

St. Joseph the Worker Preschool



2025-2026 Parent Handbook

**St. Joseph the Worker Preschool
St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church of Chatham, IL
700 East Spruce Street**

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ARTICLE I - Forward

1.1 Purpose of the Parent Handbook

1.1.1 This handbook lists and explains St. Joseph the Worker Preschool (SJTW Preschool) policies and the general operation of the school. Policy statements are necessarily general and the St. Joseph the Worker Preschool Board of Education (Board) reserves the right to make specific alterations as circumstances arise. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it for reference throughout the school year.

1.1.2 Feel free to contact any member of the Board, the teacher, or a teacher's aide regarding policies or any questions you may have about the program. Please refrain from calling the teacher or teacher's aides during school hours, unless there is an emergency. The following is a list of phone numbers for your convenience:

1.2 St. Joseph the Worker Preschool Staff & Phone Numbers

1.2.1 Teacher - Jackie Viste	217-381-7050
1.2.2 Teacher's Aide – Dana Moomey	217-483-3772
1.2.3 Teacher's Aide – Melody Clark	217-483-3772
1.2.4 Office Manager – Deb Howerton	217-483-3772
1.2.5 Secretary –Sue Coombe	217-483-3772

1.3 St. Joseph the Worker Preschool Email & Website

1.3.1 Preschool Staff Email	preschoolinstructor@stjoschatham.org stjospreschool@gmail.com
1.3.2 Preschool Website	www.stjoschatham.org

1.4 St. Joseph the Worker Preschool Board of Education & Phone Numbers

1.4.1 Pastor – Fr. Joseph Molloy 217-483-3772

1.4.2 Office Liaison – Mike Allen

1.4.3 Classroom Liaison – Sarah Flott

1.4.4 Fundraising and Events – Mallory Sinner

1.4.5 General Member – Sara Marquess-Allen

1.4.6 General Member – vacant

1.4.7 General Member – vacant

1.4.8 General Member – vacant

1.5 St. Joseph the Worker Preschool Board of Education Email

1.5.1 Preschool Board of Education sjtwpreschoolboard@gmail.com

1.6 St. Joseph the Worker Preschool Board of Education Meetings

1.6.1 The Board will meet monthly with days and times posted outside of the Preschool Classroom. All meetings of the Board are open to the public. Check the SJTW Preschool Bulletin Board outside of the preschool classroom for a current list of Board meeting dates and locations. We welcome your participation. If you are interested in filling a vacant position on the Board, please contact any Board member

ARTICLE II - General Norms

2.1 Philosophy

2.1.1. Our primary responsibility at SJTW Preschool is to provide a quality religious educational program for our young children. In meeting this responsibility, SJTW Preschool will provide a curriculum that enhances the social, intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual development of each child. A Christian environment, centered on acceptance and respect, will help the child develop a positive attitude toward God, others, and learning.

2.2 Objectives

2.2.1 To provide a quality education program which will concentrate on the growth of each child spiritually, socially, intellectually, physically, and emotionally.

2.2.2 To provide an environment that is based on successful experiences, which encourages each child to develop a healthy self-concept and a positive self-esteem.

2.2.3 To provide an environment that promotes responsibility for one's actions and respect for others.

2.2.4 To provide a curriculum aimed at preparing each child for kindergarten.

2.3 Licensure

2.3.1 While SJTW Preschool is license-exempt by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the school chooses to follow the regulations as set forth in Part 407: Licensing Standards for Day Care Centers. Often referred to as The Standards, this document guides many of our staffing, program requirements, structure and safety, health and hygiene, and facility and equipment decisions.

2.3.2 Members of our staff are mandated reporters under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act [325 ILCS 5/4]. If a member of our staff has reasonable cause to believe that a child may be abused or neglected, he/she must report the suspected abuse or neglect to the DCFS Hotline.

ARTICLE III - Enrollment

3.1 General Requirements

3.1.1 Children must be three (for the 3-year-old program) or four (for the 4/5-year-old program) years of age on or before September 1st to be eligible to attend.

3.1.2 Parents must provide a certified copy of their child's birth certificate within 30 days of enrollment. A copy will be made and the original birth certificate returned to the parents.

