

SMG
Parent-Student
Policy Handbook
2011-2012



**ST. MARIA
GORETTI**
Preschool &
Kindergarten

For Your Information
Please Read the following:

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year. In this policy book you will find a wealth of information to guide you through the current school year. There are a few changes this year. Please take a little time to read through this policy book. If you have any questions about this information or regarding the implementation of these policies throughout the year, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or myself.

It is my pleasure to be the Director of St. Maria Goretti Kindergarten and Preschool. I welcome the opportunity to get to know all of you as we continue to work together for the benefit of your children.

God Bless You,
Kathleen Bies
Director

St. Maria Goretti Preschool/Kindergarten
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ST. MARIA GORETTI PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN

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PHILOSOPHY:

“Let the Little Children Come to Me,” is what JESUS says to all His children. Our purpose for establishing this preschool and kindergarten at SMG is to allow each child to discover their own unique God-given talents and abilities. It is a time for individual encouragement and to establish a wholeness through spiritual, emotional, physical, social and cognitive development. Our preschool/kindergarten curriculum utilizes “hands-on” materials to present language, math, science, art, and religion. This curriculum will aid the child’s ability to observe, to discover, to concentrate and to make individual choices with his/her own thought process. Research clearly indicates that play can facilitate healthy development and is essential for children to develop various cognitive, social and emotional skills and abilities. Play may even provide the best context in which children grow and learn. These activities will serve to enrich and challenge in an environment where each child is respected and loved as an individual.

KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM:

The kindergarten curriculum is integrated and thematic. Children construct their learning through problem solving, cooperative learning, reflective thinking, and multi-sensory activities that are both challenging and exciting.

Reading: systematic phonics, ‘Learning is Fun/Action Reading’

Math: emphasis on concepts and problem solving, new supportive text 2011/2012

Handwriting: manuscript, ‘Handwriting without Tears’

Science: exploration and discovery, ‘Houghton Mifflin’

Social Studies: current events, field trips, ‘Scholastic Reader magazine’

Religion: ‘Catechesis of the Good Shepherd’

Music: music exploration through rhythm and song

Art: children create and experience art using different media

Computer Science: individual and whole class – all subjects

Physical Education: small and large motor development through individual activities and team games

If you have questions about any of these methods, please speak to your child's teacher or to the administration. **Uniforms are required in Kindergarten only:** Red or white polo shirt with SMG Logo; dark navy shorts, pants or skirt; plaid jumper for girls; red T-shirt for field trips (available in office); logo sweatshirts/sweaters only in classroom. Shoes should be closed-toed and closed-heeled. No boots. Tennis shoes are the preferred shoe for kindergarten. Girls should wear shorts under their jumpers. The shorts must not show under the jumpers while the girls are standing. Bike shorts are preferred. Girls may wear white/navy leggings or tights only. No sweatpants. Leggings must reach the ankle (no capri's). Leggings and tights must be plain; no lace.

MONTESSORI-BASED RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

The **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** will be used for the child's religious formation. Each day begins with prayer and ends with prayer. The **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** is a simple and effective Christian message presented to children after they reach the age of three. Great truths are placed before children in ways they can touch and feel, absorb and understand. As in the parable of the mustard seed, the Catechesis is rooted in the ideas of **Maria Montessori**, the renowned educator. She envisioned that her pioneering approach to education would naturally adapt to religious education. Her technique uses child-sized materials, allows freedom within structure and creates an environment of care and beauty. **Maria Montessori** named this place where children learn of God as an ATRIUM. Another Italian Scholar, Dr. Sophia Cavalletti, became intrigued with **Maria Montessori's** concept. She developed a Catechesis for children from age's three to twelve. Cavalletti has found that even very young children have an instinctive hunger for God. When children are offered those aspects of an infinite God that meet this need and mesh with their development stage, they respond with delight and peaceful concentration. They open to God as spontaneously and wholly as flowers turn to the sun.

