

# Parent Handbook

**2017-2018**

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**12291 River Road  
Richmond, Virginia 23238  
(804) 784-2049  
Email – [stmdover.school@comcast.net](mailto:stmdover.school@comcast.net)  
Website - [saintmarysschool.net](http://saintmarysschool.net)**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Mary's Episcopal School! We are beginning our 17<sup>th</sup> year of enriching the lives of children. We are glad that you have chosen for your child or children to be a part of our St. Mary's family. We want to provide each child with a hands-on learning environment that will optimize their growth and development and prepare them for success in the future.

We invite you to play an active role in your child's education. Get involved in your child's classroom, communicate with your child's teacher, and encourage your child at home by reinforcing the activities that are introduced at school.

Please share your thoughts and ideas with us so that as a team, we as parents and educators, can see "our" little ones reach their highest potential.

Sincerely,

Susan Rawls

# **St. Mary's Episcopal School**

## **MISSION**

St. Mary's Episcopal School is a caring community, serving children aged 2 to 6 years, in which each child is valued and encouraged to contribute in a secure and creative learning environment that reflects the joy of learning and promotes the love of God, family and friends.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

St. Mary's Episcopal School is grounded in tradition.

In encouraging each child in the love of God we offer:

- spiritual development and attendance at regular chapel services
- an atmosphere of respect and caring for one another and our world
- activities that promote family and community

In preparing each child for kindergarten we provide:

- small classes
- developmentally appropriate play-based curriculum and individualized instruction that appreciates and encourages each child's abilities
- qualified, dedicated and professional staff

## **ORGANIZATION**

St. Mary's Episcopal School is a preschool located at 12291 River Road, Richmond, Virginia, 23238 (804-784-2049). It is a Virginia non-stock Corporation that has applied for tax-exempt status under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. It operates, according to state law, under the status of religious exemption. The school offers a co-educational, pre-kindergarten experience for children ages 2 to 6 years. A voluntary Board of Directors operates the school as an independent, non-profit institution. The school functions as a collaborative effort among its students, educators, parents, directors, and the membership of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Dover Parish.

St. Mary's Episcopal School welcomes participants of diverse abilities, and any cultural, racial, religious and socio-economic backgrounds. Students are selected for enrollment on an individual basis and in compliance with non-discrimination laws.

# St. Mary's Episcopal School

## Curriculum

Our emergent curriculum promotes growth in all areas of development (social-emotional, physical, cognitive, literacy and language). It is research-based and is influenced by the works of child development theorists Piaget, Vygotsky and Montessori. The Reggio Emilia philosophy has encouraged us to follow the children's lead, provide experiences and environments that promote play through hands-on exploration, and assist children to find deeper meaning through projects and common interests. Our unique program offers:

### **I. Daily Components:**

- Opening and closing activities
- Blessing before snack
- Outdoor nature and play experiences
- STEAM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math
- Interdisciplinary center activities (including pre-literacy and pre-math activities)
- Caretaking responsibilities in the classroom
- Reading of quality children's literature that promotes values and character education
- Music, creative movement, finger plays
- Time for wonder
- Large and small motor skill development
- Imaginative and dramatic play opportunities
- Guidance that promotes self- management skills

### **II. Weekly Components:**

- Children's Chapel – every other week
- Music or Movement enrichment – twice a month
- Gardening activities
- Volunteer opportunities for parents, seniors and other members of the congregation
- After school enrichment program
- Library time

### **III. Monthly Components:**

- Holiday celebrations, following the church's calendar
- Enrichment experiences including field trips (mostly in-house) and other special activities
- Community service opportunities (Caritas, Goochland Family Services)

## St. Mary's Episcopal School

### Board of Directors Membership

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Chair** Rachel Staab  
**Vice Chair** Annie Houghtaling  
**Secretary** Ryan Pedraza  
**Treasurer** Happy Anderson

#### MEMBERSHIP

Michelle Lewis  
Sarah Gunn  
Meg Walunas  
Seth Schaeffer

Susan Rawls – Director of St. Mary's Episcopal School  
Amelia McDaniel, Director of Children's Ministries  
The Rev. Weezie Blanchard, *ex officio*

#### PROGRAM

Classes are provided for toddlers and for children ages 2 to 6 years of age. The program is divided as follows:

##### Programs

##### Day Schedule

<b>2 Day Twos</b>	<b>Monday / Wednesday or Tuesday / Thursday</b>
<b>3 Day Class (3 year olds)</b>	<b>Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday</b>
<b>4 Day Class (3-4 year olds)</b>	<b>Monday through Thursday (4 day)</b>
<b>5 Day Pre K Class (4-5 year olds)</b>	<b>Monday through Friday</b>
<b>5 Day Junior Kindergarten (5-6 year olds)</b>	<b>Monday through Friday</b>

Please note that class offerings may change slightly from year to year due to class enrollments. You will be notified well in advance if any change is made.

