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I. Introduction

Purpose
The purpose of the School for Young Children is twofold:

To provide a high quality preschool program for young children. The School serves children and families in the University of Saint Joseph Community, West Hartford, Hartford, and other neighboring communities.

To function as an exemplary demonstration teaching model for University of Saint Joseph undergraduate and graduate students and the early childhood community.

As a demonstration teaching model, it is understood that college students from all academic areas are welcome. These students may engage in the study of the growth and development of young children under the supervision of the faculty and Laboratory School Coordinator. Such students may be a function of the classroom on a short-term or long-term basis. Specific parental permission is required for any other student activities.

Background
Established in 1936 on the campus of the University of Saint Joseph (then Saint Joseph College), the School for Young Children provides an educational preschool experience for young children. The school has been a pioneer in the field of early childhood education since its founding over 75 years ago by Sister Mary DeLourdes.

Teachers plan curriculum with goals for child learning. The State of Connecticut’s Early Learning and Development Standards are used as a guide for planning. The Early Learning and Development Standards are designed to assure that children develop the skills needed for a successful transition to kindergarten. Ongoing assessment of children’s developmental skills happens throughout the year using the State of Connecticut’s Preschool Assessment Framework. Assessment outcomes are used to plan activities for the class and for individual children. (See Appendix for the Child Assessment Form.)

A belief in the value of each child and sense of responsibility towards the needs of others is demonstrated and encouraged through teacher modeling and sensitive teacher-child interactions. This is in keeping with the mission of the Sisters of Mercy.

As the University of Saint Joseph is committed to welcoming a community with a diverse student population, so too is the School for Young Children. The school recognizes a responsibility to help children learn about and live harmoniously with diversity. The School holds a strong belief that early intervention is essential to every child’s success in all areas of development. Environments are designed, strategies are implemented, and community resources are utilized to promote the full potential of every child. Admission is open to children of varying ability levels, as well as all racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.

The School for Young Children has been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children since 1985.
**Philosophy**
The School for Young Children maintains a set of core values about how young children learn and how they deserve to be treated. We understand that children view the world very differently from adults. Our staff and teachers embrace and nurture children’s unique perspectives of the world around them.

Children are treated with respect and the understanding that they are capable decision-makers. Their ideas are taken seriously, and teachers support children as they work through problems, projects, and conflicts independently. Teachers help children learn responsibility and self-control in the classroom, including respect for teachers, peers, and materials.

Teachers use their knowledge of children’s needs and interests to develop the curriculum. The daily schedule includes a wide range of child-initiated and teacher-facilitated activities. Teachers at the School for Young Children believe children acquire new knowledge and skills best within a play-based environment. The outdoor space serves as an extension of the classroom and provides children with hands-on opportunities to explore nature.

The teachers and staff at the School for Young Children recognize that families serve as the primary influence in their children’s lives. We strive to develop collaborative partnerships with families that enable us to work together to support the individual development of each child.

**Goals**
Our goal is to help each child:
- Develop a positive self-identity, self-control, and sense of belonging
- Develop confidence as a learner by taking risks and learning from successes and mistakes
- Develop skills to work effectively in a group with respect for social and cultural diversity
- Use language to communicate effectively and to facilitate thinking and learning
- Develop phonemic awareness and experience the written word in meaningful ways
- Represent ideas and feelings through the arts, play, and construction
- Think critically, reason, and problem solve
- Construct and acquire knowledge through exploration and discovery of materials
- Gain knowledge of one’s body and be able to maintain an optimal level of health, hygiene, and fitness
- Develop the self-help skills necessary to function as an independent member of the classroom community

**Staffing**
Each classroom is staffed with a Teacher and Teacher Assistant. Classrooms may receive additional support from a qualified work-study student or student teacher. Program and curriculum development of each room is supervised by a master teacher who holds a Bachelor’s and/or Master’s degree in education and has been selected for previous early childhood teaching experience.
**Funding**
The School for Young Children is a non-profit organization operated as an educational unit of the University of Saint Joseph, with major funding obtained through tuition, grants, and private donations.

**II. Home/School Communications**

**Family Visits**
Families are welcome to visit their child’s classroom at the School for Young Children. We recognize the importance of family involvement, as well as the importance of your child’s development of independence. Creating a balance between family involvement and a child’s sense of independence is essential and achievable when we work together.

Please coordinate with your child’s teacher to arrange a time to visit. During classroom visits, please feel free to read a story or to become involved in one of the many activities taking place in the room. You are also welcome to share a talent or personal interest with the class.

If you have any questions about classroom activities, please ask a teacher. Chatting briefly with teachers at arrival and dismissal time often gives valuable clues about the immediate needs of your child. Teachers welcome these moments. However, prolonged conversations with teachers during class time are difficult. Teachers will arrange a convenient time with you to discuss your questions or concerns. E-mail communication and telephone calls before or after school hours are always welcomed.

**Family Conferences**
Sharing information about a child’s adjustment, development, and activities at school is informative for families and helpful to teachers when planning individualized curriculum. Families are encouraged to share family information and/or changes that occur, as this is very helpful to teachers as they plan for children. Informal and formal conferences are conducted three times annually and are scheduled in the fall, winter, and spring. However, families may request a conference with the teacher at any time during the school year. Likewise, teachers may request a conference time with a family at any time to share important information. In this event, a time will be arranged that is mutually convenient.

The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards and Preschool Assessment Framework (CTELDS/PAF) are utilized as the guideline for curriculum development and child assessment. The PAF is a curriculum-embedded tool for assessing preschool children in their classrooms. It articulates comprehensive performance standards or learning outcomes. These documents enable teachers to plan and implement curriculum that addresses specified learning standards and to observe and assess children’s progress in achieving these standards. This system focuses curriculum planning on standards, or learning outcomes, rather than primarily on activities. (State of Connecticut State Board of Education 2005)
Curriculum Night
Curriculum Night is held in late September and is a valuable opportunity for families to visit their child’s classroom and meet their teachers. This evening is for adult family members only.

