

Parent Handbook

Revised September 2020

**Parent Handbook of Programs, Policies and Procedures**

Welcome to St. Mary Villa Child Development Center!

The following information is intended to inform and guide you as we work together to provide the very best childcare experience and developmental opportunities for your child(ren).

We are dedicated to working with you and recognize the central importance of communication to our success. We encourage questions and comments. We invite compliments and criticisms.

All doors are always open to you; please visit when convenient, volunteer whenever possible and stay in touch with us.

**OUR MISSION**

St. Mary Villa, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization affiliated with the Catholic Church dedicated to providing affordable childcare, after-school care and educational programs for infants through Pre K of all faiths in a safe, healthy, nurturing and multicultural environment, promoting intellectual, physical, social and moral development of the child.

-Adopted by the St. Mary Villa Board of Trustees on April 25, 2006

**History**

The St. Mary Villa Child Development Center was opened to provide full-time childcare in September 1978 after having served the community as an orphanage for over 100 years. St. Mary Orphanage opened in May 1864 and moved to the White Bridge Road location in 1903. In September 2016, SMV moved to the current location at the St. Vincent de Paul location. In 1922, St. Mary Orphanage became a charter member of the United Way, and funding today is still provided in part by the United Way.

**General Program Description**

St. Mary Villa is a private, non-profit corporation licensed and monitored by the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services. The local Metro Nashville Departments of Health and Fire also license, inspect and approve our operations.

A summary of the State licensure standards are included as an attachment in this handbook and complete versions are available in the administrative offices at the Center or online at <http://www.tennessee.gov/humanserv/adfam/cc_main.htm>.

St. Mary Villa participates in the Tennessee Star Quality Program, earning the highest three-star rating for quality services that exceed minimum licensing standards; an annual report card that represents agency performance is issued and is displayed near the Center entrances.

St. Mary Villa serves over 200 children from six weeks of age to five years old in developmentally appropriate spaces from nursery to classrooms as well as offering plentiful outdoor play areas.

Our daily interactions and activities are based on age-appropriate developmental expectations and individual goals established for each child in conjunction with the family.

**Communications**

Parents can expect to receive daily verbal and written information regarding their child’s experiences.

Conversation with the classroom staff at arrival and departure are casual but important opportunities to share your child’s and parental expectations.

Conferences to set and review your child’s individual developmental goals will be scheduled three times a year. Conferences are used to address developmental progress, academics, behavioral or other concerns. Conferences can be requested when needed.

Parents and family members will be invited to participate in educational and awareness meetings on topics relevant to families and children, including child abuse prevention and recognition as well as the importance of limiting screen time and social and emotional development.

Daily and weekly activity and performance summaries will be available in the classroom.

Other communications may come via scrolling messages on the keypad when signing in or out, or written memos or emails.

Menus and activity plans will be posted for each classroom; activity schedules will include any planned video/movie presentations with notation of ratings when applicable.

Administrative and classroom staff is available whenever you have questions, compliments or concerns.

**Volunteers Encouraged and Welcome**

Parents are encouraged to participate in classroom activities and to collaborate with teachers to organize activities.

Special holiday or seasonal events are always center sponsored to eliminate pressure and expectations on family resources; however, family donations and participation are appreciated. Please collaborate with teachers to learn how to contribute.

Parents are urged to participate in spring and fall season playground maintenance days that include yard work such as mulching, planting and trimming as well as cleaning equipment.

**Fees**

St. Mary Villa fees are based on a “sliding scale” that changes with household income. A copy of the current scale is included in this handbook as an attachment.

Fees are determined based on documented annual gross household income, including any funds received from employment, child support, alimony, family contributions and other sources. Pay stubs and Internal Revenue Service documents are accepted as verification.

Families are required to complete an annual income statement for purposes of qualifying children for federal food subsidies.

Families are expected to report changes in household income whenever they occur, including loss of income or increased income that would affect their fee determination.

A fee statement is prepared and delivered to your center mail slot the first of each month.

Fees are charged on a monthly basis. Fees are due the first of each month, however parents may choose to pay in two payments, half on the first of the month and the remainder on the 15th of the month. Late fees will be assessed if payment is not received by close of business 5 days after the first Monday of the month and third Monday of the month.

Fees are charged and due regardless of absence due to illness or vacation.

