



St. Peter Early Learning Center

2025

Parent Handbook

Growing your child's natural curiosity



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Our Philosophy

At St. Peter Early Learning Center, we believe a child's early years play an important role in the development of their educational future. Our teachers make learning exciting and challenging for all children based around the children's interests. As professional educators, our teaching staff understands that children learn best when the material is relevant and meaningful to them. Our engaging curriculum is aligned to the Missouri Early Learning Standards and encompasses the developmental needs of the whole child: cognitive, physical, social, and spiritual. We recognize each child as an individual who learns at his or her own pace, we offer positive reinforcement to strengthen character, and provide a nurturing environment that promotes the natural desire to explore, ask questions, and find answers.

Throughout the week, you will receive pictures showing your child's classroom in action that day. Portfolios and assessments are used to document the children's growth throughout the year. In October, teachers in the Pre K 3 and Pre K 4 classrooms hold parent/teacher conferences to discuss your child's development. Parents of any age child can request a conference with their child's teacher at any time throughout the school year.

The Enrollment Process

1. Complete the enrollment forms and return them to the ELC office. Along with these enrollment forms, a copy of the child's immunization record and medical health statement are due to process enrollment.
2. Include the enrollment fee and holding fee (if applicable). Both fees are non-refundable. Fill out the Tuition Express paperwork to enroll in our automatic tuition payment program.
3. Confirm the date that your child(ren) will be starting at the center.

Drop-off and Pick-Up Procedure

Our center hours are 7:00am-6:00pm. Parents must walk children to the classroom and notify the teacher of their arrival. When picking up your child, it is necessary to enter the building and let the teacher know you are picking up your child.

Children enrolled in the part-day preschool program (8:00am – 3:00pm) must not arrive earlier than 8am or leave later than 3pm. It is important to pick up your child on time so our classrooms are always in the correct teacher to child ratio.

If you arrive past 8:30am, please be aware that class has already started for the children. Please do not distract the teacher from the class. If you have a question, please message the classroom teacher on Procure. Teachers respond to messages when able or during the afternoon naptime.

****In the case of a late pick after the center has closed, your emergency contacts will be called to pick up your child. A fee of \$2.00 per minute, for every minute past our closing time, will be charged per child.****

Children are only released to the authorized persons listed on the enrollment form. All authorized persons must be at least 16 years old and have a photo ID available. Families with custody arrangements need to supply the ELC with the most current parenting plan from the court to keep on file.

Dress

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes. Daily activities can be messy and require children to be active. All clothing should be labeled with the child's name. The children should wear shoes that are comfortable yet sturdy. Tennis shoes are strongly recommended.

Please dress your child appropriately for the weather outside. We play outside multiple times a day, even when it is chilly outside. We recommend sending hats, gloves and heavy coats during the winter months. During the summer months, please provide sunscreen for us to apply midday. We ask all parents apply sunscreen before coming to school in the morning.

Daily Routines

Arrival

Please have your child arrive every day no later than 8:30am. Children that arrive past 8:30am miss many of the important parts of our morning activities and tend to disrupt the classroom's concentration. We work hard to make sure your child is being provided with a variety of enriching activities each day.

If your child will be absent from school, please notify the school office or classroom by 9am.

Meals and Snacks

Our center strives to provide above average healthy meals and snacks. We firmly believe in incorporating fresh fruits and vegetables in to a child's diet.

Your child will be served a morning snack at 8:30 am, lunch between 11:00-11:30am, and a mid-afternoon snack between 2:30 and 3:00 pm.

In the infant room, parents are responsible for providing formula or breastmilk and food (jarred or homemade) for their child. Parents are asked to bring a labeled container of formula or frozen package of breastmilk for their child to keep at the center in case of emergency. Bottles for the day should be premade and labeled with your child's first and last name for our teachers to warm in bottle warmers. Teachers will send home your child's bottles daily to be washed and sanitized.

In all other classrooms, we do not allow children to bring their own food for breakfast, lunch, or snacks (except under medically prescribed conditions). This ensures the safety of those children who have life-threatening food allergies.

Children may bring special treats for their birthday. The treats must be purchased commercially, either packaged or from a bakery. Treats must be peanut free. Please notify the classroom teacher in advance if you will be bringing in treats.

Please bring a water bottle with your child's name labeled on it to keep at the center. Water bottles need to be taken home every Friday to be washed and returned on Monday.

