

SAINT GABRIEL PRESCHOOL

FAMILY HANDBOOK FOR 2008 – 2009

THE STAFF

Pastor:	Rev. Maurice Maroney
Principal:	Dr. Gail Kingston
Director:	Mrs. Mary Louise Moe
Paraprofessional:	Mrs. Stephanie Mazer
Paraprofessional:	Mrs. Joan Shumaker
Paraprofessional:	Mrs. Sylvia Terew
Paraprofessional:	Mrs. Ruth Carlson

There are three options for payment of tuition.

- 1) Full Payment: The entire tuition is paid in full by May 1
- 2) FACTS Tuition Management Program: Monthly payments will be deducted out of a checking or savings account.
- 3) VISA or MASTERCARD payments can be arranged through the office. The entire amount can be charged or monthly charges can be set up.

If tuition is not up to date at the end of each marking period a child will be asked to withdraw until full payment is made. An NG check fee of \$ 25.00 will apply to all returned checks. If unforeseen circumstances arise (i.e. loss of job, severe illness, etc.) please contact the office to make arrangements for your tuition.

PERIODIC EVALUATIONS

There will be periodic evaluations of each child in the Preschool. . A “Fall Call” will be made to greet each family. Conferences will be scheduled in February for the Monday/Wednesday/Friday and Monday – Friday classes to discuss each child’s progress, development, and readiness skills. Conferences will be held in March for the Tuesday/Thursday Classes. Entrance into Saint Gabriel Kindergarten depends on the Kindergarten screening test administered in April. Teachers are also available for a conference anytime at a parent request. We ask that you refrain from discussing your child in his or her presence. We will gladly make time to speak with you alone, should there be a need. Should a problem arise at home (death, illness, unemployment, and divorce), it would be helpful to notify the staff, so in turn we can help your child

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parent Information Board: The bulletin board located next to the room entrance is our parent information board. The pouch for newsletters and other notices hangs on this board to insure that information concerning school is readily accessible. Please check it often! Also be sure you check the dates and topics of each notice. There is a lot going on in Preschool so be informed!

Staggered Entrance (First 2 sessions of each class at beginning of school year): Hours of each class are sent home prior to the opening of school. These short sessions will enable your child to feel more secure with his/her teachers and peers. This applies to all children regardless of previous experience. Parents / Guardians are welcome to stay on these days. It is necessary that other siblings are not brought along on beginning days. It may be helpful for some parents / guardians to remain with their children at additional sessions. This will be a mutual agreement between parent / guardian and teachers.

Safety: For the safety of our students, cars are not allowed in the schoolyard. Please park on Tudor Road and walk your child to the Preschool entrance. Also, since students in grades K – 8 will be arriving at the same time, please watch for buses and faculty cars pulling in and out of the schoolyard. Saint Gabriel Preschool does not allow any kind of toy weapon. The director reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of any toy.

Punctuality / Attendance: Please avoid arriving early or late to school. Arriving late causes total disruption to our meeting time. Being late can cause children to become anxious. Please notify the school by 8:30 a.m. if your child will be absent, attendance records are kept and we do need to know if a child will not be attending. If you are more than 10 minutes late you must enter the building through the main entrance. Excessive unexcused tardy or late-pick-up will consequently result in the parent/guardian meeting with the principal of Saint Gabriel School.

Arrival at School: Parents, make your good-byes as brief as possible reassuring your child of your return.

Please visit with other parents outside during arrival and dismissal times. This will enable us to begin and end our class on time and will help to allay separation anxieties. Please be sure to have siblings stay with parents during arrival and dismissal. Having siblings “playing” in our room before or after class is disruptive.

Separation: It is common for most children to experience separation anxiety. Some experience it at the beginning of the school year and some later in the year. Each child will be treated individually as their needs differ and it should be a cooperative effort between teachers, parents and the child. It is also common for parents to experience separation anxiety and children to pick up on it.

