



**Saint Luke's
Parish School**

**2016 – 2017
PARENT
HANDBOOK**

1864 Post Road, Darien, CT 06820

www.slpsdarien.org

203-655-4067

SAINT LUKE'S PARISH SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Saint Luke's Parish School!

Started in 1966, Saint Luke's Parish School is a dynamic, educational nursery school for children ages two through five years old. We strive to provide a safe, secure, stimulating and nurturing environment that creates a positive foundation for each child. Our program is child-centered taking into account all aspects of each individual child- cognitive, social, emotional and physical. Each one of our students is encouraged to grow and learn to his or her fullest potential. Our goal is to build confidence, creativity and a love for school and learning.

Our daily activities include working with manipulatives, creating art projects, experiencing dramatic play, interacting and sharing within group activities and circle time, and developing concepts in the block corner and sensory tables. Gross motor skills are developed on the playground and in the Parish Hall as well as in the classrooms. We encourage a hands-on experience whether teacher or student directed.

We are excited to have your family join us this year! Working together, we will build a well-rounded child and foster a love of learning that carries them through their future years. Our doors are always open to answer your questions and to support your child's learning experiences in any way we can.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Hearle

Director

This Handbook contains important policies, procedures and information about our school. Please take a few moments to acquaint yourself with all the information that is included in this booklet.

SAINT LUKE'S PARISH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

(Revised May 2006)

Saint Luke's Parish School operates under the auspices of Saint Luke's Parish. We provide a weekday ministry to young children without regard to race, religion, nationality or economic status through an early childhood education program which fosters a close relationship between home, school and parish. Our school's goal is to prepare your children educationally, socially and spiritually for their futures by helping the whole child grow in a developmentally appropriate atmosphere:

- **Emotionally** – to create a positive self-image
- **Socially** – to learn to get along with others in an increasingly diverse world, and to respect other religious traditions and beliefs
- **Physically** – to develop muscle coordination and the ability to care for oneself
- **Intellectually** – to encourage a child's curiosity and to provide an opportunity to learn in a nurturing environment
- **Spiritually** – to foster a sense of age-appropriate religious understanding and spiritual wonder; and to instill key Christian values of prayer, worship, love of neighbor, justice and peace

MANAGEMENT BOARD

Management Board: The Saint Luke's Parish School Management Board was created to assist in the management of the School's operations. The Board ensures that the School operates in harmony with the Parish, safeguarding the original vision of Saint Luke's Parish School and its future. Specifically, it is tasked with the following roles:

- Managing, on behalf of the Saint Luke's Parish Vestry, the School's policies, programs and operations
- Setting and monitoring an annual School budget
- Long term planning and development

MANAGEMENT BOARD

2016 – 2017

Chairperson	Beth Lane
SLPS Director	Elizabeth Hearle
Clergy Liaison	Daniel Lennox
Secretary	Tara Ochman
Treasurer	Jennifer Shea
PTC Chair	Lindsay Kollar
Vestry Liaison	Amy Rebbechi

Members at Large

Kaitlin Brophy

Noelle Kraus

Brooke Macon

PARENT-TEACHER COMMITTEE (PTC)

MISSION STATEMENT

The community-building subcommittee of the Management Board, the PTC enhances the bond between the School and the parents through organizing social events involving parents, students and teachers and by helping to raise funds for the School.