STAFF:

We realize the most important ingredient is the teacher who teaches your child. They are responsible for nurturing your children at school and are very aware of how important a Christian, loving atmosphere is to you as parents. Our teachers are selected with an emphasis on experience, certification, education, but most of all, **LOVE** for the children.

SMG PRESCHOOL/ KINDERGARTEN GOALS:

- To create an atmosphere of social justice, of respect for the dignity of every being, and reverence to God;
- To promote a positive attitude toward learning;
- To nurture creativity and appreciation of the arts;
- To foster both independent and collaborative thinking;
- To build strong self-esteem, good citizenship, appreciation of differences, and social harmony.

PARENT PARTICIPATION/SERVICE HOURS:

As part of our culture and spirit of service **PARENTS ARE ASKED TO VOLUNTEER 20 HOURS A YEAR PER FAMILY IN THE SCHOOL.** We encourage parents to participate in the classroom on special days, parties or chaperoning field trips. Your child's teacher will welcome and love your support and help. If you have a special hobby, interest or craft that you would like to share, please let your child's teacher know. Check with the office for more volunteer opportunities.

AGE OF CHILD:

Your child **MUST TURN THE APPROPRIATE GRADE LEVEL AGE BY AUGUST 31st** in order to register in the age classroom. **THIS RULE IS STRICTLY ENFORCED BY THE DIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD.**

FOUR DAY PRE-K:

Eligibility for the four day Pre-K includes the following:

A) Students requiring a second year of preschool.

B) Students that turn 5 years of age by Dec. 31st of that school year.

* Students requiring a second year of Pre-K are given priority for enrollment.

TOILET TRAINING:

Two Year Olds must turn 2 ½ by the last day of February. TWO YEAR OLDS MUST BE TOILET TRAINED (NO PULL-UPS). We understand "accidents" happen from time to time, however in the event of "consistent" accidents, **FOR THE BENEFIT OF YOUR CHILD WE WILL ASK YOU TO REMOVE HIM/HER FROM THE PROGRAM.**

PROGRAMS AND CLASS SIZE

TWO-YEAR-OLDS:

Tuesday and Thursday - 10

THREE-YEAR-OLDS:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 10 (Due to the room size)

Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 12

Tuesday and Thursday - 12

PRE-K:

Monday thru Thursday - 14

Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 14

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday - 14

KINDERGARTEN:

Monday thru Friday - 25

** Kindergarten tuition rates are contingent upon reaching enrollment of 25 students. If enrollment is less than 25 students, tuition may be adjusted to reflect full enrollment.*

OPEN HOUSE:

We will have an informational **PARENT NIGHT** for parents in late August.

CONFERENCES:

There will be conferences in the fall and spring to discuss your child's progress. Please meet with your child's teacher if you are aware of any changes in behavior or routine that you feel would affect his/her school day. Please be assured that all information shared is CONFIDENTIAL. Feel free to call or set an appointment at anytime to talk with your child's teacher or the administrator.

FIELD TRIPS:

We believe field trips are essential to enrich your child's learning experiences. However, Arizona state laws have changed regarding transporting preschool age children to and from school activities. All children under five by law are now required to be in safety car seats. One person per car, other than the driver, must be CPR and First Aid certified. Field trips will only be taken in Kindergarten and announced in advance. Each parent will be required to transport their own child to/from the location. By law, all drivers' must be 21 years of age or older, have a current, valid driver's license, and **MUST** have filled out **THE DRIVER INFORMATION FORM AND THE OFF CAMPUS PERMISSION FORM**. All signed forms will be on file in the office. **THE SCHOOL/STAFF WILL NOT TRANSPORT CHILDREN.**

EMERGENCY SITUATION:

Should children become ill or be injured, they will be taken to the office. The administrator and other staff members are trained in first aid; however, the school does not employ a doctor or nurse. In case of a minor illness or accident, the school will make every effort to contact the parents or if available, the persons designated by the parents. This information is on the child's **EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORM** which is to be completed, signed by parents, and **MUST BE** returned to the office **before the start of the school year.**

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

The following practices are followed if it would be necessary to call the paramedics' or transport a child to the hospital. In the event of a serious MEDICAL EMERGENCY, involving an illness or injury, the child will be transported to the hospital emergency room. In such circumstances, a diligent effort will be made to contact parents, within 30 min. of the injury, other designated individuals, or the child's physician.

