

SAINT RITA PRESCHOOL

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2010-2011



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INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Saint Rita Preschool is to educate and form our children to be disciples of the Lord. Saint Rita Preschool is committed to the teaching of Catholic Christian values and quality education in the early childhood developmental theories of growth.

HISTORY

Saint Rita Preschool was founded in 2004 by four friends Ali Barrett, Kelly Donnelly, Christy Gibson and Mifflin Hollyday. Under the guidance and generosity of Father Tom Collins and the Saint Rita Parishioners we have been blessed in being able to provide a great Early Childhood Catholic Education to our community and their families.

CLASSROOMS/DAILY SCHEDULE

The classrooms we currently use were originally designed for the purpose of office space. We have redesigned them as four preschool classrooms:

- Art, Science & Cooking
- Block Area & Dramatic Play
- Math & Literacy
- Music & Computers

Each classroom is used as a base room for the students divided into three groups of 2's, 3's and 4's. The daily schedule will have the students rotating from these classrooms in which they will engage in a variety of creative learning experiences.

Daily Schedule

8:30-8:40	All classes together for morning time in the Mary Star of the Sea Room
8:40-9:10	Classroom 1 (Base Room)
9:10-9:50	Classroom 2
9:50-10:10	Whole School Snack
10:10-10:50	Classroom 3 or Playground
10:50-11:30	Classroom 3 or Playground
11:30-12:00	Whole School Lunch
12:00-12:40	Classroom 4 or Playground
12:40-1:20	Classroom 4 or Playground
1:20-1:30	Base Classrooms

CURRICULUM

OVERVIEW

Saint Rita Preschool follows *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* to help plan and implement a developmentally appropriate program. We supplement our 3K and 4K programs with another curriculum called *Handwriting Without Tears*. We refer to our school as a community school meaning that our families are very much a part of our program. Our goal is to present your child with an opportunity to expand in the four child developmental theories of growth: the social, the emotional, the cognitive and the physical. Using these developmental theories teachers and children will collaborate to form questions and explore materials through project work, creative themes, center areas and child initiated play.

Child Development Learning Goals

Social and Emotional:

- Learn to trust others
- Gain independence
- Gain self-control
- Take initiative and assert themselves in a socially acceptable manner

Cognitive:

- Enhance through dramatic play
- Block building
- Manipulating objects
- Painting and language activities

Physical:

- Develop motor skills.
 - Gross Motor: Running, balancing, jumping and climbing.
 - Fine Motor: Eye hand coordination, string beads, cutting with scissors and writing.

CURRICULUM GUIDE

Environment

The teachers set up the classroom environments into learning centers where children can decide for themselves what they are going to play, explore, or create. The different learning centers include: art center, writing center, science and discovery center, reading center, dramatic play center, computers and block center. Throughout the day, the students will be able to make choices and select their own themes, materials and activities that will enhance social, emotional, cognitive and physical areas of development. An explanation of what the children can learn in each of these areas is posted in the area and also in the Curriculum Binders for each classroom. The younger the child, the less defined these areas are going to be. The teachers and students will change and/or add different props and materials in the environment as well as rotate toys and manipulatives as often as needed.

Curriculum Binders

The teachers will create lesson plans weekly that reflect the student's interest, daily activities and changes in the classroom environment. The teachers will give their lesson plans to the Director weekly to review and then place them in the Curriculum Binder. The teachers will post the lesson plans on the bulletin boards outside the classroom. The teachers and students may carry out the lesson plan theme or project activity for a week or longer.

The lessons may be written by the teacher yet they are child initiated. The teachers will provide the learning tools and allow the students to carry the experience on their own with guidance rather than directive learning. Some of the plans may include teacher directed activities, such as morning group time, reading time or specials (such as music, foreign language or creative movement instruction). The children are encouraged to, but never made to participate in any activity. Our teachers may also change their lesson plans to adapt to the learning interests and needs of the students.

