



Preschool Handbook

2026-2027

3015 Greenup Avenue

Louisville, Ky. 40217

Phone: 502-635-3505

FAX: 502-635-1576

www.ssmartyr.org

WELCOME

This handbook is provided to all families who have children in St. Stephen Martyr School to answer questions you may have concerning school policies and regulations. Please read this handbook and be aware of the content. Keep it as a reference. The handbook can also be located online. We ask that all parents be aware of the school's policies and procedures and support the school by helping their children to understand and follow those procedures.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

St. Stephen Martyr School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, scholarship and financial aid programs, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

Mission of St. Stephen Martyr School

As a Catholic School, St. Stephen Martyr, in partnership with parents and guardians, is called to nurture our students the guidance of Christ's teachings: to encourage and educate moral, independent citizens who are God's citizens who are God's face and hands in service to the world community.

Responding to the Church's call to continue the teaching ministry of Jesus Christ, St. Stephen Martyr School strives to prepare students to be educated, responsible members of the community who are also active stewards of faith. To this end, St. Stephen Martyr School...

- honors and protects the self-esteem and integrity of each child by encouraging respect and acceptance within the school environment.
- provides students with a quality academic program that prepares for the future and
- deepens the spirituality of the student body through worship, religious formation, and the daily living of Catholic living.

PHILOSOPHY

Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. We recognize parents as the first and primary educators of their children. Our work as Christian educators is to help each child fulfill God's great Commandments of love of God and love of neighbor.

Our preschool program aims to enrich the life of each child, so they experience intellectual curiosity, become creative learners, and confident faith-filled individuals.

We will focus on the following:

- v Spiritual Development
- v Cognitive Development
- v Social and Emotional Development
- v Physical Development

Hours of Operation/Ages/Tuition

2025-2026 PRESCHOOL FEE INFORMATION

3-Year-Old Preschool Tuition

Registration fee: \$50 with another SSM sibling

\$100 per student

Part Time Student-3 Days a week \$273/month (10 months)

Part Time Students-5 Days week- \$294/month (10 months)

Part Time Students Before Care Option- 7:00-7:30 arrival- \$25/Week (34 Weeks)

Full Time Students- 3 Days a week- \$195/Week (34 Weeks)

Full Time Students- 5 Days a week- \$214/Week (34 weeks)

Drop in Days for Afterschool Care: \$30

Optional Childcare Day: 10/8 \$60/student

4-Year-Old Preschool Tuition

Registration fee: \$50 with another SSM sibling

\$100 per student

Part Time Students-5 Days week- \$294/month (10 months)

Part Time Students Before Care Option- 7:00-7:30 arrival- \$25/Week (34 Weeks)

Full Time Students- 5 Days a week- \$214/Week (34 weeks)

Drop in Days for Afterschool Care: \$30

Optional Childcare Day: 10/8 \$60/student

OUR LATE FEE ARE AS FOLLOWS FOR PART TIME STUDENTS:

Any parent/guardian picking their student up after 12:00-12:15 will be charged \$10 regardless of what time they arrive. Any parent/guardian picking their student up between 12:15-12:30 will be charged \$20 regardless of what time they arrive. Any parent/guardian picking their student up at 12:30 and after will be charged \$50

Billing

Our billing system for preschool goes through our payment system FACTS. If a payment is rejected or not received, your child or children will not be allowed to attend preschool until those fees are paid. All billing and payment questions must be directed to Deacon Ken, kroberts@ssmartyr.org.

Communication

The Director and Preschool Teachers will use the **Remind** app for communication with parents. If you need assistance to get on the Remind app, please contact Mrs. Cindy Stinson (cstinson@ssmartyr.org) and she will assist you. We will also send home **Wednesday Folders** that will have additional information. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher directly.



Teachers Office Hours

Our team is dedicated to every student in our Preschool to ensure they are receiving the best education they deserve. We ask that you allow our team 24 hours to respond to emails/remind messages as they are very busy in the classrooms and we want their full attention on your children.