To deal with the instance in which a child experiences a serious MEDICAL EMERGENCY where neither parent can be reached, the **school requires that parents complete the Medical Release portion of the Emergency Information Form.** This is intended to facilitate prompt medical attention for a child in the event that parents or guardians are not present or cannot be contacted to give authorization for emergency medical treatment. The completion of this form does not preclude the school's attempt to promptly notify parents or the child's physician, but would allow physicians and/or hospital personnel to initiate prompt care when most needed in the event of a medical emergency.

SCHOOL EMERGENCY:

In case of a school or classroom emergency, the teacher will intercom the office, which will notify the appropriate emergency agency. The teacher will stay with the class or child, and if necessary in case of a school emergency, all children will leave the classroom by designated exit and proceed to the designated safe location. Parents will be notified where to pick up their children. If there is an on-campus emergency incident, teachers are instructed to lock children and themselves in classroom and await an all-clear. If an emergency occurs before school hours your child's teacher will attempt to notify you.

SCHOOL WELLNESS PLAN:

Our school is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being and the ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activities. The link between nutrition and learning is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, physical and mental growth and lifelong health and well being. All children are encouraged to bring a healthy packed lunch. In addition all classroom snacks and **birthday treats** must comply with the Diocesan wellness plan included in your back to school packet.

IMMUNIZATIONS:

Children must have proof of all required immunizations, or valid exemption, in order to attend the first day of school. Arizona law allows exemptions for medical reasons, laboratory evidence of immunity and personal beliefs. Exemption forms are available in the school office.

ILLNESS AND ABSENCES:

Parents are advised to keep a child at home during highly infectious first stages of a cold or other communicable disease. If your child develops a contagious disease, please inform the office at once so the school can notify parents of children who may have been exposed. Please notify the office if your child will be absent due to illness or other situations where your child will be missing class. **PLEASE NOTE THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP DAYS FOR YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCES.** If your child is late for kindergarten, tardy slips from the office are required to enter the classroom.

AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF CHILD:

Parents wishing to have a child released from class for part of a school day are to notify the school office in advance of the appointment. Parents must come into the office before signing children out of school. The parent would then be directed to the child's classroom. If a designated person other than the parent is to pick up the child, the parent must give written permission. This person must be listed on the Emergency Information Form and we will require **IDENTIFICATION** and a **SIGNATURE** before removing the child from the school.

LIABILITY INSURANCE AND MEDICATION:

St. Maria Goretti preschool carries liability insurance as required by Arizona Department of Health Services. Liability insurance is available for review on the facility premises. Prescription medication can be administered only after receiving a signed medication consent form and approval of the Director.

TUITION:

Tuition is due on the **FIRST DAY OF EACH MONTH.** Tuition is the same regardless of vacations, absences or the number of weeks in the school year. Discounts of 10% will be given for each additional child within the same family. Discounts only apply to preschool. A **\$15.00 late fee** will be assessed on the 10th day of each month for late tuition. Should your account fall 60 days in arrears, you will be expected to become current within 10 days of notification. Failure to do so will result in suspension of your student and a payment will be required for the full amount in order for the student to return to school. **LATE PICK-UP FEE: \$10.00 for the first 15 min. and \$1.00 per minute** there after until your arrival.

RETURNED CHECK FEE:

A service charge of \$25.00 will be assessed on checks returned to us from your financial institution. If payment arrangements are not made with the Director, the child may be dropped from our enrollment. After two returned checks, only cash or certified funds will be accepted.