Fee boxes located near the entrances should be used for checks or money orders. Cash payments are accepted in the business office between 8:00 and 4:00 Monday through Friday.

Families may request special fee consideration, such as a deferred payment plan, due to emergency circumstances and household problems affecting their ability to pay as agreed. Requests should be made to the Executive Director.

Failure to pay fees is grounds for dis-enrollment.

Failure to pay fees or arrange for payment may result in a referral to a collection service that will result in additional charges.

**Application and Enrollment**

A completed application and $25.00 fee are required to begin the admissions process or place your child on a waiting list.

At the time of enrollment, a $35.00 registration fee and $25.00 sleeping mat fee. All children need a sleeping mat except for infants.

Enrollment will begin with an orientation to the information in this handbook, a tour and introductions to staff and teachers.

Upon admission, parents are required to provide an up-to-date immunization record for children. Please be sure to update your child’s immunization annually.

Parents will be requested to complete forms that provide contact and emergency information as well as information on their child’s unique needs, expectations and issues to address in the transition. This is intended to be the beginning of a dialogue between staff and family that continues.

**Withdrawal and Dis-enrollment**

Notice of plans to withdraw a child from the program are requested as early as possible and in writing.

A minimum of two weeks’ notice is required. Failure to provide the required two weeks’ notice will result in an additional two weeks charge being added to the final bill.

A child may be dis-enrolled from the program if, in the judgment of classroom and administrative staff, the child is at risk or places others at risk of harm due to physical or behavioral conditions that are beyond the control of the program. Parents will be involved in efforts to ameliorate such conditions but when necessary given adequate notice and assistance in finding alternative appropriate care.

**Parking and Driving**

Please aware of cars entering and exiting the parking lot. Also, parents are unloading and loading children so please be conscious of your speed and children in the parking lot.

**Security**

St. Mary Villa is committed to providing a secure and safe environment for your child as well as peace of mind for the family.

Entrances to the program are controlled by keypad locks with keycards issued only to families and staff. These maybe subject to periodic change.

Areas of the premises are monitored by exterior and interior cameras.

Children are under the constant supervision of staff that is recognized as the first and most effective source of our security.

**Holiday and Training Calendar**

St. Mary Villa is closed for selected holidays and three days of in-service training each year.

The training days are scheduled within the year to coincide with professional and trade conventions and meetings; specific dates will be posted, and families informed with sufficient time to make alternative arrangements.

The following holidays are observed:

* New Year’s Day
* Good Friday
* Memorial Day
* Independence Day
* Labor Day
* Veteran’s Day
* Thanksgiving and the day after
* Christmas Eve
* Christmas Day
* New Year’s Eve (3 pm closure)

**Weather and Emergency Related Closings**

Expect us to be open!

St. Mary Villa intends to be open during all seasons and weather conditions; however, the Executive may determine when it is necessary to close or curtail operations because of winter storms, tornados, power failures, or other emergencies.

Information regarding closings will be shared on channel 2, Facebook and email.

If conditions or events require closing during a day of operations, parents will be contacted directly; however, children will remain in care under supervision in a safe setting until picked up by a responsible adult.

St. Mary will not dismiss a child in the middle of an emergency (example: tornado, lock down, etc.) for the safety of the children, parents, and staff.

If the St. Mary Campus must be evacuated due to an environmental or building emergency, teachers and children will be transported to the St. Ann’s School gymnasium, located at 5101 Charlotte Avenue.

**Arrival - Departure and Sign In/Out**

The Center is open Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Parent’s will use their assigned key card to enter the doors at the back of the building located near the parking lot.

Parent’s are asked to sign their child in/out at the kiosk using their personal number codes.

A sign-in and sign-out sheet in the classroom will also require parents to note the time of arrival and departure and a signature to verify.

Children will only be allowed to leave the Center with the parent(s) or authorized adults specified on the pick-up list. If an adult other than those specified arrives to pick up the child, the child will not be allowed to leave the premises except in emergency circumstances with specific, documented parent approval and proof of identity of other designated adults.

**Late Pick Up**

St. Mary Villa closes at 6 pm. If you are late pick up your child you will be charged $2.50 per minute and $25 for each 15-minute increment (6:15, 6:30, 6:45).

**Notice of Absence or Late Arrival**

Parents are requested to inform teachers as soon as possible of plans to be absent.