Monday: 7:00-4:00

Tuesday: 7:00-4:00

Wednesday: 7:00-4:00

Thursday: 7:00-4:00

Friday: 7:00-4:00

If you do not receive a response to your question/comment within 24 hours, I ask that you contact me, the Director, Shelby Strickland at sstrickland@ssmartyr.org or send me a remind message.

Holidays/Birthdays

St. Stephen Martyr Preschool loves to celebrate holidays throughout the year with the help of all preschool families. A sign-up sheet will be sent out via SignUpGenius, email, or Remind.

Holidays celebrated are as follows: Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter Egg Hunt, and End of the Year Celebration.

We welcome birthday celebrations too. However, the guardian is responsible for bringing in the celebration treat. **All treats must be store bought. No homemade treats will be allowed.** We understand that birthday celebrations are a way for classmates to bond outside of school hours. However, if invitations are sent out at school, everyone in the class must be invited for the teacher to distribute them amongst the class. We never want anyone in a class to be left out or feel uncomfortable in our Preschool.

Family events will take place from time to time including Doughnuts with Grownups, Gardening with Grandparents. Please check your Wednesday Folders for more information to come.

Withdrawal of Child

If you are planning to withdraw your child from St. Stephen Martyr Preschool, please give the preschool director a written letter. We require a 2-4 week notice for withdrawal. This will allow waitlisted families to be notified prior to your child's withdrawal for them to prepare for enrollment.

If St. Stephen Martyr Preschool determines your child's needs, whether medical, social-emotional, or developmental, would be best met elsewhere, members of the education team will meet with the family to help determine and obtain a more appropriate placement.

Meals

Every child is required to bring their own lunch every day if they are a Full-time preschool student. A lunch should contain a protein, 2 vegetables, a vegetable, and a fruit (fruit snacks do not count as a fruit), and drink. Please do not bring fast food for lunch, candy, sugary drink including capri suns or food that needs preparation. We are providing examples for a reference. We do not have the capability to fix hot food or store cold food. St. Stephen Martyr does not provide breakfast to students; however, if students arrive before 7:30 and they bring their own breakfast they will be allowed to eat at their table before instruction begins. The students will be asked to put their breakfast away if they do not finish when instruction begins.

Snacks

Snacks will be provided for both the 3-year-old and 4-year-old programs every day. Every child will have 2 items to choose from each day. If your child is a picky eater or has allergies, please pack a healthy snack in their lunch. We will make sure they get their snack out of their lunch box each day. Snack menus will be available to view in the classroom each month. 1% milk or water will be offered to every student at snack and lunch every day.

Allergies

It is especially important for SSM staff to be aware of any allergies that your child might have to ensure his/her safety. Please indicate any allergies on the Health Information form. If there are any changes in your child's allergy information, notify your child's lead teacher and/or the preschool director as soon as possible. If your child has an allergy and an EpiPen is required, a student medication form must be signed by the child's doctors. The medication must have the original prescription from the pharmacy label on the box at all times.

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable clothes. Also, because many classroom and learning activities tend to be "hands-on," and therefore can be messy, parents/ guardians should select clothing that is easy to wash. Flip-flops, sandals, jelly shoes, open-toed shoes, boots, and crocs are not safe for school or play and are prohibited. **Tennis shoes are required for school.** We also ask that children do not wear hats, watches, crowns, or jewelry to school as they are a distraction, and some can be a choking hazard. We ask that little girls should have shorts under their dresses or skirts.

Drop off

Our instruction time starts at 8 a.m. We understand that sometimes we all run a little late, however in our preschool, we are trying to keep our students on schedule, and we ask that no students arrive after 9 a.m. unless they have a doctor's appointment. The teacher must be notified if a doctor's appointment is taking place that day.

If a student needs to be picked up for an appointment, they may not be brought back after 12:00 noon. After-school care starts at 12:00 and we can not accept any students in our aftercare hours.

When a parent/guardian arrives to pick up their child, they are in the care of their parent and must leave with their parent/guardian. The parent/guardian may not come to the Preschool/aftercare and then leave to come back later to come pick up the child.