## PROGRAMS and FEES

**Registration Fee (non-refundable): \$35.00**

**Deposit: \$400.00 non-refundable deposit is due with the contracts. It is applied to the total tuition.**

*Tuition assistance is available. Please call the school office at 784-2049 for an application.*

<b>2 Day</b>	<b>\$ 2000</b>
<b>3 Day (/Tues./Wed./ Thurs.)</b>	<b>\$ 2700</b>
<b>4 Day (Mon.-Thurs.)</b>	<b>\$ 3,034</b>
<b>5 Day Pre K (Mon. – Fri.)</b>	<b>\$ 4070</b>
<b>5 Day Junior Kindergarten</b>	<b>\$ 4500</b>

**Early Morning Drop-Off** **\$10.00 per day**

**\*Stay and Play (12:00 – 2:00)  
(Offered Monday through Thursday) )**

**\$20.00 per day**  
**There will be a discount for  
paying by the semester**  
**No reimbursements**

**\*After School Enrichment Program (12:00 – 12:30)**

**Prices and times may vary  
depending on the program**

**\*After Enrichment Lunch/Stay and Play (12:30 – 2:00)**

**\$18.00 per day**  
**There will be a discount for paying  
by the semester**  
**No reimbursements**

***\*See “Extended Day” under General Information***

**Fees for adding additional days when available:**

<b>One time change fee</b>	<b>\$75.00</b>
<b>2 day student to 3 day student</b>	<b>\$75/month</b>
<b>3 day student to 4 day student</b>	<b>\$75/month</b>
<b>Pre K 4 day student to Pre K 5 day student</b>	<b>\$85/month</b>

### **Tuition Payment Policy**

Tuition checks should be made to **St. Mary's Episcopal School**. Tuition payments are due in full on or before **August 1**. If tuition is being paid in two payments, these are due on or before **August 1 and January 16**. Monthly payments should be paid by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. If your payment is not paid by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, you will be assessed a late fee of \$10.00. If payments are more than 2 months behind and you have no made arrangements to pay your child will not be able to attend school. Also, if your tuition is not paid in full by May 15<sup>th</sup>, your child may not attend our summer programs.

Being a tuition driven school makes it imperative that all payments be made in a timely manner.

**Returned checks will be assessed a fee of \$35.00.**

### **Tuition Assistance**

Tuition assistance is available on a limited basis. An application process is required. The application may be picked up in the school office. The following policy was adopted by the Board of Trustees.

- ❖ The family of any child admitted to St. Mary's Episcopal School will be considered for tuition assistance upon completion of the application.
- ❖ All information provided by applicant families will be kept in strictest confidence.
- ❖ First consideration will be given to current students of the school, followed by the siblings of current and former students, and finally to new students. Parishioners will be given priority consideration.
- ❖ No student shall receive 100% tuition assistance.

St. Mary's Episcopal School expects tuition assistance recipient families to participate fully in the life of the school.

## **General Information**

### **Accidents**

Parents will be notified immediately if a child has been involved in any mishap in the classroom or on the playground, including biting incidences. Any accident requiring treatment will be reported on an Incident Form and kept in the school's Accident Report notebook. The Incident Form should be signed by a parent and returned on the next school day, or the day on which your child returns to school after the said accident.

### **Allergies**

Please make sure that we have all necessary information related to any allergies your child or children have developed. St. Mary's is a **nut free zone**. This means that no nut products of any kind should be brought from home during the regular school day and during the lunchtime. There will be no nut products used in our cooking projects at school. It is important to read each label to determine whether or not nuts or nut oils are used in the ingredients.

### Assessment

Teachers actively seek information regarding the growth and development of each child at St. Mary's. The following are some of the ways that we collect information which enables us to provide the optimum learning situation for each child in our care: (these are not exclusive)

- Portfolio for each child which includes work samples, pictures, etc.
- Checklists with developmental milestones
- Anecdotal records and/or narratives
- Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
- Parent input in planning for individual children
- Specialists who work with the children outside of the school setting included in planning (speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and pediatricians)

### Attendance

We look forward to seeing your child each school day. School begins at **9:00 a.m. and ends at 12:00 p.m.** It is most helpful if each child arrives on time so that he or she may participate in the opening activities each day. Regular attendance will encourage developmental growth in all areas. If you know that your child will be out for several days to a week for illness or a family trip, please notify the school. Also, please contact us in the case of any communicable illnesses (chicken pox, head lice, etc.) so that other parents can be notified.

A daily record of your child's attendance at school is kept in our school files.

### Birthdays

Please come and share your child's birthday at school with us! A simple birthday treat (**purchased with ingredients listed**) of cookies or cupcakes is appropriate (**no chocolate or nut products!**). In consideration of others, we request that you **mail** invitations to "at-home" birthday parties.

### Bringing Things to School

We are always excited about special discoveries the children make at home or on trips with their families. It is acceptable for the children to bring these things to school to share. The teacher in each class will determine how "show and tell" will be handled. However, if your child has discovered something that must be shared immediately, please don't hesitate to send it on any given day. **Please encourage your child to leave candy, money, electronics, and toys at home unless requested by the teacher.** These items will be placed in the child's bag for safekeeping when brought to school. If a child has a transitional item such as a blanket or a special toy that will help the child to adjust to the new school setting, he or she may bring that item to school. After the beginning of school, we will try to keep the transitional item in the child's tote bag for safekeeping during the school day.

