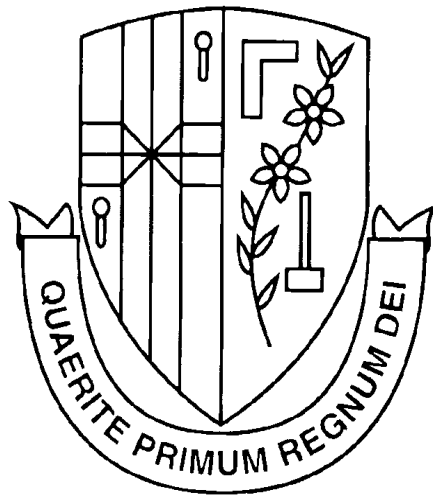


# St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool

...Where your child is loved!



## Parent Handbook

Hilo, Hawaii

# Greetings from St. Joseph Pastor and Principal



Aloha Parents, Students, Members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, School Board Members and Benefactors,

Peace in the Lord Jesus Christ!

Welcome to St. Joseph School. Together let us make the new school year a productive, meaningful and memorable one. Our formation is meant to prepare us in the Mission that has been entrusted to us, that is, "To proclaim the message of Jesus through education, worship, and service in the Catholic Tradition."

We live in a fast changing world and we need to adapt to the times. We can do so with our faith and moral values as our guiding principles. This is the path to the New Evangelization.

May our patron, St Joseph, be our inspiration in our journey.

God bless you.

In Jesus, our fullness of Life,

**Fr. Samuel Loterte, SSS**  
Pastor, Saint Joseph Parish

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## Greetings from the St. Joseph School Principal

We are indeed blessed, and we thank the Good Lord above for all the blessings he has bestowed on St. Joseph School!

On behalf of the School Advisory Board, Faculty, and Staff, I would like to welcome you to St. Joseph School, the only Catholic school on the Big Island of Hawai'i. St. Joseph School has a strong legacy in the Hilo community. It is a testament to effectively integrating Catholic morals, principles, and values into the core principles of education from preschool through high school.

We welcome you to this educational ministry, and we hope that you will make our school an extension of your home and family. We greatly rely on the involvement of family members at St. Joseph's. As we invite you to be a part of our Ohana, our successes become your successes.

May God Bless you as you make the commitment to a higher standard of education as well as the development of strong moral character.

I join our Pastor, Father Sam, in welcoming you to St. Joseph School and ask you to remember always to "Seek First the Kingdom of God"!

Peace and Blessings,

Dr. Llewellyn Young  
*Principal, St. Joseph School*

**St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool**  
999 Ululani Street - Hilo HI 96720

**Phone Directory**

July 2015

Preschool	(808) 961-0424
Fax	(808) 443-0294
Business Office	(808) 935-8443
Business Office Fax	(808)443-0294
Elementary School	(808) 935-4935
Elementary Fax	(808) 443-0294
High School	(808) 935-4936
High School Fax	(808) 443-0294

**St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool**

Operating Hours

7:15 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. Preschool Program

2:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Extended Day

**When school is not in session, leave a message on the answering machine or please contact:**

Elementary Office            935-4935

High School Office            935-4936

*St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool, a non discriminatory educational institution and employer, is a non smoking institution.*

*St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause and parents will be given prompt notification when changes are made.*

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# HISTORY OF ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL



One hundred forty three school years ago, on April 1, 1869, a small parish school of forty-two students was established in Hilo by Rev. Charles Pouzot, SS.CC., under the direction of Fr. Patrick O'Reilly, for the purpose of teaching English to the native Hawaiians. The school was named St. Joseph. Over the years, the school's enrollment increased to the point that it was necessary to build a new school on Waianuenu Avenue. This school for both boys and girls was dedicated on October 10, 1875. Ten years later, three Marianist Brothers arrived in Hilo and took over the operation of the boys' school. It was blessed on October 25, 1885. The school was called St. Mary's School. In the meantime, the Sisters of St. Francis (Syracuse, NY) arrived in 1900 to staff St. Joseph School for Girls on Kapiolani Street.

In 1948 St. Mary's and St. Joseph's were consolidated into a co-educational institution which was built on the present site at the intersection of Ululani and Hualalai streets. Some nine hundred and sixty-three students were enrolled for the first year. In 1951 the Marianist Brothers were reassigned to teaching posts elsewhere. They were replaced in Hilo with a larger staff of Sisters as well as dedicated lay teachers. The opening of the new school in 1951-52 was a memorable event for it marked the beginning of St. Joseph as a complete coeducational school directly under the Pastor of St. Joseph Parish. In June 2009 the Franciscan Sisters withdrew from St. Joseph School. The Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians were welcomed to St. Joseph School the same summer.

St. Joseph School includes a Montessori-based preschool, thus providing Hawai'i Island students a Catholic education from preschool (ages 3-5) through grade twelve. The student body is diverse in race, national origin and creed.

## IDENTITY OF ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

### **Vision**

St. Joseph School builds a nurturing community through demonstration of Catholic values and implementation of an academically rigorous and spiritually rich curriculum. St. Joseph students learn, in a safe and disciplined environment, to care for themselves and others and to accept responsibility for making a just and loving society through the generous use of their personal talents and gifts.

### **Mission**

The mission of St. Joseph School is to proclaim the message of Jesus through education, worship and service in the Catholic tradition.

### **Code of Conduct**

As members of St. Joseph School, all students and their parents as well as the administration, faculty, staff and other members of the school community will conduct themselves as good representatives of the school by:

- a. Acting with **respect** toward persons and property.
- b. Thinking, speaking and acting with **honesty**.
- c. Contributing to the building of strong **community**.
- d. Promoting school spirit through **loyalty**.

### **Philosophy Statement**

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool strives to build a Catholic educational community in an environment of faith in which tradition, culture, and knowledge are shared among teachers, students, and parents in order to help students realize their rights and responsibilities in accordance with Christ's teachings and in the light of Christian values. With the realization that every student is created by God with unique talents and potential, we acknowledge that each individual has personal goals of intellectual, spiritual and social development.

We, at St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool, practice principles set forth by Maria Montessori. "The education of even a small child, therefore, does not aim at preparing him for school, but for life." (Maria Montessori)

The history of Montessori education goes back to the turn of the Twentieth Century. Dr. Maria Montessori, Italy's first woman doctor, began her work with children in 1899, when she was asked by the Italian government to direct a state school for retarded children. After close observation and isolation of the children's learning difficulties,



Dr. Montessori developed a simple teaching approach to help these children. The success of Dr. Montessori's approach was revealed when these children shocked authorities by passing state examinations given to normal children of the same age.

The theory behind Montessori education is simple. Children want to learn. From birth to three, the child lives in what appears to be a chaotic world. He or she gradually establishes order by learning to distinguish the senses.

From three to six, the child passes through sensitive periods, awakening as an individual and revealing surprising mental agility and an intense, almost passionate interest in the world. The child loves to learn new words and is interested in orderliness and good manners - not as a game, but as a representation of the adult world toward which he or she is moving. These sensitive periods come from an inner need to acquire and master skills that are especially necessary. If not allowed to follow this natural curiosity and need to know, the child can lose interest in exploring and discovering his or her environment.

The aim is to enable the child to function in the environment independently. The underlying principle is one of freedom within established limits, which permits the child to gain self-esteem and self-reliance.

The Preschool is a community in which children live and work cooperatively. "The Prepared Environment," from scaled furniture and cleaning utensils to special Montessori apparatus, is essential to a Montessori education.

The special environment offers a means (time, place and circumstance) by which the children can develop to their potential according to their individual needs, based upon Dr. Montessori's observations and recommendations for all children.

The Montessori apparatus is designed scientifically to provide opportunities for the child to explore concrete examples of abstract ideas. It is self-correcting, allowing the children to develop their senses and discover concepts under the guidance of a skilled Montessori teacher.

With close guidance from our teachers, a child attending our school will be exposed to this method which promotes the development of the whole child, facilitates the growth of inner discipline, and cultivates the child's own natural joy in learning.