3.1.3 Children must be toilet trained before beginning the program. The use of pull-ups is discouraged.

3.2 Health Requirements

3.2.1 In compliance with Illinois law, health examinations and immunizations shall be required according to the rules and regulations promulgated by the Department of Public Health. All sections of the Certificate of Child Health Examination must be accurately completed by the specified party. Parent(s) or guardian(s) who object to health examinations or to immunizations on religious grounds shall not be required to submit their children to them. The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall, however, present to the principal of the school a Certificate of Religious Exemption (detailing grounds for objection and specific immunizations, tests, or examinations to which they object, and signed by the authorized examining healthcare provider).

3.2.2 In the event of an outbreak, students who are not adequately immunized (and have a parent-signed Certificate of Religious Exemption with reasons on file) must be removed from school for their own safety. Schools shall maintain a susceptibility list of these students.

3.2.3 If the physical condition of the student is such that any one or more of the immunizing agents should not be administered, the examining physician shall disclose such fact upon the health examination form.

3.2.4 The medical report shall be valid for two years.

3.3 Registration

3.3.1 Registration for the following school year will begin at the beginning of the new year. However, the order registration forms are received DOES NOT determine the order that students are accepted into the program.. Registration forms will be considered in the following order: Current Families, Alumni Families, Parish Families, Public Families

3.3.2 There will be a \$75 non-refundable registration fee to register each child.

3.3.3 The maximum number of children accepted in the preschool for the four/five year old grade level morning class is 20. The maximum number of children accepted in the preschool for the three year old grade level morning class is 18 (may be more with teacher approval). If an

afternoon class is added, the maximum number of students is 15. The minimum number of children that must register for the preschool program is ten. Registration fees must be paid as described in subsection (d)(1) of this Section in order for a child to be officially registered. If a child is not officially registered, the child may, at any time, be removed from the registration list.

3.3.4 SJTW Preschool admits students of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the preschool. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational and admission policies.

3.4 Personal Information Changes

3.4.1 In order to keep student records current, the following changes should be reported to the preschool staff: name, address, phone number, place of employment, and emergency numbers.

3.5 Tuition

3.5.1 Tuition and registration fees shall be determined annually by the Board.

3.5.2 Families with two or more children enrolled will receive a \$10 monthly reduction in tuition for the second and subsequent children.

3.5.3 An activity fee of \$50.00 per child is due with the first tuition payment (August) of the school year. This activity fee will cover the cost of field trips and other classroom activities.

3.5.4 We prefer tuition to be paid electronically or by check, however cash will be accepted. It is the responsibility of the parent to obtain a receipt from the office when turning in cash payments. Checks should be made payable to “St. Joseph the Worker Preschool”. If a check is returned to SJTW Preschool for any reason, the payee will be responsible for all bank fees incurred in the transaction.

3.5.5 The first month’s tuition (August) and annual activity fee are due by the first day of July, both of which are nonrefundable. A written appeal for reimbursement of these fees may be filed with the Board between the first day of July and the first day of school. Each appeal will be considered by the Board on an individual basis, but is not a guarantee of reimbursement.

3.5.6 Tuition is collected for the months of August through April. Since August and May are partial months, April will be the last month collected. Tuition checks should be placed in the locked gray mailbox located on the wall by the student sign-in sheet on the first day of each month for that month beginning with September. A late fee of \$10.00 will be assessed to any parent or guardian failing to pay a bill in full from SJTW Preschool by the 10th of the month. This late penalty will be enforced. If any parent or guardian is more than thirty (30) days behind in payment to SJTW Preschool, their child may be dismissed from SJTW Preschool and the Board reserves the right to follow appropriate procedures to collect late payments. The parent or guardian is still responsible for the payment amount for the time the child attended preschool.

3.5.7 The Board Treasurer will send a courtesy reminder email during the first week of each month that tuition is due, only if tuition has not been received for that month.

3.5.8 Contact the Board with any questions about tuition payments and fees or to set up an alternative payment plan.

ARTICLE IV - Attendance

4.1 Arrival and Departure Procedures

4.1.1 Students are to arrive between **8:50 a.m.** and **9:00 a.m.** Students are to be picked up at **11:30 a.m.** but no later than 11:40 a.m..