## DROP-OFF/PICK-UP PROCEDURES

### Drop-Off

**Before carpool begins**, all preschoolers must be escorted into the school through our double doors.

## Twos

All two year olds must be escorted to the classroom **through the side door each day.**

## Preschoolers

Beginning **the second week of school**, all **preschoolers** may utilize the carpool drop-off through the double doors closest to the school office.

- Carpool will begin at **8:55 a.m. or when the double doors are opened.** **Please remain in your car until your child is escorted into the school by a staff member.**
- Carpool ends at **9:10 a.m.**, which will be indicated by the closing of the double doors. **Late arrivals must be escorted to their classrooms.**
- Children arriving for **early morning drop-off must be escorted to the early morning drop-off room (Block room) and signed in each day.**
- **All children must be escorted into the building by an adult.**

## Pick-Up

**Safety for your children is our primary concern. Please use the following procedure for pick-up:**

- **Two year olds must be picked up in the classroom. Please enter through the side door by parking lot for pick up and drop off. If picking up an older child please wait by the double door for a teacher to bring that child to you.**
- **Preschoolers in the 3 day – JK classes can be picked up in afternoon carpool**, unless they are staying for after school activities.
- **Always display your carpool number in the front of your car.** If someone else picks up your child, they should also display the carpool number. They should also be prepared to show identification.
- Please line cars up facing **east** at the double doors near the school office. Carpool pickup will begin at **11:55 a.m.** and will **end when the double doors are shut (at 12:10 p.m.).**
- You may walk up to pick up your child (preschoolers). Please wait at the double doors by the carpool and your child will be brought to you.
- If you need to pick up your child early for any reason, please send us a note. You will need to use the double doors to come in and get your child if it is before dismissal.
- If your child will be going home with someone else, we must have a written note email or a phone call for verification. If it is someone we do not know, please let them know that we will ask for an ID. If your child is going home with another student in our school, we need **a note from both families** stating that the children will be going home together. If the person picking up your child needs a car seat please label the car seat and leave by the double doors. We will gladly help to put the car seat in the car at carpool time.
- Please converse with teachers after carpool is over. You may come in the building to do so.
- **Cell phones** must **not be in use** when dropping off/ picking up your child. Especially at pick-up, your child needs your **undivided** attention.

### **Late Pick-Up**

Any time after **12:10 p.m.** (you must be in the carpool line by 12:10 p.m.) will be considered a late pick-up. Your child will be by the office for pick up at that time. You will need to come into the building to get your child. Please notify us immediately if you will be unable to pick up your child at dismissal time so that we may reassure your child of your impending arrival. **After 3 late pick-ups you will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$1.00 per minute thereafter.**

### **Calendar**

Each family will receive a printed copy of the school calendar at the beginning of the school year. The calendar is also available on the school website. Some of the dates may change during the course of the year. You will receive an e-mail notification of any changes. Changes may also be found on the website.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Our staff is legally responsible to report any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the appropriate local agency.

### **Class Assignment and Enrollment**

Children between the ages of 2 (by December 31st) and 6 years are accepted in order of application. Priority is given as follows:

- to siblings of currently enrolled children
- to children of St. Mary's Episcopal Church members
- to children of the community

If the teacher or director feels that a child is inappropriately placed, the school reserves the right to reassign the child to the class that is most appropriate for him/her.

We have space for 80 children per day.

### **Clothes**

Children are encouraged to wear clothes that are comfortable and appropriate for the season and weather, preferably **play clothes (appropriate for messy play) and tennis shoes**. We discourage the wearing of *sandals, crocs and flip-flops* as they make it difficult for a child to move about safely on the playground. On rainy days, please send your child in a raincoat with a hood. For safety reasons, please do not send an umbrella to school. Also, please help us by labeling all personal belongings with **FIRST and LAST NAMES** of your child or children.

### **Preschoolers and Twos:**

Please send a change of clothing in the gallon-sized Zip-lock bag that we provide. As the season changes, you will need to add warmer clothing to these bags. Remember to include socks and a change of underwear. Also, remember to restock your bags if a child should have an accident and wears his or her change of clothing home.

### **Twos:**

In your child's tote bag, please have at least 2 diapers (labeled with your child's last name) and 2 large zip-lock bags to send home soiled clothing. Please have these available on a daily basis. Each parent will take turns providing wipes for the classroom throughout the school year.

### **Twos and Threes:**

Please dress your son or daughter in elastic waist pants. This helps in the development of independence in toileting skills. It is very challenging for young children to manipulate belts and buckles.

### **Chapel**

The children ages 3 to 6 will attend chapel every other week. During this 15 to 20 minute session, there will be a very simple service in "Little St. Mary's" led by a member of the church staff. The service usually consists of simple rituals – lighting candles, liturgical responses, the Lord's Prayer, an age appropriate Bible story, songs and prayers for the people. The two year olds will be invited to attend the Christmas Chapel and one chapel time in the spring.

