

**Saint James School  
Pre-Kindergarten  
Handbook  
2025-2026**



**Pre-Kindergarten classes for children ages 3 to 5.**

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## Mission Statement

Saint James School provides a quality Catholic education based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, building a foundation for independent, lifelong learners. We strive to develop every child's full potential through faith, academics, service, and character formation.

## Faculty and Staff

Mrs. Bridget Zorger .....	Principal
Mrs. Linda Carpenter .....	Director/Pre-K4 Teacher
Mrs. Rebecca Duval.....	Pre-K3 Teacher
Mrs. Kate Davis .....	Teacher Aide
Ms. Darlene McGill .....	Teacher Aide
Ms. Fionnuala Purcell.....	Teacher Aide
Mrs. Andrea Rataic .....	Teacher Aide

## Policy Handbook Statement

These policies and regulations for the Saint James Pre-Kindergarten are intended to reflect the Catholic philosophy of education and to be true to its spirit. They help us create Catholic educational communities in which learning integrated with faith flourishes and the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity prevails. For every student, it is a privilege to attend Saint James Pre-Kindergarten.

The purpose of this handbook is to clearly state the area that comes under contractual arrangements between the Pre-Kindergarten and parents and the rules of the school covering student conduct. *In the case of situations not specifically addressed by this Pre-Kindergarten Handbook the larger Saint James School Parent/Student Handbook will be referenced.*

## Goals of the Pre-Kindergarten

The Saint James Pre-Kindergarten provides a circle of warmth, caring, and sharing. The educational process of a child attending the Pre-Kindergarten has the following goals:

- To awaken each child's desire to learn.
- To facilitate opportunities in spiritual, social, physical, cognitive, and language development.
- To generate in the early learner, the value of life.
- To nurture a warm, caring environment that develops self-esteem and a positive attitude toward learning.

Curriculum areas such as religion, math, literature, social studies, language development, science, art, and music are integrated around thematic units, centers, and children's literature.

As part of Saint James School, the children have an enriching Pre-Kindergarten experience as well as various opportunities to be part of what they fondly call "The Big School."

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Saint James School admits qualified students of any race, color, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at Saint James School. Saint James School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, or sex in the administration of educational policies, admission policies, and scholarship programs.

## **Admission and Acceptance**

The Saint James Pre-Kindergarten begins the educational process of a child at Saint James School. Registration shall be announced in January/February to the school community, the Parish, and the general public. For Pre-Kindergarten acceptance, a child must be toilet trained. The final determination of admission policy will lie with the Pastor and Principal. Children whose applications are received by February 1 will be accepted into the Saint James Pre-Kindergarten based on the following priorities:

1. Siblings of Saint James School students
2. Students whose parent/guardians are alumni of SJS
3. Parishioners of Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish
4. Registered Catholics from other parishes
5. All other children on a space available basis

Prior to admission, the parent/guardian must supply a copy of the student's birth certificate and health records. Students seeking admissions for Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 must also be at least 3 or 4 years of age respectively by September 1st.

## **Parent/Pre-Kindergarten Partnership**

Parents are held to the same standard as students with regard to respect for the principal, the teachers, and aides. Enrollment of the child in the school implies a partnership between the school and the parent and child. If the partnership breaks down, the school reserves the right to terminate a child from the program for lack of cooperation or inability of a child or parent to adjust to the program.

## **Absences**

If a student is absent from school for any reason, parents must do the following:

- Call the School Nurse at 860-643-5088 #4 OR email the child's teacher before 8:00am on each day of absence and report the reason for the absence.
- When the student returns to school, send a note stating the date(s) of absence and reason for the absence. If a child has been absent with a fever, a note must be submitted to the school stating the child has been without a fever for the past 24 hours.

Any child exhibiting symptoms of severe cold, fever, flu, diarrhea, or vomiting should be kept at home until the symptoms have been gone for 24 hours without the use of medication.

## **Communication**

Communication and a cooperative effort between home and school is an important aspect to our Pre-Kindergarten program. Since parents are partners in learning, we invite them to become involved, if possible, by way of volunteering their time and talents. A newsletter or calendar will be sent home each month to keep families informed of upcoming events.

