*SAINT CASIMIR*

*CATHOLIC SCHOOL*

*PRE- SCHOOL HANDBOOK*

**

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### ***Mission Statement***

***Saint Casimir Preschool Program believes each child is a special, unique gift of God.***

***We are committed to providing a quality, caring, child-centered and developmentally appropriate program in a secure environment based on Catholic values.***

***Philosophy***

***We view families as partners in nurturing their children’s growth and development. We believe that all children are capable, inquisitive, and excited about exploring their worlds. We believe our educators are nurturing professionals who continue to learn and grow. We value and respect their contributions to our children, their families, and our community.***

***CALENDAR***

August Pre-k 3 Meet and Greet

August Pre-k 4 Meet and Greet

August Cubby Conferences

August Cubby Conferences

September 3 and 6 No School

October 7 Professional Day No school

October 31 Halloween - noon dismissal

November 23 Noon dismissal

November 24-25 Thanksgiving break

December 20 Noon dismissal

December 21-January 2 Christmas break

January 2 No school

January 16 No school

January 29-February 3 Catholic Schools Week

February 3 Noon dismissal

February 17 Noon dismissal

February 20 No school

March 3 Professional Day no school

March 17 No school

April 4 Noon dismissal

April 6-14 Easter break

May 26 and 29 No school

June 6 and 7 Last day

**Applying to St. Casimir**

Parents who wish to register their child(ren) should make an appointment with the admissions office for an appointment and tour of the school. Students entering Pre-k 4 will schedule an appointment for an early childhood screening.

**Admissions**

Non- discrimination policy : Saint Casimir is a coed elementary school for students in Pre-k 3 through Grade 8. It does nor discriminate on the basis of race, color, ses, religion,handicap or disability, and national or ethnic origin, in the administration of their educational policies , athletic and other school administrative policies.

**Status of Students**

St. Casimir School reserves the right to deny admission, readmission, or continuation in subsequent years to anyone whose behavior is contrary to the teachings and ideals of the school or whose behavior or attitude is disruptive to the functioning of the student body. All new students are probationary for one year.

**Age Guidelines for New Registrations**

St. Casimir School follows the guidelines published by the State of Maryland Board of Education. Under state law, children . Children entering pre-kindergarten 3 must be three by September 1st and children entering Pre-k 4 must be 4 by September 1st.

**Documentation for Admission:**

The following must be provided at the time of application:

Birth Certificate

* Updated Immunization Record
* Maryland State Health Inventory (pre-K 3 and pre-k 4)
* Social Security Card
* Baptismal Record and other Sacramental information
* Completed application
* Non-refundable, non-transferable registration fee
* Legal documentation of custody status (if applicable) Curriculum

**Tuition for 2022-2023 School Year**

Registration fee:

A non-refundable registration fee of $150.00 is due at the time of registration. There is a family registration fee of $250.00 for families with 3 or more children in the school.

All-inclusive fee of $400 is due by June 30th. This includes all books, archdiocesan fees, PowerSchool, technology fees, field trips, buses, and instructional materials.

Tuition for full day students from Pre-K 3- Grade 8 $6,250

Grade 8 graduation fee $ 250

Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 five half days $5,250

Pre-K 3 three full days $5,250

Pre-K 3 three half days $3,895

All-inclusive fee for three half days is $200.

Monthly payments–Monthly payments begin in August through May and must be paid through the FACTS tuition company as required by the archdiocese.

Tuition Plan A: Full time 25 volunteer hours per family and $400 in fundraising profit.

3 half day Pre-K only: 12 hours and $200 in profit

Tuition Plan B: Full time: No fundraising or volunteer hours needed- $600 fee

Part time 3 half days Plan B : No fundraising and $300

The difference owed between the amount generated and the $400 is due and payable to the school before May 1. Volunteer hours fewer than 25 will be billed at a rate of $8 / hr. Failure to meet the commitment to Plan A, Plan B, and Before and After Care will be treated the same as delinquent tuition.