SLPS Parent Teacher Committee (PTC) 2016-2017

Position	Name	Phone	Email
Chairperson	Lindsay Kollar	203-561-2322	lindsaykollar@gmail.com
Vice Chairperson	Kira Saunders	646-599-0740	kirasaunders@gmail.com
Treasurer	Erin Camporin	703-966-0205	slps.ptctreasurer@gmail.com
Newcomers Liaison	Courtney O'Connor	303-564-3003	courtneymatson@gmail.com
Parent Liaison	Carrie Sponheimer	917-696-9308	carriesponheimer@icloud.com
Communications	Maggie Machir	646-867-9552	maggie.f.hayes@gmail.com
	Samantha Casella	917-703-1476	samantha.kauer@gmail.com
Benefit Chairperson	Barclay Bowen	917-742-5996	barclaykbowen@gmail.com
Benefit Committee	Shane Roth	914-474-2932	shane.eroth@gmail.com
	Julia Semrai	917-757-8294	juliamonteith@gmail.com
	Lindsey Carr	917-822-8032	lindsey.s.carr@gmail.com
	Cecily Urenay	917-232-7015	cecily_harrison@yahoo.com
	Jennifer Richardson	203-461-5787	jennifercrichardson@yahoo.com
	Erin Morphy	412-952-0805	erin.morphy@gmail.com
	Laura Christian	347-559-2191	laura_pollok@yahoo.com
	Casey Haverstick	917-930-5969	casey.haverstick@gmail.com
	Kathy Calio	917-513-6649	kathy.calio@gmail.com
Special Events Chairperson	Becca Bartels	203-504-2565	beccabartels@gmail.com
Special Events Committee	Leslie Lester	415-336-1715	leslie_lester@hotmail.com
	Elizabeth Crosby	917-691-0113	elizabethpcrosby@gmail.com
	Emily Overbay	202-906-0901	emilyhenman@gmail.com
	Beth Russell	203-843-1256	emrussell16@gmail.com
	Tori Kramer	917-545-4419	torikramer@gmail.com
	Meghan Thornton	513-313-8767	meghan7626@yahoo.com
SLPS Director	Anne Callahan	203-554-8304	annebrowncallahan@gmail.com
Mgmt. Board Chair	Elizabeth Hearle	203-655-4067	ehearle@slpsdarien.org
Teacher Rep	Beth Lane		bloomfieldlane@gmail.com
Teacher Rep	Tallie Macdonald	917-502-0524	tmacdonald@slpsdarien.org

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1. ADMISSIONS POLICY

Based on our educational mission, class composition is primarily determined by chronological age. Admissions decisions shall be made by the Admissions Committee of the Management Board. Priority of enrollment shall be given to:

1. Children of the clergy of Saint Luke's Parish and children of full-time Parish School faculty and full time non-clergy Parish employees;
2. Currently enrolled children (at the time of the admissions meeting) of parishioners, by date (see Note B) of Parish membership. In the event of a tie, priority of enrollment shall be given to siblings of currently enrolled parishioner children and then past parishioner children;
3. Currently enrolled non-parishioner children (at the time of the admissions meeting) (see Note C). In the event of a tie, priority of enrollment shall be given to siblings of currently enrolled non-parishioner children and then past non-parishioner children;
4. Children of parishioners whose siblings currently attend the school (at the time of the admissions meeting), by date of Parish membership;
5. Children of non-parishioners whose siblings currently attend the school (at the time of the admissions meeting);
6. Children of parishioners whose siblings previously attended the school, by date of Parish membership;
7. Children of non-parishioners whose siblings previously attended the school;
8. Children of parishioners that have previously applied, but not attended, by date of Parish membership;
9. Children of non-parishioners that have previously applied, but not attended.
10. Children of first-time parishioner applicants, by date of Parish membership; and
11. Children of first-time applicants who are non-parishioners.

In the event of a tie within any of the above categories, the applicant families shall be ranked by lottery. One lottery number shall be drawn for each family of applicants.

NOTES

- A. In order to fill vacancies, we maintain a waiting list.
- B. With regard to questions of Parish membership, SLPS defers to the Parish office, which keeps all records. Parents who are active members of Saint Luke's Parish are asked to use the Verification of Parish Membership form to verify their membership date. This form will be forwarded to the Parish office for verification.

C. Once a child has been admitted to SLPS, that child is guaranteed enrollment for the following year as long as a timely application has been received by the SLPS office. No child is guaranteed their prior year time slot within the program.

D. Any admission issues should be brought to the attention of the SLPS Clergy Liaison, the Rev. Daniel Lennox, in writing prior to the end of registration (Saint Luke's Parish, 1864 Post Road, Darien, CT 06820), who will resolve any such issues. His decisions will be final. He can be reached at 655-1456, or at daniel.lennox@saintlukesdarien.org

2. APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

Our first concern is the safety of your child. For this reason we strongly recommend that children wear rubber soled shoes and not jellies, sandals, flip flops, Crocs or clogs. Teachers love Velcro sneakers. We climb every day and it is best that your child dress in clothes that allow freedom of movement. Hoods with drawstrings are known to get caught on play structures and may cause serious harm or even death. We go outdoors every day weather permitting. Please send in mittens, boots and a hat for your child.
Please make sure all clothing is labeled.

3. ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL ROUTINES

Arrivals

2's - Use front turn-a-round. If full, you may use the rear parking lot. Accompany your child from the car to the classroom and sign them in.

3's, 4's and Pre-K - Use the parking lot in the rear! The front turn-a-round is reserved for parents of 2 year olds and those with handicaps.

Please bring your child into the classroom and sign them in. If you are late in arriving, please also make sure that you personally speak with your child's teacher, never just drop off your child.

Dismissals

Children will be dismissed one by one from their classroom to awaiting parents/caregivers in the hall. This allows for less classroom confusion. Please wait for your child's teacher to dismiss your child to you.

