

Pre-Kindergarten Parent-Student Handbook



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SAINT BRENDAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Mission Statement

Anchored in faith, belief, and tradition,
Saint Brendan Catholic School
is committed to providing a Christ-centered environment
that serves our spiritual, academic, and social needs
as we navigate our faith journey together.

Belief Statements

We believe that a Catholic atmosphere and opportunities
to pray as a school are a priority.

We believe that an environment of respect is facilitated through
learning and applying Gospel values.

We believe that, as educators, it is our role to model, teach, and foster
the image and likeness of Christ in our daily teaching.

We believe that parents are the primary educators and should
support and instill the mission of the school.

We believe that students should be encouraged to reach their full potential and
become life-long learners through opportunities for collaboration, critical
thinking, communications and creativity.

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The policies in this handbook are subject to change and are not all-inclusive. It is the right of the principal, after consultation with the pastor, to make final decisions about an issue/incident that may not be specifically stated in these pages and/or the policies in the Pre-Kindergarten Parent Handbook and the Pre-Kindergarten-8th Grade Parent Student Handbook.

Philosophy & Goals of the Pre-Kindergarten Program

St. Brendan Pre-Kindergarten program strives to provide a creative learning environment for the young learner. Interaction with other children and adults, in an atmosphere of Christian love and concern, will help to promote the healthy development of each child. Learning experiences and play activities will help to encourage spiritual, intellectual, social and physical growth.

St. Brendan Pre-Kindergarten program helps the child:

1. to develop a positive self-image and acknowledge his/her self-worth
2. to develop basic social skills
3. to increase independence
4. to develop a trust in adults other than his/her parents
5. to enjoy being part of a group and accept the need to share and cooperate
6. to respect the rights of others and uphold his/her own rights in positive ways
7. to develop the desire to learn and promote self-motivation
8. to become aware of the fact the he/she is a child of God and will grow in his love

PRE-KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM

(In alignment with the State of Ohio and the Diocese of Cleveland)

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St. Brendan Pre-Kindergarten Program promotes the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, physical and social growth of young children. Our program focuses on literacy, math, self-regulation, and social activities. Students will participate in specialized classes such as Art, Etymology, Library, Maker Space (STEM learning), Music Class, and Physical Education.

RELIGION READINESS is an integral part of the Catholic Preschool Program. It is the preparation time for more formal instruction in the years ahead. Religious readiness is the development of a positive self-image in relationship to a loving God. This basis for a deep love of God comes from the examples set by the family and spiritual life of the parish community. A child's sense of God comes from the warm atmosphere of love and acceptance in the pre-kindergarten environment where the child learns about God's wonderful world. Classroom prayer and para-liturgies prepare him/her to participate in the celebrations of the Church.

LANGUAGE is the development of communication skills that enable a child to share his/her world with others. These skills include listening, speaking and thinking. Transferring thoughts into words is the primary skill upon which future language development is based. Learning experiences that promote an understanding of the sense of self, help the student express his/her thought and feelings in various ways. An awareness of the five senses will stimulate a student's curiosity as to the different ways his/her body receives information about life around him/her. Visual discrimination and memory, and auditory discrimination and memory are important readiness skills that can be taught through play activities. 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 and writing classroom stories about field trips, events, and etcetera.

MATH READINESS at the preschool level involves the development of cognitive skills. This knowledge comes from the understanding of colors: shapes, application, classification, forming sets and recognizing numerals. These concepts are taught through manipulatives, learning centers, trial and error, and play experience.

READING READINESS is part of the learning process in pre-kindergarten. Students learn to recognize letters and words that make up the stories that they hear. Through reading-readiness they also learn to listen, put events in order and predict the outcome of the story.

MOTOR SKILLS are a vital part of the young child's development and are crucial to the learning skills he/she will need in the future. The pre-kindergartener learns with his/her body. These motor skills are developed through teacher directed games and exercises as well as free play.

Gross Motor Skills:

Body coordination, as appropriate to the child's physical development, is enhanced through large muscle activities of walking, running, jumping, hopping, skipping, and etcetera. Participating in various physical activities attains hand-eye coordination. Rhythm and movement provide an outlet of creative expression and the joy of using the body in dance, games and organized play.

Fine Motor Skills:

Eye hand coordination is developed through manipulating clay, stringing beads, pasting, crayoning, painting, pouring, lacing, using scissors, and much more. Dexterity and strength of the small muscles are developing skills that enhance reading readiness. Use of the natural hand preference is observed and encouraged, although hand dominance is not achieved yet. Eye tracking is another fine motor activity that promotes the left-to-right progression skill required for reading readiness.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT includes - but is not limited to separating from the parent with relative ease; caring for own belongings and respecting others.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT includes - but is not limited to - cooperative play, sharing, following directions, initiating conversations and play situations with peers; entering into group activities; developing a positive relationship with teachers, caring about others.