Dismissal: At the end of class, each child will be dismissed individually by the teacher to the adult picking up. Once the child has been released to the adult, the child is then the responsibility of that adult to insure his/her safety. If someone other than the parent will be picking up your child please write a note and alert the staff at arrival time. A personal phone call is requested if there is a change during the day if the “regular” person will not be picking up. A teacher might call you to confirm change. Your child will not be released to someone other than those indicated on the release form. Please do not be offended if we ask for photo identification if we do not know the person picking up your child. The safety of the children is always our first priority. Remember to check on your child’s school work for the day. Children are very proud of their daily accomplishments, and their efforts should always be praised. Please have siblings stay with parents during arrival and dismissal. Having siblings “playing” in our room before or after class is disruptive.

Clothing: Our program is one that requires active work through play, which requires freedom of movement. We ask that you dress your child accordingly, school paints are not washable. Rubber soled shoes should be worn. Open-backed shoes are not acceptable in a preschool learning environment due to safety concerns. Sneakers must be worn on gym day. Please do not send your child with "Wheelies (sneakers with built in wheels). While we do not require a uniform for our preschoolers, many of them enjoy wearing the Saint Gabriel sweatpants and sweatshirt (or T-Shirt and shorts) "like the big kids". These items can be purchased at Dennis [formerly Neil Roberts] (Boston Post Road, Orange) or Blakes (in Stratford) They may also be available in the school store during the year. **Teachers and/or children are not responsible for soiled clothes.**

Money / Notes: All money, checks, and notes must be placed in an envelope and should be clearly labeled with your child's name and the purpose of the payment. Please give these directly to the teachers who will deliver them to the office.

Health: Please keep your child home if he/she exhibits the following symptoms the day before or the day of school. Fever; runny nose (green mucous); red, itchy and runny eye; persistent cough; cold sore or impetigo; sore throat; congestion; chicken pox; or if they have vomited or had diarrhea the night before or the morning of school. Isolation of contagious disease is the best way to keep both staff and children healthy. A child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Your cooperation is essential to ensure the health of other children and the teachers.

Birthdays: If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school you may bring or send in a special snack for that day. **Please remember that Saint Gabriel is a nut-free school.** You may also take advantage of our "Birthday Bash" program through the school kitchen. We ask that you **not distribute** birthday invitations at school unless all children are included.

Labels: Please make sure that all of your child's clothing and belongings are clearly labeled with their name.

Sharing: If your child has a special souvenir from an outing or something that has been collected (nature, shells, rocks, leaves, etc.) He/She is welcome to bring that to share with the class. Sharing is a way for a child to express themselves in front of teachers and friends. Appropriate sharing items are acceptable any day. **Toys are not sharing items.**

Special Friend Story Time: A special friend or parent may come in at the beginning of the school day to read one of your child's favorite books to the class. A sign-up sheet is on the Parent Information Board.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Diversity in Enrollment & Staffing: Saint Gabriel School does not discriminate in either hiring of staff or accepting enrollment of children. It is our mission to meet the needs of the entire community in a non-bias, anti-discriminatory fashion.

Mandated Reporting: We are required by law to report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect. Please refer to the Saint Gabriel Family Handbook for specifics about mandated reporting policies.

Medications: Please refer to the Saint Gabriel Family Handbook for regulations regarding the administration of medications.

Food Allergy: If your child has a food allergy that requires the school to keep an EpiPen on the premises, you will be responsible for providing your child's snack. Storage will be provided for you to keep a snack supply at school.

Changes: If you have a change of any pertinent information (address, phone number, doctor's number, pickup/drop-off, etc.) let the teachers know immediately in writing so that the new information can be added to your file.

Parent Involvement: If you have a special skill or hobby and you would like to share it, we welcome you! We welcome parent/guardian involvement. Adults are needed to donate materials and supplies, and participate in fund-raisers and chaperone field trips. Due to insurance policies, siblings are not able to accompany us on trips. A field trip permission slip is a legal document. Without the school slip your child will not be able to go on a trip. Parents must join our Home and School Association. Dues is \$ 10.00 per family each year.

