



St. Patrick Catholic Church Early Childhood Learning Center



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6803 Old Hwy 441 South
Mt. Dora, FL 32757

(352) 383-2219

(352) 383-8443 *fax*

www.stpatrickeclc.org



Parent Handbook

Mission Statement:

The St. Patrick Early Childhood Learning Center strives to serve the families in our faith community and locale. Our Center is a community of faith, dedicated teachers and care givers composed of various ethnic, linguistic and racial backgrounds. It is deeply rooted in the Roman Catholic family of believers. The make-up of our Early Childhood Learning Center reflects the catholicity of the church itself. We gather to be nourished by Word and Sacrament, to grow in the life of the gospel by our own witness and service in the name of Jesus Christ. We seek to deepen our faith, hope and charity by ongoing learning and a vibrant sharing in communion and mission, reaching out to one another and offering hospitality to all without exception. We desire to be led by the Spirit, the Scriptures and Church teaching so that we may give evidence of an evangelical response to the ever changing needs of the world at large and our own locale.



STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

I have read and received a copy of St. Patrick’s Early Childhood Learning Center’s Handbook. I agree to abide by all requirements, policies, and financial responsibilities contained therein. I understand that failure to abide by the handbook may result in dismissal of my child. I accept responsibility for payment of all fees applied to my account. I understand that any unpaid balance on my account may result in legal actions being brought against me to collect said fee. I will be held accountable to pay reasonable fees for making such collection.

Parent Signature Date

DISCIPLINE POLICY

I have read and understand the discipline policy as stated in St. Patrick’s Early Childhood Learning Center Handbook. I agree to abide by all requirements and policies stated therein.

Parent Signature Date



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Early Childhood Learning Center
 6803 Old Hwy 441 South
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stpateclc@stpatrickmtdora.org
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Our Pastor and Director:

Fr. Jimson Varghese, S.D.V.
 and Ms. Denise Harris



Hours of Operation... Monday-Friday,
6:30 a.m.—6:00 p.m.

Calendar Year... August 1—July 31

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The Early Childhood Learning Center provides healthy, physical care in a welcoming, challenging environment, guided by a leadership of trained, competent and responsible adults. All areas of development of children — physical, emotional, spiritual, social and cognitive — are vital to their growth and development. To foster this development, we use the “Frog Street Curriculum”. Frog Street is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that integrates the instruction aligned to state and national standards. The cornerstones of the curriculum include: Integrated lesson, Social-Emotional Development, and Differentiated Instructions to meet the needs of all learners.

The St. Patrick ECLC (Early Childhood Learning Center) curriculum helps children to become aware of the world’s expansive diversity. Our program provides materials and experiences to be appreciative of ethnic, linguistic and racial backgrounds.

St. Patrick ECLE is licensed under the Florida Department of Children and Families and is accredited with the Diocese of Orlando and the Florida Catholic Conference.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGE ASSIGNMENT, WAIVER, AND RELEASE

As you review this photo release form, please do so with regard to any particular considerations of photos of your child being available on-line or in print.

I, _____, for valuable consideration received, and for being allowed access to Diocesan property, activities, or events, expressly assign to **St. Patrick Early Childhood Learning Center** and the Diocese of Orlando, and to all of their current, former, and future agents and related entities (collectively, “the Diocese”), all rights, title and interest in, and to, the use of my and my child/ward’s image or likeness, including, but not limited to all videotape recordings, photographs, or audio recordings of, or made by, me and/or my child/ward on Diocesan property, during a Diocesan-sponsored event, or for any other Diocesan purpose (“the Property”). The Diocese shall have, without my consent, the right to assign its rights in the Property, in whole or in part, to any entity, parish, or school within the Diocese of Orlando.