**Curriculum**

St. Casimir’s Pre-k curriculum *Children Explore Their World (CEW) and Children Study Their World (CSW)* was recently developed by the University of Maryland’s Center for Early Childhood Education and Intervention. This curriculum is centered on six project and inquiry based experiences for students to investigate topics over a four to six week period, building on the students’ knowledge and progressively increasing in intricacy. The projects and experiences provide opportunities for students to observe their environment with increasing complexity through hands-on activities in the classroom and community. The curriculum enables students to explore their world while cultivating the developmental characteristics that make them naturally curious about the environment around them.

**Assessment**

The children are assessed throughout the school year. We use the Brigance standardized test at the beginning of the school year and the end of the year. This helps the teachers create beginning of the year goals and begin differentiating instruction at the start of the school year, and helps us track the growth each student has made. Incoming preschool four year old students are assessed with the Brigance over the summer before starting school. The Brigance for incoming three year old preschool students will be assessed at the start of school. Throughout the school year, teachers create checklists and make observations as ongoing assessments. Progress reports are sent home half way through the first trimester. We have parent teacher conferences when the first report card is sent home. Report cards are sent home three times a year. Both the progress reports and report cards are standards based assessments which follow the Archdiocesan grading scale for early childhood. The grading scale will show the following marks for each standard:

* ***Emerging*** *(E)* -- Students are beginning to understand the concept or skill, or are beginning to exhibit the behavior.
* ***Progressing (P)***-- Students are successfully making progress in understanding and demonstrating the concept, skill, or behavior.
* ***Independent*** *(I)*-- Students have mastered the concept, skill, or behavior, and are able to demonstrate it independently. This grading code is typically not issued until the third trimester.
* **N/A** -- This skill was not assessed at this time. Some skills are not introduced until later in the year. There may be more areas marked “N/A” this year than in normal years due to limitations from the pandemic.

The expectations for the skills listed on the progress report increase with each grading period. Therefore, a child’s grade could move down in some instances from *Progressing* to *Emerging* or from *Independent* to *Progressing.*  If a student continues to progress as new topics are introduced, they will continue to earn a *P* for *Progressing*. *Independent* markings are reserved for those skills that are mastered. This is not an expectation for all areas on the report. Teachers and parents may request additional conferences at any time to discuss a child’s progress.

**IEP Process**

If a child is not progressing academically, the school may ask the parents/guardians to initiate or the parents/guardians may initiate on their own the process to request a professional consultation and/or evaluation through the local public-school system. The evaluative process is generally called the IEP Process (Individual Educational Plan) and begins when a parent/guardian calls ‘Child Find’. Following the initial phone call to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) Child Find, parents/guardians are given an initial meeting date within 30 days. At this initial meeting, parents/guardians and school faculty are invited to share their concerns, present information, and discuss whether an evaluation will take place. Catholic school staff, in particular the student’s teacher, are a vital part of the process. If an evaluation is deemed warranted and takes place, recommendations and an academic plan are developed and given to the parents/guardians at the summative meeting following the academic evaluation. If such a plan is developed and the test results determine that there is a need for accommodations and/or modifications within a student’s learning environment, the school administrator will consult with the parents/guardians to determine what accommodations, resources, plans, and school placements may be implemented. When appropriate, a Student Accommodation Plan is developed at your child’s Catholic School. Every effort will be made by the St. Casimir School staff to complete the required paperwork, to attend the IEP meetings, and to support the parents. In order to facilitate this process, parents should inform the school administration prior to initiating the Child Find process on their own.

**Technology**

Each classroom is equipped with interactive Smart Boards, and all Pre-K classrooms are equipped with iPads for educational interactions.

**Screen Time Policy**

1. Each pre-K class has iPads. Only educational apps are installed on the iPads. Students may rotate use the iPads, under teacher’s supervision, for no more than 15 minutes a day per child
2. Each Pre-K class has a Smart Board. Teacher’s use the Smart Boards as an educational technology tool for whole class group activities. Each program used on the Smart Board relates to a topic in the class’s curriculum. Smart Boards are not used for more than 30 minutes a day.
3. Television/videos are not watched in class with the exception of occasional educational videos related to the curriculum. Videos do not exceed thirty minutes in length.