Individual Portfolios

An important part of our curriculum is the individual planning that the teachers do for the children. Each child has their own individual portfolio that includes their drawings and artwork collected over time. The portfolios also include anecdotal records, where the teachers record the progress of each child by using observation and assessment tools ("Creative Curriculum.") The teacher plans goals and activities for each child in the areas of child development. These activities are based on the individual needs of each child. The portfolio stays with

each child as long as they attend Saint Rita Preschool and will be given to the parents once the child graduates or leaves our school.

Through the use of these portfolios, the teachers can identify difficulties in behavior and development and also adapt their curriculum plans to their planning. If the teachers have any developmental concerns in any of the areas, they will contact the parents to discuss them. Parents are always encouraged to read their child's Individual Portfolio.

Portfolio review occurs two times a year at Saint Rita Preschool. The teacher will schedule parental conferences to review the child's portfolio and progress both in the winter and the spring.

SCHOOL BAGS AND SHIRTS

Each child who attends Saint Rita Preschool will receive a T-shirt, a handbook, a school directory and two school bags. The T-shirt will be printed with the Saint Rita Logo. We highly recommend that your child wear the T-shirt to school, although it is not required. Additional shirts can be purchased and ordered through the Director. The handbook will contain all pertinent information you will need for the school year. The directory will contain contact information for all of our children and parents of Saint Rita Preschool as well as our administration.

Here is the use of the two bags we give you:

The smaller natural canvas bag will stay at school with a change of weather appropriate clothes, shoes and diapers if needed. Please check bag daily and replace items as needed.

The larger brown bag will travel with your child to and from school. Please attach any important notes intended for your child's teacher to this bag. Also, please check the bag daily to discover examples of your child's work which can be displayed at home and important notes from the teacher regarding upcoming events.

Dress Code

Your child will be comfortable in PLAY clothes. Bear in mind that we will be playing in the sand, water and with paint that may not wash out. Please **do not** send your child to school in flip flops, jelly shoes, water shoes or open toe sandals because they are unsafe particularly on the playground. Children must wear closed toe shoes (i.e. tennis shoes, sandals with straps, etc.). We do allow the children to go barefoot on occasion for special activities. If you have any

reservations about this, please let us know. All children must wear shoes on the playground!

We require that you send us a complete set of weather appropriate clothing for your child. Please label all clothing with your child's name. Accidents do happen during water play and painting time. Your child will feel much more at ease knowing their own set of extra clothing is in their bag.

Please apply sunscreen and/or bug spray before you bring your child to school.

COMMUNICATION

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are offered twice a year. Appointments may be made directly with the teacher. Communication between parents and teachers is extremely important, therefore, parent conferences can be scheduled throughout the year as needed.

General Communication

The staff of Saint Rita Preschool wants to build a collaborative partnership with our parents in educating and caring for your children. This partnership will need to be based on trust and a mutual understanding. We do this informally through communicating verbally about your child on a daily basis. Please take some time to talk to your child's teacher everyday. **Be sure to inform teachers of any changes in your child's life (moves, illness, parent out of town, etc.) so that they can be prepared for possible changes in your child's behavior. If possible, please inform your child's teacher in advance of any future absences or please call the Director if your child will be absent unexpectedly.**

Most information for parents (newsletter, information sheets, notices, etc.) is sent home directly with the student. **Be sure to check your child's bag daily for important notes or information. Also, please read our information bulletin board in the hallway for any school related issues.**

To enhance this partnership further, the staff will provide communication through:

Weekly Lesson Plans-all classes have weekly lesson plans. These will be posted on the class bulletin board along with any other important information related to the class activities.

Newsletters-a monthly newsletter will be written by the Director with important information and calendar events. The teachers will provide monthly newsletters informing parents about the classroom themes and activities. These will be found in your child's school bag.

Parent Meetings-as needed, the Director will plan to have meetings with parents and staff to discuss issues common to a majority of parents. Notices will be sent home informing parents of such meetings and topics. Suggestions for meetings are always welcome. (Example: car seat safety)

Parent/Teacher Meetings and Conferences-formal Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice a year for the purpose of discussing the child's developmental progress. If needed, at the request of the parent or teacher, parent/teacher meetings can be scheduled as often as needed if concerns or problems arise.