I hereby irrevocably grant the Diocese perpetually and exclusively, the right to use and incorporate (alone or together with other materials), in whole or in part, the Property, in any Diocesan publication, news release, or for any other purpose. Further, I hereby authorize the reproduction, sale, lease, copyright, exhibition, broadcast and/or distribution of the Property without limitation for any purpose whatsoever, and I further waive all rights to any compensation for my and/or my child/ward’s appearance or participation in the Property.

I hereby waive any claims against and release the Diocese, its current, former, and future religious, employees, volunteers, agents, and successors and assigns from and against any and all claims, demands, actions, causes of actions, suits, costs, expenses, liabilities, and damages whatsoever that I and/or my child/ward may have against the Diocese in connection with the Property or the use of the Property.

This release shall not obligate the Diocese to use the Property or to use any of the rights granted hereunder, or to exhibit, distribute, or exploit the Property. I acknowledge that the Diocese cannot control all photographic access to its properties, and that my child/ward’s name may be printed with photos/images in various publications, including non-Diocesan publications.

I represent that I am eighteen years of age or older, and that I have read and understand the terms of this Assignment, Waiver, and Release.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Name(s) of minor child(ren)/ward(s) _____



FOUR & FIVE YEAR OLDS:

This age group is characterized as imaginative, enthusiastic and adventurous. Pre-academic work continues and is becoming more complex. The children are encouraged to work more independently and to develop self-motivation.

Language continues to be a primary focus. The children are encouraged to increase their vocabulary as well as language comprehension. The children will learn their parent's name, phone number and address. Recognition of letters, numbers and colors is continuous.



Reading and writing skills can often be seen and are encouraged. Fill-in-the-blank stories, child dictated stories and language games are used to enhance learning. Phonic awareness will be a major role in their daily activities.

Math skills such as serialization, sequencing, classifying, weights and measures are explored.

Dramatic play and socialization skills are

enhanced through block play, house keeping, creative manipulatives and other learning centers.

Further exploration of their world continues with science and cooking activities being introduced.

KIDDIE CAM:

You can monitor your child's activities any time on you computer or mobile device through our Kiddie Cam. Upon enrollment, you will get an access code that will allow you to watch your child throughout the day!



From our Director..



Dear Friends,

We welcome you to St. Patrick's Early Childhood Learning Center, where our desire is to provide loving support and excellent childcare. Our center is an example of the dedication to accommodate the needs of today's family. We offer a variety of services in childcare from infants to pre-kindergarten.

Our professional staff believes that through our curriculum and the use of learning centers, a teacher may direct active involvement in age appropriate activities on early childhood principles.

Our teachers provide a Christian environment to help promote good self-esteem and a healthy attitude toward others. Every child is a unique gift from God and it is our responsibility to aid in the development of his or her special personality.

We provide a safe, healthy and clean environment to help enrich and strengthen a child's quest for independence and self-confidence.

Our center is open to everyone, regardless of national origin, religion, gender or race. All of God's children are deserving of a loving, caring environment. The cooperation and understanding of parents and staff will determine the success of your child's experience.

Sincerely,

Denise Harris

Denise Harris
Director

Our center is using Brightwheel Software to check your child in and out, to pay tuition, for teachers to let you know how your child's day was, and to send out important announcements.

ENROLLMENT:

All parents requesting to enroll their children at our center are required to complete and sign the following forms before enrollment is accepted: **Enrollment Form, Statement of Responsibility Form, Discipline Policy Form and a USDA Form.**

It is a State Law requirement that a recent physical and up to date immunization record be provided for our records. This law is strictly enforced by our center and Department of Children and Families.

Your prompt cooperation is expected and appreciated in compliance with the above and any other form required by our center of the State of Florida.

TUITION PAYMENTS:

Tuition is due on Monday of each week prior to attendance.

Payments made after Tuesday will automatically be assessed a late payment fee and be considered delinquent. If a child is absent on Monday, tuition is due prior to attendance.

There will be no pro-rated fees for days missed during a week due to illness, vacations, and holidays falling within the week.