In the case of an unplanned absence, parents are expected to inform the center before 10 AM.

Children who arrive after 10 AM without prior notice may not be provided care without prior knowledge and a doctor’s note.

Children absent without notice for two weeks may be dis-enrolled from the program.

**Food**

Nutrition is an important part of the program. A nutritious breakfast, lunch, mid-morning juice, and mid-afternoon snack are served each day. The menu and food are planned in accordance with State Day Care and USDA CCFP regulations. Weekly menus are posted on bulletin boards. If a child requires a special diet due to food allergies, a doctor’s written statement is needed, along with a list of allowed and prohibited foods.

We will make every effort to accommodate religious and cultural dietary requirements. Please discuss your child’s needs with the administrative staff.

Meals are served family style in the classroom at a common table and provide rich opportunities for learning and socializing.

**Gold Sneaker**

St Mary Villa is a Gold Sneaker facility. This means that provide nutritious meals, a variety of fruits and vegetables. We also provide ample time for gross motor play as well as limited screen time. The following policies apply to all Gold Sneaker facilities:

* Physical activity for children ages three years and older must be a balance of structured and unstructured play, both indoors and outdoors (weather permitting) utilizing age appropriate activities
* St. Mary Villa will provide education (i.e., via parent meetings, provider newsletter articles, sharing of educational video resources, etc.) to families twice each year that addresses the importance of limiting screen time according to current American Academy of Pediatrics policy and the development of a Family Media Plan
* Children shall not be allowed to remain sedentary or to sit passively for more than 60 minutes continuously, except for scheduled rest or naptime
* The Executive Director shall take Go NAP SACC Self Assessments (Infant and Child Safety Physical Activity & Screen Time) to compare their physical activity practices to best practice standards
* St. Mary Villa staff must ensure physical activity is a positive experience for children and that it is never used negatively or to control behavior
* St. Mary Villa will ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including breastfeeding. All educators shall be trained to advocate for breastfeeding, safely prepare expressed breastmilk for feeding, feed infants according to their individual needs, and store expressed breast milk properly
* St. Mary Villa publicly displays their support for breastfeeding infants and mothers by posting signage or other publicly facing information.
* St. Mary Villa staff shall ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including adequate time for snack and meal consumption and age-appropriate portion size
* St. Mary Villa staff shall provide education to families twice each year that addresses nutritional learning experiences, with a focus on adequate time for snacks and meals and age-appropriate portion size
* All eating opportunities shall consist of a respect for the child and promotion of a positive attitude toward food
* St Mary Villa staff shall apply evidence-based early food preference learning strategies such as introducing healthy foods, repeatedly pairing new healthy food choices with foods children already like and modeling consumption and enjoyment of healthy foods
* St Mary Villa campus shall be free of all tobacco and tobacco-related products, including smoking, smokeless and electronic products.  The campus is inclusive of all vehicles used to transport enrolled children, all outdoor spaces, and all indoor locations, whether children are present. Employees and volunteers may not use tobacco or tobacco-related products while off-campus at provider-related activities (i.e. fieldtrips, walks, and all other outdoor activities)
* Employees who use tobacco products while off campus are required to change clothes and wash hands thoroughly prior to interacting with children
* “No Smoking” signs shall be posted conspicuously at each St. Mary Villa entrance, as required by state law

**Confidentiality**

Personal financial, medical, family and child information will be held in confidence and not shared outside or in the center beyond those you have entrusted with the information as responsible for administrative and child caring functions.

Staff is, however, professionally and legally obligated to report suspected child abuse and neglect, including identifying information and specifics of their concern.

With parental consent in the enrollment packet: 1) photographs of children may be used in public relations, website graphics, newspapers and other publications; and 2) pictures may be taken of center events such as birthdays, holiday activities and special celebrations.

**Discipline and Behavior Management**

The purpose of discipline is to help children gain self-control and understand their behavior including its’ consequences for themselves and others.

Children should know what is expected of them and limits to acceptable behavior before activities and events.

The application of discipline is recognized as an important teaching and learning opportunity.

Methods of discipline used include:

1. Reinforcing acceptable behavior (I like the way you are climbing).

2. Reasoning (when you run inside you may fall).

3. Removal from an activity with redirection (when you hit someone with a block, you cannot play with blocks).

4. Taking away privileges if close to the time the inappropriate behavior occurred.

1. One on one attention separated from the group until self-control is achieved.

Rewards can be used to reinforce positive behavior (ex. stickers and stars, praise, being a helper, first to do something special.