### **Communication**

An essential part of an optimal learning environment for children is parent-teacher communication. It is important for parents to contact the school with any concerns or issues pertaining to their child. It is equally important that the teacher or school keeps the parents informed of any school concerns or issues related to their child. Please notify the school and/or the teacher if you do not feel you are receiving adequate communication from the school.

We use the following sources for communication between school and home:

- Phone calls – This will be our most immediate means of contact. Your phone numbers must be kept current.
- E-mail and texts– You will receive communications from the school office as well as individual teachers through e-mail and texts. Please keep your address current so that you will not miss any important information.
- Daily folder system - A folder will be given to each child at the beginning of the year for information sent home and to school. Please check this every day for school information. You may send any correspondence to school in the child's folder.
- Newsletter – There is a whole school e- newsletter that is sent at the beginning of each month. Each teacher will also send a newsletter that is class specific. Teachers will send this through e-mail unless you specify a hard copy.
- Lesson plans - Teacher's weekly lesson plans will be posted outside of each classroom. Other class specific information may be posted, too.
- Bulletin board - A parent bulletin board is situated right outside the school office. It contains pictures of events and what is happening in the classroom. Website – Our web address is [www.saintmarysschool.net](http://www.saintmarysschool.net), for updates, schedule changes and photos of the children throughout the school year.

**Your child's teachers will (through written or verbal communication):**

- Make you aware of any changes in your child's physical or emotional state.
- Inform you of any behavioral or developmental issues that they have encountered.
- Ask for your advice when assessing and making plans for your individual child.
- Inform you of any school-related changes involving your child such as changing teachers or rooms.

**We ask that you contact us:**

- In the event of any changes at home such as a death in the family, divorce, a new baby, a hospitalized or injured relative, business trips or vacations when a babysitter is left in charge.
- If you observe any behavior changes in your child (frequent potty accidents, sleeplessness, etc. – anything that may affect your child's behavior at school)
- In cases of changes in addresses, work phone numbers, or emergency numbers. This is important information for our records. Please see form on the back of the handbook.
- With program or policy concerns. After your contact to the school, you may wish to address the Board of St. Mary's School through Rachel Staab, 12291 River Rd., Richmond, VA 23229.

**\*Please refer any questions related to communications to the director/school office.**

**Classroom/School Visitation**

We welcome your participation in our school day and grant permission to you to access our program during our operating hours. We ask that you check in with the office when you arrive to visit in the classroom and sign our visitation log. We will also ask that you wear a name tag throughout your visit. The teachers will have opportunities for you throughout the year to participate as a classroom volunteer. Please keep in mind that the first few weeks of school may not be the optimum time to visit the classrooms as the children are all adjusting to their new situations. Your child may not have an issue with you "dropping by" the classroom but your visit could trigger another child's stress during this very important transition time. Please help us to minimize any stress for our little ones during this adjustment period.

**Conferences**

There will be a fall conference day for the 3-day, 4-day, Pre-K and Jr. Kindergarten classes in early November to assess your child's progress. There will also be a conference day in February for all classes. During your conferences, you will have the opportunity to review your child's development and make plans that promote further progress. If you have a concern before these meetings, please do not hesitate to ask for an earlier conference. It is very important for us to have a continuous dialogue about your child's progress throughout the school year, not just on conference day. All conferences must be documented by both a parent's and a teacher's signature. This information and a summative report of your child's development will be kept on file in the school office. The school director is always available to conference with you and/or to participate in your classroom conference, if necessary.

**Diapers and Toilet Training**

If your child is wearing diapers to school, please send him or her in regular diapers and not in Pull-ups. It is much easier to change a regular diaper! Also, potty training will be reinforced at

school but teachers should not be expected to be responsible for the training process. Especially in our two-year class, the teachers will be very busy dealing with daily issues and will not have time to toilet train. Each day, the children will have scheduled bathroom breaks. If your child can verbalize his or her bathroom needs, and has only infrequent accidents (1 or 2 times a week), then he or she is probably ready to wear underwear instead of diapers to school. Please help us by making sure your child is ready for this transition. Children who participate in the 4 or 5-day classes should be fully potty-trained. In order to participate in Lunch Bunch (until 2:00 p.m.) children need to be fully trained, as well.

**Any child requiring diaper ointment must have a medication form on file at the school before ointment can be administered. Only teachers who have EMAT training may administer ointment.**

**When changing diapers, all personnel are required to use gloves as per standard precaution requirements.**

### **Discipline/ Guidance Policy**

Discipline/guidance at St. Mary's School is an important part of the learning experience. Children are guided to understand and use constructive behaviors in order to learn self-regulation, self-control, and respect for others. Our primary goal is for children to learn to take responsibility for their actions and in doing so, learn to accept the consequences.

When inappropriate behavior occurs, the teachers will use:

Redirection: substituting a positive action for a negative activity.

Distraction: a change in the focus of the activity.

Active

Listening: a question and answer listening time between the teacher and the child or children to determine the underlying cause of the behavior and help each child to refocus his or her behavior.

Under no circumstances will your child be subject to corporal or shaming methods of punishment.