ART at the pre-kindergarten level is joyful, creative experience full of self-expression. Creative art activities will come from use of manipulatives that develop fine motor skills: clay, paint, paste, crayons and other mediums are used. Also, sand and water play are used to encourage multi-sensory learning.

MUSIC is a channel for creative expression in two ways: The manner in which sounds are communicated by the music-maker and the emotional and physical response that sound evokes from the listener. Singing; listening to music; using rhythm instruments and making instruments; dancing and other rhythmic activities are ways of developing a love and appreciation for music.

PLAY is a child's work. The value of free play indoors and outdoors cannot be overstated. Opportunities for play occur as the child enters the classroom at the beginning of the session and after structured learning activities. Outdoor play will be a part of the daily schedule, whenever the weather is appropriate.

Management of Communicable Diseases

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Parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up your child if he/she comes to school and is not able to participate due to being mildly ill. This is for the benefit of your child and the others in the program. Please follow these guidelines when your child is ill.

- Please keep your child home 24 hours after the break of a fever / free of symptoms from illness (without taking over the counter remedies such as Tylenol and the like).
- If your child is sick during the night or before school, please keep him/her home.
- If you suspect a strep throat and have a culture taken, please do not send your child to school, until you receive the result of the culture.

If a child has an auxiliary temperature of 100• or more, skin rash, diarrhea, sore throat, severe coughing causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping cough sound, difficult or rapid breathing, yellowish skin or eyes, conjunctivitis (pink eye), unusually dark urine or grey or white stool, stiff neck, vomiting, or evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation, or sore throat/difficulty swallowing, the parent/guardian will be called.

The child will be isolated and monitored by a St. Brendan School staff member, in the nurse’s clinic where there is a cot available or in the school office, until the parent/guardian arrives to take the child home. Children may return to school after symptoms are gone or with a note from the doctor, depending upon the illness. Please inform us if your child becomes ill with a contagious illness. Notes will be sent home with the other children to notify parents/guardians of contact and incubation of communicable disease.

Medication Policy

Saint Brendan School cannot administer medication to a student without prior approval and documentation. The intent of this policy is to provide for the safety of your child. We need to be aware of possible side effects or reactions to the medication. In the event of a serious reaction, we need to be prepared. Your cooperation is essential to ensure the well-being of your child.

It is best that a child’s medication schedule can be arranged before and after school and, therefore, taken at home. When it is not possible, the proper forms and required information need to be completed before medication may be dispensed to your child. If a prescribed medication needs to be administered during school hours, both the attending physician and the parent must complete the proper form.

All medications left at school for administrating, must be kept in the original container/bottle and labeled with the student’s name. Medication is stored in the medication lock-box in the school office. A log is kept in the school office with student names, their medications, the prescription, and when the medications are administered.

The persons to administer the medication will include: the school nurse on the day she is in the building, lead Pre-K teacher, the school secretary/principal (who administers medication for the K-8 students on the days that the school nurse is not in the building).

Faculty and staff receive training each year, before school begins, on how to administer an epi-pen and an inhaler allergy awareness, as well as basic first-aid.

A List of the Most Common Communicable Diseases

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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 7 days.

Measles (Rubeola)

Cold in head. Feverishness, watery eyes, sneezing. Blotchy red rash appears on forehead, and body. Incubation period is between 7-14 days. Isolation Period of at least 5 days from the time the rash appears.

German Measles (Rubella 3-day measles)

Mild measles, symptoms (blotchy, fine red rash on face and abdomen). Swollen glands particularly in the back of the neck. Incubation period between 14-21 days. Communicable for 48 hours after the rash appears.

Mumps

Fever. Swelling on the side of the face and jaws as glands become swollen and tender. Incubation period is between 12-26 days. Isolation period until swelling of glands has disappeared and the patient has recovered.

Scarlet Fever

Fever, headache, sore throat, vomiting. A fine rash appears with fever.

Streptococcal

Incubation period is between 2-5 days. Isolation for 48-hours after the start of antibiotic treatment. May be readmitted to school upon receipt of a written statement that the child has been treated. The name of the physician should be included.

Impetigo

Blister-like lesions, which later develop into, crusted pus-like sores, which are irregular in outline. Incubation is 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.