Parent Volunteers-parents are highly encouraged and are asked to come in to our school to help the teachers in the classrooms or to do a special project/activity with the children. If there is a special project you would like to do with your child's class, please coordinate a date/time with your child's teacher. Please see page 19 for more information about our parent volunteer program.

Procedures for Parents with Concerns

The staff and board understand that parents sometimes have questions or concerns about the program or policies. These procedures are made to make sure problems and concerns are taken care of quickly and effectively. The following procedures should be followed to address any concerns you may have:

1. Parents should first talk to their child's teacher about any questions or concerns being careful not to talk about children in front of them or other parents. Please feel free to talk to your child's teacher briefly at arrival and if you need more time then please schedule a private meeting with the teacher. Discussions of concerns between families and staff about specific children must be held in private. At any time, the parent or teacher can request the Director to be present at the meetings.
2. If after talking with the teacher a parent feels the issue has not been resolved and/or if questions remain, please contact the Director.
3. If there are any further concerns about the same subject then the Director will call on the Board of Directors and/or Father Tom Collins to offer any further assistance to the problem. A final determination of the problem will be discussed with the parent.

Custody Concerns

Because custody issues can be contentious, the Board of Directors will deal with these delicate situations on a case by case basis. The Board will always put the interest of the child first.

- **Preschool must be advised and given a copy of all legal documentation on custody rights before they are implemented.**
- If a parent arrives early or late or the child will be absent, the Director or the child's teacher should be notified as a common courtesy. In the event the Director and/or the teacher are unable to be reached, a message should be left at the Church office.
- Custody arrangements and visitation schedules must be fully disclosed to the Director and the teacher via direct communication. **Legal Documentation of the agreement must be on file with the Director.** Any changes to the agreement on file regarding the scheduling must be directly communicated to the Director and a legal copy of the changed information should be given to the school immediately.
- Parent information (such as newsletters, notices, etc.) will be sent home to the primary custody parent. Written documentation should be provided to the Director and the teacher of any requests for any additional copies of school information regarding the child from the primary custody parent.
- **Parental Responsibility Clause:** We acknowledge that relationships can become difficult, particularly during custody negotiations. Our basic expectations at Saint Rita Preschool of parental conduct on the campus include courtesy to all parents and staff members and age appropriate language at all times. Profanity, crude and foul language and rudeness to others have no place in front of our children, other parents and staff and this behavior will not be tolerated.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT & DISCIPLINE STATEMENT

The Saint Rita Preschool teachers will create a safe, active, age appropriate environment for your child. They will set clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior. The children will not be "subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating, frightening, or associated with food, rest or toileting; spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited by all child care personnel." This is per Florida Administration Code 65C-22.001(8)(b).

Teachers encourage appropriate behavior by reminding the children of the rules and rationale appropriate to their age. When inappropriate behavior does occur such as hitting, pushing, biting, calling names or teasing, etc. the teachers will discuss the situation with the child, redirect them to a more acceptable behavior

or activity and apply logical consequences appropriate to their age and developmental level. When a child's response is aggressive, unacceptable, or harmful the teacher will intervene quickly and apply the previously mentioned strategies. The teachers will use positive guidance in talking to the children. They will guide the children to resolve conflicts and model appropriate skills that will help children begin to solve their problems on their own. Older children are encouraged to verbalize their wants and feelings; teachers help younger children recognize their feelings. Physical punishment, harsh or humiliating techniques will not be utilized or tolerated. While at the center, we ask that parents not use harsh discipline tactics either. Parents may not discipline other children at our school. It is the job of the teachers to handle classroom behaviors.

Most often the teachers will anticipate and eliminate potential problems before they happen but they will not be able to see or stop every inappropriate behavior that occurs. If another child hurts a child an **Incident Report** will be written and signed by the parents of both children, the teacher and the Director; the teachers will not disclose who the children were and we ask parents to respect this. The report will include what happened and how the incident was treated.

Upon serious incidents such as broken skin due to bite or a scratch, the parents will be notified immediately. By permission of the parent in writing (**Medication Form prior to an incident**) an antibiotic ointment can be applied. If it is a biting incident and the skin is significantly open, the child should see a physician to reduce the risk of infection.