Teachers will personally contact parents of children who are experiencing difficulty with guidance and will work with them to meet the needs of the child. A conference with the Director may be held to develop an appropriate plan of action. When necessary, professionals from the community or home school (in which county the family resides) may be asked to help develop a workable plan.

**The school reserves the right to withdraw a contract if the teacher and director feel that the needs of the child may be better met in another setting. We practice non-discrimination in considering the termination of a child's enrollment.**

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

**Please make sure that the following information is on file at the school and is kept current:**

1. Home/cell telephone numbers

2. Work telephone numbers
  3. TWO emergency names and telephone numbers, in the event that a parent cannot be reached
  4. A medical release form signed by both parents.
  5. Name and phone number of primary physician.
  6. Name and phone number of nanny or primary caregiver
- \*When any of this information changes, please let us know immediately!**

### **Fire Procedures**

**Children will have a practice fire drill once a month.**

In the event of a fire:

- The children will be evacuated from the building as they have practiced.
- A roll call will be taken to assure that all children are present.
- The classroom teachers will be with the children at all times.
- Children will be relocated to Second Baptist Church via church bus provided by Second Baptist (corner of Gaskins Rd and River Rd), if necessary.
- Parents will be notified to pick up their children when police and fire officials give school personnel permission to call.

### **Medical Emergencies**

In the event of a medical emergency:

- Teachers/directors will administer first aid/CPR and 911 will be called.
- The school will immediately advise you of the emergency. If you cannot be reached by phone, the school personnel will have your child transported by ambulance to the hospital that you have requested on your emergency form.
- School personnel will remain with your child until a parent or another individual designated as an emergency contact has arrived.

### **Weather Emergencies**

#### **Snow Policy**

When the school is closed due to ice and/or snow (or any other weather condition), the closing information will be reported on WTVR, Channel 6 and by e-mail. You may also receive a call from your child's teacher. (Typically, we follow Henrico County School's closing policies except for delayed openings.) **If excessive amounts of snow days are used, the director and Board of Directors will determine the need for makeup days.**

For weather emergencies that occur during school hours, the school will activate a text message to notify parents if early pick up is necessary.

#### **Other Weather Procedures (Hurricane/Tornadoes)**

**Children will have a bad weather drill 3 times a year.**

In the event of a hurricane or tornado:

- The children will be divided into areas where there are no windows or doors: the JK classroom, the bathrooms, and/ or the hallway between the sanctuary and the large hall.
- Your child's teachers will be with your child at all times.
- Staff members will use cell phones to contact parents with pick up information. Please do not call the school; you will be notified as soon as possible.

### **Crisis Policy**

In the event that a national emergency were to occur that would directly affect St. Mary's, the following plan would be put into effect:

- Our buildings would be locked down immediately.
- If necessary, the children would be moved to a safe place within the building.
- One of your child's teachers would be in the constant presence of your child. At no time would your child be unsupervised.
- Staff members would use cell phones to begin calling parents so you would know when and where to pick up your child. If you are unable to pick up your child, you should have alternate plans.
- We have an action plan with Second Baptist Church in the event that we would need to relocate. They have agreed to use their buses for relocation purposes only.

**In the event of any emergency at school, the director or the rector of the church will be responsible for any media contact. Should the director or rector be unavailable, the school office administrator or the church office administrator will be designated as the spokesperson for the school. We will aim to keep you updated throughout any emergency event through e-mail or text message.**

### **Early Morning Drop-off**

St. Mary's will offer an early morning drop-off for children in the three, four, and five day classes the second week of school. (Two year olds may use the early morning drop-off if approved through the director – an extra hour for a two makes for a very long day!) All children must be **escorted into the building, helped to hang up their belongings, and signed in** with the responsible teacher. This will begin at 8:00 a.m. and will be held in the school activity room until preschool begins. **All children who arrive before 8:55 a.m. must be taken to early morning drop off.** There is a **\$10.00 fee per day per child.** Please notify the office when your child will be using the early morning drop-off. The school should be notified **at least** the day before by email. Exceptions will be made for emergency situations. This year we will have early morning drop-off tickets sold in advance at 10 for \$80. If you would like to prepay for using early morning drop-off, you may purchase tickets in the office.

### **Evaluation**

At the end of the school year, parents will be invited and encouraged to evaluate St. Mary's and its effectiveness in meeting the children's and family needs. You will be sent an evaluation form in early May (this may be in the form of an online survey) that should be returned before the final day of school. A summary of the gathered information will be compiled and provided for parents. This information will be used to further improve the quality of the St. Mary's School experience. Parent input about the school is also welcome throughout the year. Please email the director with any suggestions on ways that we can improve. Your suggestions may be submitted in writing as anonymous however, if it is one that we use, we would love to give you credit! **Please let the director know immediately whenever there are concerns about the school's operation.** A written summary will be provided of information gathered through evaluations to help plan and improve our school in the future.

### **Extended Day**

(Please see the separate form for sign-up.)

