



# Preschool Handbook

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# Welcome to St. Lawrence Preschool!



## St. Lawrence Preschool Staff

### Contact Information

Preschool Teacher	Ms. Brittany Bray	Brittany.Bray@k12.sd.us
Preschool Paraprofessional	Miss Matti Scott	Mattison.Scott@k12.sd.us
Principal	Mrs. Brenda Anderson	Brenda.Anderson@k12.sd.us
School Office	Deanne Dockter, JoAnn Tillman	stlawrence.school@k12.sd.us

**School Phone: 605-432-5673**

## Goals

The goal of the preschool classroom is to provide a structured supportive setting where children can participate in a variety of activities that are appropriate to their level of development. The activities are planned to stimulate communication and language, to build social skills, to provide experience in fine and gross motor areas, to promote acquisition of general knowledge, to teach pre-academic skills and to foster creativity. We want children to experience success when they are at our school so they can gain self-confidence and develop a positive attitude toward school.

## Age Requirements

Acceptance into our program is based on the child's age. To attend the Monday/Wednesday/Friday class a student must be eligible to attend kindergarten the following year. He/she must be 4 as of September 1 of the current school year. To attend the Tuesday/Thursday class he/she must be 3 by September 1 of the current school year. **Preschool students must be toilet trained or have a good grasp on potty training to attend.**

## Non-Discrimination Policy

The school is open to all children, regardless of race, nationality, or creed, who may benefit from our type of program. All that we expect of the child is that they come to school, be themselves, and have respect for others. What we expect of the parents or guardians is that they read this handbook and any supplemental notes and newsletters we may send home; and that you feel free to be a part of the school, offering suggestions, comments, and constructive criticism.

## Preschool Sections

The preschool program consists of the following class schedule:

M/W/F AM Class	8:15-10:45	four and five-year-olds
M/W/F PM Class	12:30-3:00	four and five-year-olds
T/Th AM Class	8:15-10:45	three and four-year-olds
T/Th PM Class	12:30-3:00	three and four-year-olds

## Preschool Registration

Registration is held the first Monday in February. Children three years of age and up to kindergarten age are eligible to enroll in the appropriate class. Due to state regulations, immunization records and a copy of your child's birth certificate are required for all students. Current preschoolers are given first consideration in the enrollment of the following year, followed by parish members and then the general public. If classes are filled when a parent registers, the child's name will be put on a waiting list and contacted immediately if a vacancy occurs. At registration a \$40.00 registration fee is due to hold your position in the program and is non-refundable.

## Tuition

Tuition for 2025-2026 is \$115.00 per month or \$1040 per year for 4-year-olds (MWF class) and \$90.00 per month or \$810 per year for 3-year-olds (T/Th class). It is important that tuition be paid on time. Unless you have made other arrangements with the school, tuition must be paid on or before the 15th of each month. It is the financial obligation of the parent or guardian to keep current with preschool tuition. Failure to do so could result in forfeiting the child's position in the preschool program. No credit is given for absences, scheduled holidays, vacation periods, or inclement weather. **Tuition is subject to change for the upcoming school year after the finance council approves the budget for the upcoming school year.**

## Calendar/Days Off/ Weather Announcements/Late Starts

St. Lawrence School follows the same calendar as the Milbank Public Schools for days that we are in session. You will also be reminded of these dates through SeeSaw, Remind, and the school newsletter. In case of severe weather, announcements concerning school closings will be given through the Milbank School Messenger System, the Remind app, and email. When school starts 1 hour late, we will have preschool. When school starts 2 hours late, there will not be morning preschool.

## What to Expect During Your Child's Day

St. Lawrence Preschool is designed to foster the child's total development as an individual and as a member of the group. Our program focuses on play activities that foster growth in all areas of development: emotional, social, intellectual, linguistic, physical, and spiritual. Children learn best when allowed to see, hear, feel, taste, and smell. Becoming involved in preschool activities almost always means noise, much activity, and even getting messy. Our schedule encourages active involvement and balances free choice and structured activities in a warm, caring environment.

