

Dear Parent,

This handbook contains information considered important to your child's safety and for the basic operation of the Saint George School CARES Program. May we all work together to make this a happy and worthwhile experience for your child.

Sincerely,

Ms. Rebecca Kutterbach, Principal
Ms. Kirsten Plochanski, Teacher & CARES Director
Ms. Danielle Sharkus, Teacher & CARES Director

CARES PROGRAM OVERVIEW
(Children Are Receiving Extended Services)

Open from 2:45 PM until 5:45 PM each school day, the CARES Program in Saint George School provides professional care, supervision, recreation, and enrichment activities. It serves working families who desire both parochial school education and supplementary childcare in a Catholic environment of children enrolled at school in grades PreK through grade eight.

This professionally-operated program allows children to experience a rich diversity of growth activities within a Catholic environment. These activities are planned to complement the philosophy and value systems of the school and family. Arts and crafts projects, game and recreation, rest time, and snack time are just a few of the activities planned. Also, there is time set aside for homework completion.

Within a large family environment, the program strives to provide individual attention, security consistency, and caring treatment for children of working parents.

Directors and a number of devoted and committed teachers and/or other qualified adults staff the program. These people, employed on a full time or part time basis, work together to help each child grow in maturity and self-respect, as well as to maintain an atmosphere wherein respect and understanding of others is realized.

Fees are the sole support of the CARES Program. It is not subsidized by the school or parish.

GOAL OF PROGRAM

The CARES Program of Saint George School provides children with a Catholic environment extending the philosophy of Saint George School into the hours after school. The program serves the children of parents who work outside the home. There is a clear academic component, which includes homework time, as well as art, games and activities. The program provides safety, care, supervision and recreation.

Directors, teachers and other caregivers staff the Saint George School CARES Program. The entire program is under the administration of the school principal. The staff members work together to help each child grow in maturity and self-respect, as well as to maintain an atmosphere where respect of others is encouraged.

AGREEMENT

Saint George School agrees to provide the CARES Program for a student, and in return, the parents agree to pay a fee to support the rules of the program. Fees are the sole support of the school's CARES Program. Saint George School does not subsidize it.

CHILD BEHAVIOR

Since the CARES Program is an extension of Saint George School, the same basic philosophy underlies each program. As members of a caring Catholic community, the children will be expected to respect the staff, each other, and the materials and environment provided. Parents must agree to cooperate in insuring that their children behave appropriately. Children must never leave the building or grounds without the explicit permission of the staff of the CARES Program. Such permission will only be granted by the request of the parent or guardian in conjunction with the approval of the CARES staff member.

If a child violates the guidelines or rules set by the director/staff member, the child will be spoken to. If the behavior is repeated, the parent will be informed and, if necessary, a conference with the parent and director will be set up. Should there continue to be a problem, another conference will be arranged with the principal or director. At that time, the child may be given a final opportunity to improve or may be asked to leave the program.

Any child who does not conform to the set rules and regulations of the CARES Program or the guidelines outlined in the Saint George School Parent/Student Handbook is liable for dismissal from the Program.

EVALUATION

Parents may be asked, or wish to take part in, an evaluation of the program during the year. This is done so that the CARES Program can continue to serve the needs of the school community in the best way possible.

FEES

An area of parental responsibility is in the matters of prompt fee payment and prompt pick-up time in the afternoon. The method and time of fee payment, as well as the pick-up time, is determined by the CARES Program in the Saint George School. Regular and prompt payment will assure the continuation of personnel and the provision of supplies and snacks.

Checks should be made out to Saint George School. If payments are mailed, they should be sent to the School address and marked to the attention of the CARES Program Director or designated person.

If a parent fails to meet the CARES Program fee payment due at the time assigned, and does not make adequate arrangements with the director, a reminder will be sent. A late fee will be assessed for all returned checks. The fees charged are the sole support of the CARES Program, and to continue to serve the children in an adequate and fair way, it is necessary that all payments be prompt and complete.

If a parent or guardian fails to meet the CARES Program fee payment, due on the designated day of the month/year and does not make adequate arrangements with the Director, the child will not be allowed to continue in the program. Failure to meet CARES payments may also result in the withholding of the child's report card.

An appropriate charge will be assessed for all returned checks.

Designated staff members are employed until the agreed end of the Program, which is 5:45 PM. In many programs, the staff members will remain with the child until the parent/guardian arrives for pick-up. Some programs make previously arranged areas for the pick-up after 6:00 PM.

A fee of \$5.00 per 15 minutes will be assessed for late pick-ups at the discretion of the Director.

PICK-UP TIME

The program ends at 5:45 PM. It is common courtesy to the staff to respect the time of closure. Parents who have difficulty with the pick-up time should make arrangements with others listed as authorized pick-up individuals.

If a parent is late, a staff member will stay with the child until the parent arrives. A late fee will be charged if the director ascertains that a late pick-up or a history of late pick-ups occurs without justifiable cause.

Parents enter school by the designated door to pickup children. They are asked to check the play areas if they arrive early. Official attendance records are kept for the CARES Program. Signature and accurate times must be recorded when the child is picked up.

REGULATIONS REGARDING CHILD'S DEPARTURE FROM THE PROGRAM:

Parents or guardians should not take children from the schoolyard or other areas without notifying a CARES staff member and signing out the child (ren).

Cares Personnel will not permit children to leave in taxis presumably sent by parents. If you intend to send a taxi for your child, you must notify the CARES Program Director in advance, in writing, or have a permanent request filed with the CARES Director.

Parents or guardians should not send persons whose signatures are not on the Emergency Card to ask for the release of the children. For the child's safety, the release will not be granted.

