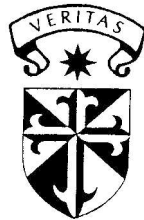


Davis Early Childhood Center

Parent Handbook

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Barbara H. Daush, O.P.A., - President

St. Agnes Academy-St. Dominic School

Early Childhood Program

Statement of Philosophy

The Early Childhood Program at St. Agnes Academy-St. Dominic School provides children with a loving, secure, Christian environment in which they can develop a sense of belonging. Classroom programs provide a developmentally appropriate atmosphere that is conducive to learning and nurtures the uniqueness of each individual child. A variety of experiences throughout the child's day are designed for exploring their environment to promote motivation and enthusiasm for learning. Art, music, computer, and physical education are integrated into the day. Works of art in music, drama and dance are used as units of study and are performed for the children throughout the year. The children are exposed to the wonders of God's world through Christian and character education. Rooted in Dominican Charism, the Early Childhood Program instills respect for self, others, community and cultural diversity. The child's self-esteem and creativity flourishes through classroom activities that are planned and incidental to the growth of the whole child.

Guiding Principles

- **Cognitive, social, emotional and physical development are interrelated in young children, and all developmental areas must be addressed.**
- **Each child is unique with an individual pattern of timing, growth and development.**
- **Young children construct knowledge and understanding through their interaction with materials within their environment and through their interactions with adults and other children.**
- **Learning moves from a concrete, personal understanding to conventional understanding through awareness, exploration, inquiry and utilization.**
- **Children have a need to make sense of their experiences and are motivated to learn by their interests and natural curiosity.**

(Principles adapted from developmentally appropriate practices of the National Association for the Education of Young Children)

Mission Statement

St. Agnes Academy-St. Dominic School is a Catholic independent school, ecumenical by charter. The school was founded to educate young people in a principle-based program designed to prepare them for advanced formal and personal studies while deepening their faith and relationship with God.

In the Dominican tradition, the School actively encourages academic excellence and promotes spiritual and moral growth, social and ecological responsibility, leadership skills, multicultural awareness, emotional maturity, artistic expression, and physical fitness.

St. Agnes Academy-St. Dominic School Prayer

Loving God,
Let Thy blessings be upon
St. Agnes Academy-St. Dominic School.

Help us to seek the truth, to stand up for the rights of
others and to promote justice and respect
in our school and world communities.

Inspire with love and goodness
both those who teach and those who learn.

Give us the grace to walk in the footsteps of Jesus,
loving and forgiving of others.

We ask these gifts in Jesus' name
through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

School Motto

Veritas-Truth

School Address and Telephone Numbers

St. Agnes Academy
4830 Walnut Grove Rd.
Memphis, TN 38117
901-767-1377

Fax # 901-684-5316

Dean.....Mrs. Kathy Toes-Boccia 901-435-5829
kboccia@saa-sds.org
Administrative Assistant.....Mrs. Tammy Brooks 901-435-5800
tbrooks@saa-sds.org

St. Dominic School
30 Avon Rd.
Memphis, TN 38117
901-682-3011

Fax # 901-681-0047

Dean.....Mr. John Murphy 901-435-5821
jmurphy@saa-sds.org
Administrative Assistant.....Mrs. Mary Jane Schifani 901-435-5801
mjschifani@aa-sds.org

The Early Childhood Center phone is for outgoing calls. Therefore, all incoming phone messages need to be left with the SDS Administrative Assistant.

Early Childhood Counselors.....Mrs. Becki Slattery (SDS) 901-435-5823
bslattery@saa-sds.org
Ms. Nancy Ganz (SAA) 901-435-5806
nganz@saa-sds.org
Extended Day Activities Director...Mrs. Jennifer Hanson 901-435-5843
jhanson@saa-sds.org cell # 901-233-5665

School Hours

Early Morning Care	7:00-8:00	Dining Hall (monitored by Pre-school Teacher Assistants)
	7:50-8:15	Classrooms open
Classes begin	8:15	Morning carpool line drop off
Dismissal	2:45	(After 8:15, check in through office)
	2:00	Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri.
		Wednesday
		❖ Pre-school children with older siblings are to be picked up at SAA or SDS 15 minutes after above dismissal times.
Half Day Dismissal	11:45	
Extended Day Care Hours		Dismissal to 6:00 p.m.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER STAFF

Dean, St. Dominic SchoolJohn Murphy
Dean, St. Agnes Lower SchoolKathy Toes-Boccia
CounselorBecki Slattery, St. DominicNancy Ganz, St. Agnes
Classroom TeachersPam Burnette, SKKelly L. Mungle, SKPamela Buoni, JKLauren Gossett, JKKathi Davidson, PKChristina Clark, PK
Teacher AssistantsLaura Aviotti, SKKaren Leone, SKCathy Bennett, JKDebbie Petrussek, JKJennifer Alexander, PKLeah Cox, PKMichelle Wendell, PKHelen Marie Williams PK