The social-emotional aspect of our day will be incorporated throughout the entire day. We will practice sharing, getting along with others, helping each other, and working out problems.

Discipline/guidance is used in the classroom to help the child understand limits in the class, and to help the child learn how to set his/her own inner self-control. Appropriate discipline/guidance allows children to respect themselves and others and to cultivate respect for each other and the environment within a classroom setting. Discipline/guidance begins even before the children arrive through thoughtful planning of appropriate environments and placement of materials within the classroom to prevent potential problems. When working with children, our approach to discipline and guidance will be characterized by:

- Consistency, and firmness
- Clear, consistent limitations that are gently enforced.
- Encouragement of internal, self-discipline.
- Modeling and teaching positive behaviors.
- Facilitating positive self-esteem by accepting children's feelings, and modeling problem-solving techniques.

We believe that positive reinforcement, encouragement, offering choices, redirection, and joint problem solving are the most effective tools for discipline. Children, when their bodies are out of control, may be directed to sit down with a teacher to take a break, calm their bodies down, and discuss appropriate choices

Both fine (small muscle) and gross (large muscle) motor activities will be taught. We use paint, colors, blocks, pencils, and fingers to develop fine motor coordination. This will help prepare the children for writing skills. Balancing, hopping, and running are among many activities, both inside and outside that will help develop gross motor coordination.

As we prepare ourselves for reading and math; we will do a variety of pre-reading and pre-math activities. These cognitive activities will start on a concrete level and build individually for each child.

We will also achieve many self-care skills. These include buttoning, zipping, getting ready to go home, lacing, toileting, and many others. We will spend time learning about nutrition and healthy bodies.

Our spiritual program will be sprinkled throughout the day. Daily prayers, spiritual discussions, Bible stories, and an appreciation for the general awareness of God's world are a few of the concrete ways we will bring spiritual emphasis into our classroom. In addition, we will cover topics on forgiveness, sharing, feelings, simple prayers, and others.

The teachers and other adults involved in our program are dedicated to providing a wide variety of learning experiences that develop the mind, body, and spirit. We treat children as an individual and

allow them to experience their own level of development and help them feel success without pressure.

We ask that you leave your child's toys at home. If an item is brought to school, we cannot be responsible for it. We have many toys to choose from at school, and preschoolers have a difficult time sharing their toys with other children. No guns, weapons, or toys that instill violence will be allowed at anytime.

Snack time is an important part of our day. We practice good manners. Conversation is encouraged, as well as listening during this time. To build strong bodies, to grow and develop, children need the right food. A well-nourished child has a better chance to learn. Parents are asked to provide a nutritious snack for each day of school. Snack ideas are: apple wedges, orange slices, raisins, crackers, dry cereal, and popcorn.

We will celebrate birthdays during snack time. If you would like to provide a treat on your child's birthday you are welcome to do so. We will celebrate birthdays on the day nearest their actual birthday. The teacher will schedule birthdays in April and May for children who have summer birthdays so they have the opportunity to celebrate with their classmates.

### General Procedures

- The teacher will greet the children in the preschool room as they arrive. Parents are asked to bring their child by 8:15 or 12:30. Students may come as early as 7:45 for the morning session and 12:00 for the afternoon session. Children are **NOT** to be in the room before 7:45 or 12:00 unless you have made prior arrangements with the teacher. Teacher preparation time is valuable. Children are to be promptly picked up by 10:45 and 3:00.
- Please send a backpack or schoolbag to school each day. Check for parent notes at the end of the day. Regular sized backpacks are preferred as they better fit all of the materials your child will be bringing to and from school.
- Think of your child's comfort and provide clothing that is free of complicated fastenings. Because of messy activities, provide clothing that is easily washable. Provide sweaters and jackets, even on the first sunny days of fall. It is easier to remove an unneeded item than to go without. Provide hats and mittens and other winter gear when appropriate for the weather. Please label all your child's outer garments, including hats, boots, and snow pants as many bring the same items and this causes confusion.

