

School Safety

Your child's happiness and development are of the utmost importance to us. In order to provide an environment where the children can grow and learn, it must be a safe environment. School safety has become a growing concern throughout our society, and St. Marks is no exception. Safety on campus covers a wide range of issues. There are a few issues that pertain especially to our ones and twos, and we ask that you work with us as we try to provide the best environment possible for your child.

Gates

The gates around the ELP building and playground are for the safety of the children. As you pass through each gate, please make sure that you close it securely behind you. While on campus, please make sure your child has your full attention. As everyone with a toddler knows, it only takes a minute for a dangerous situation to develop. When you have picked up your child, please keep them with you while walking to your car. Parking lots are dangerous places, and a child can run out in front of a car in a flash.

Authorization for Pick-up

If you intend to have someone other than yourself pick-up your child, please make sure that the person's name is listed on your enrollment form. That person should be prepared to show a picture ID. If you have an emergency, please call the office and let them know who will be picking up your child. The office will get the information to the appropriate staff member.

Class Doors

In an effort to keep our campus safer, the doors to the classrooms will be locked at approximately 9:00a.m. and will be unlocked at 11:45a.m. We continue to welcome you at anytime. Please knock and we will be happy to open the door.

ITEMS TO BRING FOR THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

- Diapers
- 2 Containers of Baby Wipes (Please bring for potty-trained children as we use wipes for everything!)
- 2 Boxes of Kleenex
- Weather Appropriate Change of Clothes

We **must** have a copy of your child's current:

1. Immunization form (blue form)
2. Health form (yellow form)
3. Birth certificate, passport, or baptismal record

Behavior

As a parent of a toddler, we are sure you are aware this age is very exciting. With that excitement, however, comes the need to periodically discipline. Your role of complete caretaker shifts slightly, and you can often find yourself using the word "no" more than you expected.

As your child's teacher, we understand that at times a behavior situation will need to be addressed in the classroom. We attempt to use redirection to change the current situation. If redirection does not work, we will resort to time out.

One unfortunate behavior that is common with this age is biting. During your child's year, it is likely that your child will be bitten, and very likely that your child will bite. As adults, we often find this act very upsetting. As children's verbal skills develop, there is often a decrease in the frequency of biting. If your child is bitten, we will help to clean the area, and console your child. If your child bites, we will let them know that biting is not acceptable behavior, and will place your child in time out. If a child is biting excessively, we will discuss the matter with you.

Parties and Special Occasions

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is a very special and worthy of great celebration. We do not exchange birthday invitations or gifts at school. However, we LOVE when you send in a special treat for the class to celebrate your child's birthday! Please do not send in treats with refined sugar. Here are some ideas for birthday treats: Fresh fruit, Jello colored for the season, Cheese and crackers, Muffins, Carrots and celery with ranch dressing (ELP II only), Festive plates and napkins, (Please be aware of our children with allergies in planning these treats.)

Special Parties

Special holiday parties are held during the year. Sign up sheets are available during open house to volunteer for our parties. We request that parents volunteer to help with one of the special holiday parties during the year. Again, please do not bring in any treats that contain refined sugar. Special holiday parties are: Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and the End of Year Celebration.



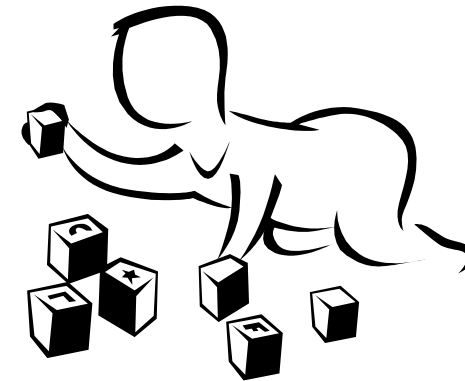
Welcome to the Early Learning Program

Our goal, in the Early Learning Program (ELP), is to provide learning experiences in a loving, and caring, Christian environment. The ELP I program is designed for one year-olds, and the ELP II program is designed for two year-olds.

We use "play activities" to teach your child. The program provides a balance of teacher and self-directed activities throughout the year. Parts of each day are spent in activities to enrich your child's vocabulary, gross motor development, and fine motor development.

Your child will enjoy the opportunity for creative play. Books, art, music, blocks, sand tables, and other tools are used to provide your child time for creative play.

These "play activities" allow your child to explore the world around, and give the child practice in vocabulary use and thinking skills.



The art of the child this age is generally not a recognized "finished picture," but rather is experimental in nature. Drawing and scribbling give the child needed small motor practice, while attempting to produce an idea.

Your child has a day full of planned learning experiences that encourage the development of the whole child. All activities will be presented in a way that encourages your child to explore, learn, and master new skills, and develop a foundation for future learning in Pre-Kindergarten.

ELP I: Children 12-24 months

Children at this stage learn through touching, repetition, imitation, and exploration. Communication skills increase and verbalization is encouraged and praised. Parallel play with your child's peer group will begin at this stage.