4.1.2 The person admitting the child must register the child for the school day by signing a daily registration sheet.

4.1.3 A child shall be discharged from the facility only to the child's parent or guardian or to a person designated in writing (in advance) by the parent or guardian. A designated person not known to the staff shall be required to provide photo identification establishing their identity prior to a child's release to them.

4.2 Daily Schedule

4.2.1 SJTW Preschool is open five days a week. The 3-year-old class meets on Tuesday and Thursday. The 4/5-year-old class meets on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

4.2.2 Morning sessions begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 11:30 a.m.

4.2.3 The Board shall establish and distribute the calendar each year.

4.2.4 Preschool shall be canceled any day the Ball-Chatham District cancels school due to weather conditions or other emergencies.

4.2.5 The preschool may cancel any other day for emergency reasons (i.e., malfunctioning boiler).

4.3 Absences

4.3.1 Parents are asked to notify SJTW Preschool by phone or in writing on the first morning of a child's absence. If the school has not been notified of an absence by 9:00 a.m., school personnel will call to inquire about the absence. This is a safety measure for the child and your call is a courtesy to the school personnel.

4.3.2 If your child has a cold, please keep the child home.

4.3.3 Children should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

4.3.4 If your child is absent due to a communicable disease, notify school personnel at once. Keep your child at home until the doctor gives your child permission to return.

4.3.5 If your child is to be away for a family trip or must keep a doctor, dental, or other appointment, the school must be notified as soon as possible.

4.4 Late Pick-Up Procedure

4.4.1 It is expected that children will be signed out of the preschool room by their designated pick-up person by 11:40 a.m. SJTW Preschool understands that sometimes emergencies arise and lateness is unavoidable. Please remember it is the parent or guardian's responsibility, not the child's, to notify Preschool Staff if there is a change in schedule or plans for pick-up. All discussions regarding the situation shall be with the parent or guardian, never the child.

4.4.2 If the designated pick-up person has not contacted the preschool by 11:40 a.m. Preschool Staff will make every effort to reach you and/or any person listed on your pick-up and emergency contacts form. It is very important that SJTW Preschool has up-to-date information for you and your contacts, such as home, work, and cell phone numbers.

4.4.3 If Preschool Staff has not received word from you or anyone on your list by 12:00 p.m. the Staff is required by Illinois Licensing Standards to contact outside authorities, including the DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline and/or the police. It is the responsibility of the Preschool Staff to keep the children protected and safe until the parent, guardian, emergency contact, or outside authority arrives.

4.4.4 The first and second time that a parent is late, the teacher will speak with the parent, clarify the reason for the lateness and review the policy with the parent. The parent will sign a form to acknowledge the situation. The teacher will notify the Board.

4.4.5 If the parent is late a third time, the teacher will again speak with the parent. The parent will sign a form to acknowledge the situation. The Board will contact the parent to discuss the difficulties and attempt to arrive at a solution.

4.4.6 Should the lateness continue, the parent will be charged a \$25 penalty fee after three incidents per school year and for every late incident thereafter. The parent will be invoiced and the invoice will be paid within one week.

ARTICLE V - Classroom Management

5.1 Supplies

5.1.1 A printed list of necessary supplies will be e-mailed prior to the beginning of the school year. Each student should have these supplies on the first day of school.

5.2 Dress and Personal Belongings

5.2.1 Students should wear durable, washable clothes. The children will have an opportunity to participate in many messy but enjoyable activities. They will also have activities which require much movement.

5.2.2 Each student should attach his/her name to all personal belongings (i.e., coat, backpack).

5.2.3 Each student is required to have a seasonal change of clothes in his/her backpack in case of mishaps.

5.2.4 Students should refrain from bringing toys or special items to school unless permission is given by the teacher. This will avoid lost, broken, or misplaced items.

5.3 Snacks

5.3.1 Snacks are brought on a daily basis by student leaders. You will receive a monthly calendar from the teacher with a schedule of the student leaders. Drinks are provided by the preschool.