4. BIRTHDAYS

Birthday Snacks

Special treats are provided by the child's parent at snack time. We suggest keeping baked Birthday Snacks to small sizes (mini or two-bite) or bring a healthy treat instead. **According to the Health Policy, birthday snacks MUST NOT contain nuts, peanuts, peanut butter, or products/food containing peanut oil. OUR BUILDING IS NUT FREE.**

Time

Please make arrangements with your child's teacher concerning the day on which you would like to celebrate the birthday. If your child has his/her birthday in the summer, ½ year birthdays may be planned.

Parties

If you plan a party for your child outside of the school setting, please **MAIL ALL INVITATIONS. Do not distribute them at school.** When transporting or carpooling children to such parties from school, gifts should be kept in a bag and handed to the teacher who will then distribute to the appropriate driver.

5. CHILD ABUSE REPORTING POLICY

The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect defines child sexual abuse as “..Contacts or interactions between a child and an adult when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or another person when the perpetrator or another person is in a position of power or control over the victim.”

Child neglect is defined as

“..a condition in which a caretaker responsible for the child either deliberately or by extraordinary inattentiveness permits the child to experience available present suffering and/or fails to provide one or more of the ingredients generally deemed essential for developing a person's physical, intellectual and emotional capacities.”

This school is required by law to report any case of suspected child abuse or neglect to the Connecticut Department of Social Services. We will do so!

6. COMMUNICATION

To contact the school please call 203-655-4067 or email elizabeth.hearle@saintlukesdarien.org. Please feel free to talk to your child's teacher before or after school hours. Open and comfortable communication between home and school is essential to good child care. Please remember - **Do not discuss problems in front of your child!**

7. DIAPER CHANGING POLICY

Two Year Olds

Although toilet training begins during the toddler years, we expect that some two year olds will be coming to school in diapers, and we are prepared to meet their needs. Diapers are changed if the teachers become aware that the child has a bowel movement or the child indicates that he or she needs a diaper change. There is a diaper changing table in the two year old classrooms with a disposable paper cover that is changed for each child. Parents are responsible to supply the diapers. Teachers wear disposable latex gloves. Soiled diapers are put into a plastic bag and the bag is put in a covered pail. The teacher must wash her hands and the child's hands at the sink in the two year old classrooms. This procedure is what the State of Connecticut requires for state licensing of nursery schools and is designed to prevent the spread of diseases.

Three's, Four's And Pre-K

Upon entering our three's program, there may still be a child in transition. If a child has a wetting accident, the teachers are prepared to help him or her change into a clean set of clothing that each parent supplies at the beginning of the school year.

If a three year old has a bowel movement, **our teachers will not change the soiled underwear**. If the child's toilet training is not secure, a parent or other designated person needs to be available to pick up/or change the child. We request that the child is quickly attended to, and it is **positively** communicated to the child that in nursery school children use the toilet. The parent may change the child at school so the child can remain in class.

8. DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline is not about punishment or control. The word itself comes from the Latin word discipline, which means "teaching". At its best, discipline is about guiding and teaching children, helping them to make wise decisions about their behavior, and allowing them to gradually accept responsibility for their choices and actions – to choose or not to choose.

At Saint Luke's Parish School our goal is to work toward helping your child to feel encouraged, invite cooperation, and practice mutual respect for others.

Our environment here is child centered. In the beginning of the school year we establish, with the children, simple clear-cut limits and rules that we need to follow to prevent problems from arising. We help the children learn to play cooperatively with their friends and with objects in the school. We work very hard to keep our goals and our rules consistent.

We first try to anticipate inappropriate behavior and intercede before an unacceptable act is committed. If this does not happen, we help the children find words or behavior that works. Distraction and redirection is another method that is used to help children keep control. More importantly, praising appropriate behavior helps to reinforce positive actions.

Consequences teach children by allowing them to experience the results of their choices. If a child has demonstrated unacceptable behavior and does not respond to the teacher, it may be necessary for the child to be removed from the situation. This allows the child time to calm down so that he or she can talk about their feelings.

If a child has ongoing behavior problems and does not respond to methods mentioned above, a conference will be requested with the parents. Another method sometimes used (with prior parental agreement) is an observation by the Darien School System school psychologist. If behavior continues, alternate education may be recommended. If behavioral problems exist and the parent refuses to seek help, withdrawal from the program is expected.

Corporal punishment is never used to discipline a child. It is against the law and will result in the immediate dismissal of a staff person if this should happen.