IMPORTANT PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Change In Address, Phone Number Or Emergency Numbers

Parents are expected to inform the director or designated staff member when there are changes in addresses or phone numbers/emergency numbers. If there is any change in the names of those authorized to pick up the child, this information should be made known to the director.

Illness or Accident:

In cases which appear to be of a minor nature, first aid will be administered on the premises. (Medication will not be administered by mouth unless both a written statement from a physician detailing method, amount, and time schedule, and a written statement from a parent authorizing the staff to assist a child in taking such medication are on file.)

In cases which appear serious, the Program Director will make an effort to carry out the instructions as given on the Emergency Card.

Parents who do not wish their child treated in any way should indicate such on the Emergency Card and should give directions to be followed in the space, "Special Instructions".

If the home does not supply adequate emergency instructions or if the instructions given cannot be followed at the time of the emergency, the CARES Staff will act according to their best judgment for the welfare of the child.

Care should be taken by the CARES Director to review all medical information and emergency card instructions with the parent and staff prior to a child's enrollment in the CARES Program.

Emergencies

With the children's safety and well being in mind, it is MOST important that the parent fills out an emergency card, and then adheres to the instructions given.

Regulations regarding Telephone Messages:

Parents or guardians may wish to telephone the CARES Program Director asking that their child be directed to go to various places after the Program. As there is always a possibility that a person other than a parent or guardian might telephone, such requests will not be granted.

Telephone numbers for the CARES Program will be provided to the appropriate persons when a child is accepted into the Program.

Absences:

If a child is absent from the CARES Program for any reason, the parent is asked to send a note upon a child's return.

If it is known in advance that a child will be absent from the program for any amount of time, it would be well to notify the CARES Program Director.

Homework – Class Projects:

A scheduled time will be provided for children to work on class assignments or projects.

One or more teachers/aides will be available to supervise the activity and assist, if possible, when needed. It is the child's responsibility to have his/her assignments and books. Children may not go back to their homeroom to get these items.

Parents are responsible for checking their child's homework before they return to school the following day.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS AND PROCEDURES

Emergency Closings:

The CARES Program Director will specify the procedure to be followed.

Emergency closing procedures and/or temporary evacuation policies will be communicated to the parents.

The CARES Program Director will communicate emergency closing procedures and/or temporary evacuation policies to the appropriate local School, Health and Safety authorities.

Scope of Program:

The Pastor(s)/Principal and/or designated person may determine the scope of the CARES Program, which may include additional days/times.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trip experiences may be included in the program. Field trips will generally be within walking distance of the school. The parent may sign a general permission slip for these field trips at the time of registration. Parents would always be notified ahead of time if a field trip were planned. This information would include time and place. A child will not be permitted to participate in a field trip without the written permission of a parent.

HEALTH SAFETY

The CARES Program follows the policy of Saint George School with regard to communicable diseases. Parents or their designates will be notified if a child becomes ill during the hours of the program. All minor injuries will be recorded in the Accident Log. Parents will be notified at the time of pick-up. When serious injuries occur, procedures will be followed as they appear on the Medical Emergency Form. Parents are expected to sign this form at the time of registration.

Copies of all necessary medical information, medicine, etc. are made available to the Director of the CARES Program. As is the policy of Saint George School, only prescription medication will be dispensed. If a child is taking medication during the school day, the same written permission slip will suffice. Reminder: The written note must include amount of dosage and the date. Medication must be in its original container marked with the child's name.

In most CARES Programs, nutritious snacks are provided. Parents should send in written notification of any food allergies.

SAFETY

Scheduled safety drills are included to the CARES Program. Children will practice exiting by the nearest designated exits.

If something serious should occur and the building is evacuated (fire, etc.), children will be taken to a designated place. Parents will be given information as to the site chosen. Along with the Fire Drill, a Crisis Plan is in place for unexpected emergencies. These plans are in place for Saint George School and for the CARES Program.

Phone Numbers: (215) 634 - 8803

HOMEWORK

Each day, a homework period is scheduled for all students except Pre-Kindergarten. It is the child's responsibility to know what homework has been assigned. It is the responsibility of parents to check homework assignments at home. The older students may have more work than can be completed during the homework period. Staff members will initial each assignment as it is completed.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Children will be outside for play on most days. Please send in clothing appropriate for the day's weather. It is expected that parents be responsible to check for all correct clothing at the time of pick-up. Staff members are not responsible for lost clothing. It is requested that children not bring toys or games from home without permission.

STAFF

In order to maintain a professional atmosphere, each staff member is to be formally addressed as adults, that is Miss or Mrs. Informal use of staff members first names by the students is inappropriate in the school setting.

The staff of the CARES Program is responsible for the children enrolled in the program. In addition to the children, the CARES staff is responsible for the facilities and materials used while in the program. As members of a caring community, the children enrolled in the program are expected to respect the staff, each other, the materials, and environment provided.

If a child violates the standards set by the Program Director, the child will be spoken to. If the inappropriate behavior persists, the parent will be notified, and if necessary, a conference with the parent will be scheduled. Parents will be appraised of the situation and all incidents will be documented.

SUPERVISION

Only adults (CARES Staff and aides) supervise children. If older students assist with this program, they do so only in assistance to and under and direct supervision of an adult.

A child will be released only to a parent or individual who has been authorized in writing by a parent to pick up the child. Exceptions will not be made unless the parent sends in written permission with the child when he/she comes to school in the morning. Phone calls during the day requesting that a child be directed to go someplace after the CARES Program will not be honored unless it is documented that the caller is a parent. In any case, the child will not be released from the CARES Program without an authorized signature.

When children arrive at the CARES Program, a designated staff member will check them in. At the time of pick-up from the program, the parent/authorized person will be asked to sign a form noting name and time of pick-up. Again, it is reiterated that children will be released only to an authorized person.