Administrative Discipline

A student whose behavior becomes more than what the teacher can handle will be sent to the Director. A student/Director conference will result in a notice to the parents advising of the discipline issues and requesting a conference with the parents immediately. In the event of consistent unacceptable discipline behaviors with a student, the Director disciplinary actions may include immediate parent notification, parent conferences with the teacher and the Director, requiring the parent to come to school to stay with the child for the entire day.

SCHOOL POLICY AND DIRECTOR'S RIGHT TO AMEND:

Any student action that is not in keeping with the philosophy/objective of Saint Rita Preschool is subject to the review of the administration and may lead to withdrawal from school.

Since situations can arise that were not foreseen at the time of writing this Handbook, the school reserves the right to initiate, change or modify the policies as needed. Parents and students will be notified of any amendments.

The Director, the Board of Directors and the Pastor are the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rules for just cause at his and/or her discretion.

SCHOOL HOURS

Monday – Friday: 8:30am – 1:30pm

Drop off procedure: We request that you arrive with your child in the Mary Star of the Sea Room **by 8:30am**. Please stay in the Mary Star of the Sea Room with your child and your child’s bag until your teacher meets you at 8:30am. Our teachers arrive early to ready themselves and their rooms for the day so if you do arrive early please wait with your child in the Mary Star of the Sea Room until 8:30am. Circle/prayer time begins **promptly at 8:30am!** This is a crucial part of our day beginning with our prayer and other special activities with the classes. This is a special bonding time with the teachers and the students. **We want each child to be able to participate in this special time!**

We understand there will be doctor appointments, vacations and such, so please communicate in writing of any advance tardiness or absences that you may have with your child’s teacher.

We will be locking the classroom doors for security purposes only since we now have connecting doors within the inside of the classrooms.

Pick-up procedure: Children need to be picked up **promptly at 1:30pm!** Please make yourself informed of our car line pick up procedure and please be sure all adults who pick up your child are informed. Our children are affected when they are the last one to be picked up at the end of the day. The following late fee scale will apply:

1:31pm.....	\$1.00 late fee
1:32pm.....	\$2.00 late fee
1:33pm.....	\$3.00 late fee
1:34pm.....	\$4.00 late fee
1:35pm.....	\$5.00 late fee
1:41pm-1:45pm.....	\$20.00 late fee
1:46pm-2:00pm.....	\$50.00 late fee
2:01pm and later.....	\$100.00 late fee

All late fees must be paid directly to the teachers on duty at the time you arrive to pick up your child!!

For the protection of all of our families at Saint Rita Preschool, students should never be picked up and ride with another parent/adult unless the parent has provided the school with specific written instructions prior to dismissal (**Dismissal Form**). **A PARENT WHO AGREES TO DRIVE A STUDENT(S) ASSUMES LIABILITY FOR THAT/THOSE STUDENT(S).**

FEES & ENROLLMENT

Your tuition check is due by the **5th** of each month (September – May).

Please make checks payable to: Saint Rita Preschool.

The registration (non-refundable) and the supply and insurance (non-refundable) fees are exclusive of your monthly tuition and are paid once a year.

- There is a **\$15.00 late fee** for payments received after the **5th** of each month.
- A student's attendance at school may be terminated if tuition is two months in arrears unless the Board of Directors approves a payment plan. Parents who foresee a problem are responsible to contact the Director.
- Please drop your tuition checks into the drop box located in the hallway of the school. Please ask the Director for assistance locating the drop box.
- We consider your child to be enrolled for the entire school year. **We require a thirty (30) day notice in writing if you wish to withdraw your child from school. Tuition must be paid for the month following withdrawal notification.**
- Parents may request to change the days a child attends school. Request will be granted if the space is available and the Director and Board approves of the change.
- Fee schedule is included in the back of the handbook

ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT POLICY

The mission of the school is to act as an agent of Catholic Christian formation and therefore the school will only accept those children whose parents demonstrate an understanding of the specific Christian nature of our school and a desire to participate in that mission.

Saint Rita Preschool will first accept children who are contributing Saint Rita Catholic Church parishioners and siblings of existing students. We will serve the public as space allows.