Rest Time

We will have rest time for our full-time preschoolers every day from 12:30-2:30. We do not require students to sleep, but we do require them to rest on their mats during this time. We will allow our non-sleepers to read a book, do a puzzle, or some quiet activity if they choose not to sleep.

Field Trips

From time to time the preschool will take field trips to areas around Louisville! The events will be planned by the preschool staff and parent involvement is always welcome. Miller Transportation is used to transport students back and forth to these destinations. A permission slip must be filled out for each child for them to attend each field trip. Watch the Wednesday folders for more information on field trips.

Your child will use unlicensed space, for example, our gymnasium for physical and learning activities. In our licensing contract, our gym is not in our licensed program but we have been authorized by our school and parish to use it as a learning tool for our students. In this handbook, you are giving your child authorization to use unlicensed space, for example, our gymnasium.

We also make trips to the big school for extracurricular activities and lunch as well as go to St. Stephen Martyr church for mass. By signing this handbook, you are signing that you give your child permission to go to the St. Stephen Martyr church and school with the preschool staff during the 2026-2027 school year.

Medication

A prescribed medication form must be filled out and signed by the child's pediatrician with medication in the original bottle before SSM personnel can distribute the medicine to your child. A prescribed medication form can be found through your teacher or through the Director. Medication includes Chapstick, lotion, Tylenol, and anything your child's teacher has to help your child apply/administer.

Sunscreen

Your child's childcare provider will assist with applying sunscreen to bare surfaces including the face, tops of ears, bare shoulders, arms, legs and feet before outdoor activities. Sunscreen will not be applied to any broken skin or if a skin reaction has been observed. Any skin reaction will be reported to the guardian. We will need you to bring in the sunscreen of your choice with an SPF 30 or higher. Sunscreen cannot be sprayed; it must be lotion. All sunscreen needs to be labeled with their child's name on it and their birthdate.

Immunization

In order to begin the first day of school at St. Stephen Martyr Preschool, children must have a current immunization certificate on file that includes a doctor signature, a Kentucky seal, and an expiration date. This certificate must be kept current throughout the student's time attending school. A teacher or other team member will notify you if your child's immunization certificate is expired or about to expire. The guardian will have 30 days to obtain an updated immunization certificate, or your child will not be allowed to return until you provide a current certificate.

Personal Items from Home

While St. Stephen Martyr recognizes that young children can be comforted by familiar objects from home and sometimes, they are eager to show new toys to friends. Team members request that you do not bring stuffed animals, toys, dolls, etc. to school unless it is a show and tell day or has been approved by the team for another reason. Items that are brought to school will need to remain in your child's backpack. St. Stephen Martyr Preschool is not responsible for any personal items that are lost or damaged.

Behavioral Support Strategies

Teachers focus on positive reinforcement, age-appropriate expectations, goal setting, and redirection techniques when addressing student behaviors. Some specific methods may include:

- Explain the classroom rules at the children's developmental level and allow children time to practice following new classroom guidelines.
- Reinforce desirable behaviors by giving positive praise.
- Use positive statements. Instead of saying, "Don't write on the table," a teacher might say, "Markers are for paper." Instead of saying, "Don't run," a teacher might say, "We use walking feet in the room."
- Offer the child two acceptable choices to help the child feel validated. For example, when the child is preparing for the end of the day, the teacher might ask, "Do you want to go to the potty first or clean up first?"

Teacher may also use the "first, then" technique.

- Redirect the child to another activity to try to end the undesired behavior. For example, if the child is continually grabbing at another child's puzzle pieces, the teacher might ask the child if he/she wants to play with play dough or build a tower with her or a friend instead.
- Provide corrective actions that are natural consequences for the behavior. For example, if a child throws toys off a shelf, then the child will be assisted in picking up the toys.
- Redirecting the child to the calm down corner instead of using "time-out". The calm down corner is equipped with calming strategies such as a pillow, fidgets, calm down strategy cards, and books to let the child decompress and allow them to calm their body.