Community Resources and Events
A Community Resource binder is available in the Resource Room with information on a wide variety of services including special education, financial assistance, health and nutrition services, family counseling, literacy and library services, and child and family activities. Please feel free to reach out to any staff person if you need assistance connecting with needed resources.

A Community Events board is located in the vestibule of the school. Please check it regularly to be updated on community events for families and children. If you have anything to hang on the board, please drop it off in the main office.

Bilingual Support
Upon request, arrangements can be made for translation of parent teacher conferences and other important information communicated between home and school.

Annual Program Evaluation
The School for Young Children undergoes a comprehensive program evaluation each spring semester. The program evaluation includes collecting family and staff surveys, analyzing child progress data, and the completion of a classroom and agency evaluation tool. Each year, the findings are analyzed in order to develop goals for improvement for the following year. Feedback from families helps us to celebrate our strengths and develop plans for growth for the future.

III. Admissions and Enrollment

Eligibility
Applications are accepted regardless of race, religion, nationality, ancestry, or special need. Children with identified special needs and their families are engaged in a Special Education Transition Plan. (See Early Intervention Policy.)

Age Eligibility Policy
The School for Young Children serves preschool children between the ages of 3 and 5. Children who will be turning 3 years old on or before January 1st are eligible for September enrollment. Children with birthdays after January 1st may enroll on or after their 3rd birthday.

Some families make the decision to have their child engage in a third year of preschool prior to kindergarten. Families can enroll their 5-year-old for a third year of developmentally appropriate preschool at the School for Young Children. Children enrolling for a third year of preschool must be turning 6 on or after January 2nd of that school year. We encourage families considering this option to engage in conversations with their child’s teacher, as they are a valuable resource and can help you to make the best decision for your child.
State Licensing regulations require the following forms to be complete and up-to-date at all times in each child’s file:

1. Early Childhood Health Assessment Record (ED119) with current immunizations
2. Medical Consent Form
    (Including emergency contact/alternate pick-up information)

All files must be complete and up-to-date in order to start and to remain in school. This rule also applies to all medications, medication authorizations, and care plans for children with severe asthma or food allergies.

A written consent form is needed prior to the pick-up of a child by an adult not listed on the Medical Consent Form. Teachers will not release a child to any adult other than those listed on the Medical Consent Form without prior notice. If anyone else will be picking up your child, you must send a note. If you discover during the course of the school day that a different person will have to pick up your child, please call the main office. The main office will inform your child’s teacher of the change. The person picking up the child will be asked to provide valid photo identification.

Scholarship
Scholarships are available for families with economic challenges. The State of Connecticut’s School Readiness program sponsors these spaces, along with funds from the University of Saint Joseph. Families from West Hartford interested in School Readiness funding should contact the Curriculum Office at the local Board of Education. The Income Guidelines for School Readiness can be found on the State Department of Education’s webpage at: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&Q=320808. Scholarships are generally awarded to families who fall below 50% of the State Median Income Level (about $40,000 a year for a family of 4).

IV. Policies

Ethical Conduct and Confidentiality Policy
The School for Young Children adheres to the Code of Ethical Conduct for Early Childhood Professionals as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Copies are available in the Parent Resource Room.

Our Confidentiality Policy has been adopted to assure confidentiality and protection of individual rights to privacy for children, families and employees of the School for Young Children. The individual dignity of children, families, and employees shall be respected and protected at all times in accordance with the law.

Information about children, families, or employees must not be divulged to anyone other than persons who are authorized to receive such information. This policy extends to both internal and external disclosure.
Staff Policies Concerning Confidentiality of Children’s and Families’ Information

- All children’s records must be kept in a secure file.
- Access to children’s records is limited to appropriate employees and agencies.
- Children’s records will remain in the School at all times.
- Children’s records will never be left out on desks, tables, etc. where other people may have access to them.
- Children’s or families’ private information must never be discussed among employees except on a need-to-know basis. Employees must be particularly aware of their surroundings when discussing this information. Special caution must be taken to be sure other children, families, or employees do not overhear information that is private.
- Discussion of children’s or families’ information with volunteers, other families, friends, or community members is prohibited.
- Information and documents that are considered confidential are medical records, educational records, special needs records, family records, financial records, and any other private information about children or their families.
- All requests for release of information will be coordinated by the Director.

Child Guidance Policy  (This policy will be discussed at New Parent Orientation)

The School for Young Children at the University of Saint Joseph believes that a challenging curriculum and warm, responsive teaching help to create an atmosphere that promotes positive interactions. Anticipation and preventative intervention are teaching strategies used to help children control impulses and develop communication skills.

Through positive guidance, teachers:

- Help children respect the rights and feelings of others
- Help children develop empathy for others through example
- Praise efforts of cooperation and compromise
- Give specific feedback regarding their behaviors

The ultimate goal of the guidance policy of the School for Young Children is to help children develop self-control, self-esteem, and respect for the rights of others in a trusting, secure, and nurturing environment. Teachers refrain from using any methods of discipline that would embarrass, humiliate, or harm the self-esteem of a child.

Prevention is the key. Through classroom procedure and planning, teachers:

- Accept each child as a worthwhile individual at his/her own level of development and recognize that behavior is a reflection of each child's life experiences
- Anticipate behavior and intervene before disruption occurs
- Plan a wide range of activities using a variety of materials that complement children's interests, growth, and development
- Provide a balanced curriculum of quiet and active events in an orderly daily sequence in which children participate at their own pace
Early Intervention Policy
The School for Young Children recognizes the essential role that early intervention services play in ensuring that every child reaches his/her full potential. The School collaborates with the Gengras Center, West Hartford Public Schools’ Early Learning Center, University of Saint Joseph faculty, and the State funded Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP) for guidance and support in observing children and implementing classroom strategies to ensure learning success for all children. Parents are informed and participate in all aspects of this process. The School for Young Children has collaborative arrangements with a number of organizations and agencies in the community with the purpose of providing families with support services as needed. The School will assist families in any way possible, including providing for a language interpreter, to ensure that families are successful in their request for support.