9. DROP OFF/PICK UP AND LATE PICK-UP

Normal Days: Drop Off and Pick Up

An adult should take the child to class and sign-in the attendance book with the **exact arrival time**. The young twos should use the cloister entrance. All others must come in the main door by the parking lot. Pick-up will be from your child's classroom unless the teacher has planned otherwise.

Parking Lot Full: Drop Off and Pick Up

Several times during the year our parking areas become very congested. This is due to large attendance at funerals, meetings, etc. We will make every effort to notify you in advance of any changes to the standard drop-off/pick-up procedure.

Late Pick Up

If delayed at pick-up a parent **MUST** call the Parish School office (203) 655-4067 **BEFORE** dismissal.

When a child is not picked up on time and we are unable to reach either parent, the child will remain in the office with two staff members until the parent or emergency person arrives.

Please be sensitive to your child's feelings when he or she has to be brought to the office after all the other children have been picked up.

Written Notice

Children will only be released to their parents or those adults authorized by parents on our written emergency form. If someone, other than those listed, is scheduled to pick your child up, you must sign the daily attendance book or call the office. We reserve the right to ask those persons picking up your child to show proper identification.

10. HEALTH POLICY

Nurse

SLPS employs a part-time nurse that observes the two's classrooms in accordance with state regulations.

Hand Washing

Before your child enters class, they should wash or "Purell" their hands. If there is a bathroom or sink in the class, you may help them to wash hands there.

Administration of Medications

The School will store and administer only prescribed emergency medications with parent's consent. An authorization form, which must be signed by an authorized prescriber, as well as, the parent is available at the School. The completed form/s will be reviewed by the nurse. Medications cannot be administered until all the proper forms are filled out.

Medications must be in their original container, clearly labeled with the child's name and stored in a zip-lock bag along with a photo of the child and Action Plan signed by the Doctor and parent(s) and reviewed by our Nurse. All medications will be kept in the School office. Parents will be notified in advance if a medication is due to expire. It is the responsibility of the parent to replace the expired medication and dispose the old medication properly.

Parents will be notified when/if a child has been administered any medication. Staff is trained in the administration of medication by our nurse. Training for epi-pens is repeated once per year. At no time is an untrained staff member allowed to administer medication.

Allergies

Saint Luke's Parish School is a **NUT AND PEANUT-FREE SCHOOL**. We do not allow ANY nuts, peanuts, peanut butter or projects/food containing peanut oil in the school or on the playground. This policy is strictly enforced. Thank you for your cooperation!

Illness

Keep your child home if he or she:

1. is overtired or overexcited
2. is unable to participate in usual daily activities
3. has nasal discharge (yellow or green)
4. has an elevated temperature
5. has a communicable disease
6. has a rash that may be infectious – (i.e. scabies, ringworm or impetigo)
7. has infectious conjunctivitis
8. has a sore throat
9. has nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

Return Dates

Your child may return when:

1. fever is absent for **24 hours**
2. nausea, vomiting or diarrhea is absent for **24 hours**
3. 24 hours have passed **after** start of treatment for strep infection or infectious conjunctivitis, or one treatment for head lice
4. the stage of contagion for communicable disease has passed
5. the child, under doctor's care, has received permission to return
6. the child feels well enough to participate in all activities

**** **Please notify us immediately if your child has been exposed to** ****

Pink Eye

Strep Throat

Head Lice

When a child becomes ill at school

1. Parent (or alternate person specified by parent) is notified by phone to pick up child
2. Sick child is cared for in the School Office thus protecting well children

Injury

If a child is involved in an accident at school:

1. It is written up in a report and a log is kept for the State.
2. Parents are always informed of accidents that are in the log and given a copy of the report.
3. Parents are always informed of any head injuries immediately.
4. In case of major injuries we call the parents.
5. If there were to be an emergency severe enough for 911, the call to the parent would come after the 911 call.

All parents fill out an emergency contact form that gives their information, back-up information and pediatrician's contact information as well as hospital preference. This form is kept in duplicate in the School Office.

11. PARKING LOT SAFETY POLICY

1. Please drive at an appropriate speed and be aware of the speed bumps and stop signs.
2. Only park in designated areas.
3. All children should walk into school together, holding an adult's hand.
4. Please use the sidewalks around a portion of the parking lot for entry into the building. This is better than walking around cars or through the middle of the lot.
5. Upon departure from school, please hold your child (children) by the hand.

12. SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICY

Security

The safety and security of your children is our most important consideration. The doors to the school remain locked during school hours. For more information on our Safety and Security protocols, please contact the Director.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are performed twice per year.

