

St. Gerard Majella Preschool Handbook 2019-2020



WELCOME!

Saint Gerard Majella Preschool

2005 Dougherty Ferry Road

Kirkwood, MO 63122

314-822-8844 ext. 5

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MISSION STATEMENT

St. Gerard Majella Catholic Preschool Program believes each child is a special, unique gift of God. We are dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing environment that fosters the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth and development of every child.

PHILOSOPHY

Our program is based on the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth of each child.

Spiritual Growth

Children receive the gift of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (a Montessori based preschool faith formation) to nurture a deep love and relationship with God. Children are given opportunities to experience prayer, scripture, altar works, liturgical calendar, baptism, and Jesus as the Good Shepherd.

Intellectual Growth

St. Gerard Majella Preschool is committed to preparing each child for success. This will be done through a Project Construct approach that will invite inquiry, exploration and focus on the 4 C's (creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking). Table Time and centers will lead our learning based on language arts, math, science, dramatic play and the arts, to prepare our students for Kindergarten.

Social Growth

Young children learn through life experiences and their environment how to interact with others by applying respect, responsibility and self-control. Positive reinforcement and gentle guidance encourage Christian behavior.

Emotional Growth

Preschoolers are encouraged to express themselves in a safe and nurturing environment. As a child of the Good Shepherd, each develops positive self-esteem and a sense of security.

Physical Growth

Children are given opportunity to develop small muscle and large muscle groups through a variety of activities. These opportunities occur in the classroom, gym and outside play areas.

ABSENCE

Parents are required to contact the preschool office (314-822-8844 ext. 5) before 8:00 a.m. if a child is going to be absent or tardy.

ACCIDENTS OR INJURIES

All minor accidents or injuries will be taken care of by the teacher, preschool director, or school nurse. In the case of serious injury, the parent will be notified immediately, and emergency procedures as prescribed by the parent on the child's emergency form will be implemented.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURES

Safety is very important to the faculty and staff at SGM. To keep all traffic flowing and to prevent any accidents, we are asking ALL parents (preschool through eighth grade) to circle around the back of the school building to drop off all children. Everyone will enter the parking lot from Ballas Road and drive around the back of the building from west to east. If you enter the lot from Dougherty Ferry, make a left driving past Church and meld into the line of cars entering from Ballas and continue around back of the building. Once in the back of the building, ONLY K-8 students will exit from the passenger side of the cars and will enter school from the various entrances. **Preschool students will remain in the cars.** Continue to drive around the back of the school building towards the main parking lot. Once you get to the main parking lot, you will veer an immediate right into the **preschool drop off lane**. This lane will be alongside/parallel to the stage area. Please drive your car up as far as it allows in this lane. Then you may either park your car and walk your child into school or safety patrol students and faculty will be outside to help students exit cars and walk them into school. Once your child has exited the car, you may then exit onto Dougherty Ferry with the rest of the cars.

On Preschool Visiting Day, you will be given a card to keep on your dashboard that says "Preschool Drop Off" so safety patrol students are aware of which cars to help in the drop-off line in the back of the building.

The building doors will be open at 7:30 a.m. and the students will be allowed to enter the classrooms at 8:00 a.m. The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. During 7:30-7:55, the gym is open for our use. The teacher assistants are in the gym with the students and will help with the transition into the classrooms.

At the end of the day, the main preschool doors will open at 11:00 a.m. for you to enter and you will greet your child **outside** their classroom. When the teacher is ready, the students will be released one by one. If there is a change in who is typically picking up your child, please be sure to inform the teacher or administration. The students will only be released to parents or other pre-authorized adults. If there is someone who is not on the release form but is picking up your child, then a note or phone call is required. Please know that the K-8 students have lunch recess from 11:00-1:00 p.m. so please park on the church side so you can avoid recess activity.

BIRTHDAYS

Students are asked not to bring in a snack for their birthday celebration. We have several students who have allergies in our classes and we want everyone to be able to participate in the excitement. Instead of a snack or a gift to share with classmates, **students can have a dress out day when celebrating their birthday.**

Birthday invitations may not be passed out at school unless the entire class is receiving the birthday invitation, or one entire gender is receiving them.