Communication

Ongoing communication is essential for keeping our home-school team connected. Sharing information about what is important to your child occurs on a regular basis. To support this, a daily folder will be sent home. Your child's teacher will inform you of its contents and the importance of returning it each day. Parents are encouraged to send notes to school in the daily folder about changes in their child's schedule or important events (i.e., new puppy, trips, flooding basements, family birthdays/illnesses, etc.) Additionally, all teachers may be reached via email, using the following format:

Email: **firstinitiallastname@saa-sds.org**
Example: jmurphy@saa-sds.org

School news and general information should be accessed weekly on the school website.
Website: www.saa-sds.org

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Arrival and Dismissal Procedure

Morning routines such as center play, circle time, general orientation into the day's events, and special classes occur regularly within the first hour of the school day. Therefore, it is important to arrive on time each day.

School begins promptly at 8:15 A.M. If you arrive late, please sign in at the office and walk your child to the classroom door. Do not disturb class.

Students arriving:

- **between 7:00 and 7:45 A.M.** should report to the Dining Hall for early morning care, monitored by a Pre-school Teacher Assistant. **Escort your child to the Dining Hall.**
- **from 7:50 to 8:15 A.M.** may be dropped off in the morning carpool line at the front doors of the Early Childhood Center. Teachers will be on duty to escort them into the building. Please unbuckle your children from their car seats. Children should remain in the car until greeted by a teacher.
- **after 8:15, must be checked in through the SDS office. The ECC doors are locked.** Parents will need to walk their child into the main entrance to St. Dominic. It is school policy for parents to sign children in when tardy. **A notebook located inside the SDS office is designated for this purpose.** In addition, SK students will be issued an Admit Slip from the school office. After checking in, parents should escort their child to the classroom door.

Dismissal will take place in the circular drive in front of the Davis Early Childhood Center. All families will be issued a carpool number. **Please mount this number on the passenger side of the car near the bottom of the windshield but above the windshield wiper.** Carpool numbers allow the teachers to identify the car easily, so that children may be ready and waiting when parents drive to the front entrance. The circular drive is for carpool pick-up only.

- ECC carpool begins at 2:45 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. On Wednesday, ECC dismisses at 2:00.
- Parents are welcome to park and walk to pick up their child. However, parking is limited to the visitor spaces on campus or across the street at Independent Presbyterian Church. Parents may wait on the handicap ramp and children will be brought out by the teachers. Please do not stand in front of the entrance during carpool.
- The orange cones are placed outside the SDS entrance at **2:55** for the SDS carpool. If the cones are already out, please go through the SDS pickup line. **DO NOT** enter through the exit. The driveway is **ONE WAY ONLY.**

Dismissal

2:45

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri.

2:00

Wednesday

- ❖ Pre-school children with older siblings are to be picked up at SAA or SDS 15 minutes after above dismissal times.

Half Day Dismissal

11:45

Dress Code

Please dress your child in clothes that are casual, comfortable and easily laundered. Shoes should fit well and be appropriate for running and climbing. Socks should be worn at all times. ECC Children are required to wear tennis shoes. Shoes such as sandals, boots, or slides are not appropriate for the daily activities of Early Childhood.

Change of clothing

Please send in a complete change of clothing including socks, underwear and long pants for cooler weather that we may keep on hand for your child. Place clothes in a zip-lock bag and label with your child's name. **Please make sure to replace clothes as needed.**

Recess

Children go outside for playground time every day that the weather permits. Please dress your child appropriately for play.

The Early Childhood staff will assist in helping parents "sunproof" their child. Please let us know if you wish for your child to wear a hat or sunglasses for recess. Because playtime is early in the day it is recommended that sunscreen be applied prior to coming to school.

Snack

The children will be served daily snacks. Each classroom teacher will inform parents of how snack is handled in their classroom. Please label all snacks and lunches.

Rest Time

- All children will rest for approximately one hour per day. The children are not required to sleep. However, they must recline on a rest mat quietly during this time. This is in accordance with Tennessee law and developmentally appropriate practices outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- All PK and JK students use a 2" rest mat as required by the Tennessee Department of Education. This mat is provided by the school.

Parent/teacher conferences

Two parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled during the school year. One will be held during the fall and one during the spring. If you desire, additional conferences may be scheduled by contacting your child's teacher. Additionally, progress reports will be sent home four times throughout the year.