5.3.2 While SJTW Preschool is DCFS license-exempt, we choose to follow DCFS regulations, and snacks that are brought daily by the leader should meet those DCFS regulations. DCFS requires all snacks to be store bought, prepackaged, nutritious snacks. Snacks that go along with daily or monthly themes are appreciated, but not required.

5.3.3 While SJTW Preschool is DCFS license-exempt, we choose to follow DCFS regulations. Therefore, special sweet treats are only allowed on birthdays and special holiday parties, and must meet the DCFS regulation of being store bought and prepackaged.

5.4 Field Trips

5.4.1 Field trips will be organized throughout the school year. All adult volunteers (i.e. Parents, Grandparents, sitters, etc) will be required to complete an online Safe Environment Training and to fill out an Authorization For Background Check in order to comply with the Pastoral Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors By church Personnel of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

5.4.2 Parents or guardians who drive shall provide proof of insurance and have a valid driver's license.

5.4.3 Students will be required to use appropriate car seat restraints during transportation. Parents or guardians will be required to provide a car seat for their child during class field trips.

5.4.4 Parents or guardians will receive advance notification for forthcoming field trips and means of transportation. Permission slips or online Sign-Up forms must be signed and returned to the program if the child is to participate in the event.

5.4.5 Children not attending SJTW Preschool are prohibited from attending field trips unless approval by the teacher is given and a responsibility waiver form is completed.

5.5 Medication

5.5.1 Efforts should be made to give all medications at home. In special cases, medications can be administered by school staff on an as needed or emergency basis.

5.5.2 Only prescription medication may be given to the children during the day, according to the following guidelines:

5.5.2.1 All medicine must be brought to and kept in a locked box in the classroom.

5.5.2.2 Medicine must be in a bottle or box with the label of the pharmacy attached, child's name, doctor's name, name of medicine, and proper dosage.

5.5.2.3 A medication authorization form must be completed by a parent and kept on file in the classroom.

5.5.2.4 A log of all medicine dispensed is kept in the classroom.

5.5.3 A first-aid kit will be available at all times for minor cuts and abrasions.

5.6 Visitation and Communication

5.6.1 Parents or guardians are welcome to visit the classroom at any time during school hours. Parents or guardians who wish to volunteer in the classroom must have completed Protecting God's Children/Safe Environment Training.

5.6.2 There will be a parent/teacher conference for students in the 4/5-year-old class in November. There will be a parent/teacher conference for the students in the 3-year-old class in February. More frequent communication is welcomed and encouraged.

5.7 Guidance and Discipline

5.7.1 SJTW Preschool staff shall use disciplinary measures designed and carried out in such a way as to help individual students develop self-control and to assume responsibility for their own acts.

5.7.2 Discipline shall be the responsibility of adults who have an ongoing relationship with a student.

5.7.3 Discipline may be carried out in three ways:

5.7.3.1 Time out – Removal from the group as a means of helping the child gain control in which the time period shall not exceed one minute per year of age.

5.7.3.2 Parental notification – The parent or guardian of the child will immediately be notified of the student's conduct.

5.7.3.3 Dismissal – The parent or guardian of the child will immediately be notified of the student's conduct. Arrangements should be made to retrieve the student from the school. Dismissal from the school may range from the rest of the day to the rest of the school year.

5.7.3.3.1 Any dismissal of a child for more than one (1) month may be appealed to the Board.

5.7.3.3.2 If a student is dismissed from the school that does not exceed two (2) months, the parents or guardians are still financially responsible for the child's tuition for that time period. If a student is dismissed from the school indefinitely, the parents or guardians are still financially responsible for the child's tuition for two (2) weeks.

5.7.4 Discipline shall not be out of proportion to the student's act or the student's behavior history and shall not be out of proportion to the particular inappropriate behavior. The student will be made aware of the relationship between the act and the consequence.

5.7.5 Corporal punishment is prohibited.

5.7.6 For the safety of your child and the other children, please notify the teacher immediately if there is a change in your child's behavior or if other situations arise, such as medical conditions.