Behavioral Challenges
Family strategy sessions are held to develop behavior plans to meet the needs of more challenging behavior situations that may arise in the classroom. The school utilizes a Behavior Support Plan (BSP) that is composed by the teachers with assistance from the Director. The BSP outlines strategies for the classroom and home to assist the child’s success in school. Parent participation in the implementation of the BSP ensures positive outcomes. Staff at the School for Young Children will assist families with the referral process in the event that an alternate program with special services is needed.

Special Education Transition Plan
A special education transition plan has been developed for children with identified special needs and their families in order to ensure a smooth transition to the School for Young Children (SYC) or to the child’s future school, whether that be a kindergarten program or an alternate preschool program.

Children who enter SYC with an IEP (Individualized Education Program) or IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) will be engaged in the Special Education Transition Plan. The following four steps comprise the transition plan:

Step 1: Home Visit. The Director of the School for Young Children (SYC) will conduct a home visit for the child and family with an IEP/IFSP. During the visit, information will be shared in regard to the IEP/IFSP and SYC programs. At the family’s request, this visit may take place at the School for Young Children. Families will be contacted prior to their entry to SYC to arrange for a mutually acceptable time.

Step 2: Initial Meeting. A meeting will take place to include the family, teachers, and if available, the early childhood special education team. This meeting will take place prior to school or during the first few days of school and may occur informally or formally with a PPT (Planning and Placement Team). During this meeting, the current IEP/IFSP will be reviewed, and plans for effective and successful implementation at SYC will be outlined. Depending on timing, the Home Visit and Initial Meeting may be combined as one meeting.
**Step 3: Review Meeting.** When necessary, a review meeting will take place **30 days** following the child’s first day of school. Individuals to attend will include parents, teachers, the Director, and if available, early childhood special education team. These individuals will review the child’s progress on goals and objectives and determine SYC’s continued ability to meet the needs of the child and family. Future and continued review of the IEP/IFSP will take place as designated by the special education team and the family. All efforts will be made to meet the needs of the child and family. However, in the event that this cannot be done successfully, SYC will help transition the child and family to an alternate program.

**Step 4: Transition to Kindergarten.** Teachers and staff will assist in the transfer of the child’s records to the kindergarten school. Families will be guided in requesting a PPT to discuss the process for transitioning to kindergarten. Staff from the School for Young Children would be happy to attend your child’s kindergarten transition PPT at your request.

**Interagency Communication Policy**
If your child is receiving educational or related services outside of the School for Young Children (for example your child is attending an early learning center and/or receiving services such as speech, physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc.) a family member must sign a waiver. This waiver will allow SYC staff and the staff from the other program(s) the ability to communicate educational information throughout the year. This policy is in place to enable us to work together as a team, providing the best education possible for your child.

If your child enters such services during his/her time at SYC, you will be asked to sign a waiver at that time.

**Transition to Kindergarten**
A Kindergarten Transition Form is completed for each child entering the West Hartford Public School System. Your child’s future school will receive this form with your consent. The form provides information about your child’s skills and abilities. The information SYC teachers collect is used by kindergarten teachers during the classroom placement process and transition period. The School for Young Children will share information with families about upcoming kindergarten transition meetings for families.

If your child is transitioning to kindergarten in another school district or to a private school, this information can be shared with the school district at your request.

**Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:**
School staff and parents must work together to maximize children’s success at school. We are committed to engaging in a mutually supportive relationship with families.

As a parent/guardian, we count on you to:

- Submit and update school forms as requested to ensure your child’s record is current at all times. Information that must remain current at all times includes your
telephone number, home address, work telephone number, emergency contact information, and Early Childhood Health Assessment Record.

- Make sure that all individuals approved for pick-up are on your child’s Medical Consent Form. Communicate all changes in pick-up to your child’s teacher, including the full name of the person picking up your child. Remind anyone picking up your child to bring photo identification.

- Become involved in your child’s education by participating in parent-teacher conferences. If possible, volunteer in your child’s classroom and participate in school-family activities.

- Read all school communications in order to stay informed of important classroom and school happenings.

- Follow the security guidelines as posted at the main entrance. A buzzer and monitor system enables school staff to safely supervise the comings and goings of all visitors. After ringing the buzzer, please state your name and purpose for entry.

- Teach your child to walk in the hallways, as this will ensure that everyone is safe.

- Inform your child’s teachers if something has happened at home that could affect your child’s success in school.

- Provide the school with a certified copy of any court orders prohibiting a non-custodial parent from contact with his or her child.

- Give the school written permission if you want a stepparent who is not the legal guardian of the child to have information about the child or sign forms related to the child.

- Adhere to the School for Young Children’s Parking Policy (see pg. 15).

**Toilet Training Policy**

Toilet training can be a difficult developmental issue. We want to be as supportive of families’ efforts as possible. However, we need to have a clear policy in place that allows us to meet our licensing regulations. As we are not licensed for infants and toddlers, we do not have changing facilities that meet state requirements for diapering.

- Children must be toilet trained to attend the School for Young Children. Specifically, they must be able to independently recognize when they need to go to the bathroom and be able to sit on the toilet without help.

- The first few weeks of school can be overwhelming for any child. Even children who have been trained a long time suffer occasional lapses when they are engrossed in an activity, are overtired, excited, or in new surroundings. We realize that an occasional accident may occur. Please be sure to provide an extra set of clothing for your child.
• Teachers observe all children during the first three weeks of school. If a child does not appear to be trained, the teacher and family will work together to develop a plan in order to encourage success. This plan may include a provision that the child is picked up from school in the event of an accident, especially one that the child is not able to easily clean himself or herself with minimal assistance. If by September 30th the child has not shown progress toward toilet training, the Director will schedule a conference with the child’s teacher and family to discuss whether the child is ready to continue in our program.

• Occasionally, a child shows regression in toilet training during the school year. If this occurs, the Director will schedule a conference with the teacher and family. A plan will be developed to encourage successful independence with toileting. This plan may include a provision that the child is picked up from school when an accident occurs, especially one that the child is not able to easily clean himself or herself with minimal assistance. The Director, family, and teacher will meet again after one month to assess the success of the plan and adjust it as necessary. If the child has shown no progress toward independence with toileting after a month, the Director will make a decision about the child’s ability to continue in our program.