REGISTRATION FEE - PRESCHOOL:

Registration fees are as follows:

All preschool students enrolling - \$100.00

ALL REGISTRATION FEES ARE DUE AND PAYABLE AT TIME OF REGISTRATION.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE REGISTRATION FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE.

BOOK FEE/REGISTRATION- KINDERGARTEN:

Book fee for all kindergarten students - \$175.00

ALL BOOK FEE REGISTRATION FEES ARE DUE AND PAYABLE AT TIME OF REGISTRATION. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE REGISTRATION FEE IS NON-

REFUNDABLE.

MONTHLY TUITION RATES:

PRESCHOOL: 9:00 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.

Monday thru Thursday

In Parish: \$230 Out of Parish: \$270

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

In Parish: \$200 Out of Parish: \$240

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

In Parish: \$200 Out of Parish: \$240

Tuesday and Thursday

In Parish: \$170 Out of Parish: \$210

KINDERGARTEN: 9:00 A.M. - 2:30 P.M. Mon, - Thurs.

7:50 A.M. - 1:30 P.M. Friday

Level 1 Faithful Family: \$4,300 Level 2 Outside Parishes: \$4,800 Level 3 No Parish, Non-Catholic: \$5,300

(TUITION FOR THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM IS CONTINGENT UPON REACHING ENROLLMENT OF 25 STUDENTS.)

Tuition Levels:

In Parish-Level 1: Faithful Family Members: faithful family members are St. Maria Goretti registered parishioners who are making a commitment to: pray daily (personally or as family) as well as participate every Sunday and Holy days at Mass, serve the community in a parish ministry, **and** give to the church through sacrificial giving (financial Contributions).

Level 2: Registered Faithful Family Outside Parishes-Letter required from Parish

Level 3: Non-Registered/Non-Catholic

PLACEMENT FEE:

The placement fee for all students is equal to one month's tuition. This fee is collected in May & June of the proceeding school year. **THIS FEE IS APPLIED TO THE LAST MONTH'S TUITION OF THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR.** If for any reason your child/ren are withdrawn from the enrolled program, your placement fee will be refunded provided we receive a **ONE MONTH WRITTEN NOTICE.**

LUNCH BUNCH:

LUNCH BUNCH PROGRAM is available from 11:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. for an additional fee. **EACH CHILD WILL PROVIDE THEIR OWN LUNCH.** Please note that lunch bunch fees will be recorded and billed into the following month's tuition.

Lunch Bunch Fee - \$5.00 per day

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM:

An extended day program is available for all three-year-olds, and Pre-K students. Students may stay **ONLY** on the days they attend school. The extended day hours are: **12:30 P.M. until 2:30 P.M. DAILY fees are as follows: \$10.00 per day.** Extended Day will be billed the following month along with lunch bunch fees.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS :

Placement and Registration Fees must be paid. The Preschool Registration Form, Emergency, Information & Immunization Record Form, Off-Campus Permission Form, and the Acknowledgment of Receipt of the Policy Book form **MUST** be completed for each child before entering school; otherwise, the child cannot be admitted to the program. All students enrolling in kindergarten must take the Gesell Developmental Screening administered during the Pre-K school year.

SUN HAT POLICY:

SMG will require all of its students to wear a hat while out on the playground. Students can only wear hats that have been approved by the school. These sun hats are available for purchase in the school office for \$10.00. They come in red, navy or khaki. Hats must be kept at school.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT:

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the Center Director to discontinue a child's attendance. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interest of that child, the other children in the class and the overall operation of the Center to terminate enrollment. Every effort will be made to correct problematic situations before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be the result of the following:

- Abuse of the children, staff or property
- Continued violation of policies
- Disruptive or dangerous behavior
- The center's ability to meet the child's needs
- Non-payment of tuition(see page 10)
- Re-enrollment for the coming year cannot occur unless the student's account is paid in full
- Any balances owed on account will be reported to the next catholic school your child will be attending

Whenever possible, written notification of one week in advance will be provided to the parent in the event of termination of enrollment.