Lock Down/Lock Out Drills

Lock down and lock out drills are not performed with the children. Teachers are instructed on procedures.

Playground

1. During the course of the school day, SLPS has exclusive use of the playground.
2. A teacher will never be on the playground alone with her class. An assistant or second class will always be present.
3. All teachers are asked to carry their personal cell phones when outside. If an emergency develops, these can be used to contact the school office immediately.
4. Teachers will verbally announce dismissal time and perform a headcount at the gate: a sweep of the playground will be done: a second headcount is taken before entering the school building.
5. Teachers return to their classrooms before cars parents start arriving. This creates a safer environment when crossing our road and avoids confusion and commotion in doorways and stairwells when children and parents are leaving. In any event, deference should be given to classes entering the building in order to keep children together with their classmates.

13. SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS/

DELAYS/EARLY DISMISSALS POLICY

Saint Luke's follows the Darien School System for school cancellations.

Delays

If the Darien Schools have a 90 minute or 2 hour delay, SLPS will open on those days at 10:30 a.m. for morning classes and any subsequent Afternoon Adventures. Parents are urged to use their judgment in safely traveling to and from school and assume responsibility for all decisions for such actions. Please check www.slpsdarien.org for up to date information. Days missed due to weather or safety issues will not be made up or refunded.

Early Dismissals

When Darien calls for an "early dismissal", our morning classes meet during normal times and our Afternoon Adventures will not be held. It sometimes becomes necessary to begin our dismissal earlier than our 11:45 set time due to the severity of the weather or driving conditions. Starting dismissal a bit earlier also helps with juggling all the cars and children in the parking lot.

We will alert you to an "early dismissal change" via email. Staff will remain with all children until pick-up is complete. We only ask that you drive carefully. Weather related closings will not be made up.

14. SNACK/SPECIAL SNACK/LUNCH

Please keep special snacks healthy. Please keep candy at home. If you need suggestions or ideas, the office or your child's teacher has a list. **According to the Health Policy, snacks MUST NOT contain nuts, peanuts, peanut butter, or products/food containing peanut oil.** The State now requires all lunches to contain ice-packs.

15. SUMMER CAMP

SLPS has **no** association to any summer school camp/program nor does it endorse such camp/programs, even those that might employ or be run by SLPS faculty. Our faculty has been reminded not to use the Parish School's resources or our name in operating these schools or camps.

The only exception to this policy is the Saint Luke's Vacation Bible School which is run by the Church.

16. TELEPHONE

The school's private number is **203-655-4067**. In case of illness or other emergencies, we have an answering machine for your convenience. If your

child will be absent from school please call or email elizabeth.hearle@saintlukesdarien.org. In an emergency if you cannot reach us, call the Church Office and speak to the receptionist at **(203) 655-1456** and she will contact us.

17. TOYS

We recognize that blankets, stuffed animals, and lovies help children transition from home to school easier, especially at the beginning of the school year. Please be sure that your child is aware that the teacher may ask him or her to place it in his or her cubby if it becomes a distraction.

18. TUITION PAYMENT AND REFUND POLICY

Tuition is paid in approximately 3 equal payments starting in late January. The first payment is a non-refundable deposit. The other payments are due in June and October. Exact dates appear on the contract.

Due Date

Deposit payments must be delivered to the Parish School Office by noon on the specified due date. In the event that the deposit payment is not received by the deadline, the child's spot in the class shall be forfeited to the first child on the waitlist.

Late Payment

Tuition payments not made by the dates listed on your contract shall be subject to a late payment fee of 10% of the amount due. In the event that tuition payments (with the exception of the deposit) are not made within 30 days of the stated due date, your child shall not be allowed to attend school until all past due payments have been deposited. If you need to work out a payment arrangement, please speak with the Director of the Parish School.

Refunds

If your child withdraws from school, the Director must be notified in writing 30 days in advance of the date of withdrawal. You will not be liable for further tuition installments provided that the Parish School is able to fill the vacancy within 3 weeks of receipt of written notification of withdrawal. The first tuition payment is non-refundable and non-transferable. The Parish School will not refund any part of the first tuition payment under any circumstances.

Afternoon Adventures

There are no refunds for missed days and no swapping days with other children for any of our Afternoon Adventures. If your child withdraws from any auxiliary program, there is a full refund for the unused portion.

19. VISITING AND VOLUNTEERING

We welcome parent visits to our school and encourage volunteering in the classroom when needed. If you would like to spend some time with your child, bring grandparents or a friend to visit, or volunteer to help with a special activity in your child's classroom, please feel free to discuss this with the teachers. If you do drop in unannounced, please report to the office first. Thank you.