Our center reserves the right to refuse attendance to children whose parents become delinquent in payment of their fees until all fees are paid in full. Unpaid balances will be subject to collection by attorney or collection agency. Parents will be responsible for all costs incurred in collecting delinquent fees.

Parents are asked to pick up their children from the center no later than 6:00 p.m. **A late pick up fee will be charged to your account starting at 6:00 p.m. and for every ten (10) minutes the child remains at the center after the 6:00 p.m. closing.**

TWO YEAR OLDS:

Two year olds are developing at a rapid pace. Growth in this area can be seen in the rapid acquisition of speech, self-help skills and establishing their own identities.

Their vocabulary is enhanced through stories, songs, nursery rhymes, finger plays and color recognition.

Goals in the self-help area include buttoning, zipping and toilet training.

Fine motor skills include stringing beads, puzzles and working with a variety of manipulatives.

Gross motor skills include tumbling, climbing, running, jumping, and simple movement to music and play in the learning centers.

We introduce toys and games that enable them to “do” rather than merely observe.

To aid in the development of a positive self-esteem, children are encouraged to make choices whenever possible and explore their interests and capabilities.

THREE YEAR OLDS:

This program continues with language development. The activities are structured to make recognition of the alphabet, numbers and their names enjoyable. Emphasis is also placed on classification, sequencing and patterning.



Music is encouraged through song, creative movement to music and simple rhythm patterns.

Other areas of importance are muscle control and social interactions. At this stage, many develop the “I can do it myself” attitude. We allow time and patience for their growing needs and encourage independence.

INFANTS (6 MONTHS TO 1 YEAR):



Enrichment is enhanced by physical contact such as patty-cake and peek-a-boo games. Floor time is essential for crawling and creeping experiences.

Textured objects to grasp and roll are necessary as well as manipulatives such as blocks.

Gross motor experiences are encouraged through the use of tumbling mats and baby walkers.

Language is promoted and reinforced through mimicking and imitation of the child's utterances. Finger plays and simple nursery rhymes are also employed for language and rhythm.

TODDLERS:

At this age, children become more aware of things around them. The activities are structured to help them understand their environment. This is done through music, exercise, and simple movement.

Language is enhanced through singing, nursery rhymes and finger plays.

Fine motor work is accomplished through simple puzzles, manipulatives and art projects requiring skills such as tearing and gluing.

The children are encouraged to do things for themselves which helps develop coordination and self esteem.



A payment box is located in the Child Center lobby for your convenience. Please use the tuition payment envelopes provided, clearly writing in the information requested. *If payment is a combination of fees (example: registration, tuition.), please specify the individual amount for each fee being paid.*

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE:

Parents are required to park their vehicle in the parking spaces available in our parking lot. **Parking along the yellow curb is prohibited.**

All children must be brought into the lobby upon arrival and picked up there upon departure. No child will be allowed to leave from the playground or from the parking lot area for any reason. Do not leave children unattended in the parking lot.

All parents are required to sign children "in" and "out" on the attendance form provided in the Child Center lobby.

NO children are allowed to be picked up by siblings and/or other children. Your child **WILL NOT BE RELEASED** to anyone for whom prior written authorization has not been given. We need to have a current name, address and phone number on record. If the person is not recognized, proper identification, ie: driver's license, will be required. Verbal messages from your child will not be accepted. Please send a note or telephone the Director prior to arrangements. If there is any doubt at all, and the parents cannot be reached, the child will remain at our Center until proper release is arranged.

HOLIDAYS:

Our center will be closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- The second or third Friday in September or the first Friday in October for Early Childhood Association of Florida State Conference
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving
- The week of Christmas (varies each year, notification of closing will be well in advance).