**Pre-K Positive Discipline Policy**

We follow the PBIS, Positive Behavioral intervention and support program to support positive discipline throughout the school. We strive to ensure all students are aware of expectations and review them often. Positive behavior expectations are posted throughout the classrooms and school, with our three R’s – Respect, Responsibility and Ready to Learn. We focus on positive behavior through praise and rewards. When children exceptionally well behaved or kind to others they earn anchor bucks. The anchor bucks are collected and entered for drawings for weekly and monthly prizes.

The children review the posted rules with the teacher often, the children help name reasons for rules. If the children are having a hard time following a given rule they are given reminders and choices for redirections. Teachers often review with children different situations where they may have difficulty making good choices. The children problem solve with the teachers, what would be a better choice or a poor choice. Sometimes the children may need to take a quiet break to calm themselves and think of better choices. If the children take a quiet break they may review posted guidelines with the teachers, such as what “Kind Hands”, “Kind Words” or “Kind feet” do. When children take a break teachers guide them in reflecting on what poor choices were made and problem solving as to what they could do better next time. If a child repeatedly has a hard time in a given situation the teachers will reach out to the parents for assistance, the parents may help the teachers understand what works at home to help guide the child as well as reinforce school expectations. If the problem continues, the problem will be referred to the principal and/or counselor to help ameliorate the situation and protect the safety and well being of all students.

**School Uniform**

Pre-K students are to wear comfortable play clothes throughout the day with tennis shoes. If a student is wearing a dress, they should wear shorts underneath, so their underwear is not seen while sitting on the carpet and playing. Their clothing should be easy for them to take off independently to use the restrooms.

**Gym Uniform**

On the pre-k classes’ assigned gym days, students are required to wear the St. Casimir gym uniform. This consists of navy sweatpants/shorts, a St. Casimir yellow or gray shirt, St. Casimir navy sweatshirt (if needed), and white tennis shoes.

**Safety**

**Teacher/Student Ratio:**

The staff to child ratio is 1 adult for every 10 children. Each pre-k classroom has a teacher and teaching assistant in their classroom.

**Arrival and Departure Procedures:**

**Arrival:**

Pre-k 3 and 4 children may arrive anytime between 8 :00 am and 8:15 am to the back door by the playground.

You will sign your child into their teacher’s attendance book with the adult at the door, who will walk the child to their classroom.

**Dismissal:**

Half day pre-k 3 and Pre-k 4 children will be dismissed at the back door at noon each day. Full day pre-k 3 and Pre-K 4 children will be dismissed at the back door at 2:45pm.

Adults picking up children need to sign the child out in their teacher’s attendance book. Anyone picking up a child needs to be listed on the child’s emergency form. Please email your child’s teacher or call school if someone other than the regular person is picking up your child. The new person will have to show an ID, and it is helpful if they can come with you to meet the teacher in the morning, but we understand that this is not always possible.

**Drills:**

Fire drills, intruder drills , evacuation drills are held throughout the year as required by the State of Maryland.

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# **Delayed Opening / School Closing**

At times it may be necessary to cancel school, open late, or dismiss early due to inclement weather or other emergency situations. Under emergency weather conditions, we comply with **the BALTIMORE COUNTY (not Hereford Zone)**. Due to our students residing in both Baltimore County and Baltimore City St. Casimir School follows Baltimore County Public Schools. You will be notified on our website, by phone, by email and by text.

Half day students may come if we are 1 or two hours late.

If special circumstances involve only St. Casimir you will be informed by

If we dismiss early, there will be no After Care.

**Health**

**Hand washing:**

Children wash their hands at least after using the restroom, after coming in from outside play and before meals. Teachers demonstrate and guide the children in appropriate hand washing as necessary. Children are guided in using soap and singing a song such as the ABC’s or a handwashing song to wash hands for the appropriate length of time, at least 30 seconds. Reminder picture posters are also posted in the children’s restrooms.