• If a child leaves the program because of toilet training issues, parents can choose to continue to pay tuition in order to hold the spot until the child is trained, or they may drop the spot and have their tuition bill prorated. If the family has decided to withdraw from the program, they may contact the school once their child is trained in order to inquire as to whether or not space is still available.

**Tuition Policy**
Tuition may be paid in monthly installments for your convenience. It is also possible to pay the semester or year in full if you wish. Failure to pay tuition in a timely manner may result in disenrollment from the program.

Payments can be made via the Cashnet website at www.usj.edu/payonline. There is an additional fee to use your credit card for payment. There is no additional fee if you pay online with electronic payment from your savings or checking account.

If you wish to pay with cash or check, this may be done in person at the Cashier’s Office located in McDonough Hall on the campus of the University of Saint Joseph or by mail to:

University of Saint Joseph  
Cashier’s Office  
1678 Asylum Avenue  
West Hartford, CT 06117

*Include your Family ID number on all correspondence and payments. Please do not send payments to the School for Young Children.*

*Please note that all checks must be made payable to “University of Saint Joseph.”*
Withdrawal and Discharge Policy
Families are entitled to withdraw, forfeiting their $200 deposit. Until cancellation of enrollment is submitted to the Director, children are considered enrolled, and families will be responsible for tuition as described in your Contract for Preschool Tuition. Notice of cancelation must be submitted in writing 30 days in advance of the first day of each semester.

Fall Semester – September to December (Last withdrawal date August 1)
Winter Semester – January to March (Last withdrawal date December 1)
Spring Semester – April to June (Last withdrawal date March 1)

Termination of Enrollment Policy
The School for Young Children (SYC) and its teaching staff will go to great lengths to help a family maintain their child’s enrollment at SYC. Removing a child from the SYC program is a last resort.

SYC reserves the right to terminate a child’s enrollment without notice for the following reasons:

- The family has failed to submit all state required forms.
- Tuition payments have fallen behind by more than three (3) months.
- Child has been picked up after 5:00 p.m. five (5) times in any 60 day rolling period.
- The teaching staff has been unable to meet the child’s developmental needs, as determined by the child’s teacher and/or the Director after consultation with the child’s parents.
- The family prohibits communications with other agencies providing services to the child. (See Interagency Communication Policy)
- The child demonstrates behaviors that put other children, adults, and/or themselves in danger as determined by the teaching staff and/or the Director.
- A parent is verbally and/or physically abusive to a member of the SYC community, including teaching staff, other staff, volunteers, other parents, or any child.
- The teaching staff has been unable to meet a parent’s requests after consultation with such parent.
- Other unforeseen reasons at the discretion of the Director and/or appropriate personnel at the University of Saint Joseph.

Upon such termination, SYC, at its discretion, may offer to assist the family to find a program that is better suited to the child/family’s needs.

SYC reserves the right to terminate a child’s enrollment without notice should the Director and/or the teaching staff feel there is a threat, physical or otherwise, from such child or any family member of such child to anyone in the SYC community.

Accident and Incident Policy
In the event of a minor accident at school, SYC staff will administer first aid to the child. All teachers, teacher assistants, and office staff members are trained and certified in First Aid and child CPR in accordance with State requirements.
An Accident or Incident Form is filled out when an injury or misconduct occurs at the School. This report will be kept in your child’s file after you have read and signed it. An accident report will also be filed if a child comes to school with an unexplained noticeable injury. If your child has a noticeable injury as a result of an accident outside of the School, please inform the staff.

It is extremely important that all Medical Consent Forms be kept up to date. In case of a serious emergency, Emergency Services will be contacted through 911. You or your emergency contact number will be called immediately, and a staff member will remain with the child until you or your emergency contact person arrives.

**Illness Policy**

To prevent the spread of infectious disease within the school, the teaching staff, with the help of the housekeeping staff, maintains a diligent cleaning routine to provide a sanitary environment. Teachers help children to develop sound health habits by encouraging hand washing and the use of disposable tissues.

Children who are in the initial stages of an illness as evidenced by sneezing, coughing, nasal discharge, vomiting, diarrhea, fever or other symptoms are requested to remain at home until these symptoms have subsided.

Please notify the school by 9:00 a.m. if your child will be absent due to illness. Identifying the illness will help the staff alert other parents about the possibilities of contagion and identifying symptoms.

If a child becomes ill at school, the child will be temporarily isolated within sight and hearing of a caring adult while we contact a family member. If a family member cannot be reached, the emergency contact person listed on your child’s Medical Consent Form will be contacted. Once a family member or caregiver has been contacted, **the child needs to be picked up within 1/2 hr.** If the child is not picked up within 1/2 hr, the next person on the emergency contact list will be called to pick up the ill child. An illness form will be filled out by your child’s teacher and sent home with your child.

A child may return to preschool only after the time indicated:

**Fever:** When your child’s temperature returns to below 100° without the use of medication (e.g. Tylenol, Motrin, etc.) and your child is able to fully participate in preschool activities.

**Vomiting:** 24 hours after vomiting has ceased

**Diarrhea:** 24 hours after the diarrhea has ceased

**Conjunctivitis:** 24 hours after the first dose of medication, when eyes return to normal, or a note from the physician is received

**Strep Throat:** 24 hours after the first dose of medication and the child has no fever
**Lice:** After shampoo treatment and hair/scalp is completely nit free

**Rash:** When rash is deemed non-contagious as evidenced by a physician’s note

**Lethargy:** When the child is able to fully participate in preschool activities

**Administration of Medication**

It is encouraged that medication be administered at home. When this is not possible, each child’s particular needs will be reviewed by the Director, nurse consultant, and parent on an individual basis. Children with life-threatening conditions that require immediate care are the exception to this review process. If your child has a prescribed medication that needs to be dispensed at school, staff members who have completed the required training to administer medication will do so. All teachers, teacher assistants, and office staff members are trained to administer the Epi-Pen and to follow the emergency protocol in the case of anaphylactic reaction.