(continued)



When a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, our Center will be closed the Friday before or the Monday after the holiday. Occasionally an event may occur which calls for our center to close beyond the days listed. Notices will be posted in advance for parents to make other child care arrangements.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/EMERGENCIES:

We will close our facility if Lake and Orange County Schools close due to inclement weather or other emergency situations. **We will also contact you through our Brightwheel App. Please be sure to keep a current cellphone number on file.**

ATTENDANCE: VACATION & SICK TIME:

Each child is allowed **TWO FULL WEEKS OF ABSENCES** per school year where no tuition will be applied to your account. This is in one-week increments and cannot be accrued from one year to another. A child must be absent the entire week for no charge to be applied to your account. If a child attends at least one day in the week, full tuition will be applied to your account.

ILLNESS & MEDICATIONS:

Children with a fever, vomiting or diarrhea cannot be admitted in our center. If your child develops any of these symptoms, you will be notified to pick him/her up immediately.

A fever of 99.9 or higher, vomiting and diarrhea symptoms must be gone for a **minimum of 48 hours WITHOUT medication** before the child can return to our center. If a child still has symptoms after 48 hours a doctor's note is needed to return to the center.

Please notify our center immediately if your child has been exposed to any communicable diseases or infectious illnesses. By the same token, our center will notify parents if your child has been exposed at school.

Prescription drugs will be dispensed as per the instruction from the doctor. All medications must be in original containers. No medications will be dispensed without a completed and signed medication form. Over the counter medication can only be dispensed according to the recommended dosage, unless written release from a doctor accompanies it. Medicines such as Tylenol and Triaminic cold, etc. will not be dispensed without a note from a physician, NO EXCEPTIONS.

PICK UP CHILD LATE FEE:

A Late Pick-Up Fee will be applied to your account if your child has not been picked up by closing at 6:00 p.m. The fee will be applied for every ten (10) minutes the child is at the school after the 6:00 p.m. closing. Payment is expected with your next scheduled tuition payment. **Current fees are listed on the rate sheet.**

NON SUFFICIENT FUNDS FEE:

A N.S.F. fee will be applied to your account for all checks returned by the bank for any reason. The check **will not** be re-deposited and a cash payment will be due within three (3) business days of notification.



Educational Goals

We do not want to merely be a childcare center, but an extension of your family. The lines of communication must remain open between parent and center to provide the best possible care.



*We are proud users of the Frog Street * curriculum!*

INFANTS (6 WEEKS TO 6 MONTHS):

Because this age group is so totally dependent on others, it is also the most difficult for parents to approach. The physical, emotional and mental development of each child is considered vital.

Enrichment at the infant stage consists of tracking activities, the playing of music at regular intervals, the placement of mirrors, mobiles to increase an infant's attention span and direct one-to-one contact between the infants and care giver.



**To learn more about Frog Street, visit www.frogstreet.com.*





REGISTRATION FEE:

For children currently enrolled, our annual registration process will take place in August. A Registration Fee will be required to be paid at that time. Payment of this fee reserves a space in our center for your child during the current school year. If payment has not been received by the deadline, any empty spaces will be filled on a "first come, first pay" basis. Please see rate sheet for current fees.

For new children requesting enrollment in our center between the months of March and May of a current school year, a pro-rated Registration Fee of will be applied to your account. In August, you will be required to pay the full Registration Fee to secure a space for your child in our center for the new school year.

The Registration Fee is due along with your first week's tuition prior to attendance.

Registration Fees are non-refundable and due the day your child is enrolled in our center.

SUPPLY FEE:

A Supply Fee will be applied to your account in August of each school year.

The Supply Fee is due along with your first week's tuition prior to attendance. Please see rate sheet for current fees.

Supply Fees are non-refundable and due the day your child is enrolled in our center.

LATE PAYMENT FEE:

A Late Payment Fee will be applied to your account if payment is not received by the time allowed. Please see [Tuition Payments](#) for further explanation.