**Toilet Training:**

All pre-k students should be able to use the restroom independently. We will not be able to wipe their bottoms, but baby wipes can be brought in for them to use if needed. The pre-k bathrooms are separate from the upper grade restrooms and are sized appropriately for pre-k.

**Change of Clothes:**

All pre-k students should provide a seasonal change of clothes at the beginning of the year. Please label these clothes in a ziplock bag. These clothes should include- short/pants, shirt, underwear, and socks. They will be kept at school in case an accident occurs. When the seasons change, the teachers will send home and ask for a different set of clothes according to the season.

**Health Records**

Health records are due in the office the first week of school. Parents are required to complete a Student Emergency Card listing any allergies, serious medical conditions, medications, and emergency contact information. In case of illness or emergency, every attempt will be made to contact the parent and others listed on the emergency form immediately. If no one can be reached by phone, the family doctor may be consulted. Please notify the office immediately concerning change of name/family status, address, or phone number on these forms during the school year. We MUST have a way to contact you at all times. In case of a change of custody, a copy of the portion of the court order that names the custodial parent must be on file with the school. Children will be released to the person/s designated on the emergency card, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian.

**Illness**

Parents should be aware that the following symptoms may indicate the presence of a contagious illness: earache, enlarged glands, fever, skin rash, and sore throat, red discharging eyes, persistent cough, bad cold, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. Please do not send a child to school who is ill or running a fever in the morning. Children should return to school only after symptoms have subsided for a 24-hour period and/or a release form is obtained from the doctor. The school must be notified immediately of infectious or communicable diseases or any significant health changes. Any child in school with a temperature of 100 degrees, an injury, a serious asthma attack, or a contagious disease will be sent home. It is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to make arrangements to have the child picked up immediately. If the parent/guardian or alternative contact person cannot be reached in an emergency, the school will contact police/ambulance for assistance. The parent/guardian will be responsible for any expenses incurred, in that event. Children who are ill enough to be kept in during recess periods should be kept at home until they can follow the regular school schedule. The school does not have adequate personnel for individual supervision. A doctor’s written and signed request is needed for a student to be excused from physical education classes.

**Communicable Diseases**

Parents must call the school if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school must notify the Health Department. All reports are confidential. The following communicable diseases/conditions need to be reported: Measles, Regular or German T.B. Meningitis, Whooping Cough, Hepatitis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Food Poisoning, Human Immune Deficiency, Pediculosis (head lice), Virus Infection (AIDS & all other symptomatic infections, Lyme , Impetigo, Chickenpox, Conjunctivitis (pink eye), Adverse Reactions to Pertussis Vaccine, or a positive test of Covid-19. Any student with drainage from the eyes associated with conjunctivitis (pinkeye) must be kept at home until under treatment from a doctor. A doctor’s note will be required for readmission to school. Students who have chickenpox are excluded from school until all lesions are scabbed over. Students are excluded from school for head lice. A child may return to school when he/she is free of lice and nits. A child must be examined by school personnel before he/she can return to class.

If it becomes necessary to reinstate or update our Covid precautions parents will be informed in a timely manner.

**Allergies**

Parents must notify the school of their child’s allergies, including food allergies. The physician must renew school medication orders each year, and the order must be signed on or after July 1. If the student needs an EPIPEN, the physician’s order must state this requirement, and appropriate planning for the child’s safety will take place.

**Medication Procedures and Administration**

When a student is taking medication, the parent should make every effort to arrange for the medication to be taken at home; however, if there are occasions when the child must receive the medication during the school day, the following guidelines apply:

● No medication, prescription or over-the-counter, will be administered in school without parent/legal guardian authorization AND a written order from the physician, specifying start and stop dates.

