

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

SLPS is an Episcopal School that provides a weekday ministry to young children without regard to race, religion, nationality or economic status, through an early childhood education program, fostering close relationship between home, school and parish. Our school's goal is to prepare our 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

2018 – 2019

Chairperson	Callie Hulick
SLPS Director	Elizabeth Hearle
Clergy Liaison	Daniel Lennox
Secretary	Maggie Domont
Treasurer	Jennifer Shea
PTC Chair	Maggie Machir
Vestry Liaison	Callie Hulick

Members at Large

Barclay Bowen
Lindsay Kollar
Kira Saunders
Carrie Sponheimer
Jennifer Ward

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) 2018-2019

Position	Name	Phone	Email
Chairperson	Maggie Machir	646-599-0740	maggie.f.haves@gmail.com
Vice Chairperson	Barbara May	646-867-9552	barbaramay428@gmail.com
Management & Vestry Board Liaison	Callie Hulick	609-203-0530	callie.hulick@gmail.com
Treasurer	Whitney Maurer	917-359-5316	whitneyhaurer@gmail.com
Newcomers Liaison	Casey Haverstick	917-930-5969	casey.haverstick@gmail.com
Parent Liaison	Beth Russell	203-843-1256	emrussell16@gmail.com
Benefit Co-Chairs	Blair Bijou	203-521-3166	blair.bijou@gmail.com
	Ashley Lauria	609-915-1274	wellington.ashley@gmail.com
Benefit Committee	Kate Barber	914-474-2932	ktbarber10@gmail.com
	Meredith Martin	203-253-9364	meredith.v.martin@gmail.com
	Sonia Johnson	203-246-9969	soniasparolini@gmail.com
	Lauren Adkins	617-413-9994	laurencarlucci@gmail.com
	Katherine Spellane	847-373-7900	katherine.eberly@gmail.com
	Sarah Kohart	203-521-3167	skohart1@gmail.com
	Jennifer Crosswell	917-434-6628	jennifercrosswell@gmail.com
	Jenn Tuohy	917-653-2772	jlgoodwin7@yahoo.com
Special Events Chairperson	Emily Overbay	202-906-0901	emilyhenman@gmail.com
Special Events Committee	Emily Farnum	908-872-1051	emilyfarnum@gmail.com
	Leslie Lester	415-336-1715	leslie_lester@hotmail.com
	Julia Semrai	917-757-8294	juliamonteith@gmail.com
	Whitney Artiano	973-945-8664	wkartiano@yahoo.com
SLPS Director	Elizabeth Hearle	203-655-4067	ehearle@slpsdarien.org
Teacher Representative	Helen Del Bene	203-655-4067	hdelbene@slpsdarien.org

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Saint Luke's Parish School

1. ADMISSIONS POLICY (3/14/2018)

Based on our educational mission, class composition is primarily determined by chronological age and gender. 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;
3. Applicants whose sibling(s) currently attend SLPS;
4. Applicants whose sibling(s) previously attended SLPS;
5. Applicants whose immediate families previously applied, but were not admitted;
6. First-time applicants. If a first time applicant is also a Parishioner, priority will be given over section 5 in the event the previously applied applicant is a Non-parishioner.

In the event of a tie within any of the above categories, priority will be given to:

1. Parishioner applicants by date of Parish membership (See Note A),
2. Applicants whose non-parishioner parents attended SLPS,
3. Non-parishioner applicants.

Within these categories, applicants shall be ranked by lottery within age group. In order to fill vacancies, we maintain a waiting list. 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 and all payments are current. No child is guaranteed their prior year schedule of class days within the program.

Any admission issues should be brought to the attention of the SLPS Clergy Liaison, Daniel Lennox, in writing prior to the contract due date (Saint Luke's Parish, 1864 Post Road, Darien, CT 06820). He will work to resolve any such issues. His decisions will be final. He can be reached at 203-655-1456, or at daniel.lennox@saintlukesdarien.org.

Notes:

- A. With regard to questions of Parish membership, SLPS defers to the Parish office, which keeps all records. All Parish memberships will be verified through the Parish Office. Newcomer Orientation date will be used for all Newcomers who are in the process of becoming Parish members.

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 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. 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

Young 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.