Food, toileting, or outside play (which includes swimming) should not be used as part of any disciplinary action.

Corporal punishment in any form is not used under any circumstances.

**Referral for Evaluation**

Children presenting medical, behavioral, learning or emotional problems that challenge their ability to participate in and benefit from the St. Mary Villa program may be recommended for evaluation by an appropriate professional or organization, such as the Metro Nashville Public Schools in their Special Education program.

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the child’s needs and identify the best service site and provider to meet those needs.

St. Mary Villa is committed to serving a wide range of children with special needs and will work with families and other professionals to provide the care needed.

Children who have needs beyond the competence of the center or who present risks to themselves or others that are beyond the control of the center will be dis-enrolled with adequate notice and assistance in obtaining recommended care elsewhere.

**Illness and Medical Treatment**

If a child becomes ill or injured while in our care, every possible effort will be made to contact parents or other designated emergency contacts.

With your signed consent on a form in the registration packet, we will administer first aid, including CPR by trained staff, and involve qualified medical personnel when considered necessary.

If necessary, St. Mary Villa carries insurance for injuries that occur on the campus.

1. Our program will not keep actively sick children, and it is the parent's responsibility to make alternative arrangements in the event of illness. A sick child must be picked up within an hour from the time a parent is called.
2. A written statement of good health from your child's pediatrician will be required in order to return when:a. A child has had a diagnosed with a communicable disease (strep, head lice, pink eye, impetigo). We do not require a statement when a child has had chicken pox, but we will do a visual check to make sure that all the pox are dried.b. A child has undergone surgery or has been hospitalized.

c. Covid-19

Please do not bring a contagious child into the program when picking up a sibling. If your child becomes sick over the weekend or in the evening, please call and let your child's teacher know that his/her absence is due to illness.

FEVER OF 100.4 DEGREES (not related to immunizations): \* Child cannot return until he or she has been free of fever for 24 hours.

\* We do not give fever suppressants without a written note from the doctor.

FEVER DUE TO IMMUNIZATIONS:

A shot record will serve as verification of an immunization, and we will give fever suppressants with a doctors note and medicine provided for up to a 24-hour period.

DIARRHEA & VOMITING: \* We will call parents after two episodes of diarrhea or vomiting.

\* Child cannot return until 24 hours after last episode of diarrhea or vomiting.

\* If diarrhea is a result of medication, teething, or allergies, the pediatrician must specify this to us either in writing or through a phone call before the child can return to school.EAR INFECTION: \* Child can return to school the next day if fever is below 101 degrees but needs to bring medication and verification of doctor visit.

COLDS: \* If child has: a constant runny nose, persistent cough, or green mucus from nose, we will request medication.RASHES:\* If child develops rash and the cause is not known, we will ask that the doctor check out the rash and verify in writing or through a phone call that it is not contagious.

\* We will request lotion or salve to treat poison ivy, poison oak, or bad chigger, flea or mosquito bites.

**Illness**

Chicken Pox

Diarrhea

Fifth Disease (slapped cheek disease)

Giardia

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

Herpangina

Head Lice

Impetigo

Influenza (Flu)

Pharyngitis, Viral

Pink Eye

Pinworm

Pneumonia, bacterial

Ringworm

Roseola

Rotavirus

Respiratory Virus

Scabies

Scarlet Fever

Shingles

Strep Throat

Thrush

Covid-19

**Return Policy**

Return when poxes are dry and crusted

Return when symptom free 24 hours

Return with MD statement approving return

Return when symptom free 24 hours

Return with MD statement approving return

Return when symptom free 24 hours

Return with treatment when nit free

Return with MD statement of antibiotic

treatment

Return when symptom free 24 hours

Return when symptom free for 24 hours

Return with MD statement of treatment

Return with MD statement of treatment

Return with MD statement

Return with treatment

Return with MD statement not contagious

Return when diarrhea free for 24 hours

Return when fever free for 24 hours.

Return with MD statement of treatment

Return with MD statement

Return with MD statement

Return 24 hrs. after antibiotic treatment begins

Return with MD statement during treatment

Return with MD statement