Diaper Changes and Potty Training

If your child is in diapers, we ask you provide diapers and wipes to keep at the preschool. Parents are also welcome to provide diaper cream labeled with the child's name. When potty training begins for your child, please notify the teacher so we can begin working with the child at the center. We ask the following during potty training:

- The child is sent to school in underwear with 3 changes of clothes in their backpack
- The parents are actively working on potty training at home, at night, and on the weekend as well. We will not be successful if only potty training at school!
- Parents understand that we have a classroom of 16 or more children so potty training can be difficult at school. We will take your child to the restroom, but the majority of the training must happen at home. We recommend beginning training on a weekend or a break so the child has a good grasp on the concept when returning to school.
- Tuition will not decrease to the 3 year old rate until the child is both 3 years old AND potty trained completely. Parents must notify the office when their child is 3 years old AND completely potty trained to receive the discount.
- Potty trained guidelines mean the child uses the restroom independently, asks to use the restroom when needed outside of bathroom breaks, is in underwear, and has no more than 2 accidents per week.
- Our center does not potty train in the infant or toddler classroom units. Our center can start potty training children in the 2 year old classroom.

Outdoor Play

We believe children should be physically active to remain healthy. Fresh air and physical activity are very important parts of our day. All children will go outside on a daily basis weather permitting. During inclement weather, large motor play is planned for indoors. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. Gloves and hats are often needed during the winter months. Should there be a reason your child is unable to participate in outdoor play, please discuss this with the director or your child's teacher.

Naptime

A nap/rest period is scheduled each day in order for children to recharge and relax. The nap/rest time is two hours. If your child has not fallen asleep within 45 minutes, she/he will be allowed to participate in a quiet activity so as to not disturb the other children. Children in the infant classroom follow a nap schedule that fits their individual needs.

In all rooms (excluding the infant room), parents are asked to provide a crib sheet and blanket each week if their child is at the center during nap time. Nap time items are sent home weekly to be laundered by the parents and returned the next week.

Weekly Extra-Curricular Activities

Kinderdance runs from August through May. Kinderdance is not a required program, but a fun addition to your child's school day. If you are interested in registering your child for dance class, it is an additional fee that is paid for through the Kinderdance website. See the front office for more information.

Children's Health and Health Information

Should a child exhibit any of the below symptoms, the parents will be called and asked to pick their child up from school. Parents are expected to pick their child up within 1 hour. Children may return to the center when they are symptom free for 24 hours. In the event a child contracts a communicable disease and exposes other children, parents will be notified.

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher under the arm
- Vomiting
- More than one loose stool
- A suspicious rash
- Lice
- Pink Eye

It is up to the center's discretion to ask a parent to pick up a child if they do not appear to be feeling well. The center may require a doctor's note for a child to return.

Any prescription or over-the-counter medication to be administered by an ELC staff member must be in its original container and labeled. The label must contain the child's name, name of medication, dosage, potential side effects, frequency, date and expiration if applicable. For over-the-counter medicines, the dosage will be determined by amount stated on container. You will need to provide the office with a medicine authorization form filled out by your pediatrician and signed by you for both prescription and over the counter medication.

In case of an emergency or major injury, we will call 911 immediately. Parents or authorized persons will be contacted. Parents sign the authorization for emergency medical care on the child enrollment form.

Treatment for minor injuries including, Band-Aids and ice packs, will be administered by the staff of the center. If the child has a minor injury during the school day, an injury notification will be put on the Procure app.

COVID-19: Should a child exhibit symptoms of the COVID-19 virus, the family will be asked to pick up their child and follow the most current COVID-19 quarantine guidelines.

Behavior Management and Discipline

We believe that positive reinforcement teaches and encourages the healthy development of self-control and self-esteem. Our philosophy of discipline is one of personal responsibility that encourages self-management. We call attention to appropriate behavior and act as good role models in order to influence and reinforce good behavior.

The parents will be notified of any recurring inappropriate behavior. The staff and parents work as a team to resolve any difficulties a child may be experiencing.

When inappropriate behavior occurs, we will do one or more of the following:

- 1) Redirect behavior.
- 2) Discuss the problem with the child to determine the cause and work on ways to resolve it.
- 3) Assign special tasks and responsibilities to help build self-esteem.
- 4) Monitor the classroom for potential underlying causes.
- 5) Separate the child from the group, allowing time to reflect on the situation. The child may rejoin the group when he/she is ready.
- 6) Remove from classroom and spend time in the school office until child is able to return to class.