- **Stay and Play (4 day and 5 day children)**

Beginning **September 20th**, St. Mary's will offer Stay and Play every **Monday through Thursday from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.** Children will bring a healthy lunch (no NUT products!) and eat from 12:00 to 12:30. Then they will have indoor and outdoor play time from 12:30 to 2:00. 3-day children may stay with the approval of the Director.

- **After School Enrichment (3 day, 4 day and 5 day children)**

Beginning **September 20th**, we will offer after school enrichment from 12:00 to 12:30 p.m. (this end time will vary). The After-School Enrichment program will run for 6 to 8 weeks at a time throughout the school year and will include activities such as ballet, soccer, tennis, music, drama, cooking, puppetry and music/movement. Brochures will be sent home with the children before each session begins. **Children in the 3-day class are welcome to participate in the enrichment and must be picked up at the end of class (this time may vary).**

- **Lunch/ Stay and Play (4 day and 5 day children)**

**After School Enrichment children**, may bring a healthy lunch and eat once the class has ended and will participate in Stay and Play until to 2:00 p.m. There will be a separate fee for this.

### **Family Participation**

St. Mary's is a community that actively encourages parental participation. In addition to allowing parents to regularly participate in classroom/school activities, we encourage families to participate in the following:

- Grand friend's Day - during the week of Thanksgiving, we invite our grand friends (grandparents or a special adult friend other than our parents) to visit us. On this day, the children will share some songs and display their artwork for all to see. Parents are welcome, too.
- Donuts with Dad's Morning – This is a special time for each child and their dad (a male substitute is appropriate). The classrooms are open and each teacher plans a special hour of fun for the children and their dads. This activity is provided in the morning before school so that you may choose whether or not to come. We will offer this 2 times during the school year.
- Mother's Day Teas – Each spring, mothers (a female substitute is appropriate) are invited to join their child's class for a special tea of honor. The children provide a special treat for this event and usually sing a song or two to welcome their guests.
- Spring Family program – this event includes a display of children's art and a presentation of songs and instruments by the children. All family members are encouraged to attend.
- Spring Carnival – Games, food and family fun.

### **"Being Green"**

We would like to encourage our children, teachers and our families to be resourceful in the use of limited resources. Some of the practices we continue include:

- Using recyclable materials when we can (our labels for children's personal things will be made out of recyclable materials)
- Bringing cups/ water bottles from home for snack time
- Teaching children about gardening and even using some of what we grow during our snack time
- Electronic billing
- Online newsletters

If you have other ideas to encourage our this practice, please let us know.

### Facility

Our school is situated in the newest part of St. Mary's Episcopal Church. The eight classrooms that are used throughout the school week are shared with the church's Sunday school on the weekends. In addition to our classroom space, the children have weekly use of our Block Room (a multi-purpose room that is also used for rainy day play and special events) and attend chapel in an adjacent building. Outdoor play takes place on our courtyard play area, our two playgrounds in the school/church yard, and our nature trail. Teachers also have access to the state of the art kitchen on our premises.

### Field Trips

Occasionally the preschool children will go to off campus field trips. We ask that each child be accompanied by an adult at each of these events.

### Health Policies

- **All students and staff members will have a Medical Form on file based on a current physical exam; the children's form will include an up-to-date list of immunizations. Virginia State Law requires that the form be on file at the school prior to the student's first day.**
- The health and well being of your child is of primary importance at St. Mary's Episcopal School. Therefore, it is critical that parents and teachers work together to prevent the spread of communicable diseases and illnesses.

Children should be kept at home when they experience the following symptoms:

1. **Temperature above 99 degrees within 24 hours of the school day.**  
**Please do not administer Tylenol for a fever and send your child to school.**
2. **Vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours of the school day**
3. **Thick nasal discharge, yellow or green in color**
4. **Mouth sores with drooling**
5. **Rash with fever**
6. **Heavy bronchial cough**
7. **Strep throat**
8. **Chickenpox**

9. Impetigo
10. Any eye inflammation or discharge/conjunctivitis
11. Sore throat or enlarged glands
12. Earache or discharge from ear
13. Head lice
14. Scabies

**\*Children who have been ill with fevers, strep, etc. usually need a day or two of rest before returning to the activity level of preschool**

- Please notify the school of any contagious diseases your child may contract. We particularly need to know about **head lice, chicken pox, and the H1N1 flu**. In these cases, it will be important to let other families know of these illnesses (through printed materials) so that they may be alert to symptoms in their children. At the discretion of the director, some contagious diseases will require a doctor's note to return to the school setting.
- **Each day as the children arrive at school, there will be a health inspection completed by the classroom teacher or director.** If the adult observes any symptoms related to illness, you will be asked to come get your child and take him or her home.
- **Should your child become ill at school, he or she will be separated from his classmates and kept in the school office until a parent can return to school to pick him or her up.** An illness report must be completed and signed by the teacher and parent.

**The health of our children and teachers are very important. Please make every effort to adhere to these important policies.**

### **Helmets**

The children ride trikes and scooter boards on a regular basis. If you desire for your child to wear a helmet when riding, please make sure there is one in his or her bag each day or it can be left on the child's hook in the hallway. Like all items from home, please label the helmet with the child's name.