State law requires that all medications to be dispensed be accompanied by a Medicine Administration Order from your child’s pediatrician. This includes over the counter medications. This form must also be signed by the child’s parent or guardian. All medicines must be in their original container/box and be labeled with the child’s name. Prescription medication must have the original prescription label affixed to the box.

Medicine will not be stored at school or administered if the administration order or the medication itself has expired. Children who have expired medicines or expired Medicine Administration Orders will not be allowed to return to school until updated orders and medications are supplied or until an order is removed in writing by the child’s physician.

**Administration of Sunscreen**

Children that participate in the Afternoon Backpack and full day Summer Camp programs are eligible to participate in the Sunscreen Policy. Sunscreen will only be applied with written consent of the child’s parent/legal guardian. The consent form will include the child’s name, the name of the sunscreen, times for application, duration (start and stop dates), special storage requirements, and any possible side effects (use package insert or pharmacist's written information). Information will be distributed during appropriate times of the year.

**Parking Policy**

Parking spaces at the School for Young Children are limited. Parking spaces in front of the school are reserved for parents. Parking along the street is also permitted. Please do not park in the Handicapped or “Reserved” parking spaces nearest the school entrance. Please do not stop in the middle of the parking lot while waiting for an open space. If no spaces are available, exit the parking lot and either park in the street-side parking or re-enter the lot.

Your patience and cooperation are requested in dropping off and picking up your child. Please drive slowly as you enter and leave the parking lot, and remind children to hold an adult’s hand. Do not leave children or infants in your car unattended. Please be mindful
of Connecticut’s idling law and turn your vehicle off before entering the school or when staying in the parking lot for an extended period of time.

**Arrival and Dismissal**
Arrival time is important to help your child transition easily into the activities planned for the day. Arrival and Dismissal times are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrival:</th>
<th>Dismissal:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Backpack Program: 7:45-8:55 a.m.</td>
<td>Preschool Program: 1:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Program: 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Backpack Program: 4:00 or 5:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you expect to be late, please call the school. If a parent is late for *Dismissal* more than once, a $2 per minute fee will be assessed after 1:00 p.m. or your child’s scheduled Backpack Club dismissal time. If a child is not picked up at the expected time, we will attempt to reach a parent/guardian or person from your *Emergency Contact* list. If we are unable to do so within a reasonable amount of time, we are obligated by law to notify the West Hartford Police Department.

**Safety Drills**
Fire Drills are required to be held on a monthly basis throughout the year. During a drill, as in the case of a real emergency, we do not stop to put on outerwear. Children are evacuated to Taylor’s Field on the South side of the School. Primary and secondary evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. Following a routine Fire Drill, children will re-enter the building. From start to finish, drills usually last 5 minutes or less. **If you are in the building when an alarm is sounded, please proceed to the nearest exit.**

An Emergency Evacuation Drill is practiced once annually, and Shelter in Place and Lockdown Drills are practiced twice annually. During a Shelter in Place Drill, classrooms are evacuated and children and staff proceed to the basement, where a roll call is taken. Food, water, and a lavatory are available in case of a real emergency. During a Lockdown Drill, classroom doors are locked and teachers and students gather together in a hidden area of the classroom and do a quiet activity, such as reading a book, until the drill is over. During an Evacuation Drill, teachers and children will proceed to the emergency evacuation site located in the auditorium of Saint Mary Home at 291 Steele Road. Beverages, food, and lavatories are available at this site to make children comfortable while engaging in the drill. (See appendix for the full outline of Evacuation Drill procedures.)

**School Closings**
The decision to close school is the responsibility of the School’s Director. Inclement weather is the primary reason a decision is made to close school. For announcements concerning school closings, please listen to WTIC AM 1080 radio, watch NBC Channel 30 television, WFSB Channel 3, or call the school at 860.231.5560 after 6:45 a.m. It is beneficial to sign up online for *text message or e-mail* notifications from the University of Saint Joseph at [http://ww2.usj.edu/e2c/secure%20alerts/index.html](http://ww2.usj.edu/e2c/secure%20alerts/index.html).

A separate information sheet on inclement weather closings and late openings will be sent home in the Fall.
Lead Paint Management Plan
The School for Young Children operates under a lead paint management program overseen by the Bloomfield/West Hartford Department of Public Health (DPH). The School has regular inspections by the University of Saint Joseph Facilities department and by the DPH. At this time, the building has been sided, and the only locations containing possible lead paint include interior window sills, the round window outside of the gross motor room, and around the front door and south side double doors. Monthly TSP washes are done on interior window sills to eliminate the risk of lead paint exposure.

The DPH has determined that areas with lead paint should not be a cause for health concerns, as long as painted surfaces remain in good condition. We encourage anyone who witnesses damage to or deterioration of painted surfaces to inform the office immediately. (See Appendix)

V. Program Routines

Clothing
Children will be participating in many types of indoor and outdoor activities. Children should be dressed so that they can play comfortably without fear of soiling their clothes. Therefore, please do not send children to school in clothing that is very special or difficult to launder. Children will need a spare set of clothing appropriate for the season. Please provide a labeled change of clothing at school in a labeled box/bag. Please include: socks, underwear, shirt, and pants (or whatever dress your child likes) in the labeled shoebox. Make sure all items are clearly and permanently labeled. Please update spare clothing as the seasons change.

Since outdoor play is part of the daily curriculum even in the winter, children should come to school adequately prepared for all types of weather. In the winter months children will need boots, hats, mittens, and warm snow pants in addition to a warm winter jacket. Please label all items. The School stresses independence. All daily clothing should be child friendly, encouraging self-care.

Toys from Home
We recognize that children are often excited to show toys from home to their teachers and friends. However, this can cause challenges surrounding sharing and also disappointment when toys from home are lost or broken. Unless there is a specific sharing day or activity in your child’s classroom, we kindly ask that toys from home remain at home.

Snack
Active children need frequent servings of nutritious food throughout the day. To accommodate this need, a mid-morning snack is served in each classroom, as well as a mid-afternoon snack in Backpack Club. All snacks are chosen for their nutritional value.