If a child's behavior consistently disrupts the flow of the program, physically or emotionally harms others, or otherwise conflicts with the program rules and guidelines, a conference between the director and parents will be scheduled. If the inappropriate behavior continues, possible suspension and/or termination from enrollment in the center could occur as the outcome. All possible steps will be taken before suspension or termination occurs.

Please do not hesitate to contact the director to discuss any concerns or to provide suggestions that you believe will help your child be successful in the classroom.

Holidays and School Closings

Please refer to the School Year Calendar to see scheduled school closing dates for this school year. Full tuition is due for days the center is closed, excluding the week during Christmas. Tuition is not due for 1 week over Christmas Break.

In the event of a snow day or late start, notifications are sent via the Procure App. Please check the app before coming to school if the weather forecast predicts snow or ice. Notifications are posted by 6:00am. In the event of an early closure, parents will be notified through the Procure app. Tuition will not be prorated in the event of a snow day.

Communicating with the Center

All lead teachers can be reached via the Procure app and the classroom phone.

You can contact Alison at abeach@stpstc.org or through the office phone (636) 344-7000. You can contact Crysten at cwappelhorst@stpstc.org or through the office phone.

Always Welcome

Parents are welcome to visit any time the center is open. We encourage parents to volunteer for classroom parties; all volunteers must be in compliance with the Prevent and Protect Program. (See Child Safety section.)

Child Safety

Our building is locked at all times. Only parents or caregivers with an access fobs have the ability to gain entry into our school.

All staff at the center are background checked and are mandated reporters. We are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

Teachers take pictures of children to use in the child's portfolio, send home in daily messages in the Procure app, and to display in the center. Pictures used outside of these purposes (for advertising, use in the bulletin, or on the Parish website) will only be used if the parents are notified and grant the center permission.

We encourage parents to volunteer for classroom parties. For parents that would like to volunteer, the Prevent and Protect workshop must be completed prior to volunteering and the proper paperwork submitted:

1. Copy of driver's license
2. Completed Family Care and Safety Registry Form
3. Signed Code of Ethics Form

The Prevent and Protect workshop is offered at St. Peter ELC at the beginning of the school year. You may also sign up for the workshop through the St. Louis Archdiocese website at www.archstl.org and take the workshop at any of the other available locations. Prevent and Protect is a free, one-time class that lasts between 2-2.5 hours. Children are not allowed to attend the class due to the nature of the material that is presented.

Tuition and Fees

Many different tuition packages are available. We accept ACH and credit card payments only through our Tuition Express program. If families pay by ACH, there is a discounted tuition rate. Please refer to the tuition rate form to see which package will fit your family's needs. There is a 5% discount for families enrolled with two or more children.

When your child turns 2 years old, your tuition will decrease. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the office with 2 weeks' notice of a child's birthday to adjust tuition. Tuition decreases again once a child is 3 years old and is fully potty trained. The parent again must notify the office of this upcoming birthday and potty training accomplishment with 2 weeks' notice for the office to adjust tuition. Please see the Daily Routines section for our guidelines on potty training.

Yearly registration fees are due upon initial registration and every year for reenrollment.

Your family is allowed one week of vacation each school year (August to July) which tuition will NOT be due. The child must be absent Monday through Friday to use the vacation week. If you have multiple children attending our center, the entire family must be absent for the vacation week. We do not charge tuition the week the center closes during the Christmas holiday. Tuition is not prorated for missed school days due to illness, classroom or center closures, snow days, or holidays.

If your child is enrolled part-time and needs to attend additional days, please ask if there is a space open one week prior to bringing your child. If we have an opening, an additional fee will apply.

If your tuition is in arrears for two weeks, your child will not be allowed to attend until tuition fees are paid in full. If your child is withdrawn from the center, you will be required to re-register your child.

There is a \$25.00 fee for returned payments.

Notice of Withdrawal

Two weeks of notice is required for withdrawal from the program.



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Tuition/Fees and Parent Handbook Agreement

Please sign and return this form to St. Peter Early Learning Center with the enrollment packet and registration fee.

Child's Name (please print) _____

Parent's Name/Person Responsible for Tuition (please print)

Registration fee \$ _____

Tuition Fee to be paid weekly \$ _____

I have read, and understand, the contents of the St. Peter Early Learning Center Parent Handbook.

I agree to abide by the rules described in the handbook.

Signature _____

Date _____