Children will not be subjected to punishment of a physical or psychological nature of any kind. Children will not be punished or intentionally embarrassed for toileting accidents. Restriction of food, drink, and/or gross motor time will not be used as a means for disciplining.

If a child is not responding to these strategies, an individualized behavior plan will be written and implemented. Individual behavior plans will be written by the lead teacher in the child's classroom and the Director then consulted with the parents in a meeting.

To ensure the plan is the right plan for the student to succeed at St. Stephen Martyr Preschool. The team (lead teacher, Director, and parents) will then discuss the plan. Each behavior plan is individualized, however, if a student is a threat at any time to themselves, other students, or teachers', parents/guardians will be called and required to pick up the student immediately. If the parent/guardian is asked to pick up their child more than three times within a 30-day span, you may be asked to leave the program. Our number one priority at St. Stephen Martyr Preschool is keeping students and teacher safe.

Child Abuse

The employees of St. Stephen Martyr Preschool are dedicated to respecting and upholding the dignity and rights of young children. St. Stephen Martyr Preschool team members have been trained to recognize signs of abuse and/or neglect. When a child in the care of SSM is suspected of being abused in any way by anyone, the preschool team stands ready to act appropriately and immediately by calling Child Protective Services. If it is felt that a child is in imminent danger and needs immediate protection, 911 will be called.

We have a policy in place to act immediately to address any disrespectful or abusive interaction, whether verbal or physical, between a team member and a child. Any disrespectful or abusive interaction is cause for immediate dismissal.

FIREARMS AND DANGEROUS WEAPONS

KRS Chapter 527 reads as follows: "A person is guilty of unlawful possession of a weapon on school property when he knowingly deposits, possesses, or carries, whether openly or concealed for purposes other than instructional or school-sanctioned ceremonial purposes, or the purposes permitted in subsection (3) of this section, any firearm or other deadly weapon, destructive device or booby trap device in any public or private school building or bus, on any public or private school campus, grounds, recreation area, athletic field or any property owned, used or operated by any Council of education, school, Council of trustees, regents, or directors for the administration of any public or private educational instructions.

The Ky. Penal Code, Section 500.080, states that "deadly weapon" means:

- Any weapon from which a shot readily capable of producing death or other serious physical injury may be discharged;
- Any knife;
- Billy club, nightstick, or club;
- Blackjack or slapjack;
- Nunchaku karate sticks;
- Shuriken or death star;
- Artificial knuckles made from metal, plastic or other similar hard material.

While the Ky. Penal Code does not define hunting knives, or pocketknives as “deadly weapons” these knives should not be permitted in schools unless prior permission has been obtained from the administrator and the items are used for instructional purposes.

Emergencies/Security

St. Stephen Martyr Preschool meets all **fire and health regulations** and is licensed by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, meeting all requirements of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. All personnel with responsibility for students are instructed to perform within these regulations and are trained in safety and emergency procedures.

Fire, tornado, and earthquake **drills** are scheduled according to state-required frequency. The preschool practices fire drills once a month and tornado drills and earthquake drills quarterly. All classrooms also practice lockdown drills and shelter-in- place drills quarterly.

In the case of an **emergency evacuation**, SSM team members will escort all children to the Audubon elementary, or to St. Xavier High School, if more distance is needed for safety. Parents/guardians will be notified of the event immediately and will be asked to pick up their child. SSM Emergency Preparedness Plan is updated regularly.

Changes in the evacuation policies will be shared with SSM families.

Emergency Contacts

It is critical for us to have updated names and phone numbers for parents/guardians and all emergency contacts. If anyone on the child's Authorization for Emergency Medical Care Form or Pick Up Authorization Form moves or changes phone numbers, please update the information with the child's teacher as soon as possible.

Parents/guardians will only be contacted when necessary.

Health and Safety Inspections

To ensure that the preschool campus is a safe and clean environment, St. Stephen Martyr Preschool has regular inspections by licensing, the state fire marshal, and an exterminator.