SPECIAL NEEDS:

St. Maria Goretti preschool will meet the needs of most children with special circumstances. A pre-enrollment conference is required before admittance.

BIRTHDAYS:

Birthdays are special to children and if you notify your child's teacher of this special day your child may bring a healthy birthday snack to share with classmates to celebrate.

VISITATIONS:

All parents/visitors visiting the classroom must stop in the office to receive a visitor pass. The pass should be worn at all times while on campus. All other visitors are asked to report to the office so that we may answer any questions or to arrange an appointment to observe our classes. Due to Diocesan policy only children enrolled in the school will be allowed to stay in the classroom. Guest readers can be scheduled with the teacher. Parent's have access to the school facility at all times where their child is receiving child care services.

DONATIONS:

We are always in need of donations to our school. If you have any items such as dress-up things (purses, hats, gloves, shoes), dolls, playground equipment, and classroom items that are in good condition, we would appreciate your donating them to our school.

These donations will help our teachers to plan activities or make them available to the children during their supervised free choice time. Tax deduction forms are available in the office.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

In an attempt to keep our school progressive, we will be having guest speakers to share their talents and interests with the children. We will be sure to inform you as to when these speakers are scheduled to be at the school so that you can have an opportunity to attend if you wish. We also schedule educational speakers for the parents and all adults involved with the children to help keep them informed as to what is happening in the education field.

TRANSPORTATION:

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT:

The Diocese of Phoenix requires anyone who wishes to volunteer in the school in any way to have completed Safe Environment training. You must complete this requirement **before** volunteering on campus. Dates and times where this training is being held will be communicated to you throughout the school year.

PESTICIDE APPLICATION:

A notice of pesticide application will be posted outside the office at least 48 hours before a pesticide is applied on the facilities premises. SMG school is scheduled for the 3rd Friday of each month at 1:45 pm.

STATEMENT OF RIGHTS:

St. Maria Goretti School administrator retains the right to change, modify, cancel, suspend or interpret any of the Parent-Student Handbook policies and practices without advance notice, within its sole discretion and without statement of cause or justification.

Inspection reports are available for review upon request. SMG Preschool/Kindergarten is regulated by:

Arizona Department of Health Services,
150 N. 18th Avenue, Suite 400, Phoenix, AZ 85007-3244
(602) 364-2539 Fax (602)364-4768

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

As a teaching staff and with the support of our director, we believe discipline is a way of life. As teachers, we hope to guide and nurture your child toward self-discipline. To teach your child to be self-disciplined takes time, patience and guidance. Our policy concerning unacceptable behavior (defined as a behavior that physically or verbally hurts another) is to treat the child with love and dignity while confronting him/her. We will encourage the child to talk about the behavior, to find another activity (distraction) or to take time alone to think about the incident. Art work, music or picture books will be available during think time. This will allow your child to process his/her feelings. If the behavior (i.e., biting, disrespect, inappropriate language or physical harm to another child or teacher) is not modified after incorporating the above methods we will:

1st incident - The teachers will send a written note home describing the behavior. Parent will acknowledge with signature and the note will be filed in student's records.

2nd incident - Notice will be sent home requesting a conference (i.e. telephone or in person.) In this conference (i.e. telephone or in person) we will together develop a plan of action to help your child correct his/her behavior.

3rd incident - Child will be sent to the Director's office. Parent will be telephoned and requested to pick child up immediately. Student will be denied the privilege to return to his/her class their next scheduled class day.

4th incident - As a very last resort we will have no other alternative but to ask you to remove your child from the program. This decision will not be made without evaluating the situation thoroughly, and if the Administrator must exercise her discretion, she will remove the child.

We as a staff realize we are a small part of your child's life. We really need the parent support and participation. This is absolutely vital to your child's overall well being and success.