Family Snack Day is on Tuesdays or Wednesdays at the School for Young Children. Look for the sign-up sheet posted in each classroom. Snack donations and special birthday treats should be agreed upon by you and your child’s teacher. Allowing children to help at home in preparation for a class snack can be an especially meaningful experience. Fruits,
vegetables, whole grain, and low-sugar baked goods are appreciated. A list of recommended snacks will be sent home at the beginning of the year.

**Please check with your child’s teacher in case your child’s classmates have food allergies that require your consideration.** If you are bringing a snack to share, please provide your child’s teacher with the original packaging or the recipe used in order to ensure safety for children with allergies or restricted diets.

**Allergies/Special Diets**
Please keep the staff up-to-date about special dietary needs your child may have due to allergies or other dietary restrictions. A list of children and their allergies is posted in each child’s classroom and the kitchens. An alternative snack will be provided for children with special dietary needs.

**Food Allergy Tips for Parents**
Parents have come up with many successful strategies for managing their children’s food allergies. They often prepare and freeze snack items, such as cupcakes, that may be stored at school. You can store items in clearly marked freezer bags or plastic containers. This strategy ensures that your child will always have a safe treat on hand when there is a birthday or other special occasion being celebrated, or when there is any doubt about the day’s snack. We are happy to store an everyday snack here at school as well.

To help other parents prepare snacks and treats that are safe, provide them with a list of things your child CAN eat. Include name brands designated safe.

Start teaching your child about safe treats now. While they are too young to be relied upon to resist temptation, at some point they are going to have to manage their own diet. An early start and a positive attitude will help your child feel good about making safe choices, rather than feeling left out.

Parents whose children don’t have allergies can help. Make sure you, your child, and any siblings wash their hands before entering the classroom or using classroom materials to cut down on contact reactions. In rooms where there is a severe allergy, we may ask that you inform us if your child has a trigger food in his or her lunch, such as peanut butter. This is usually done by making a note on your classroom sign in sheet. Parents of children with allergies would be happy to share safe recipes in advance of class celebrations, so feel free to ask them.

**Lunch**
Children eat lunch in their classroom with their classroom teachers between 11:30 and 1:00 P.M. Lunches, including a beverage, are provided by the child’s family and should be brought to school in a labeled lunch box. Using insulated containers or enclosing a cold pack in the lunch box should keep most lunch items fresh. **If your child’s lunch contains perishable items, the State of Connecticut requires that you include an ice pack with the lunch.** Teachers are not able to heat lunches. Children are encouraged to only eat what is in their own lunch box. This helps to control food allergies and allows parents to assess what their child has eaten.
**Safe Food Policy**
In accordance with NAEYC standards, staff do not offer children the following foods due to a high choking risk:

- Hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds)
- Whole grapes (cut in half are okay)
- Popcorn
- Raw peas
- Hard pretzels
- Spoonfuls of peanut butter
- Chunks of raw carrot or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

This applies to both foods served by the School, as well as foods sent in from home for three-year-olds. Please help to observe our Safe Food Policy by not sending in the above foods for your three-year-old.

**Rest/Nap**
Children attending the full-day program who no longer nap are considered “awakers.” Awakers rest quietly in their classroom from 1:00 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. Please send a blanket, sheet, or towel for your child to rest on. Children who still nap sleep between 1:00 p.m. and 2:45 p.m. Nappers may bring a crib sheet to cover their cot, a blanket, a pillow, and a special “lovey” if desired. We ask that you bring resting and napping materials home each Friday to wash. Please return them to school on Monday morning.

**Holidays**
At the School for Young Children, we strive to preserve normal routines during holiday times. We approach the holidays by focusing on the essence of the holiday season. Groups may spend time exploring the concept of generosity during the winter holiday season and friendship during the Valentine season. In keeping with SYC’s focus on science and nature, we also study seasonal changes and explore various elements of nature, such as snow during the winter. Families are welcome to come into classrooms and teach the children about their cultural or family traditions during the year. Feel free to arrange a visit with your child’s classroom teacher. For more information about SYC’s holiday philosophy and for our full curriculum document, please visit the Families section of our website.
VI. Contact Us

Main Number 860.231.5560
Fax 860.231.5581
Kimberly Perrotta, Interim Director 860.231.5569
Sue O'Donnell, Laboratory School Coordinator 860.231.5561
Keisha Santos, Administrative Assistant 860.231.5564
Joanne Burke, Administrative Assistant 860.231.5562

Room 1 Jackie Sanderson, Pam Hosek 860.231.5572
Room 2 Sarah Bond, Aida Estanislau 860.231.5573
Room 3 Nicole Sul, Margaret Byrne 860.231.5574
Room 4 Mary Claffey, Eileen Kennedy 860.231.5575
Room 5 Rebekah Seaton, Allison O’Hara 860.231.5576
Room 6 Jamie Albright, Jolie Garfinkel 860.231.5577
Room 7 Phyllis Winer, Rachel Hoffman 860.231.5579
Gym Morning and Afternoon Backpack (nap room 1pm-3pm) 860.231.5566

In the event of a power outage or other technical issue, the phone system may malfunction temporarily. This is usually indicated if you hear a “trouble” message” or if the line signals as busy for an extended period of time. In the case of such an event, there is an analog phone line available for emergency use only. **This phone is not answered by staff if the regular phone lines are in working order.** The number is 860.233.8788.

The School for Young Children website can be found at [www.usj.edu/syc](http://www.usj.edu/syc)
Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/schoolforyoungchildren](http://www.facebook.com/schoolforyoungchildren)
VII. Directions to the School for Young Children

The School for Young Children is located on Steele Road in West Hartford between Asylum Avenue and Albany Avenue. Steele Road is just east of the University of Saint Joseph campus.
Important: Adhere to your classroom’s outdoor schedule! The outdoor schedule includes each classroom’s designated field and trail day. This schedule is posted in the office.

**Ride-On Vehicles**
- Helmets must be worn when on any riding vehicle & must be off when NOT.
- Only community helmets marked “SYC” are shared.
- Ride-on vehicles must stay on the bike path. Riding down the hill is not permitted.