# Expected School-Wide Learning Results (ESLRs)

(Preschool - Grade 12)

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool promotes

## **Excellence** as evidenced by

- Academic achievement
- Appreciation of the arts
- Career and college preparation
- Effective communication and interpersonal skills
- Independent and informed thinking
- Desire for lifelong learning

## **Spirituality** as evidenced by

- Christian values and lifestyle
- Development of personal prayer life
- Ethical and moral character
- Participation and service within a faith community
- Understanding of Catholic teachings

## **Local and Global Connectedness** as evidenced by

- Involvement in civic, government and community organizations
- Productive citizenship
- Respect for individual, cultural and religious diversity
- Stewardship of the environment
- Utilization of technology and other scientific advances

## **Respect and Responsibility** as evidenced by

- Personal and social integrity
- Healthy physical, emotional and mental lifestyle
- Leadership development
- Self-discipline

## **School Spirit** as evidenced by

- Contributions of time, talent, and treasure
- Involvement of alumni, parents and other supporters
- Perpetuation of school traditions and values
- Beneficial school and community relations

## Code of Christian Conduct for Students and Parents/Guardians

"Catholic education is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to the Church He founded. Through education, the Church seeks to prepare its members to proclaim the Good News and to translate this proclamation into action. Since the Christian vocation is a call to transform oneself and society with God's help, the educational efforts of the Church must encompass the twin purposes of personal sanctification and social reform in light of Christian values." (*To teach as Jesus Did*, National Council of Catholic Bishops, 1972, p.7)

Parents are the primary educators of their child(ren). Parents who enroll at St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool, are choosing its program and curriculum over those available at other schools. Students' interest in receiving a quality, morally based education can be served when students, parents, teachers, and school officials work together. Normally, differences between individuals can be resolved. In some rare instances, however, the school may find it necessary, in the best interest of the child, to ask parents/guardians to withdraw their child.

It shall be an expressed condition of enrollment that the student and the parents/guardians behave in a manner that is consistent with the Christian principles of the school as determined by the school in its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to, any policies, principles or procedure set forth in the Parent Handbook of the school.

These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Parents/Guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting the academic, moral and behavioral expectations of the school.
- Students and parents/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about school operation and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive.

These expectations for students and parents/guardians include, but are not limited to, all school-sponsored programs and events (e.g., extended care, athletics, field trips, etc.)

The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, which actions fall short of meeting the Christian principles of the school. Failure to follow these principles will normally result in a verbal or written warning to the student and/or parent/guardian and normally will first result in disciplinary action short of a requirement to withdraw from the school (e.g. suspension of student or **suspension of parent/guardian's** privilege to come on the campus grounds and/or participate in parish/school activities, volunteer work, etc.). The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, when conduct is of such a severe nature as to warrant immediate action without a warning.

## SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

### **Preschool History**

In 1991 Sister Grace Michael Souza was the Principal of St. Joseph Elementary School. Sister Grace, always having a heart for young children, wanted to start a Montessori preschool that would be part of St. Joseph School.

Sister Grace asked a parent of St. Joseph Elementary School who was certified in Montessori education to help her create a Montessori-based preschool.

The preschool went through several transitions; first as a 3-5 program then a 2-3 and 3-5 programs, and now a 3-5 program again.

### **Accreditation**

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool is currently accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA) and Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS).

The Preschool is licensed by the Roman Catholic Church, Diocese of Honolulu, in the State of Hawaii.

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool (3-5 Year Old Program and Extended Day Program) is licensed by the Department of Human Services.

The Preschool is currently licensed for 49 children, ages, 3, 4, and 5. There will be 12 children maximum per teacher/aide on staff in the classroom.

### **The Montessori Classroom - What is Montessori?**

**Helping Children to Help Themselves.** Have you ever heard a child say, "I want to do it myself?" Working under the guidance of our teachers, children use Montessori materials in practical life, as well sensorial apparatus, to sharpen their senses, which equips them to learn a wide variety of subjects, including pre-reading, science, mathematics, geography, botany, zoology, etc.

**Montessori Cultivates Self-Motivation.** A child learns, through working with materials, a satisfaction that leads him/her to continue to explore his/her world through working with it. A child may continue in a stage of development as long as necessary for mastery but progresses to the next step as soon as he/she is ready. At no time is a child held back or pushed ahead because of the needs of other children.

**Planned Order in Montessori Classrooms.** Each piece of equipment has its place. The presentations of the teachers to individuals or small groups of children are well planned. With this carefully prepared and completely equipped environment, the

Montessori classroom becomes a place where a child can fall in love with learning for a lifetime.

### **The Montessori Philosophy Utilizes Childhood's Special Powers**

The Absorbent Mind: Children have the ability to literally absorb information from the environment.

Sensitive Periods: Children have periods of intense fascination for learning a particular skill.

Sense of Order: Young children's need for order is one of the most powerful incentives that dominate the formative years. The child possesses sensitivity to the orderly arrangement of things and their relative positions.

### **Montessori Classroom Structure**

During the work period the children are free to select their own materials that have been demonstrated by a teacher. They may work with the materials as long as they choose, and then they return them in proper order to their assigned places on the shelves. The materials are ordered and sequenced in difficulty, teach only one new concept at a time, and are to a large extent, self-correcting. Each child's workspace is respected as private and may be shared only at the child's invitation. A child may choose to work in a small group, a large group, or by himself/herself. Older children often help younger ones, which reinforces their self-esteem, as well as their understanding of the concept or skill involved.

Younger children look up to their senior classmates and learn much from them indirectly through observation. There is little competition in the Montessori classroom because many children of different ages are working individually with the materials. Each child relates primarily to his/her previous work, and his/her progress is not compared to the achievements of others. Learning areas in the Montessori environment include, but are not limited to, practical life, sensorial, art, math, language, science, social studies, geography, listening, reading, writing, fine motor, manipulatives, and cooperative games.

Areas of our Playroom include, but are not limited to, block area, manipulatives, cooperative games, housekeeping, drama, puppets, reading corner, dress-up, sensorial table, puzzles, etc. Daily activities include the following opportunities: circle time, free choice of work, outdoor play, art, music, movement, nature study (botany/zoology), science, cultural studies, etc. Weekly visits to the School Library, and special guest readers, are but a sampling of the enrichment opportunities provided.

## SECTION 2: GENERAL OPERATING POLICIES

### Hours of Operation

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool is open weekdays from 7:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

We operate:

3-5 Year Old Program: 7:15 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.

3-5 Year Old Extended Day Program: 2:15 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Consult the monthly preschool calendar for early dismissal times, holidays, and vacation periods. We observe the same holidays as St. Joseph Elementary School. Our school year runs from August through July.

### Visitors to St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool

All visitors are to check in at the Preschool School Office before proceeding to the classrooms. Upon check-in, visitors receive a Visitor's Pass. When leaving the Preschool, return the Visitor's Pass. Visits to the classroom, playground area, etc. must be prearranged and approved by the Preschool Director. Visitors are expected to be appropriately dressed and present a current photo I.D.

### Arrivals and Dismissals

Parking is available along the one-way Ululani St. or along Hualalai St. fronting our building or in the back area near Furnitureland. Gravel area near preschool is for Teachers, Cafeteria Staff and cars with handicap parking permits ONLY.

**Please hold your child's hand at all times while walking through the parking lot.**

Upon arrival at the classroom be sure that a teacher has seen your child. We want to personally greet you and your child upon arrival. At dismissal time, please be sure your child says "good-bye" to the teacher on duty. This procedure is important in establishing courtesy and manners as well as for the safety of your child.

It is extremely important to obey signs, to extend courtesy, and to cooperate with others during these hours. This will create the safest possible environment for all children. Please drive carefully, observing appropriate entrances and exits. **Watch for pedestrians, especially children.**

### Drop-Off and Pick-Up

For the safety of the children, the Preschool has a strict policy concerning the release of our students to adults other than those listed on the Parent Authorization Form (PAF). Children will be released **ONLY** to those persons listed on the PAF. There will be **NO EXCEPTIONS**.