CLASS SIZES

3/4-Year-Old Class:

The 3/4-Year-Old classes meet three days a week Tuesday thru Thursday. Children must be three years old by July 31st and be FULLY potty trained. The maximum number of students per class is fourteen with a Lead Teacher and an Assistant Teacher.

Pre-K Class:

The Pre-K class meets four days a week Monday thru Thursday. Children must be four years old by July 31st. The maximum number of students per class is sixteen with a Lead Teacher and an Assistant Teacher.

CLASS SUPPLIES

A supply list is given out in spring with the registration paperwork. You are encouraged to stay true to these name brands and supplies. This list includes supplies each student needs for the following school year. Additional items are provided by the preschool.

COMMUNICATION

Open communication between parents and staff is essential. Parents are encouraged to express their needs, suggestions, and concerns with the teacher or administration. It is beneficial when the staff and parents regularly exchange information concerning the care of the child. To stay informed on school issues, remember to check your child's backpack daily and read the newsletters and notices sent home at the end of the week.

The staff is always ready to meet with you to discuss your child's progress, his/her strengths, and/or any areas of concern. If you are interested, feel free to schedule an appointment. Preschool wide conferences will occur in fall. These will be a face to face with your child's teacher during preschool hours. Assessments will be sent home in May and conferences can be scheduled as needed throughout the year.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is designed for children between the ages of three and five. It allows the child to be challenged while still developing at his/her own pace. We follow the Missouri Early Learning Standards and incorporate them into our activities to best prepare your child for Kindergarten.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a Montessori-based religious program designed for children ages three through twelve. The atrium is a sacred space where children can nurture a personal relationship with God. The space is ordered, child-sized, and beautiful, allowing the children opportunities to interact directly and intensely with materials that are specially prepared by the catechists. The atrium is not a classroom, but rather a place prepared for the child to fully receive God's love and feel His presence. Children are given opportunities to learn about and experience prayer, the Kingdom of God Parables, the Altar and parts of Mass, the Geography of Israel, the Infancy Narratives, the Paschal Mystery, Baptism, and Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Children have the liberty to move freely and choose works they feel drawn to. The eventual aim of the atrium is to prepare the children to develop and nurture their faith and to participate more fully in Mass.

Music

Twice a month, the children attend a music class for 30 minutes. The children have the opportunity to experience music in a variety of ways by singing, dancing, marching, finger plays, and using musical instruments. The music class generally ties into the season or theme the children are studying in class.

Yoga

Children will attend two yoga sessions a month. Each one will last 20 minutes. This will be a time for the children to become aware of their bodies and movement and how the various pose's makes them feel. We may learn the importance of quieting our bodies.

DISCIPLINE

Early childhood educators consider discipline as a teaching opportunity, not a punishment. The staff members are asked to:

- Interact with the children in accordance with the teachings and principles of Jesus.
- Develop environments that keep children engaged and involved in positive learning experiences.
- Redirect behaviors when necessary.
- Stop any behavior that interferes with learning activities or safety.
- Assist children in making positive choices with others.

In enforcing discipline, educators are to be guided by God's Word. If the teacher is unable to get the children's cooperation, the staff will confer with administration. Parents are kept informed of any discipline concerns throughout the year.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

At the beginning of the school year, information concerning you and your child will be requested by the preschool. This information will be kept on file so that we may contact you in case of illness or emergency. Please keep the requested information current throughout the school year.

Response plans and procedures for emergencies that may arise are in place at St. Gerard Majella Preschool. These plans and procedures are disseminated to and reviewed by the faculty and staff before the start of each school year. A copy of the Emergency Plan and Crisis Response Procedure is on file in the elementary school office.

To assure the safety of each student in the event of fire, tornado, earthquake, or other potentially dangerous situations, drills are held periodically during the school year to familiarize students and teachers with emergency procedures. Exiting procedures for each area of the school are posted.

Parents are requested to fill out an emergency release form at the start of each school year. This form will instruct us as to whom your child may physically be released in the event of a natural disaster or hazardous situation. A copy of those to whom your child may be released will also be on file at the preschool office.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at St. Gerard Majella includes the completion of an application for enrollment with a non-refundable enrollment fee. Enrollment is subject to the approval of the administration, Pastor, and availability of space. St. Gerard Majella Preschool admits students of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin to all programs and activities afforded to students of the school. St. Gerard Majella Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational or admission policies.