Older 2's, 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 ehearle@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, we do not have the diaper changing table and sink required by the State** to carry out this task. 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 who has soiled is quickly attended to, and in a matter of fact, non-punishing way communicate 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 (6/30/17)

The goal of discipline is to help the child develop inner controls so that he/she may move towards appropriate social behavior. At Saint Luke's Parish School (SLPS), our first concern is the health and safety of our students. Our goal is to work toward helping your child feel encouraged, invite cooperation, and practice mutual respect for others.

SLPS's environment is child centered. In the beginning of the school year simple, clear-cut limits and rules are established with the children. 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. More importantly, praising appropriate behavior helps to reinforce positive actions. Methods for resolving conflict are:

- Positive guidance
- Setting clear limits
- Redirection

When disputes arise among children or between a child and the teacher, the teacher will encourage a talking out process among those involved. The goal of this process is to acknowledge feelings and find solutions using the children's ideas whenever possible.

If a child has demonstrated unacceptable behavior and does not respond to talking things through, the following steps may be taken:

1. The child may be asked to make an activity choice in another area.
2. The child may be removed from the situation.
3. A conference may be requested with the parents.
4. At the director's discretion, SLPS may hire a "shadow" for the child on a short-term basis, to provide additional adult supervision and to ensure the safety of all children in the classroom.

Children will be continuously supervised during the disciplinary actions.

However, if the child's behavior continues after reasonable disciplinary efforts have been made, the school may determine that, for the safety of others, the child can no longer be enrolled at SLPS.

Staff Members shall not be abusive, neglectful or use corporal, humiliating or

frightening punishment under any circumstances. No child shall be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or another child or adult. Failure of a Staff Member to abide by these guidelines will result in immediate termination.

In addition to the steps outlined above, the following applies specifically to biting incidents:

SLPS takes biting very seriously. Bites are painful and may cause the spread of infection if the skin is broken. If a child bites or is bitten, we will contact the parent immediately.

Two year olds have limited language skills and may bite out of frustration. The biter will be removed from the group and told that biting is not acceptable. The child will return to the class when the teacher feels that he/she is ready to rejoin the group. If the biting incidents persist, the child will be sent home after the 3rd bite. The parent will be encouraged to reinforce our message at home. The child may return to school the next day.

Three year olds seldom bite but may do so if frustrated in certain situations. The biter will be removed from the group and will have a discussion with the teacher and/or school director. If the child bites a second time, the child will be sent home. The child may return to school the next day.

In the four year old and Pre-K classes, biting is not acceptable and the child will be sent home. The child may return to school the next day.

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 twos' classrooms once a week in accordance with state regulations.

Hand Washing

Before your child enters class, they should wash their hands with soap. 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 such as epi-pens, and emergency oral medications (i.e. Benadryl) 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. All medications will be kept in the School office.

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 Parish 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.
3. Parents are always informed of any head injuries
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.

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. Announce to your children that as you get out of the car, everyone must stay together and walk into school together, holding Mom'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. Please do not remove your child from line.
6. Please remember to let the teacher know you're taking your child.
7. And, 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.

13. SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS/DELAYS/ EARLY DISMISSALS

School Cancellations

SLPS follows the Darien School System for all weather-related school cancellations.

Please check www.slpsdarien.org for up to date information.

Weather related closings will not be made up.

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.

Early Dismissals

When Darien calls for an “early dismissal”, our morning classes meet during normal times and our afternoon classes don’t meet at all. 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.

Church Closing

In the event that Saint Luke’s Parish closes for any reason, SLPS will also be closed.

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 ehearle@slpsdarien.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 SLPS Office by noon on 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 times listed on your contract shall be subject to a late payment fee in the amount 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

The first tuition payment is non-refundable and non-transferable. SLPS will not refund any part of the first tuition payment under any circumstances except in cases where the state has determined that the child's needs cannot be met at SLPS.

If your child withdraws from school, the Director must be notified in writing 30 days in advance of the date of withdrawal.

If your child withdraws from school prior to June 1st of the year preceding enrollment, you will not be liable for further tuition installments. The first tuition payment is non-refundable and non-transferable.

If your child withdraws after June 1st of the year preceding enrollment, you will be refunded tuition payments made subsequent to the first payment provided that the Parish School fills the vacancy by September 1st. In the case of multiple withdrawals, refunds will be given in order of date of receipt of written notification of withdrawal.

Please note, our refund policy is based on the fact that we sign contracts with teachers in the beginning of June for the subsequent year. After that date, we are obligated to pay them regardless of enrollment.

Afternoon Adventures

There are no refunds for missed days and no swapping 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.

NOTES