Some students may not be accepted because the school's educational program and facilities are not able to meet the needs of the child.

In matter of admission and registration, the decisions of the Director, Board of Directors and Father Tom are final.

In order for your child to re-register for the following year, the parent is responsible for completing the registration form and submitting the non-refundable, registration fee per student by the deadline noted on the registration form.

The following is the age requirement per class...

- Children in the 2 year old program must be 2 by September 1st
- Children in the 3 year old program must be 3 by September 1st
- Children in the 4 year old program must be 4 by September 1st

(The Director reserves the right to adapt classroom age guidelines listed above as necessary to avoid scheduling/classroom occupancy conflicts.)

Registration Preferences

- 1) Siblings of families currently enrolled
- 2) Sons and daughters of teachers and staff members have priority after siblings.
- 3) Contributing St. Rita Church Members
- 4) Children on waiting list/application list. Parents will be notified as to a student's acceptance or placement as spaces become available.

Enrollment Procedures

Each family enrolling in the school will meet first with the Director to complete and review the following:

1. Registration Application-parent will complete the registration form and pay the non-refundable registration fee.
2. Admission Overview-parent and child will visit and tour the school to review the following information: center schedule, hours, fees, meals, health policies, supervision policies, dismissal and pick up policies, philosophy and curriculum and items the parents need to bring to school for the child.
3. Health Appraisal-each child needs an updated yearly health appraisal. A physical exam (yellow form) and an immunization (blue form) are

required by state regulations. The student cannot attend school without these updated forms. If a form expires during the school year then the child may not return to school until the Director receives the updated forms.

4. Family/Child Questionnaire-parents will complete an informational form answering questions about the child and their family, what goals parents may have for their children while enrolled at the school and what traditions or customs the family may have. We use this questionnaire to become more familiar with the family as a whole and to incorporate into our curriculum the unique cultural backgrounds and goals you have for your child.
5. Parent Orientation-after forms have been completed; the parent(s) meet with the teacher to discuss the routine and the procedures of the classroom the child is entering. Saint Rita Preschool requires that the child also visit the classroom at least once before attendance begins. The parents will stay with their child for orientation to spend time with the teacher and to explore the centers. All children transition differently so the teachers work with the parents to make each transition as easy as possible.
6. The first separation can be very upsetting for both the child and the parent. We want to assure you how quickly this passes. The adjustment is far more successful if we do not have parents lingering in the classroom at drop off. Please plan to drop your child in your child off, give kisses, give hugs, say goodbye and leave.

HEALTH FORMS

As of July 1, 2001, all children entering preschool will be required to have the varicella (chickenpox) vaccination. A complete **physical exam form (yellow)** and **immunization form (blue)** are required for all children entering our school. We must have these forms, on file, for your child to begin school. This is necessary in order for our school to be licensed. **The State of Florida requires both forms to be submitted within 30 days of your child's enrollment.** The student cannot attend school without this important document.

These forms must be updated each year and given to the Director when the school year begins. If a form has expired, the parent is responsible for renewing the forms with the child's doctor and providing the updated forms to the Director. **The child cannot return to school until the forms have been updated.**

SICKNESS

SICK CHILD POLICY

Children may not return to school until 24 hours after a fever has broken. If your child requires to be on an antibiotic then the child must be on it for 24 hours before returning to school.

DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF HE OR SHE HAS HAD ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS IN THE LAST 24 HOURS:

Diarrhea

Unidentified rash-rash must be identified and treated before returning.

Fever-temperature elevation of 101 degrees or more

Vomiting-more than one occurrence in 24 hours

Parents will be notified if their child has any of the previously mentioned symptoms and the parent notified is expected to pick up the child within one hour. An **Illness Report** will be filled out by the teacher and signed by the parent as to the symptoms of the child. The school reserves the right to request proof of treatment such as a doctor's release. If your child will be absent, please notify the Director/Teacher.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease, all parents will be notified by an **Illness Alert** posted on the bulletin board. Parents should report all communicable illnesses to the Director as soon as possible. The name of the child who is ill will not be given to other parents.