ARTICLE VI - Safe Environment

6.1 Safe Environment Training

6.1.1 Safe Environment Training (previously Protecting God's Children) is a program required by the Diocese of Springfield for all volunteers in Diocesan parishes, including those working in parish schools. It is a workshop designed to teach volunteers how to create child-safe environments and protect children from child sexual abuse. The course is free and will require a background check. Volunteers are only required to complete the online course once, but must resubmit a background check every five years to be kept on file in the parish office.

6.1.2 SJTW Preschool complies with the Safe Environment Training requirements. We strongly recommend that all parents take the class before their child begins school at SJTW Preschool. We require that parents (grandparents, daycare providers, etc....) who want to volunteer in the classroom, attend class parties, and/or drive on field trips take the class prior to participating in any of these activities. No exceptions.

6.2 Safety Plan

6.2.1 Medical Emergency

6.2.1.1 The staff will determine when the bumps, bruises, and headaches of daily life have escalated to the level of a medical emergency. Should a medical emergency require the assistance of the fire department or ambulance, the staff will summon the proper authorities.

6.2.2 Earthquake

6.2.2.1 Stay inside the building.

6.2.2.2 Drop to the floor

6.2.2.3 Take shelter under tables or other furniture.

6.2.2.4 Keep away from windows.

6.2.2.5 Stay away from electrical equipment and cabinets.

6.2.3 Tornado

6.2.3.1 The preschool staff will be notified of a tornado warning by the office staff.

6.2.3.2 Students will be brought out of the classroom to the nearest internal hallway between the permanent Faith Formation classrooms.

6.2.3.3 The last person out of the classroom will close the door behind them.

6.2.3.4 Teachers shall take a copy of the class list with them and take roll after evacuation noting any students who are absent.

6.2.3.5 Students will be instructed to remain silent, sit with knees bent on the floor with their backs to the wall and face and neck sheltered by arms, hands, and knees.

6.2.4 Fire & Explosion

6.2.4.1 In the event a fire or explosion is detected within the building, proceed according to the following plan:

6.2.4.1.1 Sound the fire alarm by pulling the alarm system located right outside the preschool classroom door that opens into the North hallway.

6.2.4.1.2 The preschool staff will call 911.

6.2.4.1.3 If needed, a fire extinguisher is located inside the preschool room North door.

6.2.4.1.4 Evacuate room in accordance with posted classroom evacuation map. Teachers will move the students outside via either the primary exit on the North side or the secondary exit on the South side of the classroom depending on the situation. Attempt to confine the fire by closing classroom doors upon leaving. Students will proceed to the predetermined outside location.

6.2.4.1.5 Teachers shall take a copy of their class lists with them and take roll after evacuation, noting any students who are absent. Teachers will also take the traveling first-aid kit with them.

6.2.4.1.6 Students should be instructed to stay orderly and quiet so that emergency instructions can be followed immediately.

6.2.4.1.7 Render first-aid to any evacuated persons with injury.

6.2.4.1.8 Should it be necessary to move students off school grounds, Chatham Public Library will be the first choice for evacuation.

6.2.4.1.9 Re-entry to the evacuated building is not permitted without the fire department's permission.

6.2.5 Emergency Numbers

6.2.5.1 In the event of any emergency 9-1-1

6.2.5.2 Chatham Police Department 217-483-2453

6.2.5.3 Chatham Fire Department 217-483-2121

6.2.5.4 Village of Chatham (Electric & Water) 217-483-2451

6.2.5.5 AmerenCILCO (Gas Leak) 1-888-672-5252

6.2.5.6 Poison Control 1-800-222-1222

6.3 Integrated Pest Management Program

6.3.1 SJTW Preschool has developed and implemented an integrated pest management (IPM) program as required by the Structural Pest Control Act [225 ILCS 235]. The IPM states that chemicals for insect and rodent control shall be applied in minimal amounts and shall not be used when children are present in the facility. All toys and other items handled by children must be removed from the area before pesticides are applied. All commercial chemicals shall be applied by a licensed pest control operator and a record of any pesticides used shall be maintained at the facility. Written notification of the intended application date will be posted on the classroom bulletin board. Pesticides subject to notification requirements shall not include antimicrobial agents, such as disinfectants, sanitizers, or deodorizers, or insecticide baits or traps. Persons wishing to view the IPM program in its entirety should contact the Board.