### **Holiday Celebrations**

We will celebrate traditional holidays throughout the school year. Although we do not completely exclude Santa and the Easter Bunny, we do approach holidays from a Christian perspective, particularly at Christmas and Easter. If your family has any unique ways to celebrate the holidays (traditions, etc.) that you would like to share with the children, please let us know in advance so that we can plan a time for you to visit.

### **Hours of Operation**

The school is open five days a week, Monday through Friday within the designated school year. School hours are 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. We offer extended day hours throughout the year on certain days of the week. These days will be listed periodically throughout the school year.

### **Insurance**

St. Mary's Episcopal School has public liability insurance through The Church Insurance Company.

### **Lost and Found**

A bucket for lost and found items is in the school office. Please check this periodically. Any unclaimed items will be donated to the Goodwill after a period of 6 weeks. To avoid losing items, please make sure your child's things are labeled properly.

### **Medication**

**For any medication to be administered at school, there must be a completed medication consent on file in the school office. This form must be signed by the child's pediatrician to be valid.**

#### Epi - Pens

A form must be completed **and renewed every 6 months (as per state law)** if your child has a prescription for an epi-pen. Teachers are trained to administer epi-pens. The epi-pen will remain with your child's teacher at all times. Any use of the epi-pen will be recorded in the school office. The school will remind you when your child's epi-pen is close to expiration. We expect parents to provide a current epi-pen and form for use at school. **The school cannot provide an epi-pen for your child. It must come from a prescription from a certified medical doctor.**

#### Diaper Ointment/Lotion

To apply diaper ointment and lotion, prescription and non-prescription, (per State requirement) on your child, we must have a medication form completed and kept on file. A written log must be kept in the classroom.

#### Other Medication

Other medication, prescription and over the counter, will be administered at the director's discretion. The director will not administer the initial dosage of medication. The parent must provide written instructions that are consistent with labeling on medication or doctor's note and include medication name, dosage, time and date medicine is to be given. A written log will be kept showing amount and time the medicine was given. Medicine will be stored in the director's office in a locked cabinet and will only be administered by the director. Medicine must not be expired.

### **Nannies/Sitters**

If you have a regular sitter or a nanny you must fill out a form to keep in file in the school office. It is important to have accurate information on file related to who will be bringing your child to and from school. We will check identification of unfamiliar persons. Also, please make sure these individuals carry your child's carpool number with them. If you do not have record of these individuals on file, your child may not be put in the car.

### **Office Hours**

The school office will be open daily from 8:00 to 2:00 p.m. except on Fridays when it will close at 12:30 p.m. If you should need to report a change in your schedule, a family emergency, or anything else related to your child, please leave word on our voice mail or with our administrative assistant @ 784-2049. We will be checking the voice mail several times. Mrs. Rawls may be reached by cell, 833-9422 during other times if you need assistance.

### **Outdoor Play**

Unless it is raining or the temperature is below 30 degrees, we will go outside every day. We have a variety of outdoor spaces that allow for extending classroom activities into the natural environment. In addition to our two playgrounds, the children will also have an opportunity to garden and to explore our nature trail. We often use an open space near our building to play soccer, t-ball, or parachute games. We value opportunities for children to embrace the joys of nature and their surroundings.

### **Payments**

Payments should be mailed to the school at 12291 River Road, Richmond, Virginia 23238. If you wish to drop your payments off at school, please place them in the wooden box outside of the office or give them directly to Cathy Martin (at her desk). If you choose to pay monthly, you will be given a payment sheet with tickets noting the payment number, amount and due date. You will make 10 equal payments on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month, August – May. If you are unable to make payments, please contact the director to make additional arrangements. If payments are not made for 2 consecutive months, you will be asked to withdraw your child from school **Please do not send in payments with your child and do not hand the payments to the staff in carpool line.**

**Returned checks will be assessed a fee of \$35.00.**

### **Parent Resources**

In addition to the memos that you will receive from the school, there is an updated list in the office of resources for parents. This includes speech and language specialists, behavioral specialists, public school resources, health resources, etc. Please check with the director should you need any assistance in finding help for your child or your family. A small lending library with parent resources is also available.

### **Playground Safety**

Please help us to keep your children (including siblings) safe by observing our playground rules **after hours** as well as during the school program.

- Children should always be accompanied by an adult when on the playground
- Children should not be allowed to climb on the roofs of the houses, stand on top of the play equipment, or stand on the fence
- The sandbox should be covered by the last visitors
- During our school day, our playgrounds are used only by our preschoolers.

### **Room Parent Committee**

Each classroom will have 1 or 2 room parents. Throughout the year they will be responsible for helping to plan and implement some of our schoolwide activities. Room parents will also be responsible for planning class parties and encouraging participation in school events.

### **School Directory**

Each student will receive a directory complete with students' names, addresses and phone numbers. If you do not wish to be included in the directory you must indicate that on the school agreement.