Children with contagious diseases must not attend the school during the contagious period.

Common guidelines for returning are:

- **STREP THROAT** – 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
- **MUMPS** – 9 days after onset of swelling
- **CHICKEN POX OR SHINGLES** – 7 days from onset of rash or until all lesions are crusted
- **INFLUENZA** – until all symptoms are resolved
- **IMPETIGO** – 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
- **HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE** - after fever and blisters are gone

- **COLDS** – after continuous cough ends and there is no purulent discharge from eyes and nose
- **CONJUNCTIVITIS** (pink eye) – 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
- **LICE** – 24 hours after treatment begins and all nits are removed

MEDICATION

We must know if your child has any allergies or special medical problems. **If your child has any type of food allergy you will need to send a snack to school for them.**

The administering of medication to a child outside the doctor's office or health institution is a parental responsibility and should not be delegated to school personnel except under unusual circumstances. Parents should ask their physicians if it is possible to prescribe medication so that it can be administered at home. **Only when absolutely necessary is the school willing to accept responsibility for administering medications, and under the following guidelines:**

The school will never administer/dispense medicines (**including "over the counter" drugs**) to a student without specific authorization by **BOTH a licensed physician and the parent(s) of the student.** An "Authorization of Medication" form must be completed and submitted by the parent. The name of the medication and the dosage must be indicated on this form.

Medications to be dispensed by the school must be labeled with the child's name and the exact dosages. All medications will remain in a secure location. Medications of any kind including ointments, lip balm, pills, vitamins, or liquids may not be placed in a child's lunch box or carried in the student's pockets or school bag.

Sunscreen/Bug Spray falls into this category as well.

EMERGENCY

Emergency Procedures

We have developed procedures to ensure the safety of your child in case of an emergency. These procedures and evacuation routes are posted at the door of each classroom. Please read them. Local police and fire authorities have been notified of our location and assure speedy reactions to any emergency. The

teachers are all trained in First Aid and CPR. Monthly fire drills are also conducted at the school.

If any child should need emergency medical care, he/she will be transported to Sacred Heart ER by ambulance and parents will be contacted immediately. The Director/Teacher will accompany the child and remain with the child until the parents arrive.

For minor injuries, first aid kits are on hand and the teachers will clean the injury with soap and water, apply ice, etc. Teachers are not permitted to use any antibiotic ointment or gels unless the parent has given written consent (**Medication Form**) prior to the injury. All minor injuries that occur are reported to the parent on an Incident Report for the parent, the teacher and the Director to sign and place in the child's file at school. The report will explain what happened and how the injury was treated. We alert parents by phone on an individual basis as needed.

BAD WEATHER DAYS

When the threat of weather is in the area, our school will follow the Walton County School District closings. You may also check with the Church office for any other closings by calling 267-2558 or 830-5679.

STUDENT INFORMATION

SNACK AND LUNCH

If your child has any type of food allergy, the parent is responsible for notifying the school in writing. All students must bring a snack and a lunch to school in a brown bag or lunchbox. **Please include a separate drink with snack and lunch.** We ask that you save any hard candy items for your child as special after school snacks. All lunchboxes, cups, etc. should be labeled with the child's name. If there are any special instructions to follow for your child's lunch, such as heating, please attach a note to the lunchbox with instructions. **Also, please include any necessary utensils (plastic) that your child might need for his/her lunch.**

BATHROOM NEEDS

For those children who are potty trained – We encourage you to visit the bathrooms with your child to familiarize them with the sinks, soap, paper towels and stalls. We are always there to help and change if there are accidents, direct hand washing, etc. Please send changes of underwear in your child's bag.

For those children in diapers – Please provide diapers for your child in the extra bag kept at school. Please label all diapers with your child’s name. We will notify you when the supply needs to be replenished. We would like for all our students to be potty trained by the age of three.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are very important to you and your child and we will be glad to help you celebrate. If you would like to bring a special birthday snack, please make arrangements with your child’s teacher. We will celebrate at snack time or lunch time depending on our day. Suggested snacks are individually wrapped cheese cubes, cut-up fruit, popsicles, rice crispy treats, donuts, cookies or cupcakes.