Please note that all adults must complete a background check and attend the VIRTUS training before helping in the classroom, on field trips, at school events, etc. Please refer to the Virtus information sent out

from the school for additional details.

If there are any special questions or concerns you would like to discuss with your child's teacher, parents are welcome to call the Pre-K before or after school hours or email the teacher directly.

### **Tuition Rates and Payment**

Tuition rates for the Pre-Kindergarten are as follows:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Tuition</b>
3 year olds - M/W/F - AM	\$4,100
3 year olds Mon-Fri - Full Day	\$6,250
4 and 5 year olds - Mon-Fri - AM	\$4,825
4 and 5 year olds - Mon-Fri - Full Day	\$6,250

At the time of acceptance, a non-refundable \$225 registration fee per family is required (maximum of \$450 per family). This will be applied towards tuition. Tuition is paid through FACTS Tuition Management company and may be paid in one, two, or ten payments. Families must remain current with their tuition payments. Students may be withdrawn from the school and will not be registered for the upcoming school year if tuition payments are not current.

### **Early Withdrawal Policy**

If a student is withdrawn from Saint James School, the following rules apply:

<b><u>Withdrawal Date</u></b>	<b><u>Tuition Obligation</u></b>
Prior to July 30, 2025	Family Non-Refundable Tuition Deposit
As of July 30, 2025	Family Non-Refundable Tuition Deposit + full tuition for first trimester
After First Trimester	Family Non-Refundable Tuition Deposit + full tuition for each trimester student has attended regardless, if they finished the trimester
If student is expelled	Family Non-Refundable Tuition Deposit + full tuition

If a refund is due after a student withdraws, Saint James School will endeavor to remit the refund within 30 days of the withdrawal date.

### **Assessment**

The Saint James Pre-Kindergarten assesses its goals and expectations for each child through ongoing informal observations and discussions with co-teachers. Children in the three- and four-year-old programs are assessed individually throughout the school year to measure the developmental skills.

A progress report is sent home with each child in January and in June. The progress report consists of a checklist of skills that are considered age-appropriate; or discussions are held regarding certain skills that may need more time to develop. Conferences will be held in October and March to discuss each child's

progress. Conferences may also be scheduled on an as needed basis with the teacher.

### Program Schedules

The Saint James Pre-Kindergarten operates the following programs:

Age	Day	Time
3-year-olds	Mon/Wed/Fri	8:00 A.M. - 11:50 A.M.
3-year-olds	Mon – Fri Full Day	8:00 A.M. - 1:50 P.M.
4- and 5-year-olds	Mon – Fri A.M. Only	8:00 A.M. - 11:50 A.M.
4- and 5-year-olds	Mon – Fri Full Day	8:00 A.M. - 1:50 P.M.

### Parking

In an effort to avoid traffic problems, parents are requested to park on Park St. or Otis St. in areas that are not restricted with No Parking signs (e.g., do not park directly in front of the main school building).

### Inclement Weather

Saint James School is informed by the Manchester Public School system when there will be a delayed opening, snow day, or early dismissal. Please look for the notification from **St. Teresa of Calcutta Church** on WFSB, which will apply to both parish schools. A TEXT notifying you of a closure, delay, or early dismissal will also be sent to you from Saint James School via our FACTS Emergency Alert System.

In the event of a two-hour delayed opening of school, the following schedules will be in effect:

- Full Day Session starts at 10:00 A.M.
- Half Day students have the option of attending from 10:00 A.M. until 11:50 A.M.

In the event of an early dismissal, the following schedules will be in effect:

- All Pre-K students (full and part-time) will dismiss at 10:50 A.M.

The extended day program is cancelled on early dismissal days, and all students must be picked up from extended day no later than 1:00 P.M. There is no before school care available on days of delayed openings.

### Appropriate Dress

Pre-Kindergarten children should wear suitable, comfortable clothing, keeping in mind that children will be playing outside on the playscape daily. Children should wear **sneakers** to school each day. All jackets, sweatshirts, sweaters, hats, mittens, and scarves should be labeled with your child's name.