If, for any reason, you will be having your child picked up by someone not listed on the PAF, you must provide us with written notification when you bring your child to school.

A phone call is not enough. Please do not send a note with the person picking up your child. We have no way of verifying the legitimacy of the note. If the on-duty staff member deems it necessary, identification (Driver's License or Picture ID) may be requested of the person picking up your child. If you expect to have a different person picking up your child on a fairly routine basis, please add that person's name to your Parent Authorization Form (PAF). Update information as it changes, **PLEASE**.

Note: Even if you are having another child's parent pick up your child for the day, we **MUST** have written word from you to that effect.

In the event of a marital separation, divorce, or TRO (temporary restraining order) a copy of the custody agreement will be requested. Release arrangements must be in writing for the protection of all concerned. A Parent Authorization Form (PAF) must be done for each household. A PAF will provide a list of authorized contact person(s) for your child while in your care.

If the adults picking up a child smells or acts like s/he has had alcohol teachers will use their common sense regarding safety and not release the child to that adult. The teacher will call someone on a PAF for the safety of the child.

### **Early Dismissal and Late Fees**

Early dismissals are occasionally scheduled throughout the school year, specifically for Parent-Teacher Conferences, excursions and/or special events. Please note these special dates on the monthly school calendar. Otherwise, dismissal from school is between 2:00 - 2:15 p.m. for regular day students and anytime thereafter for the Extended Day students, but no later than 5:00 p.m. Dismissal for the Elementary school on Wednesday is at 1:30. Please be considerate and allow your child time to rest until 2:00 pm or pick your child up before nap to avoid disturbing others.

- Please provide a written note if your child will be leaving before 2:00 p.m. This way we can assist in a smooth transition for departure.

Late pick-up fees after your child's scheduled time are due at the time of occurrence and will be charged accordingly:

#### Regular Day:

- 2:16 - 2:30 p.m                      \$10.00 + \$1.00 every minute thereafter

#### Extended Day Program:

- 5:01 - 5:05 p.m                      \$10.00 + \$1.00 every minute thereafter

In the event of an emergency, please call the school immediately to apprise us of your situation so that we can reassure your child of your impending arrival.

### **Attendance**

Consistent attendance is imperative to a child's success in school; missed lessons and demonstrations leave a child with a sense of loss and uncertainty as to what has transpired. Attendance is recorded daily and submitted to the Elementary School Office.

- Please call the Preschool Office (961-0424) each day of your child's absence.
- Submit a doctor's note for absences that exceed 2-3 days.
- Submit written notice of vacations, trips and special days off.

### **Tardiness**

Tardiness is very disconcerting and unsettling for the child arriving late. To allow sufficient time for social play and to keep class interruptions to a minimum, please have your child at school by 8:15 a.m. After 8:15 a.m., report to the Elementary front office for a tardy slip.

- **Please call the Preschool Office (961-0424) by 8:00 a.m. if you are running late and want to purchase a school lunch.** Our lunch count must be submitted by this time; otherwise, please plan on bringing home lunch for the day.
- If your child has a scheduled doctor appointment during the morning hours, they must be in class by 7:15 a.m. and picked up at least 10 minutes prior to their appointment time. Your child **MUST** return to school by 10:30 a.m. or else they will not be accepted back into class for the day.

### **Sign-In Procedure and Morning Routine**

Please adhere to the following procedures to make for an easy-going morning. If you have other siblings in our school, please take them to class first. This will prevent congestion in the Playroom.

1. **Sign-In:** Daily sign in/out sheets are located in your child's homeroom. Please enter your child's "time of entry" and initial next to it.
2. **Morning Water:** Have your child get his/her glass from the cup rack and drink a glass of water from the cooler located in the Classroom/ Playroom.
3. **Lunch Program:** The lunch procedure will be explained at the Parent Orientation Meeting at the beginning of the school year.
4. **Bathroom and Handwashing:** Please have your child use the bathroom and wash hands.
5. **Follow Schedule:** When you sign in on arrival you will find a note as to where your child will begin their day. It will be either Schedule 1 or Schedule 2.



## Daily Schedule (7:15 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.)

- 7:15-8:45 a.m. Arrival, sign-in & lunch order, check parent packet, drink water and visit restrooms  
Free choice work time (jobs the teachers have showed them)
- 8:15 a.m. Doors near teacher's parking is locked for added security (reopened at 2:00 p.m.)
- 8:45 a.m. Clean up, circle time & prayer  
It is important that your child be present at circle time. By being late, your child misses all important presentations demonstrated at this time. It is also disruptive to the children participating in circle time.
- 9:00-9:20 a.m. Snack, restroom
- 9:45-10:20 a.m. Room 1 goes outside, Room 2 works in Room 1
- 10:30-11:15 a.m. Room 2 goes outside, Room 1 works in Room 2
- 11:20-11:45 a.m. Story, prayer, nap set up, wash hands & lunch
- 12:20 p.m. Lunch clean up, restrooms, quiet music, story, nap/rest
- 1:45-2:15 p.m. Wake up, restrooms, put nap items away, wait for pick up

**\*\* Every Tuesday, we visit the St. Joseph Elementary School Library to borrow a book. Please read to your child, record the time in their reading log and return the book to school by Friday. Show your child how to properly take care of the book to ensure that it gets returned it to the library intact. \*\***

## **Extended Care (2:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.)**

- 2:15-2:30 p.m. Playroom, prepare for outside time
- 2:30-3:10 p.m. Outside time
- 3:10 p.m. Clean up, prayer, bathroom, snack
- 3:30-4:00 p.m. Circle time/story/craft demo
- 4:00-4:50 p.m. Work/playtime room 3
- 4:50-5:00 p.m. Clean up and dismissal

**\*\*PLEASE be prompt when picking up your child. Children get scared when they are the last one picked up\*\***

### **Sign-Out Procedure and Afternoon Routine**

After school, if you have other siblings in our school, please pick-up your preschooler first. Please set Doctor/Dentist/Other appointments later in the day to not disturb child's routine.

1. **Afternoon Dismissal:** For an uninterrupted naptime, pick-up is from 2:00-2:15 p.m. Please let teachers know at drop off if you will be picking up your child before lunch.
2. **Sign-Out:** Daily sign-out sheets are located on the counter of your child's home room. Please enter your child's "time of departure" and initial next to it.
3. **Parent Mailbox:** Check your mailbox daily for important flyers, etc.
4. **Nap Mats:** If your child is still sleeping upon your arrival, gently wake your child and give him/her time to adjust to his/her surroundings. Please have your child fold and put away his/her nap mats/blankets.
5. **Socks & Shoes:** Have your child put on his/her own socks and shoes before leaving.
6. **Art Folders & Cubby:** Have your child check his/her file/cubby before leaving.

### **Release**

A child leaving campus during operating hours waits in the classroom until he/she is picked up. The teacher or another authorized adult establishes the positive identification of the person picking up the child. The parent or guardian signs out the child before taking him/her off campus.

### **Attire**

Students are required to wear St. Joseph Preschool uniform t-shirt and shorts. Each child should have an extra change of uniform in his/her cubby at all times. Extra uniform is either school uniform t-shirt or solid gray t-shirt, shorts, underpants and socks.

**Hair should be kept neat and trimmed. Chemical hair color is not appropriate. Girls with long hair should wear a ponytail, braids, or bun to keep hair out of their eyes. Boys hair should be kept short and neat. No gel/spiky hair.**

Please label each item of clothing and store in a labeled Ziploc bag. On cold days, sweaters and sweatpants in gray, red or navy may be worn over your child's shorts.