Dear Parents/Teachers/Employees:

This informational letter comes to you at the direction of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Agency requires all schools to inspect their buildings, and facilities, and to identify, sample, and analyze all friable and non-friable building materials that may contain asbestos. Friable materials are defined as those that can be easily crumbled by hand. The Asbestos in Schools Rule and the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) regulations further requires that all parents, teachers and employees of schools where asbestos is found, be notified. This requirement will be part of an inspection and management plan that will eventually be on file at our school.

The Asbestos Office of the Diocese of Phoenix has conducted an inspection of our entire school facility. Any friable asbestos containing material that has been found to be damaged has been repaired or removed in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The non-friable asbestos containing material will be maintained as it is and re-inspected visually every six months for any physical damage until it is eventually removed.

Repair or removal is done by contractors experienced and certified in this type of work. After repair or removal, an extensive survey is completed to insure that all of the school areas are safe and free of asbestos fibers.

Kathleen Bies
Director

CODE OF CONDUCT:

It is the policy of the Catholic Diocese of Phoenix that any sexual, physical, emotional abuse of a minor is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Employees and volunteers while working in their scope of ministry shall:

- Abide by the Diocese of Phoenix Policy and Procedures for the protection of minors.
- Exhibit the highest Christian ethical standards and personal integrity.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the discipline, norms, and teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Provide a professional environment that is free from all forms of abuse including intimidation and harassment.
- Accept personal responsibility to protect all minors and adults from all forms of abuse.

- Report concerns about boundary violations or other questionable behaviors and circumstances with the program supervisor, pastor or principal.
- Report promptly, in accordance with the law of the State of Arizona and policies of the Diocese of Phoenix, any suspected abuse or neglect of a minor.
- Call the Office of Youth and Child Protection for clarification when in doubt of policy or procedure.

Employees and volunteers while working in their scope of ministry shall not:

- Abuse a minor.
- Take advantage of supervisory and/or authoritative relationship, or any relationship of trust for their own benefit.
- Because it is impossible to compile a comprehensive list of specific acts constituting misconduct, employees and volunteers must use common sense, guided by the principles set forth above, to direct their behavior and to abide by the current Diocese of Phoenix Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Minors.

CRISIS PLAN PARENT NOTIFICATION:

Please be advised that you will be given a summary of our **CRISIS PLAN** high-lighting specifically the parent's responsibility and student pick-up locations in the event of an emergency. In the event if an emergency, students will be re-located to a predetermined evacuation area. Once students are allowed to be released, the Assistant Director will bring all emergency cards to the South Parking Lot. (See Site/Plant Map) On the Southern portion of the lot, special area teachers will set up "checkout" stations. **ALL PARENTS WISHING TO CHECK OUT STUDENTS MUST REPORT TO THAT AREA FIRST.** Once the parent or designated pick-up person has been cleared, your child will then be brought to you and released.

EMERGENCY CHECK OUT PROCEDURES:

In the event of an emergency or students have been placed in lock down, parents must follow all check out procedures before picking up their child. Under no circumstances will parents be allowed to take their children from the classroom or other designated area until all check out procedures have been completed. In the event that students have been evacuated from the building and parents begin to arrive wishing to check out their students, the following procedures will take place:

- The Assistant Director will bring all emergency cards to the South Parking Lot.
- On the Southern portion of the lot, special area teachers will set up "checkout" stations. **ALL PARENTS WISHING TO CHECK OUT STUDENTS MUST REPORT TO THIS AREA FIRST.**

Special area teachers will take a designated portion of the emergency cards and be responsible for checking out students from their stack of cards. Teachers must check for valid ID for each person checking out a student. If that person is not on the emergency card, the child may not be checked out.

- After showing ID, the parent will be given a "check out slip" to be presented to the classroom teachers by that parent.
- Teachers are not to dismiss students to adults without a check out slip.

Check Out Assignments:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Pam Bardet | Last Name: A-G |
| Pamela Contu-Owen | Last Name: H-M |
| Stacy Branum/Lisa Hamm | Last Name: N-R |
| Megan Nelson/Mary Dunne | Last Name: S-Z |