**Climbing Equipment**
- Do not physically place (pick up or lift) a child onto climbing equipment, such as the rope or spiral pole.
- Climbing up or down the spiral pole is permitted.
- You may guide or teach a child how to use the apparatus.
- Additional guidance may be needed as children acquire the motor planning skills to be successful.

**Slide**
- Children are permitted to climb up or slide down.
- Children must slide down on their bottoms with feet first.
- One child on the slide at a time.

**Swings**
- Lifting children up onto a swing is permitted.
- Children may be pushed by a teacher. While doing so, place yourself so you can view the playground.
- Creative use of the swings is allowed, including standing and twisting (with close supervision), except when the movement interferes with the pathway of an adjacent swinger.

**Cargo Net**
- 3 children are permitted at one time
- Children are permitted to go up and down, as well as side to side

**Monkey Bars**
- Children are permitted to climb on top of the monkey bars with close supervision.

**Playhouse**
- A teacher who opens the playhouse must monitor or pass the responsibility to another teacher.
- NO sand or chips in the playhouse.
- Playhouse equipment needs to stay in the playhouse.
- Windows can be opened OR closed, but not both during play. The windows need to be locked “Open” or locked “Closed.”

**Sandbox**
- Sand removed for play purposes must be returned. Classroom teachers will assist.
- First group outside must set up an inviting environment in the sandbox. Materials should be rotated.

**Tabletop Toys**
- The first group on the playground must take out a tabletop activity. The last group to go in must clean it up.
**Outdoor Blocks**
- The outdoor blocks must stay at the bottom of the hill.
- Please return the blocks to the properly labeled shelf.

**Sledding**
- The first group to arrive on the playground will assess the conditions for safe sledding. A green or red flag will be used to indicate if sledding is an option for the day.
- Use designated sledding area (area between the entrance sidewalk and the starting point of the upper split rail fence).
- A maximum of 10 sleds are permitted on the hill at one time.
- At all times, one adult must be positioned each at the top of the hill AND at the bottom of the hill.
- Creative sledding permitted; unless it becomes unsafe (The one exception being that no child shall be permitted to ride the sled face first or in a standing position down the hill.)
- Sleds must be stored in the shed at the end of the day.

**Watering**
- Children must ask the permission of a teacher to use the water hose.
- Teachers will monitor the use of outside faucet.
- Children with waterproof boots will be permitted to play in the mud.

**Composter**
- Children may only turn the composter with direct teacher supervision.

**Supervision**
- Teachers must spread out in various locations of the playground and scan the area.
- Obstructed areas, such as behind the shed, under the bushes, and around the sandbox must be continually monitored.
- Teachers need to provide friendly reminders to each other about maintaining proper supervision.
- Monitor all exterior gates to be sure they are latched.
- Teachers should model proper supervision practices for college student workers.

**Clean-Up**
- All storage containers are labeled. Please place materials back in their proper storage bins.
- Children must park their ride-on vehicles when they have finished with them.
- Each child must put away 2-3 loose parts or sandbox toys before going inside.
- Classrooms will be assigned to playground clean-up duty on a monthly rotating basis. During your playground duty month, you must complete the Playground Maintenance Checklist one time.

**Flower Boxes**
- Raised beds: Every room has a section to maintain (watering, weeding, etc.) These sections are designated below.
- Children are permitted to get into the boxes to examine the plants, to plant new seeds, to turn over the soil in search of things, etc. (Adult supervision is necessary at this time.)
- Classroom assigned with playground cleanup will take care of small boxes on the shed.
Below is a chart of the *maintenance* responsibilities of each classroom for the planting/flower boxes. *Maintenance* involves weeding and upkeep of inside the box and the ground just outside the box.

![Diagram showing the maintenance responsibilities]

**Bathroom**

**Conference Room**
## CHILD PROFILE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Standards</th>
<th>Benchmarks for 2 1/2 - 6 year-olds</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>E</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### PERSONAL AND SOCIAL

- **P/S 1.** Selects activities
- **P/S 2.** Sustains attention
- **P/S 3.** Participates in group
- **P/S 4.** Manages transitions
- **P/S 5.** Expresses emotions
- **P/S 6.** Shows empathy
- **P/S 7.** Cooperates with peers
- **P/S 8.** Resolve conflicts
- **P/S 9.** Appreciates differences

### PHYSICAL

- **PHY 1.** Uses large muscles
- **PHY 2.** Uses small muscles
- **PHY 3.** Cares for self

### COGNITIVE

- **COG 1.** Engages in inquiry
- **COG 2.** Solves problems
- **COG 3.** Sorts objects
- **COG 4.** Makes patterns
- **COG 5.** Compares & orders
- **COG 6.** Quantifies
- **COG 7.** Shows spatial awareness
- **COG 8.** Uses sentences
- **COG 9.** Understands conversations
- **COG 10.** Understands stories
- **COG 11.** Understands books
- **COG 12.** Recognizes sounds
- **COG 13.** Identifies words
- **COG 14.** Writes for meaning

### CREATIVE

- **CRE 1.** Builds and constructs
- **CRE 2.** Draws and paints
- **CRE 3.** Pretends in play
- **CRE 4.** Responds to music

E=Emerging  M=Mastered
The School for Young Children-Plans for Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency evacuation

1. The Director* will contact campus safety (x5222) to “activate the Evacuation Plan for the School for Young Children.” And inform them of the time frame for which the children and staff will be exiting the building.