### Snack/Lunch

All Pre-Kindergarten students should bring a snack, **spill-proof** water bottle, and a lunch. We ask that you provide nutritious food because we believe this to be important to the children's education. **Due to allergies, we ask that children do not bring any nut products including nuts of any kind. Please pack snack and lunch in separate bags.**

## **Health and Safety**

Every student entering Pre-K, Kindergarten must submit a completed State of Connecticut Department of Education Early Childhood Health Assessment Record (two-sided yellow form) verifying that the student has received a physical within 12 months of the current school year. Connecticut state law mandates that children in preschool get the **flu vaccine each year between August 1 and December 31**. An assessment of vision and hearing should be available to the school. An updated emergency card must be on file for each child attending the Pre-Kindergarten.

The staff of the Saint James Pre-Kindergarten works closely with the school nurse in dealing with illnesses, allergies, health issues, prevention of injuries, and medical emergencies regarding the Pre-Kindergarten children. A medical supply kit and an injury log are kept in the Pre-Kindergarten office along with each child's emergency card.

## **Medicine**

Should it be necessary for a student to be given medicine during the school day, Connecticut State Law requires the following:

- A Medication Authorization Form, filled out by the student's physician, must be on file with the School Nurse. Blank forms are available in the school office and on the school's website.
- An adult must deliver the medication, properly labeled, to the school.
- A Pre-Kindergarten Teacher or the school nurse will administer the medication according to the prescription.

***Under no circumstances is a student allowed to transport prescription or over-the counter medication to or from school.***

## **Illness at School**

If a student becomes ill at school and the School Nurse decides that the student should be sent home, they will contact the student's parent to come and take him/her home. On the first day of school, emergency cards are sent home to be filled out and returned to the school to be kept on file in the Nurse's Office. If a parent is not available to pick the student up, the emergency contact listed on the emergency card will be contacted.

## **Fire Drills and Lockdown Drills**

Fire drills are practiced monthly. Students are informed of the evacuation procedures for their classroom, and these procedures are also posted in each classroom. While the responsibility for a smooth evacuation lies with the staff, students are expected to respond to the alarm quietly and quickly and follow all instructions. If a parent or volunteer is in the building when an alarm is sounded, he/she should proceed to the nearest exit. During a fire drill, no one should re-enter the building until the Principal has given permission to do so.

Lockdown drills are also practiced periodically.

## **Evacuation and Emergency Dismissal**

If for any reason other than weather-related, the school must be evacuated and it has been determined that the building is unsafe for students to return to it, students will be directed to other designated areas. The classroom teachers will remain with their class until all students are picked up or the building is declared safe. Parents will be notified of an Emergency Dismissal.

## **Pre-Kindergarten Program Highlights:**

- Following directions in a group setting
- Pledge of Allegiance, daily prayers
- Bible stories and lessons, Gospel Weekly Seeds Magazine
- Show n' Tell, days of the week, weather, and story time
- Singing, dancing, small group activities, and games
- Recognition and writing of shapes, colors, patterns, letters, and numbers
- Fine and gross motor skill activities
- Indoor and outdoor imaginative play
- Bi-weekly themed units that consist of books, songs, and art activities
- Progress reports issued twice a year
- Holiday celebrations
- Field trips
- "Stepping-up" celebration for Pre-K4 students and parents on the last day of school
- Optional Extended Day program (before and after school hours) available to students in the full-day program.

# Saint James School Pre-Kindergarten Handbook 2025-2026

## Parent Signature Page

When enrolling your child in Saint James School, you are agreeing to abide by and be governed by the Saint James School Pre-Kindergarten Handbook as well as the larger, school-wide Parent/Student Handbook.

Saint James School reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time. Notices of amendments will be sent to parents via the students, or through email.

I have read and discussed the Saint James School policy book with my child(ren). We agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.

*Circle One:*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Program: Pre-K3 / Pre-K4

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Program: Pre-K3 / Pre-K4

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please complete and return to the school by August 28, 2025.**