Conjunctivitis ("Pink Eye")

Redness and swelling of the membranes of one or both eyes with burning or itching, sensitivity to light, and discharge. Immediate medical treatment. Exclusion from school until clinical recovery. Communicable during course of infection and until discharge from infected mucous membranes cease.

SKIN ERUPTION (ringworm)

Any child with an undiagnosed skin eruption must leave school. Students may be return to school upon receipt of a written statement from a doctor, of what the diagnosis was, and that the child has been treated. The aforementioned is a directive from the Ohio Department of Education

Additional Information

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After School Care Program (ASC)

Full-day pre-kindergarten students may participate in the After school care program. You, as a parent, may choose to use this program one day a year, every day during the year or any number of days in between. The after-school program will be conducted until 6:00 p.m. on days' school is in session (except for Holy Thursday and the last day of the school year).

A registration fee must be paid and required paperwork needs to be completed prior to a child being admitted to the after- school care program. Contact the school office for ASC information.

Good-Will Policy: Families who may need to use the After School Care Program for an unplanned or emergency situation will be charged the hourly rate of \$5.00 per hour. This needs to be paid at the time the service is provided.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for academic success.

Parents are asked to contact the school office by 8:30am to report an absence.

Calamity Days

In the event that school is cancelled due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances you will be contacted through the Option C emergency alert system and/or by tuning into a major television station.

Child Custody

Court documents, pertaining to custody, must be on file in the school office. Unless the decree indicates otherwise, school communications will be sent home to the custodial parent.

Custodial parents should understand that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-custodial parent's right to access to records, the non-custodial parent has a right to the same access as the custodial parent. We will, unless instructed by a Court Order, release such records upon request to the non-custodial parent. "Records" include official transcripts, report cards, health records, referrals for special services, and communications regarding major disciplinary actions.

It does not include daily class work and papers, or routine communications sent through the children to the home of residence. In these cases, the custodial parent is asked to cooperate with the school and share this information directly with the non-custodial parent. This avoids time-consuming duplication of services.

Regarding parent conferences in all custody situations: it is preferred and will be the general procedure that one conference appointment be scheduled 'jointly' if both parents wish to be present. A joint conference further insures that both parents are given the same information at the same time, thereby avoiding misunderstanding, and misinterpretations.

Every effort will be made to keep communications open with both parents while at the same time avoiding duplication of services and excessive demands on the teacher's time.

Discipline

Student's disruptive behavior will be addressed in a respectful manner that helps the student learn and grow. The teacher/aide will use techniques that will encourage the positive and discipline with dignity when it is needed. In order to help the students, learn this process, the following guidelines are in place:

- Assist students with making clear and concise rules and limits;
- Faculty anticipate and redirect inappropriate behaviors;
- Faculty remind students of expectations, rules and limits;
- Faculty help children use words to express anger, resolve conflicts and express needs and desires;
- Faculty will assist students in the conflict resolution process;

- Students are spoken to in a friendly but firm voice when necessary;
- Faculty may remove a student from an activity if inappropriate behaviors persist and help the child to find an appropriate activity to engage in;
- If a student physically hurts another student, he/she will be removed from the activity, the hurt student will be comforted and those involved will be assisted in the conflict resolution process and the parents will be informed at the end of the day.
- A conference will be held with the parents if serious inappropriate behaviors continue.

Discipline Policy C1-C10 per State of Ohio

The following apply to all persons on the premises:

- ❖ There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.
- ❖ No physical restraints 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 that the child may regain control.
- ❖ No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, box, or a similar cubicle.
- ❖ No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself, or his family, or other verbal abuse.
- ❖ Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep or for toileting accidents.
- ❖ Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame or frighten a child.
- ❖ Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ The school shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the pre-kindergarten program.
- ❖ The school's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows: No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.

Dismissal from Pre-Kindergarten

The Pastor or Principal reserves the right to dismiss a student from pre-kindergarten if we cannot meet the needs of the child. Before dismissal, all attempts will be made to work with your child to meet his/her needs. A problem-solving meeting will be held with the principal, teacher, parents, and any other agencies requested to help develop a plan to resolve the problem and best meet the needs of the student within a specified time limit. If the problem cannot be resolved and the child's needs are not being met, the child will be dismissed from Saint Brendan Pre-Kindergarten.

Drop Off/Pick Up

Vehicles will line up along the curb in front of the school. The teacher/aide will meet each car and escort that child in/out of the school building and from/to their individual vehicle.

SAFETY FIRST: The person picking up or dropping off your child must be registered to do so on your child's registration paperwork. Changes must be in writing and turned into the school office. Anyone showing up to pick up your child who is not on the list will be denied, you will be called and the child kept at the school until you can pick them up.