2. The Director* will then place a call to Saint Mary Home at 860.570.8200 and
   a. Inform the operator who they are and the nature of the emergency.
   b. Inform the operator of the time frame for which the children and staff will be exiting the building.
   c. Ask the operator to alert the following individuals:
      1. Eric Dana (Administrator of Saint Mary Home)
      2. Phil Murray (Assistant Administrator of Saint Mary Home)
      3. Carl Saraceni (General Manager)

3. The Director* and support staff will take the following steps:
   - Inform classroom teachers to prepare for evacuation via the phone intercom system (or verbally if already outside)
   - Attain visitor and student sign-in log
   - Direct office staff to post a sign on the door and/or alter the school’s outgoing message for incoming phone calls as necessary.
   - Direct office staff to take cell phones with them if possible, in the event that they are needed to phone families.
   - Put on evacuation reflector vests
   - Monitor the group’s exit of the building
   - Exit the building with the Evacuation Kit containing the following items:
     - Master list of children’s emergency contact information
     - Set of attendance sheets for the school
     - Notepads with writing utensils
     - Two way radio Channel 1-campus safety
     - Two traffic stop signs

4. In classrooms, teachers will prompt children to line up for exit. A head count and roll call will be taken to assure all children are in line. One teacher per classroom will wear an evacuation reflector vest and carry to the evacuation site their classroom backpack containing the following items:
   - Emergency cards
   - Day’s attendance sheet
   - First aid kit
   - Medications with Administration Order for children in the classroom

5. All SYC staff and children will exit to the field at the South side of the building. (Similar to a fire drill.) At the field, teachers will take a roll call. Administrative staff will collect the attendance from each group. When all are accounted for, the School will walk as a group the auditorium of Saint Mary Home (291 Steele Road). Campus Safety will assist the SYC group across Steele Road at the SYC cross walk. In the event Campus Safety is not present for the street crossing, the Director* and support staff will utilize handheld stop signs to control traffic for the crossing.

6. Upon arrival to Saint Mary Home auditorium via the Callaghan Center Entrance, teachers and children will assemble as classroom groups. Teachers will take a roll call. Water and bathrooms are available to children and teachers.

7. The Director* will meet with Campus Safety and/or administration to develop a Risk Communication Message relative to the emergency. The Risk Communication Message to families will include a call back phone number. Radio and TV will be contacted to communicate the Risk Communication Message.

8. The Director*, with administration appointed support staff, will phone parents or emergency contacts of children present to relay the Risk Communication Message (with call back phone
number) to provide pick up information. A separate calling list will be available for the Director* and the support staff to phone families. Campus Safety will bring campus safety cell phones with them whenever possible to assist with this process. If Campus Safety cell phones are not available, office staff will use their cell phones, the available land line at Saint Mary Home, and/or Saint Mary Home staff phones to phone families. One individual will be assigned to monitor incoming calls.

9. Families will pull into the Service Entrance and exit via the Callaghan Center Entrance. A Campus Safety officer will be stationed by the auditorium door to announce each parent’s arrival via two-way radio. A member of the school staff will walk each child to their vehicle. If a parent arrives on foot, they will also be expected to follow these Dismissal Procedures. No children will be dismissed from inside the building.

10. All teachers and staff will remain present at the evacuation site as needed. Teachers will update attendance sheets as children are dismissed to families.

11. The campus van will be utilized in the event some children need to be transported home. Note: the van will only be used to transport children that are routinely transported to the School during the regular school year.

12. Saint Mary Home will provide meals in the event children and staff remain in the auditorium for an extended period of time.

*Or person in charge

When you arrive on campus

For Saint Mary Home: Park in first driveway on your left (Lot C) and enter first building on your left through sliding white doors of The Maximilian E. and Marion O. Hoffman Foundation Entrance. See receptionist on your right as you enter. For direct access to the Fitzgerald or Callaghan Units, please use Callaghan Center Entrance off Steele Road. For direct access to the Saint Mary Auditorium or loading dock, please use Lot D from the Service Entrance.

For The McAuley: Drive past Saint Mary Home and park on right side of road in Visitor Parking. The McAuley consists of two large, brick towers to your right. Walk down the walkway and enter the main entrance marked Building A. See the concierges inside this entrance.
Parent Advisory Committee

Mission: The Parent Advisory Committee’s role is to help build a sense of community among families and staff through activities and ongoing school-wide communication. With the help of parent volunteers, PAC provides support for all school programs and is an avenue for parent feedback, which is used to shape the direction of the School.

Please see the calendar for the dates and times of these events.

New Parent Orientation: An evening event before school starts for new parents to meet veteran parents and SYC staff in order to learn about a typical day in the life of a preschooler at SYC.

Fall Picnic: A chance for new and returning families to come together on Taylor’s Field (field adjacent to the school parking lot) for a “Bring Your Own Picnic and dessert to share” gathering.

PAC Fundraiser: Each year fundraising events are held to help financially support the events PAC sponsors.

PAC Meetings: This year, meetings will be held six times throughout the school year in order to help prepare for PAC events, receive an update from the Director, and gather for discussions.

Fall Festival: An annual tradition for the children to celebrate fall at school with their friends, teachers, and parents. The festival includes a “pumpkin patch,” pumpkin decorating, games, and fun.

Community Service Events: Brings the children and families together to provide support to our SYC families and teachers, as well as urgent needs within the broader community. Past examples include collecting food for the West Hartford Food Bank and collecting coats for the “Coats for Winter” drive.


Spring Auction: The big annual fundraiser to support SYC improvements brings the school community together for a festive evening of food, beverages, basket raffles, and silent and live auction sale items.

Staff Appreciation Week: An opportunity for the families to show their appreciation to the SYC staff with special activities throughout the week.

Spring Picnic: An end of the year picnic for the families and staff at SYC to share fun and friendship on Taylor’s Field.

Beth Bye Scholarship Fund: PAC teams with SYC and University of Saint Joseph staff to select a USJ student to be awarded money from the Beth Bye Scholarship Fund.
Lead Paint Advisory Yearly Notification
The School for Young Children

To: Parents, Teachers, Employees, and other personnel or their guardians

From: University of Saint Joseph
1678 Asylum Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117

The School for Young Children contains some lead painted surfaces (namely interior window sills, the round window outside of the gross motor room, and the area around the front and south side double doors). These surfaces are in good condition and should not present a hazard to children, unless the condition of the painted surfaces changes significantly or unless the children are allowed to mouth (bite or chew) the painted surfaces. The University of Saint Joseph will be conducting frequent inspections to ensure that paint remains in good condition. We ask you to assist us in trying to provide a safe school by doing the following:

1. Notify us if the condition of suspected or known lead paint changes (chipping, peeling, cracking or flaking).

2. All areas with suspect lead paint should be kept clean (washing the surfaces is the most effective.)

3. Children should be supervised carefully to ensure they are not chewing any suspect surfaces.