INCIDENT AND ACCIDENT REPORTS:

Accidents and incidents sometimes occur even in the safest child care centers. Documenting and reporting accidents and incidents helps parents understand what took place, helps staff to avoid similar events in the future, provides a record for legal purposes and is required by law. When an accident or incident is witnessed, the event is reported to the Director and to the parents of the child/children involved after the first steps to ensure health and safety have been taken. If the accident or incident is not directly witnessed, the staff member responsible for supervision of the child/children will make the report.

When appropriate, parents will be called so that they can advise staff regarding the follow up action to be taken with their child. All accidents or incidents are documented in writing. The written accident/incident report must be signed by the parent, the person responsible and the Director. **NOTE:** If bumps and bruises or other marks on the child are present at arrival time, staff may ask you about the circumstances surrounding the injury and these will be documented.

All staff members at the Center are First Aid and CPR certified and can be considered as non-medical first responders. In the event of a serious injury, 911 will be called immediately. The Director or staff member in charge will also call you immediately. Your child's records will go with them to the hospital if they need to be transported by ambulance to the hospital. This is another reason for parents to keep our records current including phone numbers, allergies, immunizations, etc.

DRESS CODE

For all children's safety, NO open-toed shoes, jellies or slip on shoes will be allowed. Be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather each day. We will not allow gum chewing in our Center.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Infants: Minimum of 6-7 diapers per day, change of clothes.
- Toddlers: Minimum of 6-7 diapers per day, change of clothes, blanket
- Pre-schoolers: Change of clothes, blanket

Please be sure to label all personal belongings with child's name. We will not be responsible for anything not properly labeled. If you accidentally take someone else's belongings, please return them as soon as possible.



TOYS & MOVIES:

Children are not allowed to bring toys or movies to our center except for Show and Tell Days or as directed by their teacher. However, no toy guns, swords or any toy or movie with a violent connotation will be permitted. If in doubt, ask the Director for permission.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH & SNACKS:

Our center provides a nutritious breakfast from 7:00-8:00 a.m. A hot, well-balanced meal is served to all children. We also provide an afternoon snack with juice or milk. Our Center follows the USDA guidelines and upon enrollment, all parents are asked to fill out and return a current USDA form. Parents of infants are also asked to fill out and return the Infant Feeding Form.

REST TIME:

A rest time is provided after lunch in all rooms. Your child does not have to nap, but needs to lie quietly so that those who need to sleep may do so. Please be sure your child brings a blanket on Monday and takes it home every Friday to be laundered.

BIRTHDAYS:

Every child's birthday is a special day at our center. Please contact your child's teacher regarding special healthy snacks, treats or favors to celebrate your child's birthday. Parents are encouraged to stay and join in the celebration.



Discipline

Discipline problems are avoided whenever possible by the following techniques:

- A well organized room
- A well organized routine
- Offering a wide variety of prepared activities.

When a teacher must intervene, the following procedures are followed:

1. Each child is given an explanation of why an adult is entering the situation.
2. Children are encouraged to express feelings, even if negative, but in words only.
3. If directions are given, they will be clear, simple, positive, specific, firm and polite.
4. If possible, the child is directed to another activity.
5. If the child needs to be removed from the group, the appropriate "time out" is one minute for each year of the child's age and is held in the classroom.
6. If further disciplinary action is needed, the "time out" will be held in another classroom or with the Director.
7. The parent agrees to work with the Center to restore any disciplinary problems.
8. As a last resort, a student will be asked to leave the Center.

No child is humiliated or subject to discipline that deprives him or her of rest, food or rest room breaks. Spanking is not allowed or tolerated in our Center!

BITING:

Unfortunately, children do act out and biting is a way of expression for them. The following procedures will take place when a child **TWO** years and older expresses biting behavior:

- **First Warning:** Temporary isolation from other children
- **Second Warning:** Suspension from our Center (one week)
- **Third Warning:** Permanent expulsion from our Center

Parents will be notified in writing or phone if a child receives a warning and the consequences of each incident.