Priority of enrollment is as follows:

1. Students and families currently enrolled in St. Gerard Majella Preschool/School.
2. Active parishioners of St. Gerard Majella.
3. Open enrollment.

Once enrollment becomes full, names will be placed on a wait list for the appropriate class and contacted if and when a space becomes available.

Registration forms for the next school year are distributed in February. A non-refundable registration fee is required.

We do accept new students at semester with discretion from administration.

FACILITIES

St Gerard Majella Preschool is located on the main campus of St. Gerard Majella Elementary School in Kirkwood, Missouri. The preschool is comprised of two PreK classrooms and two 3/4-Year-Old classrooms. All four classrooms offer a comfortable and stimulating environment where children come together to explore, inquire and interact through various play-based activities. The walls, both inside and outside the classrooms, display the children's creativeness through various types of artwork. Our facility also includes a brand-new playground area where their imagination comes alive.

HEALTH CARE

SGM School Board Healthcare Policy

(formerly Medication Policy - February 1992, revised November 2007)

It is the policy of St Gerard Majella School to assure the physical well-being of students and staff during the school day by employing a school nurse and implementing procedures that are in accordance with state and federal guidelines, as well as directives from the CDC and the St. Louis County Health Department.

An RN/LPN is on duty from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to handle illnesses or injuries that may occur. When the nurse is not on duty, the staff assumes those responsibilities. Per Archdiocesan policy, an Emergency Response Team is in place. The team consists of the nurses, administration, elementary school secretary, playground aides, and one additional staff member. The Emergency Response Team responds to all first aid and emergency situations. They attended a basic training session and received additional training in CPR through the Archdiocese. In addition, all staff members receive general first aid training on a regular basis.

Communications about health concerns as well as all medications that need to be dispensed must come directly to the administration and school nurse. In case of illness, a parent will be notified either by phone or at dismissal of the student's visit to the nurse.

Special Medical Considerations

Students with Significant Medical Conditions

(Archdiocesan policy 4401.6)

A student enrolled in a Catholic school that has a significant or potentially life threatening medical condition may require special consideration.

Schools should take steps to obtain the information necessary to understand the condition, its manifestations in the school setting, and any specific adjustments or plans for an emergency response which may be necessary in order to provide the student with a healthy and safe environment.

If you feel that your child has a special medical need, please call administration directly. After the parents and the student's physician provide pertinent information, a plan of accommodations that may need to be considered or provided will be put into place. All appropriate staff will be informed of the special health plan. Any additional reasonable staff training to assure the physical well-being of the student will occur.

Records/Screenings

State Regulations govern immunizations and health record requirements. All students must have health records on file at school. (Archdiocesan policy 4401.2)

Medication

Administration of Medication

(Archdiocesan policy 4401.4)

Ideally, all medication should be given at home. However, some students are able to attend school because of the effectiveness of medication in the treatment of chronic illnesses or disabilities. If a student requires prescribed medication during the school day, the following must be in place:

1. the direct order/consent of a licensed physician, licensed physician's assistant or nurse practitioner (Appendix 8: Physician Consent for Medication Administration), signed and properly filed with the school. (The current prescription label on the container may serve as a physician's order and physician's orders may be faxed or mailed to the school.);
2. written consent of the parent/guardian for school personnel to administer the medication (Appendix 9: Parental Consent for Medication Administration to their Child);
3. the medication in the original container;
4. proper training of personnel on medication administration.

All medication sent to the school nurse must be secured in a locked cabinet under the supervision of the administration. Students may not carry medication on their person, with the exception of metered-dose inhalers when properly registered with the school. A trained staff member must be assigned to administer medication. Proper documentation must be kept on every dose given.

St. Gerard Majella Preschool discourages the administration of any medication to students during the regular school day unless it is medically necessary and impractical to accomplish outside normal school hours. Parents are directed to arrange the administration of the student's medication for times outside the regular school day when feasible.