Guiding Your Child's Behavior

The Early Childhood Staff is sensitive and responsive to the specific needs and situations of each individual child. The foundation of guiding your child's behavior positively is to focus on and praise behaviors that are appropriate and acceptable. Development of self-control is facilitated through modeling, redirection, allowing your child to express his/her feelings and maintaining consistent behavior parameters within the classroom setting.

School rules that are common to all classes are:

- Follow directions the first time.
- Keep hands/feet to yourself.
- Use walking feet in the classroom and hallways.
- Use your *inside* voice in the classroom and hallways.

Each classroom teacher utilizes her own method to transition the children smoothly between activities. For example, a familiar song, changing the lighting in the room, voice, rhythmic clapping, etc. may signal the children to begin center clean-up or go to morning circle.

Ongoing communication between parents and teachers is essential when attempting to resolve behavioral issues. We encourage parents to communicate with their classroom teachers and to work as a team when resolving inappropriate behaviors.

Time out is used when aggressive, destructive or dangerous behaviors persist. A child may be placed in time out for one minute per year of age.

Special Events

- Birthdays-We would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Please let your child's teacher know if you would like to provide special refreshments. Teachers will distribute party invitations only if one is sent for each child of the same gender or the entire class.
- Parties and programs are a memorable and joyous part of your child's preschool years. Throughout the year your child's teachers and room mothers will notify you of these special events. Parents are invited to participate and attend.

Communicable Disease and illness Protocol

- **School Attendance:** Children with any of the following symptoms should not be sent to school:

▪ <i>Acute cold with yellow/green discharge</i>	▪ <i>Temperature of 99.6° or higher</i>
▪ <i>Sore throat</i>	▪ <i>Inflamed eyes with or without discharge</i>
▪ <i>Earache</i>	▪ <i>Headache</i>
▪ <i>Diarrhea and/or vomiting</i>	▪ <i>Swollen, painful gland</i>

Children must be symptom and fever free for at least 24 hours **without** the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school after absence.

The Early Childhood Center Staff or the School Nurse will contact you if your child develops any of the following symptoms or illnesses:

▪ <i>Temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit</i>	▪ <i>Pain or injury</i>
▪ <i>Persistent cough</i>	▪ <i>Conjunctivitis</i>
▪ <i>Vomiting or Diarrhea</i>	▪ <i>Head lice</i>

Important Health Information:

- All children enrolled in the SAA-SDS ECC program must have on file a copy of their birth certificate and the most recent copy of their immunization record (green form) signed by their pediatrician in two designated places.
- Each child is required to have on file an Emergency Health and Accident form complete with emergency addresses and phone numbers of at least two responsible people who have permission to pickup in the event the parent cannot be reached.
- Children with allergies to foods, medications, insect bites, or other common substances will need to have their physician's protocol on file in the school office, nurse's office and the child's classroom.
- In the event your child contracts a communicable disease such as strep throat, chickenpox, viral meningitis, mumps, measles, etc. please notify your child's teacher immediately.
- Children who are suspected of having or who have actual head lice, ringworm, or impetigo will be sent home. Children may return to school after appropriate treatment and a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious. Please note that the school strictly enforces a "no nit" policy in the event of head lice.
- We are a peanut free environment.

The **Pre-Kindergarten** program fosters the joy of learning through nurturing and recognizing the uniqueness of the individual child. The children learn through play and are given opportunities to be creative individuals. Their active learning is enhanced through child-directed activities and theme-based units of study. Learning centers foster language development, pre-academic skills and responsibility. Building a positive self-concept, developing a sense of belonging and a life long love of learning are major goals of the program.

The **Junior Kindergarten** program emphasizes the importance of play as the way young children begin to acquire the skills necessary for cognitive development. The classroom environment is structured so children actively explore and experiment with concrete learning materials. The use of learning centers provides the opportunity for children to work in small groups on specific tasks or projects related to early learning skills. The children construct their own knowledge to add to the base of knowledge provided by the teacher-directed activities. Learning centers include math and science, art, blocks, dramatic play, books, table toys and puzzles, materials to facilitate early literacy skills, and computers.

The **Senior Kindergarten** program is designed to build a high self-esteem and generate a positive attitude toward academics. The atmosphere in Senior Kindergarten transitions the child into a more structured learning setting. The academic essentials of Senior Kindergarten are to establish the foundation for reading readiness and math concepts. Science and social studies are incorporated into the curriculum through thematic units and experienced-based activities, which are designed to blend with language arts and math. The children actively participate in learning centers and use computers to reinforce curriculum. In Senior Kindergarten, learning is further integrated through field trips in the community and guest speakers.