Field Trip: Chaperones are welcome to join us on any outing. These are special occasions for your child. Therefore siblings are not allowed to come along on field trips.

Snow Days: Remember that in bad weather we will be closed when Milford Public Schools are closed. If Milford delays the opening of school, Saint Gabriel Preschool will open 90 minutes late – at 9:45 a.m. , along with the rest of Saint Gabriel School. Please listen to the radio (WICC 600 AM; WEZN 99.9 FM) for information regarding school closings and delays. You may also check our website @ www.stgabrielschool.com. If Milford decides to dismiss school early because of inclement weather a half-day schedule is followed. Saint Gabriel dismisses at 12:45 on half-days and therefore will dismiss at that time due to inclement weather. Of course you may come and pick up your child any time if the weather is deteriorating. Please Note: When school is delayed, Milford often cancels morning preschool and kindergarten. **This does not apply to Saint Gabriel Preschool. We will open on a delayed schedule.**

Removal from Program: If you wish to remove your child from the program, please let us know 30 days prior to removal. If your child is absent for more than two (2) weeks without notification, his/her place will be filled by a child on our waiting list. This does not relieve you of your financial commitment.

Biting Incidents: Because “biting” can be normal developmental behavior yet present significant risk to “bitee’s”, it is important that any child who repeatedly bites other children be removed from the program. The teacher first attends to the hurt child. If the skin has been broken, medical attention is given to the injured site. A teacher will immediately notify the parents of the “bitee”. In incidents where a child bites another child, the “biter” will be separated from other children while the teacher speaks to the child about the dangers of biting other children. In addition, the child will be informed that their parents will be told about their biting other children and that if they continue to bite the other children, they may not be permitted to stay in the program. At that time, the director will notify the parents of the child who is the “biter”. If there are more than two bites of children with skin-broken injuries, such child will be removed from the program until the biting behavior ceases. For professional assistance in managing a child’s behavior, contact INFOLINE at 1-800-203-1234

Procedure For Releasing a Child From Enrollment: The following is a digest of our policies and procedures for the termination of a student and releasing him/her from our enrollment.

- 1: If the cause is monetary, please refer to the specific procedures as outlined in the tuition policy. Keep in mind that Saint Gabriel School does its very best to be understanding during a financial crisis.
- 2: If the cause is developmental or behavioral, then a thorough assessment of the situation will be made by teachers, parents, and professional consultants as needed.
 - a. Next the parents and/or guardians will be contacted, and one or more conferences will be held explicitly stating the problem(s) and any candid recommendations for referral or dismissal.
 - b. After all parties have been informed and all decisions for dismissal/termination from enrollment have been made, the child will be expected to leave the program on the date agreed upon.

CLASSROOM RULES

- **Stay Where A Teacher Can See You:** The children are asked not to go to their cubbies during the school day. They are also to tell a teacher when they are going to use the bathroom.
- **Be Kind To Yourself:** The children are reminded to walk in school, no running. In addition, use health habits such as cover sneezes and coughs / use tissues / flush toilet and wash hands making bubbles.
- **Be Kind To Others:** We use kind words and manners in our classroom. We keep our hands and feet down and our bodies to ourselves.
- **Be Kind To Our School:** We are quiet in the school hallway because children are learning. We are kind to our classroom by not smashing or bashing toys and by showing respect to books.

▲ Two (2) warnings:

1. The child may be asked to walk away from the activity and find something else to do in our classroom.
2. The child may need to sit with a teacher for a moment, catch their breath, problem solve the situation.

Parents, keep in mind that our Preschool is a learning environment. Your children are growing each day. Posted in the classroom are the rules where the children can easily read them. In addition, the teachers do role playing for the children using unkind words vs. kind words and problem solving skills. We review the rules often. We encourage you to take a moment to discuss them with your children.