Shoes should be closed-toe tennis, sneaker type with Velcro or zipper. Please no shoelaces unless the child is able to tie his/her shoes unassisted. Loose, slip-on shoes are not acceptable, as they are unsafe and can fall off when children are playing. Acceptable shoe colors are white, blue, or gray. **Cartoon character designs that**

**represent violence on clothing, bedding, or shoes are not allowed. Light up shoes are also not allowed.**

**White, low-cut ankle socks** are recommended. This style of sock is much easier for the child to put on independently, especially if the sock is somewhat loose and non-binding. Children will be expected to put on their own socks and shoes unassisted at naptime.

Jewelry is a source of needless distraction and could pose safety problems while on the Playground. Jewelry is limited to stud earrings for girls with pierced ears. Please leave all other jewelry at home.

Child tattoos cause a distraction and should be removed before school time.

### **Disclosure of Information**

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights on non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information to be given, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a court-certified copy of the court order and to update those records as necessary.

### **Special Needs**

A child with special needs will be considered on an individual basis after consultation and discussion with parents, the child's physician, the Preschool Director and St. Joseph Principal.

### **Child Abuse Reporting Regulation**

Under the Hawaii Child Abuse Law (HRS Chapter 350), all school staff are "mandated reporters" of Suspected Child Abuse (under eighteen years of age). A report would be made to Child Protective Services or the Police. This is not an option; it is a legal requirement. Child abuse and neglect means the acts or omissions of any person or entity who is in any manner or degree related to the child, is residing with the child, or is otherwise responsible for the child's care, that has caused the physical or psychological health or welfare of a minor child to be harmed, or to be subjected to any substantial risk of being harmed.

### SECTION 3: CHILD ORIENTATION

**Please note:** Detailed information for the Phase-In process will be given before school begins.

#### Parent Orientation Night

Right before school starts, there will be a mandatory meeting with **ALL** parents/guardians of children attending the 3-5 Year Old Program.

#### Child Orientation

- **Returning Student** is a child that has attended our 3-5 program the previous year. The returning students re-establish relationships with their peer groups and teachers and review classroom procedures and lessons. As they acclimate to their environment and familiar routines, they create a foundation upon which new children can successfully transition. They will have opportunities to mentor new students, which gives them the opportunity to develop, demonstrate and reinforce their skills and abilities.
- **New Student** is a child coming from home, or from a school/child care center other than St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool. They will "phase-in". This "phasing-in" allows children to experience school in small, yet tangible increments and provides each child opportunities for success. Each day, new procedures and routines are introduced and each session is a little longer than the previous one, culminating when a complete day's routine has been experienced.

**Please note:** On the first day of phase-in for a **new** student, we ask that the parent stay as an observer and supporter of his/her child's orientation. During this time, we ask that you sit in a chair, perhaps bring a book or magazine to read, and not interrupt the class by talking or moving excessively. Part of the orientation is for your child to experience the necessary separation from you, while feeling safe due to your physical presence in the classroom. Please refrain from engaging or pushing your child into activities. Our goal is for your child to become independent because of the trust gained in the environment, while their parents are present as "touchstones." Some children may need additional emotional support from their family beyond the first day. Determining when the child is ready to "solo" will be done on an individual basis. Please feel free to discuss your child's progress during this separation phase, with a teacher.

#### Beginning School - How to Prepare Your Child

Young children live in and understand the present moment. Future is vague for children under the age of six. Shortly before your child enters school, it is helpful to talk to him/her about the Preschool as a place where children go to play, learn, eat and rest. Children need to understand clearly that they continue to live at home and that at the end of the school day, the parent will always come for them. A lot of talk about beginning school may create anxiety and apprehension of a place he/she knows little about. Prepare your child for beginning school by indirect preparation such as:

- Select children's books from the library about preschool, making friends, etc.
- Make up stories about playground activities or going to school, etc.
- Tell stories, real or made up, about when you first went to school. These stories will give your child the information he/she needs without causing anxiety.
- Begin a week or two ahead of the school's starting date to gradually adjust your child's bedtime and wake up time.
- Work toward a calm and orderly place of getting up, dressed and ready to leave the house for a timely arrival at school. If this routine is mastered before the first day of school, your child will have less stress with learning a new morning routine.

### **The First Few Days (How to Say Goodbye without Falling Apart)**

We offer these suggestions to assist you in preparing your child for his/her first day at school. When a child begins the Montessori experience, it is a big step in his/her young life. Children need to know that their family is interested. It is best to talk about the beginning of school only a week or two before the actual date. Explain the situation briefly and calmly. Remind them of their previous visit. Speak in general terms; talk about how the both of you will be visiting the children at the school. Explain to your child what your role will be (to sit and read your book while he/she gets to play with the teacher and children).

When you come into the Preschool, sign-in, follow lunch procedure, and complete the morning routine with your child, helping your child to settle in. This procedure should not take more than 10-15 minutes. When time allows, do a simple job. Have your child walk you to the gate. Give your child a friendly goodbye and leave your child in the care of the teacher. Keep your goodbye warm and brief. Promptly leave and refrain from returning *even if tearful entreaties beseech you*. If you keep your demeanor positive and happy, your child will sense your confidence in their teachers and their fears will soon be dispelled. If you are concerned about your child, feel free to call the Preschool Office (961-0424) to check on your child. The adjustment period is usually very short.

However, be honest about your feelings and allow your child to have his/her feelings too. It is all right to feel sad, scared or angry. Phony cheerfulness will not change the feelings, and it is possible to have these feelings and *still* go to school.

Communication with your child about school and daily events can be enjoyable moments. These moments are most successful when they are spontaneous and initiated by the child. They are often offered at an unspecified moment, though sometimes an indirect approach may elicit information.

Begin the conversation by sharing your day with your child. He/she may respond by sharing personal, enjoyable events with you. Direct questions such as "What did you do at school today?" usually produce an answer such as "Nothing," "I don't know," "Polishing" or "I fell down on the Playground."

Do not be discouraged if your child does not relate many specifics about their school experience. Usually the child has been working with many different activities throughout the day. This morning is "history" and recall can be difficult. A child under six lives in the present moment. Significant growth and development are important to adults but are usually unconscious events for the child.

Consequently, much of what the child has accomplished is being internalized. You must be patient as your child gradually reveals his/her newly acquired skills and tidbits of knowledge.

Parents must clearly follow the schedules for the adjustment period and the regular school term. It is vital never to disappoint children by failing to return when scheduled during the adjustment period or later when the child attends the program regularly. If prevented by unforeseen circumstances from returning at the promised time, the parent should telephone the Preschool. It is also helpful for the parents to become better acquainted with the adjustment process by reading the literature made available by the school and by attending any meetings or conferences set up for the purpose of discussing the adjustment period.

### **The First Few Weeks**

Beginning school is tiring for young children. They form new relationships and experience new procedures and lessons. Be sure your child has adequate rest and appropriate quality time spent with you.

Reluctance to go to school may sometimes manifest itself the first weeks of school. The child may experience a growth spurt physically, intellectually, or socially. He/she may anticipate a future event, which could be a cause of some stress and strain for a child under six.

If a child is not adapting to the life of the classroom within a short time, the teacher will contact you. The staff is equally eager for your child's acclimation and will put forth every effort toward your child's comfort. If complaints at home continue or worry you, please contact a teacher about your concerns or call the Preschool Office (961-0424).

Common complaints reported by parents during adjustment and transition times are:

"I don't feel well."

"No one likes me."

"Johnny pushes me down."

"I don't get any new jobs."

"I'm too tired."

Please accept these and other remarks as a sign of growth in your child. He/she is beginning to develop the ability to express feelings, although children are not always able to accurately identify the cause.

Short good-byes and a positive non-worried manner convey to the child an unspoken message that you know he/she is being left in a safe place that you chose for him/her. Parents set the pace for a child's success at school. A short, cheerful goodbye from you can help your child feel there is nothing to be concerned about.

### **Classroom Observation**

Parents are welcome to visit the Preschool to observe their child at work or play. Please schedule an appointment time after the first six weeks of school or when your child has adapted to the daily routine of the class. St. Joseph Preschool has an open door policy by which parents are always welcome.