Illness

Please keep sick children home. If a child is sick at school with any of the following symptoms, a parent/guardian will be called to pick up the child and take him or her home until he or she is better to minimize exposure to other children:

- a fever (100.3 degrees or higher)
- diarrhea/more than 2 loose bowel movements
- vomiting
- green/yellow runny nose without a doctor's note/explanation of allergies
- skin conditions such as poison ivy, ringworm, unexplained rash, etc.

If a child runs a fever of 100.3 degrees or higher, parents/guardians are required to keep the child home and fever free **without** any medications (Tylenol/Motrin) for 24 hours before she or he can return to the classroom.

If the child has had symptoms of vomiting (1 time) or loose bowel movements (2 times), the child must stay at home until 24 hours after the last incident.

If a child is sent home from school, then that child needs to stay at home until all relevant symptoms (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) have subsided for 24 hours.

If the child is given a prescription for antibiotics for strep throat, pink eye, etc., the child will need to be on the antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to school.

If a child should become sick while at school or in the event an emergency arises, a team member will get in touch with the parents/guardians or their designated contact person immediately. If the parents/guardians or emergency contact cannot be reached, the child will be removed from the company of classmates and will wait in the office of the preschool director until she/he is picked up by a parent/guardian. If a situation is judged to be a medical emergency, 911 will be called.

*The Illness policy is subject to change due to any outbreak at the Preschool or season.

Infestations

Bed Bugs - The belongings of each teacher and child are kept in individual spaces, which helps to prevent issues including, but not limited to, the spread of infestations like bed bugs. However, in the case that a possible bed bug is found in any of the classrooms, the parents/guardians of children in that class will be notified and told of any actions that they might want to take as a result. SSM will take appropriate action on-site to ensure the potential problem is contained including vacuuming, bagging belongings, having the space examined, and securing a visit from an exterminator, if deemed necessary.

Head Lice - Children must be kept home from SSM Preschool if they are discovered to have nits or live lice on their scalp. Parents/guardians will be called immediately if their child is discovered with nits or lice. Guidance will be given on strategies for eliminating the lice before the child's return to preschool. Other SSM Preschool families will be notified when a case of head lice is found, so they may take any desired precautions.

If parents/guardians have further questions regarding the school's findings and/or decisions, they can contact the Pediatric and Adolescent Health Care branch of the Department of Public Health and Wellness at 595-4958.

Injuries

Injuries at School

All team members of St. Stephen Martyr Preschool are trained to always keep children safe while in their care. If a child is injured in any way at school (falls, bumps head, etc.), parents/guardians will be notified with an Incident Report and/or a phone call, depending on the severity.

Parents/guardians will be notified immediately if the child needs medical (including dental) attention. If it is necessary to call EMS, parents/guardians will be notified after a team member calls 911. If parents/guardians do seek medical treatment for their child (such as stitches), SSM will notify the local Division of Regulated Child Care. When an Incident Report is completed following an injury, the original will be sent home, and a copy will be filed in the child's records.

Injury Observation

While recognizing that children will have falls resulting in bumps and bruises outside of school, classroom staff will be watchful of injuries that, at least to their knowledge, did not occur during preschool hours. These injuries will also be documented, so SSM staff can keep records to identify patterns. To keep the most accurate record of these

injuries, a teacher or classroom assistant may ask you to describe how the injury occurred.



St. Stephen Martyr Preschool Handbook Agreement

I/We, the undersigned parent(s)/guardian(s) of

Child_Preschool (3/4) _____

Child_Preschool (3/4) _____

Child_Preschool (3/4) _____

Child_Preschool (3/4) _____

I have read and discussed the St. Stephen Martyr School Handbook for the 2026-2027 school year with my student. We agree to be bound by the rules, regulations, policies and practices of St. Stephen Martyr School as promulgated in various forms by the school. We agree to cooperate with the school/parish officials as required to insure the smooth functioning of the school.

Parent/Guardian_Date _____

Parent/Guardian_Date _____

Please complete and return to your Preschool teacher ASAP.