Dress Code

Tops:

- Solid red or white short or long sleeved polo shirt.
- Solid red or white sweatshirts, sweaters or school spirit wear may be worn.

Bottoms:

- September-October/May – navy blue shorts (boys/girls) or skorts/skirts (girls)
- November-April – navy blue pants (boys/girls) or skirts (girls) with a solid red or white polo shirt

Shoes

- loafers, saddle shoes or the like or solid color tennis shoes. Please no shoes that light up or have characters on them.

Socks

- White, red, or blue socks with shorts, skorts, skirts
- Dark socks with pants
- Girls may wear tights with their skirts.

Jewelry

- For safety reasons, avoid jewelry except for post earrings for the girls.

Grievances

Statement regarding policy for seeking reconciliation of personal grievances.

The pastor is the person ultimately responsible for the administration of the parish school. This responsibility is shared with the school principal. Should a situation arise concerning a personal grievance, the following steps are to be taken in seeking reconciliation.

When a grievance arises between a parent and a teacher, they are to first meet to settle the issue. If either party feels the issue has not solved the problem, it should be referred to the principal. Then, the parent, teacher and principal will meet. If after this step has been taken, and the problem is still not resolved any of the parties may refer the issue to the pastor. However, at each level all persons should be present to assure that all sides of the issue are given a hearing and can be answered.

On this third level of reconciliation, any of the persons involved may request the presence of two additional parties. These are to be agreeable to all people involved; pastor, principal, teacher and parents.

Questions and concerns may be directed to the Ohio Department of Education regarding common communicable disease policies, grievances or other policies stated in the parent handbook. (1.614.466.0224)

Handbook

Policies not specifically stated in the Pre-K handbook may be found in the All school PK-8th Grade Parent-Student handbook which is more comprehensive.

Healthchek

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
- earing 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>

Incident Reports

In the event your child is injured at school; an incident report will be filled out by the supervising teacher and kept on file, in a log. Depending on the nature of the accident, parents/guardians will be contacted (erring on the side of caution). A copy of the report may be sent home.

Nutrition and Snacks

Parents are responsible for providing a daily nutritious snack for their child. Please avoid snacks with nuts due to nut allergies. Nutritious snacks include but are not limited to:

*Fruit *Vegetables *Cheese *Raisons *Yogurt *Cereal/granola bars *Juice

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Conferences will be scheduled twice during the pre-kindergarten year: one the first semester and one the second semester. Conferences are available upon request at any time during the school year.

Safety Procedures

The faculty and staff are trained, annually, on safety protocols by the North Olmsted Police Department in ALICE (intruder alert) and the school nurse on school-related medical concerns. St. Brendan School follows the mandates by the State of Ohio for required safety drills. Fire, tornado, rapid and intruder drills are practiced throughout the year. Most drills are given with advanced notice so pre-kindergarten can be properly prepared by their teacher.

St. Brendan Pre-Kindergarten Program

Students must be four years old on or before September 30th

Class is held Monday-Friday

There is a half day option, 7:55am-11:15pm or full day, 7:55pm-2:25pm.

Ratio

One certified pre-kindergarten teacher and one aide to a maximum of 14 students.

Student Directory

Parents will be given the opportunity to be included on a Pre-Kindergarten roster to be used only for the group of students in the class. You have the option to opt out of this directory. Only families who agree to be a part of the roster will receive the published document

Transportation

Parents and/or another designated adult are responsible for dropping off and picking up the pre-kindergarten student. Bus transportation is not available.

Toilet Trained

Children entering the pre-kindergarten program must be fully toilet trained. Pull-ups are not permitted.

Virtus Program – *Protecting God’s Children*

“The Protecting God’s Children program consists of many components. The education component helps prevent child sexual abuse by first making every adult employee and volunteer aware of the issues surrounding child sexual abuse. This includes awareness of the many ways that sexual abuse harms its victims, their families, the parish, and the community. The awareness session also helps adults learn to recognize the warning signs of abuse, and shows them the appropriate way to respond to such behavior. Finally, the awareness session empowers each with five steps to help prevent child sexual abuse.”

Visit VIRTUSOnline.org to find a location in the Diocese of Cleveland that offers the class. There is no cost associated with the awareness session.

Visitors

All visitors (parents) need to report and sign in at the school office prior to going to your scheduled destination.

Volunteers

Volunteer opportunities will be at the discretion of the lead teacher. Parents need to attend the VIRTUS session and have a background check in order to volunteer in the classroom.

Anchored in Joy!