## **SECTION 4: PROGRAM, CLASS MANAGEMENT & SCHEDULES**

### **Program Goals and Guidelines:**

The focus of St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool is to provide a solid foundation for success in present and future learning. This is accomplished through four major areas:

#### **1. Individual Child**

The curriculum helps to develop the child's knowledge and skills, socially, emotionally, physically, spiritually and intellectually. Instructional emphasis is placed on developing positive self-esteem and a sense of competence. Each child is considered a unique individual. Growth is according to individual development. There will be different levels of ability and learning styles.

#### **2. Teaching Strategies**

The curriculum is designed around basic subject areas and implemented through projects, learning centers and play activities. Teachers encourage learning by planning experiences that involve extending the child's knowledge and skills. The child works and plays in a small group or alone on activities he/she selects or is guided to by the teacher.

#### **3. Integrated Curriculum**

The curriculum incorporates the content and process of all subject areas: language development, number and science concepts, social living, music and movement, sensorial experiences, cultural experiences, practical life skills, and freedom of artistic expression. The child is considered a life-long learner.



Therefore, the curriculum is designed to help the child to learn the process of "how to learn."

#### **4. Parent-Teacher Relationship**

Teachers and parents are partners in the development of the child. Conferences and visits help to establish the best possible approach in guiding the child toward further growth.

#### **Classroom Management**

"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it."  
Proverbs 22:6.

Respect for self, others and the environment are key values we regard highly at St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool. In practice, these values are part of our Christian living, translating toward the development of self-discipline through thought and action. We utilize positive language to explain limits, describe social expectations and to maintain cooperation with the children. We do not allow children to hurt one another, to damage materials in the environment, or to act in an abusive or disrespectful manner toward teachers and/or classmates (inappropriate behavior).

Children who display inappropriate behavior will be given opportunity to correct and adjust their behavior accordingly. Often times, an adult's redirection is sufficient in assisting a child to refocus his/her energy towards positive behavior. However, if a child seems to need a "cooling off" period, the teacher will provide an appropriate time and space for the child to calm down, reflect, and adjust to the situation at hand. This process may include being removed from their friends and activities for a short time until the child is thought to be ready to re-enter the environment and social setting.

Ongoing disciplinary problems may need to be addressed through Parent-Teacher Conferences. In cooperation, teachers and parents will devise an appropriate plan of action to support the child in overcoming inappropriate behavior both at home and in school. Professional referral outside of the school environment may be an option to consider.

Dangerous or violent behavior will not be tolerated. In this event, the child will be cared for by the Director and Parents will be notified. A child who continually risks his/her own safety and/or the safety of others, may be placed on probation, and/or may not be allowed to continue attending St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool. The Principal will be notified.

#### **Daily Schedule**

The schedule is flexible and is not ruled by the clock. We observe the children and often vary the transition and the pace of the schedule according to the children's needs.

### **Naptime & Bedding**

Following lunch, the children nap between the hours of 12:15 and 1:45 p.m. Music plays gently in the background while teachers assist in rubbing backs, reading stories, and helping the children achieve a restful state.

Please provide the following:

- One plastic folding Kindermat, covered with a washable fabric and secured by either a zipper or Velcro.
- One lightweight nap blanket (one that can be folded by the child).
- Roll mat with attached pillow and blanket work well.

All nap items are sent home on Fridays for laundering and brought back on Monday.

### **Child Records**

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool keeps a record of accumulated information for each child. Child records are personal and confidential. Records are available only to the parents or legal guardians and authorized persons of St. Joseph Preschool, as indicated by the Principal. Access to a child's records is made through the Preschool Office. Parents or legal guardians may review the complete file containing their child's St. Joseph record after prior arrangements have been made with the Principal. A child's record information is not given over the telephone.

Both parents are entitled to access their child's records or other school information, unless there is a court order to the contrary. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the Preschool Office with an official copy of the court order. "Never-married parents" are also required to provide the Preschool Office with custody documents.

## **SECTION 5: HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Doors and Gates**

**The children will be instructed NEVER to open the gates of the building.** Always latch the gates behind you. **DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO OPEN ANY OF THE GATES, EVEN IN YOUR COMPANY. Do not allow your child to WALK unattended outside the building.** We do not want any children to slip into the parking lot unattended. Please hold child's hand until you are in the building. The doors near the cafeteria are locked at 8:15 a.m. If your child is tardy, you must report to the front office to get a tardy note.

## **Sick Children**

Your child should not be sent to the Preschool if he/she shows signs of fever, sore throat, constant runny nose, rash, earache, vomiting, diarrhea, or headache. If your child is sick in the evening or morning, PLEASE keep them home and monitor them for 24 hours. When in doubt, please keep your child home. Call the Preschool Office (961-0424) if your child is to be absent. If your child becomes ill during school hours, you (parent/guardian) will be called to pick him/her up. (The regular release procedure is followed.) A child sent home with fever, vomiting, or diarrhea will not be admitted back until 24 hours **after the symptoms have ceased**. The Department of Health requires that a child who contracts any of the following diseases be excluded from school:

<b>Disease</b>	<b>Exclusion from School</b>
Chicken Pox	For 1 week after eruption first appears.
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	As long as eyes are red and discharging
Influenza	During acute illness
Measles	For 4 days from onset of swelling; less, if swelling has subsided
Rubella (German Measles)	For 4 days after rash appears
Active Tuberculosis	Until return authorized by the Department of Health
Uku (Head Lice)	Until head is clean of ukus and eggs (nits). Nits will hatch 7-10 days if not removed.

The Department of Health also requires that a child who has contracted any of the listed diseases, or has a communicable disease, be excluded from school until a doctor's written release to return form is received at the Preschool, stating that the student may return to school. Without this form, your child may not return to school.

Children, who are not well enough to go outside for playtime, are not well enough to come to school. If your child becomes ill at school, a teacher will notify the person(s) designated on the Emergency Card. Please pick-up your child after notification. Children may return to school when:

- Vomiting and diarrhea have subsided for 24 hours
- They can tolerate full activities
- They have been on medication for at least 24 hours

- There is no discharge from rash
- There is no heavy drainage from the nose

The teachers will be responsible for observing signs of illness in each child each school day.

If your child is out sick for three or more days, you must get a doctor's note stating this.

If your child was sick enough to have medicine before school, please keep that child home and not bring them in only to be sent back home. Let us be considerate of one another.

Please notify the staff:

- Of any special health conditions that your child might have such as allergies, asthma, heart murmur, diabetes, etc.
- Whenever your child is under medication of any kind and the side effects of such medicine, if known to you.
- Immediately, whenever your child has been exposed to a contagious disease in order to determine whether a notice needs to be sent home to classmates.

**Have a back up person that is able to care for your sick child at home.**

#### **Administration of Medication**

Medications prescribed by a physician, may be administered at school, only if the following procedures are followed:

- ALL medication must be in the original container with the child's name, doctor's name, name of medication and current issue date.
- **ALL** medication must be accompanied by a doctor's certificate, with specific and legible instructions for administration.
- **A measuring device must accompany ALL medications.**
- **ALL** medication must be accompanied by Administration of Medication Authorization Form, available in the Preschool Office.
- **ALL** medication must be in a Ziploc bag, clearly labeled with your child's name.
- **ALL** medication and permission forms must be given to a teacher.
- **NEVER** leave any medication in a lunch bag or cubby.

The staff of St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool is not permitted to dispense non-prescriptive medication to your child. Do not send these items to school with children: vitamins, cough drops, itch cream, over-the-counter medicine.

**Health Requirements Required before Entry to St. Joseph Preschool**

The Hawaii School Attendance Health Law requirements for tuberculosis screening, immunization and physical examination must be completed by the first day of school. Children without a tuberculosis clearance will not be admitted to the Preschool. The following must be submitted before entry to school:

1. A tuberculosis clearance test (Mantoux), within one year prior to school entry.
2. A physical examination within one year prior to school entry date.
3. The complete series of required immunizations. Each applicant must present documentary evidence of immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, rubella, mumps, and Hepatitis B.