Discipline Policy:

1. Classroom rules are created and discussed with the children and reviewed regularly.
2. Redirection: When a child isn't following class rules, the teachers remind the child of class rules and ask children for solutions or alternatives for safer play.
3. Positively reinforcing appropriate behavior
4. Open-ended questions will lead to the child solving the problem instead of teacher imposed solutions.
5. Inappropriate behavior: Teachers use logical or natural consequences. In the event of aggression the teacher first attends to the hurt child, comforts that child and asks how they feel about the incident. Then both children are asked to problem solve the situation.
6. Staff shall not use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment under any circumstances. No child shall be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety and health of the child or others.

Emergency Policy: In case of an accident, parents will be notified immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency person signified on the emergency form will be contacted. A staff member will call 911 for help. If necessary, your child will be transported by ambulance to the hospital with a teacher. It is the responsibility of the parent for any expenses incurred. If the parent is present, the school will expect the parent to help handle the emergency. In the event of an evacuation, the parents will be contacted to pick up their child. **Please make sure that phone numbers on emergency forms are kept up to date.**

CLASS SCHEDULE

Meeting Time: Meeting Time is a learning time. It provides the teachers with the opportunity to introduce daily lessons and curriculum.

- 1) Opening Song
- 2) Name Recognition
- 3) Prayer
- 4) Pledge of Allegiance
- 5) Talk About Our Day

Art: Art is an important part of our day. We use a large variety of media and materials. The paint is not washable. **Teachers and/or children are not responsible for soiled clothes.** Please dress your child accordingly.

Prayer: Prayer is an important part of each day's activities; it fosters the child's spiritual life and relationship to God. A morning prayer and grace will be said daily.

Morning Prayer: "God made the sun,"
"God made the trees,"
"God made the mountains,"
"And God made me"
"I thank you, oh God for the sun and the trees,"
"For making the mountains and for making me."

Grace: "Thank you for the world so sweet,"
"Thank you for the food we eat,"
"Thank you for the birds that sing,"
"Thank you God for everything."

Grace: We thank the Lord for happy hearts,
For rain and sunny weather.
We thank the Lord for this our food
And that we are together.

Birthday Prayer: Dear God: Today is _____ birthday.
Bless and Give _____ health, wealth and lots of hugs.
Over the next year we pray that you will guide _____
Into happiness and friendships.
Make this day a special day for _____.
We will help by wishing _____ a very Happy Birthday!

Choice Time: Free play gives the children opportunities to develop social skills and personal relationships while in the classroom. The children have a choice of the science center, music center, dramatic play area, reading area, writing center, small manipulative, block area, math center, art center, and play table (rice, water, sand, dirt, etc.).

Music & Physical Education: Games and exercises are used to develop large motor coordination, to learn to take turns, and to acquire good sportsmanship. Music offers self-expression through body movement, singing, playing instruments, or composing songs.

Story Time / Library: This is where the desire to read is born and nurtured. The children will be exposed to many different authors, styles of writing, and illustrators, including books the children have written and illustrated themselves. Books give imaginations time to grow. Materials relate to class activities as well as seasons and theme units. Parents may send in books. Parents may also visit our library and sign out/in books.

Snack: Snack is a social time for the children to share conversations, to interact with adults, and to promote good table manners. Posted on the Parent Information Board will be a blank calendar. Each parent can pick a date to provide a simple snack for the whole class that day (including juice). Each parent should only have to provide snack once a month or less. **Any student with food allergies will be required to provide his/her own snack and drink. Space will be available if needed.**

Snack Menu Ideas

Animal Crackers	Pretzels	Graham Crackers	Juice
Saltines	Goldfish	Fruit (Cut Up)	Vegetables (Cut Up)
Cheezits	Cereals		

▲ Teachers will only serve **unopened** snacks – opened snacks will be sent home. Please remember – **NO NUT PRODUCTS. SNACKS THAT CONTAIN NUTS OR SNACKS PROCESSED IN A FACILITY THAT PRODUCES NUT PRODUCTS WILL ALSO BE SENT HOME.** Please check your food labels carefully.