Our school's personnel will only dispense routine maintenance medication (e.g., asthma medication, etc.) every day to a student in our preschool under the following conditions:

- At the beginning of the school year, a signed written permission note from the parents or legal custodian directing the school to administer the medication must be brought to the school office.
- The student must bring the medication to the school nurse. The student's medication must be in measured doses. Physician's label with dispensation time and name of medication must be clearly marked and visible on the container. This applies to both liquid and capsule type medication. (Pharmacists will give a duplicate labeled container for transporting medicine to and from school upon request.)
- School personnel will not be responsible for determining appropriate dosages. (e.g., if two dosages are needed for one day, each dosage should be separately wrapped and clearly marked with dispensation time and name of medication on each container). School personnel will not administer medication if it is past the expiration date (e.g., inhalers).
- School staff will administer no initial dose of any medication and no change will be made on the dosage without a new physician's order.

The above steps also hold true if school personnel need to dispense medication on a daily basis to students who need to take specific prescription medication for a limited period of time (normally 10 or fewer consecutive school days) under the following circumstances:

Cough drops, throat lozenges, and Tylenol are considered forms of medication and should not be in the possession of any student. Nonprescription external or internal medication will not be administered or stored by the school unless accompanied by a physician's order that clearly states time and dosage. "As needed" is not a sufficient directive.

ILLNESS POLICY

All parents are encouraged to make provisions for the occasion when their child may become ill and need to be taken home. We wish to provide the healthiest environment for all children and need each family's cooperation regarding the illness policy. Please note the following rules concerning childhood illness, which are from the Department of Health Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers.

Each child shall be observed for contagious diseases and signs of illness throughout the day. Parents shall be notified immediately when any contagious disease occurs in the preschool. In the event of illness, parents or other contacts listed on the child's emergency form will be called. It is imperative that sick children be picked up in a reasonable time frame. A child exhibiting any of the following symptoms must be sent home:

- More than one abnormally loose stool
- Severe coughing - if the child gets red or blue in the face or makes high pitched croup or whooping sounds after coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Tears, redness of the eyelid lining or irritation followed by swelling or discharge of pus
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or swallowing difficulty
- An infected skin patch - crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of the skin

- Unusually dark, tea colored urine, Gray or white stool
- Fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Headache and stiff neck
- Vomiting
- Severe itching of the body or scalp or scratching of the scalp which may be symptoms of lice or scabies
- Lice (When your child is okay to return back to school he/she must show a notification from Lice Busters or a note from the pediatrician saying the child is "lice free")

A child may return for school after a physician has evaluated a contagious illness, medication has been prescribed, and any period of contagiousness has passed as determined by a licensed physician. A child returning to school **fewer than 24** hours after being sent home will need a physician's written approval before acceptance for care.

Please note: Children must be **fever free** for 24 hours **without** the aid of medication before they can be accepted for care.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If it becomes necessary to close school or have a late start, due to inclement weather, you will receive a phone blast and the announcement will be broadcasted on KSDK and KMOV television stations. We will follow St. Gerard Majella Elementary School closings and snow schedules. If the announcement indicates, "snow schedule," doors to both the schools will open at 7:30 a.m., classes will begin at 9:00 a.m. The regular pick up time will still apply, and Lunch Bunch will still occur.

LUNCH BUNCH

Lunch Bunch, an extended day option, is available for children who are enrolled in either of our classrooms. The 3/4-Year Old's can have up to 14 children sign up each day while the Pre-K may have 16 children each day. The children bring their lunch with a drink. (peanut free lunch) The extended day will be filled with music and movement, lunch, crafts, games, stories, and outdoor play. Registration for Lunch Bunch is available semi-annually and payment is due with registration. Drop-ins for Lunch Bunch are not allowed. There is no Lunch Bunch the first and last week of school. If a student is sick during the school day, students are not allowed to come to Lunch Bunch.

PRESCHOOL SESSIONS AND TUITION

3/4 Year-Old Class	Tues., Wed. & Thurs.	8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	\$2,200 a year
PreK Class	Mon. - Thurs.	8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	\$2,800 a year
Lunch Bunch (optional)	Monday-Thursday	11:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.	\$12.50 a day

**Monday is PreK only.

Tuition is due on or before the 5th of each month. (September - May). All checks are to be made payable to St. Gerard Majella. The payment may be brought to the school office, Parish office or put in the collection basket on Sunday with attention Diane Bengard on the envelope.