Your health care provider will document the required health information on the official Health Record (Form 14). This form becomes part of your child's official Preschool records and is transferred, along with other official records, when your child changes schools. Physical re-examinations are not required but are recommended.

### **Insurance Coverage**

All children should have health insurance coverage. If employment situations or other circumstances do not make it possible for parents to provide such insurance for their son/daughters, then it is strongly recommended that parents provide enroll their children in the Hawaii QUEST and Medicaid coverage for youth up to age 19. [For information, call 211 for Kids Insurance Hotline or go to [www.coveringkids.com](http://www.coveringkids.com).]

The school enrolls all students in a **supplemental accident insurance** policy each year. This policy reduces parents'/guardians' out-of-pocket expense in case of accident or injury (not illness) suffered during school-related activities or at a school-sponsored event. This insurance does not replace a regular health insurance policy.

When a student is involved in an accident or receives an injury during school-related activities or at a school-sponsored event, the parents/guardians should contact the Business Office to obtain information to file a claim within 90 days of the incident. The child is covered for the period of enrollment.

### **Medical Coverage**

Each child must have on file medical insurance coverage information (personal physician's name and phone number included).

### **Accident Policy**

Although children are under constant supervision, accidents do occur. Teachers are certified through the National Safety Council and are able to administer treatment according to Hawaii D.S.S.H. State Rules and Regulations. Should an accident occur, an Accident Report will be filled out and sent home with the child. A duplicate copy will be on file in the office.

In the event of a serious injury, parents or designated contact person listed on the Emergency Card, will be notified immediately. If parents/guardians and emergency contact persons cannot be reached, the school will have the child transported to Hilo Medical Center Emergency Room for treatment. An adult will accompany the child to the emergency room and will stay with the child until the parent or parent's representative assumes responsibility for the child's care. The selection of the adult accompanying the child cannot compromise the supervision of the other children in the Preschool.

### **Biting Policy**

Due to the serious nature of this behavior, incidents of biting will result in the physical removal of the child from the classroom environment. In this event, the child will be referred to the Preschool Director, and parents will be notified. If this behavior is of a serious nature, or if biting incidents continue, it may be deemed necessary to request your cooperation by removing your child from school for the remainder of the day.

### **Emergency Card**

An Emergency Card is to be completed before attendance. The form is kept at the Preschool. The names and phone numbers for emergency calls are on this form. Please keep this information current by informing us of ANY changes. Make sure they are able to drive to pick-up your child. Car seat is necessary.

### **Parent Authorization Form**

The names and relationships of authorized persons who may pick up your child are listed on this form. No child will be released to anyone other than those persons listed on this form. Any changes (additions, deletions, etc.) must be in writing and given to the Preschool Office **before** new people are authorized to pick-up your child. You may have as many names on the list as you want.

### **Emergency Survival Kit**

Besides the classroom supplies that you will be bringing, (a supply list will be sent to you before school begins) an Emergency Survival Kit must be included with the following items:

- 1 emergency blanket (space blanket)
- 1 16 oz. bottled water
- 1 small flashlight
- 1 package of batteries for flashlight
- 1 Granola bars or cheese and cracker packs

All emergency items (except water) are to be placed in a gallon Ziploc bag with the child's name clearly marked on the bag.

### **Inclement Weather**

Listen to the radio for announcements regarding closure of St. Joseph Preschool due to bad weather. Call the preschool answering machine for updated messages (961-0424).

### **Car Seat Policy**

Children will be required to ride in a federally-approved safety restraint car seat and/or booster while riding to and from school. Parents will be required to sign Child Seatbelt/ Restraint Form agreeing to abide by this policy. Click it or ticket, call Hawaii Police Department at 961-2226 to report a child not secured in a car seat.

### **Transportation and Excursions**

Parents will provide all transportation to and from school.

We only partake in walking field trips and excursions. While on excursions, parent chaperones for supervision support are generally a ratio of 1 chaperone for 2 children. Teachers are not allowed to use their personal vehicles to transport children. Parents **MUST** complete safe environment certificate to be around other children.

Advance notice will be given for all excursions and permission forms will be sent home for signatures, should a field trip be organized.

### **Safe Environment Policy**

The "Policy on Allegations and Incidents of Sexual Misconduct" promulgated by the Diocese of Honolulu is incorporated in this handbook by this reference. A copy of the policy is contained in the handbook, "To Offer Healing, To Restore Trust," first published January 8, 2004. The handbook is available from the school.

The Church endorses the mandatory reporting provisions of H.R.S. Chapter 350 concerning child abuse. All staff members and teachers are required to sign an acknowledgment that they have read and understand the ethical and personal conduct policies of the Diocese of Honolulu.

Consistent with diocesan policy, St. Joseph School will conduct Safe Environment training as part of the school curriculum. A meeting will be held before the class is conducted to provide parents an opportunity to review the safe environment materials.

Consent for the participation in this program is included in the signed acknowledgment form located in this handbook.

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

In 1987 the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) was signed into law. Since the enactment of AHERA, all schools nationwide are required to take comprehensive action to asbestos in their buildings. These actions include inspections and re-inspections by EPA accredited inspectors, the assessment of conditions, training for workers who may encounter asbestos in their course of work, development and selection of an appropriate response to potential exposure to asbestos material, posting warning labels and the

development of management plans for each school site. The school's asbestos management plan is on file in the school office and can be reviewed by contacting the Principal.

## **SECTION 6: FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Please refer to Tuition and Fee Schedule from St. Joseph Business Office. Financial contracts, tuition payments and/or questions regarding billing can be directed to the Business Office (935-8443).

### **Tax Donations**

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool is a non-profit organization, as described under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. As such, any cash or material donations to the Preschool are tax-deductible. Parents often want to support our Preschool in this manner; please let us know how we can be of assistance. Please contact the school's Development Office (935-4936) if you need a letter of donation for tax purposes.

## **SECTION 7: NUTRITION**

### **WELLNESS POLICY**

(Revised Feb. 12, 2008)

This policy supports the mission of St. Joseph School (Hilo), a Hawaii Catholic School. The school community recognizes that a poor diet, combined with the lack of physical activity has a negative impact on student's health and their ability to learn, both short-term and long range.

The National Catholic Education Association statement on Accountability and Assessment in Catholic Education states that: *"We hold a sacred trust to educate and form the whole person—mind, body, and spirit."* As Catholic educators, we believe in providing consistent school activities and an environment in which students can learn to make lifestyle choices that promote their healthy futures.

### **The Wellness Policy of St. Joseph School is to:**

1. Provide a positive environment and appropriate knowledge of healthy food choices and the benefits of daily physical activity that:
  - a) Ensures that students have access to healthy food choices and safe physical activities at school and at school functions;
  - b) Provides a pleasant eating environment and secure playground for students and staff;
  - c) Allows sufficient time for students to eat lunch and to engage in social activities for physical fitness prior to consuming meals;



- d) Enables students through a comprehensive health and physical education curricula to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy food and physical activity choices for a lifetime.

2. Reduce student access to foods of minimal nutritional value through a five year plan that focuses on and:

- a) Ensures the integrity of the school lunch program by discouraging food and beverage sales that are in conflict with the lunch program;
- b) Encourages teachers, students and parents to make healthy, nutritious food choices when food is used as part of a class or student incentive program, curricular lesson or fundraiser;
- c) Practices selective pricing that favors sales of healthy foods over unhealthy food choices.
- d) Food and beverages sold or served at school will meet or exceed the nutrition recommendations of the United States Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

3. Provide opportunities for school community involvement in the development, review, assessment, and implementation of St. Joseph School Wellness Policy, and to ensure that this policy is being met.

- a) A school committee shall utilize the School Health Index and/or other sources of evaluation to identify priority areas, monitor improvements, and report findings to the school principal or his/her designee annually.

