur and provide intervention or directions in advance
2. Establish clear and simple rules that are age appropriate. Consistent reminders help reinforce limits. Rules should be stated in a positive way.
3. Be a model for the desired behavior.
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. Positive environment. 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.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

St. John Paul II 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 always adhered to.

- 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.
- Always supervise children. 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 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/vaping on the premises and during all center or parent activities. St. John Paul II Early Learning Center adheres to a "Smoke Free Environment."
- Refrain from illegal activities while on the premises or in attendance at center activities. St. John Paul II Early Learning Center prohibits theft, firearms, alcohol, and illegal substances on the premises and during all center or parent activities.
- 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 Director.

Section 6 – Classroom Activities

CURRICULUM

Preschool teachers will use the God Made the World, God Made Everything – Loyola Press, Wee Learn, and the Catholic Icing curriculum to plan specific activities that promote school readiness. The curriculum will be based on helping children to attain positive school readiness outcomes.

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 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.



ST JOHN PAUL II
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. John Paul II Family Handbook and agree to abide by the policies.

Student's Name _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Director Signature _____ Date _____