Each child enrolled is asked to pay an annual registration and material fee of \$125.

There will be no refund for absences due to illness, change of plans, or vacation.

If tuition for the month has not been received by the 5th of the month, a reminder will be sent home for the first month this occurs. If repeated, a late-fee will be assessed for each additional month a reminder is necessary. If tuition is repeatedly missing, the student may be asked to leave the preschool program.

SNACK

Each day the students take time to eat snack. Students bring in their own, individual snack opposed to group snacks. Though, students are asked to bring a snack from home, these snacks still need to follow the 'snack cracker', fruit/vegetable/dairy item and **MUST BE PEANUT FREE**. As always, the students are asked NOT to share their food with one another and to only eat what comes from home.

"Peanut free" carb snacks include Goldfish crackers, Utz or Rold Gold Pretzels, Keebler Graham Crackers (original, cinnamon, honey), Nabisco Teddy Grahams (all flavors), Kix Cereal, Veggie Straws, Pirate Booty (all kinds), Keebler Vanilla Wafers, Cheez-Its, and Town House Flipsides Pretzel Crackers. **It is important that we follow these snacks, so we can keep everyone safe.** If your child has other allergies and you have additional food items we can add to the list, please let us know. On Visiting Day, your child's teacher may provide you with additional guidelines for the classroom based on the needs of the students in each classroom.

TOYS

In order to keep children from being disappointed by a broken or lost toy or book, we prefer that they use the toys and books provided by the preschool. Please leave all toys and books at home. On special occasions, the parents will be notified when it is okay for the child to bring in a special toy or book for things such as "show and tell."

VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERING AND THE ARCHDIOCESAN SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

Opportunities for volunteering time include assisting the teachers with classroom activities, class parties, projects as requested, and chaperoning on field trips. **Parents wishing to volunteer time where children are present must comply with Archdiocesan guidelines by attending The Safe Environment Program, reading and signing the Archdiocesan Code of Ethics, and submitting Child Abuse Screening forms.** SGM requires all volunteers to comply with these guidelines and they are required for all educational and sports programs. If you have not completed these procedures or you need to check if your status is current to volunteer, contact Kathy George (314-965-3985) at the parish office for more information.

UNIFORM AND CLOTHING

Preschool students wear uniforms unique to our program.

- Shirts: Each child is asked to wear a hunter green polo or t-shirt with SGM Preschool Logo on it.
 - T-shirts, short and long sleeved, are purchased through *Just Me Apparel*. There are some shirts available through preschool. Check with administration for shirt sizes.

- Green polo shirts, short and long sleeved, and polo dresses are purchased through *Just Me Apparel*.
- Shorts/Pants/Skorts: Each child is asked to wear navy colored shorts/pants/skorts. No fleece, jeans, or jean like material are allowed. The parents have the discretion of what type of bottoms the child should wear depending on weather conditions. When the weather gets colder, the children are allowed to wear **solid** grey, black, white, or navy colored tights or leggings under the skorts, but they should not be worn instead of a skort.
- Polo Dresses: The hunter green dress is available for purchase at *Just Me Apparel*. They are available in short and long sleeve. Students need to wear shorts, tights, or leggings underneath their dress.
- Tennis shoes must be worn to school. Children should not wear sandals, slip on shoes, or boots to preschool.
- All children should have a change of clothes and underwear, clearly labeled with their name.
- During cold weather, please have your child dressed for 20 minutes of outdoor play. A sweater, jacket or sweatshirt may be left in case of changeable weather.

We ask that each student has at least one polo top (shirt or dress) to be worn on Atrium days, school pictures, and other special events.

****Yellow polo shirts are no longer allowed as part of the uniform for preschool.****

Just Me Apparel. 232 Old Sulphur Spring Rd, Ballwin, MO 63021, [\(636\) 391-3551](tel:6363913551).

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

In the event that it is necessary to withdraw your child from preschool, please notify administration in writing as soon as possible.

Contact Information

Phone Number for the Preschool
(314) 822-8844 ext. 5

Rev. David Skillman, Pastor
frskillman@sgmparish.org 314-965-3985

Ms. Chrisell Guthrie, Principal
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