### **School Pictures**

In the fall a photographer will take individual school pictures. In the spring, we will take a group photograph of each class. **Each photographer has their own billing process. Please read your payment information carefully.**

### **Scholastic Book Club**

On a regular basis, your child will receive book order forms from Scholastic Books. There are always great selections and excellent prices in this book club. With the bonus points from the book sales, we are able to acquire new books for our school library. Please make the checks payable to Scholastic Books. This year all of your transactions for the book club may be completed online. The website for the club is [www.scholastic.com/bookclubs](http://www.scholastic.com/bookclubs). You must set up a login. The school activation code is **DYTQT**. You may also submit your order to us from the printed flyer. This year we will host a Scholastic Book Fair. The funds raised from this event will provide us with classroom items and new books for the library

### **Snacks**

**We are a nut-free school.** Please make sure that you read all labels for nuts and nut oils. **DO NOT** send peanut butter for snack or for lunch. We will send home the unopened snack/lunch with nuts and provide your child with another snack in the event that you mistakenly send one. There are some highly allergic children who cannot risk even sitting next to nut products.

Each day the children will have a mid-morning snack. Parents of the 2-day twos classes will be assigned a week to provide a group snack for the children in the class. All other children will bring their own snack each day. **Please label your child's snack with his or her name. We are promoting independence at snack time so please do not send containers that your child has difficulty opening (each teacher may have age related suggestions.)**

All children will be given water to drink during snack time. Each child should bring a cup or water bottle from home (labeled with his or her name) to be used for water. These will be sent home for washing. **Please do not send additional drinks for your child unless requested by the teacher.**

No more than once a month, preschoolers will be making/cooking a snack at school. Parents will be asked to help with the ingredients for preparing these snacks. Every effort will be made to include ingredients that all children can eat (even those with allergies). For those who have

allergies, parents may send an alternative snack for cooking day or the school will have crackers available for the child. We plan for our cooking times to allow us to incorporate foods from other cultures represented in our student population.

**Please try to send healthy snacks to school.**

**Healthy snack suggestions:**

**Apples**

**Bananas**

**Raisins**

**Yogurt**

**Cheese**

**Muffins**

**Pretzels**

**Graham crackers**

**Fresh vegetables**

**Hummus**

**Crackers (including Goldfish)**

**\*\*Please try to avoid cookies and candy for snacks.**

### **Social Media Policy**

The use of social media has become a very important and necessary tool for communication. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn are a few of the many ways to communicate over the internet. As a precaution, St. Mary's has developed the following guidelines.

- Please do not distribute any information that might be deemed personal about any students, including pictures of children (other than your own) where they can be identified and/or their names
- Please do not share personal information of other teachers, parents or students such as full names, addresses or phone numbers without permission from said individuals.
- Please do not post any negative information about the school on any form of social media. Instead, bring your concerns to the St. Mary's office.
- Above all, use good judgment when posting anything related to the school, respect the privacy of our St. Mary's families and make sure you understand copyright and fair use laws.

### **Special Event Days**

During the year, there are several special events planned (i.e. pictures, parties, puppet shows). **If these events do not fall on your child's school day, your child is invited to attend the event.** The Two's classes will be informed of their special events throughout the year. We ask that you stay with your child during this special activity and take him or her home afterwards.

### **Student File**

Each child should have the following information on file with St. Mary's Episcopal:

- Application/re-registration

- Contract
- Medical form
- Agreement
- Copy of birth certificate
- Emergency information card
- Information sheet
- Parent volunteer form
- Handbook review form

### **Staff Qualifications**

Your child's teachers and assistant teachers are well qualified for providing your children with a developmentally appropriate preschool education. Our lead teachers have college degrees in education or a related field and/or have many years of classroom experience with young children and some are currently working towards certification in early childhood. Our assistant teachers have college degrees and/or 2 or more years experience with working with young children. The director, at her discretion, may hire a teacher or assistant teacher who has not met the stated qualifications. In addition to training in CPR and First Aid, standard precautions, child abuse, and use of the fire extinguisher, our teaching staff receives training (required to have 20 hours) throughout the school year in topics that relate to working with young children. All hiring and termination of employees follow non-discrimination laws.

### **Tote Bags**

Instead of backpacks, **it is much easier for the children to carry a tote bag.** This year, we have tote bags with the St. Mary's Episcopal School logo for sale. The cost of each bag will be \$8.00. The children may use paint pens or permanent markers to put their names on their bags.

### **Volunteers Other than Parents**

We welcome volunteers other than our St. Mary's parents to participate in our program under the following conditions:

- Must always be under the direct supervision of an employee of the school
- Must participate in a volunteer orientation program that includes health and safety, child abuse, emergency procedures and child guidance
- Must have criminal background check at a cost of \$10.00 per person

### **Withdrawal/Refunds**

When enrolling a child at St. Mary's Episcopal School, according to the **Student Contract**, it is understood that each child is enrolled for the entire school year and therefore responsible for the year's tuition. The tuition has been determined based on the cost of providing quality services including materials, supplies, equipment and a well-qualified staff. If for any reason, the child is withdrawn from the school by the parents, the school in its sole discretion may decide to refund tuition payments or waive future payments. This action will not be considered unless the family has given **30 days written notice**. No refunds or tuition waivers will be granted after **March 31** of any given school year.