Outside Play: Playground equipment encourages physical play, social skills, waiting for turns, and sharing. Realizing that outside physical activities are important, we go outside when weather and schedule permit.

Readiness Skills: Our program incorporates the learning of the following skills that children should master in order to successfully enter Kindergarten. Kindergarten readiness is determined by the Kindergarten screening test administered in April to all applicants.

<u>Fine Motor Skills:</u>	Build a tower of 10 blocks	Draw a person
	Complete a puzzle	Copy simple shapes
	Trace over predrawn lines	Cut on predrawn line

<u>Gross Motor Skills:</u>	Locomotor Skills – skipping, hopping, running
	Catching/Throwing a playground ball
	Balance – on toes; on one foot (left, right); walk balance beam

<u>Self Help:</u>	Dress self with minimal supervision
	Wipes and blows nose
	Totally cares for toileting needs including flushing toilet and washing/drying hands.

<u>General Knowledge And Comprehension</u>	Know body parts
	Name and match basic colors
	Name and match simple shapes
	Sort objects by color, size, & shape
	Know concepts (high/low; in/out; above/below)
	Identify weather in given pictures
	Know what to do in given situations (i.e. What do you do when you are sick?)

<u>Readiness:</u>	Shows interest in stories
	Can print own first name
	Can discriminate designs and some letters of the alphabet

<u>Math:</u>	Has an understanding of correlation of numerals and sets of objects.
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<u>Developmental Readiness:</u>	Has ability to sit and be attentive during structured activity
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FLEXIBLE YEARLY CURRICULUM

Throughout the year

Different cultures: Multicultural experiences
American Sign Language is introduced

September

Getting To Know You
End of Summer
Apples
Autumn

October

Fire Safety
Changing Leaves
Real and Pretend
Pumpkins

November

Corn
Extended Families
Pets / Animal Safety
Transportation
Harvest – Squashes
Manners
Parent Celebration

December

Evergreens
Shapes / Boxes
Giving

January

Healthy Bodies / Healthy Food
Winter Garden
Snow
Five Senses

February

More Winter / Snow
Shadows
Addresses / Post Office
Dentist Hygiene
Love

March

Harbingers of Spring
Wind / Air
Rainbows / Colors
Opposites

April

Water / Rain
Environment
Plantings

May

Flowers
Nursery Rhymes
Grandparents / Special Person
Social

June

Americana
Beach / Summer

PRESCHOOL RELIGION

Daily Morning Prayer * Daily Snack Prayer
Special Birthday Prayer * Religion Vocabulary Words
Bible Verses * Bible Songs * Bible Stories

September

- God Made Me. I Am Special
- Saint Gabriel: Sept. 29
- Morning Prayer / Snack Prayer

October

- Mary / Rosary
- Disciples as Jesus' friends

November

- All Saints
- Blessings
- Cornucopia of Prayer

December

- Advent / Christmas
- Nativity
- Service-Learning Project

January

- Epiphany
- Self / Differences
- Appreciation of God's gifts

February

- Lent: Doing for other
- Love – Love of Jesus and Others

March

- Saint Patrick
- Bible song: Celtic Alleluia
- Saint Joseph

April

- Easter
- Spring

May

- Mary
- Mass
- Flannel board of church

June

- Culmination of preschool religion program

Saint Gabriel Preschool conducts a service-learning project which is ongoing throughout the year. We choose a special person in the school/church community that would enjoy receiving "art" from the children. After awhile the children are asking if their art could be sent to that person.

The Principal and Preschool Director retain the right to amend this handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made. The Principal is the final interpreter of all policies and regulations contained herein.

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