● The medication, in its original medication container or box for inhalers, properly labeled by a pharmacist in the case of prescription drugs, must be hand-delivered to the school by the parent. These containers or boxes should include the following: name of medication, directions for use, time for dispensing, name of doctor ordering medication, date of prescription, expiration date as stated by the pharmacist, strength of medication/dosage, and student’s name and grade. Under no circumstances will medication brought to school by the student be administered.

● THE FIRST DOSE OF ANY NEW MEDICATION MUST BE STARTED OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL.

● The school must have on file in the student’s health folder a statement from the physician including: (a) name of the pupil; (b) name of the medicine; (c) dosage and hours to be given during the school day; (d) expected duration of administration; (e) list of all possible side effects, if any. THE PARENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING THE PHYSICIAN’S STATEMENT. These forms are available in the school office or on the school website.

● The parent is responsible for submitting to the school notification of any change of dosage or time of giving medication in writing from the physician.

● All medication kept in the school will be kept under lock and key accessible only to authorized administering personnel. Students may not possess, dispense or distribute medication on their own.

● Students may not possess, dispense or distribute medication on their own. All medication must be delivered to school by a parent/ guardian. Calamine lotion and cough drops may be administered with a note from parents. Cough drops should be brought to school in the original package in a Ziploc bag with the student’s name on it. The package should be given to the student’s teacher. Cough drops that contain an anesthetic will be kept in the office.

**Immunizations**

Maryland Immunization Guidelines Upon entering St. Casimir School, students must have the required immunizations mandated by state law. A child may not enter school unless he/she has submitted an official immunization record or other appropriate documentation of immunization status. The immunization record must have the month, day and year of each vaccination, be signed by a physician or health department official, and be approved by the school. A parent must show a medical contraindication, signed by a doctor, for his/her child to be excused.

The following immunizations are required for all pre-k students before entry into school: DPT, 3 / Polio, 1 / Hib, 1 / MMR, 1 / Chickenpox, 3/Hepatitis B, 1 / PCV7

**Medical Emergency**

Emergency card information for each child is to be kept current and is to be filled out by a parent or guardian before the start of school. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE HAVE AN EMERGENCY INFORMATION IN SCHOOL ADMIN WEBSITE FOR EACH CHILD AND THE SCHOOL IS INFORMED IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CHANGE IN ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency card, unless otherwise instructed in writing by the custodial parent/guardian.

**Communication**

**Confidentiality**

**Buckley Amendment/FERPA**

St. Casimir School chooses to adhere to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) regarding privacy of student records and the rights of non-custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information decided through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the principal. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child.

**Emails**

At the start of the school year, teachers will create a parent classroom distribution list in which emails can be sent out to parents in the classroom. The email will have all emails blind copied (bcc), for the privacy of the emails sent and replies. Classroom newsletters and updates will be emailed from this list. Individual emails may also be sent from the teacher to a parent if needed. Because of the many happenings during the day, teachers may not have a chance to check their emails or Seesaw until after school. If you need to reach a teacher immediately during school hours, please call the school office, 410-342-2681.

**Newsletters**

Pre-K teachers send out newsletters with upcoming dates and events. Pre-K 3 students receive a weekly newsletter, while Pre-K4 students receive a monthly newsletter.

**Seesaw**

At the start of the school year, teachers will send out login instructions for how to access Seesaw. Seesaw is a free website and app which helps each classroom create digital student portfolios and is also a parent communication tool. Parents will connect to the Seesaw Family app to receive important updates and reminders. The teachers will share each student’s learning with parents by posting pictures and videos of student work. Teachers will also be able to send messages and reminders. The Seesaw app and website is private. Parents only see posts that have been tagged of his/her child.

**Conferences**

If the nature of a problem is too long for an email, it is best to schedule a conference. All teacher/parent conferences must be scheduled in advance to allow time to create an appropriate time to meet. Conferences may be held in person or via phone.

**Volunteers**

Virtus training : Families are a vital part of our school community. Saint Casimir School adheres to the archdiocesan policy known as “Virtus” regarding the screening and training of volunteers and employees who work with children, All parents who volunteer must be trained.