### **Lunches**

Nutritious and healthy lunches may be purchased through the Preschool's Hot Lunch Program or prepared and brought from home. The children eat lunch in our classroom. In compliance with the Department of Health food service guidelines, foods that are high in salt and sugar are discouraged, so please keep you child's home lunch\* healthy. Beverages must be either milk or 100% fruit juice. A healthy and nutritious lunch made at home is preferable to lunch from a fast food restaurant that is usually high in fat and salt.

Home lunches should include:

- 2 napkins/ washcloths (washable/reusable)
- Proper eating utensils
- Labeled containers (that your child can open and close unassisted). Plastic containers, no glass please.
- Food that *does not* need to be reheated
- Ice pack for items requiring cold temperature

**\*NO aggressive or violent cartoon character designs on lunch boxes.**

Details on the Federal Lunch Program, school lunch menu and cost, will be available at the Parent Orientation meeting at the beginning of the school year. Daily records, monitoring lunch consumption, are located near the parent sign-in sheet.

### **Snacks**

Healthy snacks are provided and made available to children in the morning session and again during the Extended Day Program. To provide a variety of different food items each family will be responsible for 1 full snack for 49 children every 49 days. Keep receipts for Time and Talent Hours. We discourage highly sugared treats, as research supports the proposition that surplus sugar has negative side effects and contributes to tooth decay.

Snack time supports important learning experiences for practical life exercises. Children learn to serve themselves, pour their own milk and \*wash their dishes. Occasionally, the children are invited to prepare special snacks and/or practice their skills in the proper handling of a plastic knife and peeler.

\*All dishes (plates, cups, bowls, silverware, etc.) are later sanitized by the method approved by the State of Hawaii Department of Health.

## **SECTION 8: COMMUNICATION**

### **Calendars**

A calendar is distributed to all families before the beginning of the school year. This calendar gives pertinent information of important dates, deadlines, holidays, vacations, early dismissal days, and parent-teacher conferences. In addition, monthly Preschool Calendars are distributed to families. These monthly calendars should be your frame of reference for any upcoming event for the month.

### **Concerns**

The best way to handle a problem is at the level at which it occurs. It is recommended that parents voice their concerns to the proper person(s) to ensure immediate and appropriate action. A classroom concern should be addressed to the teacher or teachers involved. Parents, with teachers, can usually solve a problem in a mutually satisfying manner. However, if the problem persists, parents are encouraged to seek further assistance from the Director. In the rare event that the problem cannot be resolved with the Director, then parents and/or Director directs the concern to the Principal. The final recourse for parents rests with the Principal.

### **Messages and Notices**

We cannot over-emphasize the importance of open communication between home and school. We welcome your suggestions! We appreciate receiving written notes for important information. This is the most reliable procedure for staff members to

receive information about your child. Notepaper and a message basket are provided on the sign-in counter. A book is located for messages of early pick-ups and vacations.

Also, please notify the teachers/Director of significant changes or events in family life. The arrival of a new sibling, grandparent visits, death in the family, marital problems, surgery/illness, business or vacation trips, etc., can often influence a child's social, intellectual, and/or emotional balance in school life. Keeping staff adequately informed helps us meet your child's needs. Changes in address, phone numbers, emergency information or adjustments in your child's drop-off and pick-up schedule should also be put in writing.

Sometimes your child may voice a concern over something that has happened at school. Try not to over-react. Let a staff member know what is happening so that the concern can be handled properly. Sometimes seemingly trivial things can build up if not handled properly. Do not hesitate to talk with us, if something is becoming a problem.

### **Parent Mailbox**

Every family has a mailbox where they receive notices, flyers, newsletters, magazines, etc. Please check your mailbox daily.

### **Conferences**

Parent conferences are scheduled in the early Fall and as needed in the Spring. Consult the monthly preschool calendar for specific dates. The Fall conference is somewhat informal and focuses on your child's transition and progress in the classroom environment. It is a time to share with the teacher your insights regarding your child, as well as your concerns. The teacher will discuss with you expectations/goals for your child during the school year.

A parent/guardian may request a conference with a teacher at any time. The parent/guardian may do so through the Preschool Office or by writing the Director a note.

If a concern arises between regularly scheduled conferences, please leave a message for the teacher to contact you.

### **Newsletters**

Monthly *Keiki Cardinal Newsletters* will be sent home from the Elementary School Office to keep you informed of school-wide happenings. Monthly Preschool newsletters will keep you informed of events happening in the Preschool. Please make sure that you take the time to read the newsletters. These newsletters are sometimes our only means of routinely contacting all families.

### **Sign-In/Sign-Out Area**

There will usually be posted reminders of upcoming events, on or near the sign-in/sign-out board/area.

### **Telephone**

Teachers may contact parents by telephone for immediate communication and feedback. Parents may contact teachers through the Preschool Office. If the teacher is not available, a message is left for the teacher to return the call.

Anytime your job or phone number changes, please notify the preschool.

### **Use of Student Information/Pictures**

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool reserves the right to use the children's pictures in publication and on the school's website. The Preschool Office must have on file a written notice from any parent or guardian prohibiting the use of their child's picture in school publications and website. Parents/guardians sign a photo release form during registration.

## **SECTION 9: PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **Parental Agreement**

Registration at St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool indicates the parent's agreement to abide by all rules, regulations and policies in the St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool Parent Handbook. Parents are asked to read the handbook carefully, sign the Parent Handbook Form at the end of this book, and return the form to the Preschool Office. Questions or comments should be directed to the Preschool Director or School Principal.

### **Parent Volunteers**

Parent volunteers and support are encouraged for a number of reasons:

1. To develop a positive home-school relationship.
2. To provide assistance with special projects, events, excursions, and clerical work.
3. To develop a greater appreciation for the Preschool as a partnership.
4. To provide opportunities for contributing skills and talents.
5. To increase communication.

Information on parent volunteering and support is distributed at the beginning of the school year.

### **Parent Nights**

Throughout the year, we have various Parent Nights that are aimed at increasing your understanding of your child, our school and the Montessori philosophy. Some of these nights may be informational and/or instructional, while others are just "feel good"

nights, filled with special activities for you and your child to fellowship as `ohana (family). We request that at least one family member attend these meetings. Please refer to the Preschool calendar and newsletters regarding these evenings.

Credit is given when you attend PATCH classes and bring in your certificate. Many of the child development classes from PATCH can be taken online.

### **Time, Talent and Treasure**

We appreciate all of those who have already contributed and look forward to working with those who plan to contribute. Time, Talent and Treasure hours are now a minimum of 25 hours per family and 35 hours required for families receiving tuition assistance. A family may "opt out" and make a donation to the school for \$350.00 by September 6. Volunteer hours from last year cannot be carried forward into the current school year. A binder is being provided in the Preschool to record all donations. Any member of the family (or a friend or relative) may do the hours for the family. If donating bought goods, \$14.00 = 1 hour of Time & Talent. All donations and hours must be recorded within five days of the activity and completed by May 16, 2013. With your cooperation SJS will track required hours.

## **SECTION 10: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

### **Lost and Found**

All t-shirts, shorts, pants, sweaters, jackets, slippers, nap mats, blankets, etc. should be clearly marked with your child's name. The Lost and Found basket is located in the main entryway on top of the children's cubbies. The Preschool cannot accept responsibility for lost or stolen items. Unclaimed items and clothing are periodically donated to charity.

### **Birthdays**

We follow the Montessori tradition of helping the child to understand the concept of a year in time, by having them "journey" around the Sun while we talk about what has happened in their lives. The process has you bringing pictures of your child as a baby, at one, two, three, to present age. (A handout will go home before the event, explaining in detail, what is needed). The ceremony is very simple but tremendously enjoyed by the children. Parents are also encouraged to donate a book to our Preschool library in your child's name as a fond remembrance of the child and his/her time at our Preschool. Highlights of your child at birth ...1...2...3...are helpful.