Language development is important at this age. Development is encouraged as children listen and react to stories. Use of simple descriptive adjectives introduces concepts of size, color, shape, and texture. Dramatic play becomes a way to develop language skills.

Opportunities are presented during the day to develop both fine, and gross motor skills. Fine motor skills and visual stimulation are enhanced through the use of large manipulatives, like pop beads, nesting cups, puzzles, and crayons. Gross motor skills are enhanced through the use of climbing apparatus in the classroom, and on the playground.

ELP I Class Schedule

8:00–9:00 - Free Play
9:00–10:00 - Art Activity/Creative Play
10:00 - Change Diapers
10:15 - Snack
10:30 - Playground Time
11:30 - Return to Classroom
11:35 - Change Diapers
12:00 - Dismissal

ELP II: Children 24-36 months

Development of verbal, gross, and fine motor skills continues at a rapid pace at this age. Children begin to discriminate between sounds, colors, shapes, and sizes. Toddlers typically have a vocabulary of 50 words at thirty months, and between 300 to 1,000 words at thirty- six months. This is a busy time in your child's life.

Language development is enhanced with daily activities like circle time. Reading stories, and discussing topics related to the units, provide children the opportunity to use comprehension skills and begin an awareness of past and future.

Exercising your child's fine motor skills helps to develop their pre-handwriting skills. Playing with puzzles, stringing beads, lacing cards, and play dough, all work to strengthen the muscles in the hand, and develop eye-hand coordination.

Playing with blocks, stacking rings and sorting by patterns work to develop fine motor and pre-math skills. Activities like painting at the easel, help to develop pre-reading skills.

Development at this age is explosive, and ELP II provides your child with a fun atmosphere, where learning is through play.

ELP II Class Schedule

8:00–9:00 - Free Play/Manipulatives
9:00–9:30 - Art Activity/Creative Play
9:30–10:15 - Playground Time
10:15 - Circle Time
10:30 - Snack
10:45 - Change Diapers
11:00–11:45 - Art Activity/Unit Discussion/
Songs and Stories
11:45–12:00 - Dismissal from Playground

Dropping Off and Picking Up

Children may arrive in the classroom at 8:00a.m. Prior to 8:00 your child will need to go to early morning drop off with our Extended Day Program. Parking is available for picking up and dropping off in front of the ELP building along Ionic Blvd. and Oxford Avenue. Please follow the traffic flow as it is outlined in the student handbook.

You must provide your teacher with a list of individuals who have permission to pick up your child. If you intend to have someone other than yourself pick-up your child, please make sure that the person's name is listed on your enrollment form.



All toys must be left at home. We have plenty of toys for children to play with in their classroom.

If your child is not pre-registered for Extended Day, please promptly pick up your child between 11:45 and 12:00. Children staying for Extended Day will remain in the ELP building and playground throughout the day. Once the morning pick up is complete, the Early Learning Program, Extended Day staff will begin preparing for lunch and nap for the children. A form will follow your child during the day, providing you with information about your child's morning activities, lunch, and nap.

Illness and Allergies

Illness

The best way to keep your child healthy is for children that are sick to be kept at home. Any child that has had fever, diarrhea, or vomiting must be kept home. Children are allowed to return when they have been free of symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours. If your child becomes ill while at school, the teacher will call you to come pick up him or her.

Children who stay for our Extended Day Program may need medication administered by the staff during the day. Your teacher will have a form that should be completed by the parent, to authorize administering medicine.

Allergies

The number of children with allergies has increased over the years. Please try to be considerate of the peers in your child's class that may have severe allergies. If your teacher has informed the class that there is a child that has severe allergies, please be mindful when bringing in special treats for the class. If your child suffers from an allergy, please make sure you have completed an Action Plan with the office.

Early Learning Program Potty Training Policy

We understand that potty training is a process. Some of the indicators that your child may be ready for potty training include: consistently dry diapers (after naps or in the morning), the recognition of the need to go, recognition that their diaper is soiled and requests for the diaper to be changed, and interest in the potty.

We consider a child potty trained when he/she is able to articulate the need to go to the bathroom (i.e. stop playing and go to the bathroom.) This needs to be happening with consistency at home before you send your child to school in underwear. At this point, we will be happy to reinforce what you have been working on at home.

Of course accidents happen, however, if a child has two or more accidents in a two-day period, we recommend that you continue working with the child at home and send the child to school in a diaper. After a month, we would be willing to try this process again.

We understand that this can be a frustrating process, but please understand that these rules are in place for the safety of all children in the classroom. Helping a child who has had an accident takes one adult out of the classroom.

If you decide to use training diapers, please send **Pull-Up** brand diapers only. It is the only brand that can be put on without taking off pants/shorts.

Potty training is an exciting developmental milestone in your child's life, and we look forward to helping your child reach this goal.

Conferences

The school offers conferences in the fall. During open house, a sign up sheet will be available to select a time to meet with your child's teacher. We encourage you to take advantage of the conference time to discuss your child's development in the classroom.

Our teachers are available at any time to discuss, in person or over the phone, any issues you are having. Please do not hesitate to come to us if you ever have a question or concern.