ARTICLE VII - Waiver of Liability

7.1 Waiver of Liability

7.1.1 I realize that while attending SJTW Preschool my child(ren) will be supervised by a SJTW Preschool employee. I understand that SJTW Preschool has attempted to create an injury-free play area for my child(ren); however, I acknowledge that young children may get hurt while playing with other children and while engaging in physical activities, and that there is a risk of property damage, serious injury or death inherent in my child participating in preschool classes and activities. I also understand that there are risks inherent in any physical activity program, including the use of equipment such as those provided for use at SJTW Preschool, which may or may not be obvious and which may pose serious threats to any person if used improperly.

7.1.2 In the event my child(ren) becomes injured while participating in SJTW Preschool activities, I hereby consent to SJTW Preschool to provide first-aid as well as summoning medical professionals to administer first-aid or emergency medical treatment for my child(ren).

7.1.3 I agree to follow any instructions or rules established by SJTW Preschool with regard to my child(ren)'s activities, whether written or orally given by SJTW Preschool.

7.1.4 I understand that every child is in a unique developmental stage and that I am most familiar with my child(ren)'s capabilities and limitations. As such, I agree to discuss any concerns with SJTW Preschool that I have about my child(ren) which I think may affect my child(ren)'s ability to safely participate in any activities or to use any equipment.

7.1.5 I agree not to hold SJTW Preschool as its entirety responsible for any injuries suffered by my child(ren) while involved in activities at preschool.

7.1.6 In exchange for the services provided by SJTW Preschool and the use of the St. Joseph the Worker parish facilities, **I agree to hold harmless, waive, release, indemnify, defend, and discharge the SJTW Preschool and St. Joseph the Worker Parish from all liability and claims arising from my and my children's participation in the activities of SJTW Preschool. I agree to these actions to the fullest extent allowed by law, which includes liability and claims arising from negligent acts.** The parish includes its pastor, parish staff, preschool staff, preschool board, including the individual members thereof, and its officers, agents, employees, volunteers, and representatives. "Liability and claims" means demands for any value or benefit, such as lawsuits, tort claims, insurance claims, causes of action, fines, fees, costs (e.g. medical costs and attorney fees). **I have the legal authority to waive, discharge, release, and hold harmless the released parties on behalf of myself and my child.**

7.1.7 I understand and agree that this release and waiver of liability, assumption of risk, and hold harmless agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by law, and that, in the event any portion of this agreement is determined to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable, the validity, legality, and enforceability of the balance of the agreement shall not be affected or impaired in any way, and shall continue to full legal force and effect. This release and waiver of liability shall be enforced and interpreted only by binding arbitration in Sangamon County.

St. Joseph the Worker Preschool Calendar

August	17	S	Parent Orientation - 5:00 p.m.
	18	M	Teacher Work Day
	19	T	Open House 3's (9-10 a.m.)
	20	W	Open House 4/5's (9-10 a.m.)
	21	Th	First Day of School (3's)
	22	F	First Day of School (4/5's)
September	1	M	Labor Day—No School
	26	F	Picture Day
October	13	M	Columbus Day—No School
	23	Th	No School
	24	F	No School
November	11	T	Veterans Day - No School
	19	W	Parent/Teacher Conferences 4/5's
	26-28		Thanksgiving Break—No School
December	16	T	Christmas Program @ 6:00 PM
	22-Jan 5		Christmas Break—No School
January	6	T	School Resumes
	19	M	MLK Birthday—No School
February	10	T	Parent/Teacher Conferences 3's
	13	F	No School
	16	M	Presidents Day—No School
March	30-Apr 6		Spring Break—No School
April	7	T	School Resumes
May	7	Th	3's Mother's Day Tea at 11:00 am
	8	F	4/5's Mother's Day Tea at 11:00 am
	11	M	4/5's Last Day in Classroom
	12	T	3's Last Day in Classroom
	13	W	4/5's Graduation 6:00 pm
	14	Th	Last Day of School Picnic Teacher Work Day