### **Toys**

Toys are to remain at home. Toys at school detract from the specially prepared environment at school. Young children have not yet developed the social skill of sharing personal belongings. The classroom materials are community property, and every child learns the procedure for taking a turn with them. The Montessori materials are carefully selected and prepared by the teachers to suit many purposes. When your child

is in the classroom, he/she is surrounded by a marvelous array of materials, experiences, sights and sounds, objects to manipulate in a variety of ways, exercises that will challenge, soothe, inspire, and inform. The richness of the classroom cannot be duplicated at home, nor can the home environment be duplicated at school. They are two related but distinct environments.

### **Supply List**

A supply list of items you will be asked to purchase for the children to use throughout the school year will be provided to you before school begins.

### **Fundraising**

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool participates in the school's annual Country Fair. The Preschool will sponsor fundraisers throughout the school year depending upon the opportunities available. There is usually a *Garage Sale* fundraiser some time during the school year. These proceeds help us buy needed classroom materials. This fundraiser is a family/school venture.

### **Sharing Day**

Friday is Sharing Day. Children are encouraged to bring a book, photograph, something from nature, or an item of interest to them. We discourage bringing toys for sharing. Please be sure the item is labeled with your child's name. No violent characters or objects. Choose an item before child goes to sleep on Thursday evening, write child's name on it and put it in a bag. If your child forgot to bring something to share, they can share a story.

## **SECTION 11: CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY AND DISASTER/EMERGENCY PLAN**

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool follows specific procedures for various emergency situations.

### **Crisis Management Policy**

#### **Action Plan**

Crises are inevitable in the operation of any organization. We make every effort at St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool to minimize risk and to assure the safety and security of our students and staff. Since it is not always possible to avoid crisis, planning ahead of time may prevent panic and uncertainties. It is imperative that a media crisis policy be in place for efficient and effective management of internal and external communication during emergency situations that may endanger the health, safety, operation, image or economic stability of the school.

#### **Evacuation Plan**

Evacuation is coordinated with the aid of the Hilo Police Department. There are several options for evacuation sites. The type of emergency dictates these options. Notification will be made public as soon as the site is determined. This is what the Preschool will do if evacuation is necessary.

Response to emergency situation:

1. Determine the seriousness of the situation(s).
2. Call 911. If unable to reach 911, call emergency number directly for ambulance, fire or police (see phone listings).
3. Render assistance or call a person certified in First Aid to help. The Preschool staff is certified in CPR/First Aid.
4. Contact Principal. Do not call or involve others without further instructions. If it is an emergency that affects the entire school (High School, Elementary, Preschool), the Principal will initiate telephone notification of Pastor, faculty, staff, parents, or other persons deemed appropriate.
5. If a child is involved, a staff member must remain with the child at all times during the emergency. All other children are moved to another area. A teacher is to stay with this group until the all-clear signal is given. A staff member must stand at the entrance of the emergency area to direct emergency response personnel.
6. Someone from the Preschool must accompany the child/adult who is to be transported in an ambulance to the nearest medical facility.

### **Implementation of Policy**

All faculty, staff and administrators shall be informed of crisis communication procedures. A complete copy of the disaster plan shall be available in the Principal's Office. Failure to comply with the policy shall be grounds for disciplinary actions.

Drills to test compliance, implementation, and familiarity with disaster policy shall be conducted at the discretion of the Principal.

Any situation that might pose a possible threat to the safety or security of personnel or the continued operation or fiscal stability of the Preschool shall be reported immediately to the Principal. Any situation which poses a hazard or which may be detrimental to St. Joseph Preschool must be reported. Upon notification of such a situation, the Principal shall determine whether the Crisis Management Team (CMT) should be convened.

The Principal is designated as the spokesperson, unless otherwise stated by the Pastor, to represent the Preschool's communication with journalists. Other persons may also represent the Preschool in interviews but only with the approval of the Principal or designated spokesperson.

Every contact with a journalist should be documented and archived in the Principal's Office.

### **Crisis Management Team**

(Listings of the Crisis Management Team responsibilities follow).

The Pastor and the Principal shall have the right to make decisions independently or to convene the Crisis Management Team (CMT).

The CMT shall be comprised of the Principal and representatives of all school divisions.

A copy of this policy and a roster of CMT members with appropriate telephone numbers shall be available in the offices of the Principal, the Pastor, and the Superintendent of Hawaii Catholic Schools.

The CMT shall act as an advisory group in time of emergency situations. The Principal and the CMT will consult in all decisions during emergency situations that include the closure of buildings, cancellations of classes, suspension of contractual agreements, and the involvement of external emergency personnel, such as police.

The Principal is designated as the spokesperson, unless otherwise stated by the Pastor.

Individual members of the CMT shall be indemnified by St. Joseph School against possible liability incurred in the implementation of their duties.



The CMT will analyze the effect, coverage and impact of the crisis within a week of the event.

**Crisis Team**

POSITION/ PERSON	BACKUP	RESPONSIBILITY	ACTIONS	TIMETABLE
Pastor	Assistant Pastor	Decision-Making	As Appropriate	Throughout
School Principal	High School VP* Elementary VP*	Decision-Making Notification	As part of CMT As directed by Principal	Throughout Immediately
Level I School Moderator – Elementary VP	As Part of CMT			
Level II School Moderator – High School VP	As Part of CMT			
Preschool AM Supervisor	As Part of CMT			
Preschool PM Supervisor	As Part of CMT			
*Elementary School Vice-Principal – Elementary VP *High School Vice-Principal – High School VP				

**Disaster and Emergency Plan**

St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool is equipped with fire extinguishers and First-Aid kits. In the event of fire, flood or natural disaster, the following procedures are taken.

**Fire Drills**

St. Joseph School conducts emergency drills on a regular basis. Students are educated about the seriousness of all drills and are expected to file out of the building quickly and quietly or to follow instructions given by the teaching staff or local officials. If school facilities were to be damaged by fire and not habitable, we would care for your child and call you to pick him/her up as soon as possible.

### **Tsunami Warning**

The school is not in a tsunami inundation zone, so we do not anticipate an evacuation. The following procedures have been adopted in the event of a Tsunami Warning.

1. If a warning is issued during school hours, we will feed and take care of your child until you can safely pick him/her up. You need not leave work or rush to pick up your child. It is recommended that you remain in a safe area until the "all clear" is announced and avoid contributing to unnecessary traffic on roads and highways.
2. If a warning is issued before school opens, please keep your child home. School will be closed. Listen to your local radio station.

### **Hurricane/Tropical Storm/Flooding**

The Preschool is not in a flood inundation zone, so evacuation is not the normal procedure. However, if evacuation does become necessary, the nearest designated area is the High School Soccer Field, located on Wailoa and Kapiolani Streets.

Hurricane or Tropical Storm Watches are issued by the National Weather Service 36 hours prior to the arrival of a storm. Hurricane or Tropical Storm Warnings are issued when one of these storms could affect Hawaii in 24 hours or less. When a Watch is issued, we will monitor the storm and make a decision to close the school before the issuance of a Warning.

### **Earthquake**

Should an earthquake of significant magnitude occur on Hawaii, we can anticipate considerable disruption to our road networks. If your child is at school, you may not be able to get to him/her. Please be assured that we will take care of your child until you can safely pick him/her up.

Please be assured that we will take good care of your child during any emergency or disaster. If school is to be closed, it will be announced over radio or television. In the event that school is closed, all children will be supervised until they have been picked up by their parents/guardians or authorized persons.

Please do not call during emergencies. Telephone lines need to be kept open and available to take care of urgent needs.

# PARENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM

All parents/guardians must sign and return the following certification that they have thoroughly read and understand the contents of the St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool Parent Handbook. Please return the form to the Preschool Office before your child begins school.

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This is to certify that I/we have read and thoroughly understand the contents of the St. Joseph Montessori-Based Preschool Parent Handbook. I/We further agree to abide by the policies and procedures set forth in this parent handbook, to ensure quality education for my/our child.

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**Student's Name**

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**Social Security Number**

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**Parent/Guardian's Signature**

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**Parent/Guardian's Signature**

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_