### Speech

Speaking correctly and being good listeners, as well as building our vocabularies, will receive much attention. We will use our conversation times (snack time, circle time, and playtime) to talk to others and listen to our friends. We will explore many new and exciting things to foster our vocabularies. After consultation with the parents, students who display delayed patterns of speech may be referred to speech therapy with parental agreement.



## Transportation and Dismissal

St. Lawrence preschool is not responsible for transporting children to and from preschool. Children are to be walked or driven to school by their parents or legal guardian. The Milbank Community Bus is available for transportation needs. Their number is 432-4866. No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent. We must have authorization for changes by the parent or legal guardian. The teacher must receive permission for another adult to pick up the child. For your child's safety, you must notify the teacher or school every time your child's going home routine changes. Children are dismissed at the main entrance on the south side of the school. Our main concern is the safety of the children. Please stress to your child not to run out into the parking lot to greet you, but to **wait on the sidewalk for your assistance**.

## Parents

Please take time to check the SeeSaw app (Ms. Bray), Remind app (Mrs. Anderson), and the school newsletter that will be sent home or emailed. These will all share important communications and reminders.

The main objective of parent involvement is to provide an avenue through which parents and teacher can learn more about each child. Parents can give insight into your child by observing them working with others and participating in activities. The teacher can learn more about the child through the parent and therefore more accurately meet the child's needs. Children enjoy having mom or dad come to school and have a sense of security in knowing mom or dad are involved in their school.

The parents of our children provide a valuable service to St. Lawrence Preschool. Your participation at school, providing materials, and other opportunities help establish a well-rounded educational program with a family-like atmosphere. We are most grateful for the invaluable resource we have in you!

The preschool classes may be taking educational fieldtrips during the year. Volunteer drivers will be arranged if necessary. Parents will be asked to fill out a Volunteer Driver form as well as complete Safe Environment training through the Sioux Falls Diocese. This will include a background check that will be paid for by the school.

We kindly ask that parents are timely in dropping off their child and leaving the classroom. The transition for littles can sometimes be difficult, but most often, tears and sadness are very short lived. The longer you stay, the harder it will be for your child to transition into the classroom activities. Consistency is important in building routine for your child, so we kindly ask that you don't take your child home unless you have given us the opportunity to acclimate your child to the classroom. If a child persists and doesn't settle down, we will reach out to you to discuss your child's readiness for preschool.

If you need to visit with the teacher, please be courteous of their time with their students. Please communicate through the SeeSaw app or schedule an appointment. If you need to talk with the teacher over the phone, the best time to call is after 3:15 when all students have been dismissed. Please feel free to reach out over any concerns you have no matter how small.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Conferences will be scheduled on the same days as St. Lawrence School and the Milbank Public Schools in October and February. Parents will be notified by letter if the teacher would like a conference. Please note that if you would like a conference at any time during the year, please contact your child's teacher to schedule one. Check the school calendar for exact dates of conferences.

## **Illness**

If your child becomes sick at school, we will contact you immediately and take your child to the nurse's office. If called, you are responsible for picking your child up immediately. Please carefully consider the well-being of your child, other students within the classroom, and the teachers when deciding how soon after an illness your child should return to school. When sending your child to school you should fully expect that your child will be able to fully participate in the school day.

### **We suggest these guidelines when questioning if your child should stay home:**

- If your child has had a fever of 100° or more, they must be fever free without fever reducing medications for 24 hours.
- If your child has just started taking an antibiotic, ask your doctor when the child's condition will no longer be contagious (usually 24-48 hours).
- Has a heavy nasal discharge.
- Is fussy, cranky, and generally out of sorts.
- Has vomited or had loose stools more than once in the past 24 hours.
- Has an unexplained rash.
- Has a symptom of a possible communicable disease.

You are responsible for notifying the teacher of any and all medical conditions prior to the day of class. It is vitally important that you contact us by either calling the school or contacting the teacher whenever your child will be absent from school. The school number is 432-5673.

In case of a medical emergency during a preschool session, the staff will administer first aid. The parent or authorized adult will be notified as quickly as possible. If medical attention is required the staff will refer to the Medical Permission Form completed by the parent or legal guardian.