Please do not send hard candy items, gum, nuts or peanut butter products.

If you plan to have a birthday party for your child outside of school and you plan to invite all students in your child’s class then we welcome you to hand out your child’s invitations at school. If you do not intend to invite all students then please handle your invitations outside of school.

SHARING TREASURED TOYS

We ask that you do not allow your child to bring toys to school. The teachers may have Show and Tell Days at their discretion. It’s hard to share them with all of our friends and they are often lost or damaged.

Saint Rita Preschool provides ample appropriate play materials for the children. At no time should toy guns, swords or weapons of any kind be brought from home. Security items such as dolls, teddy bears or blankets are always accepted. Books from home are also welcome.

LIBRARY

Parents and children are welcome to borrow books from our school library. If you do decide to borrow a book then please sign the book(s) out with your child’s teacher.

PRAYERS

We pray together with the children throughout the day, but especially in the morning and before snack and lunch. The prayers are posted in the back of this handbook. We ask that you say the prayers with your child at home.

FIELD TRIPS

Unfortunately, Saint Rita Preschool does not go on field trips. The children will take excursions on the church grounds. There are many useful resources here including special visits from people in the community. We often times are blessed to have special musicians, artists, religious instructors and other educators who come in to do activities with the children. We also have the local Fire, Police and Health Department come in to do safety workshops with the children.

SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures of the students will be taken in the fall and spring each year. Purchase of the pictures by parents is optional. Parents will be given picture information accordingly.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

USE OF STUDENT PICTURES AND INFORMATION

Parent(s) or Guardian(s) of students who attend Saint Rita Preschool grant permission for all photographs taken during the school year to be used by Saint Rita Preschool for either publicity or advertising.

Saint Rita Preschool reserves the right to use pictures and student information in reporting school publications on the Saint Rita Website for publicity and/or advertising. If you object to this policy, you may exclude your child(ren) by written request to the Director.

FINGERPRINTING

According to the Department of Children and Families and the Diocese, all staff are required to be fingerprinted and background checked before hiring. We also require all members of Saint Rita Preschool Board be fingerprinted as they frequently interact with the children.

Any parent or adult who intends to have routine contact with the students is required to be fingerprinted and background checked before working with the students.

Parents who are not fingerprinted are not permitted to be left alone with the students for any reason; therefore, a teacher should accompany the parent while with the class.

CELL PHONE

In an effort to reduce distraction and disruptions, we ask that parents **refrain from bringing cell phones into the school building**. If you must bring your phone into school then please have it adjusted it to a "silent" setting. Please do not use your phone in car line when picking your child up from school.

WEB SITE

Please check out our website to view all of our special church and preschool information, activities and events at www.saintritaparish.org.

PARENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

We believe our school is built upon the relationships between our parents and our school. Parent involvement is one of many factors which contribute to the success of our school. Because of this belief, we are suggesting eight hours of volunteer time per family. You will be given more detailed information about our parent volunteer program at our parent orientation.

REPORTING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

CHILD ABUSE

Florida law requires that persons who work with children and “have reason to believe, on the basis of their medical, professional, or other training and experience, that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is a victim of child abuse” are required to report suspected child abuse to the Child Abuse Hotline. They are also required to notify the person in charge of the institution of suspected abuse and to make a written report. All staff members are oriented as to this policy.

Child Abuse is defined as: serious physical or mental injury that is not explained by the available medical history as being accidental; or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation; or serious physical neglect of a child under 18 years of age.

We require for all children while on Saint Rita Preschool property to be safely buckled into the backseat or in a car seat. Our children are our primary concern and we never like to see them not safely restrained in a car seat in the back seat of a vehicle.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The DCF regulations state that a staff person “may not disclose information concerning a child or family, except in the course of inspections and investigations by agents of the Department.” Therefore, the staff must keep confidentiality concerning children at all times. The staff will not disclose information regarding the children as to which the child has an illness (although, the illness itself will be posted), which child is biting or behaving inappropriately in the room, or the developmental progress of other children.

In order to provide mutual respect and consideration for other children and families, we ask that parents not discuss other people’s children, classroom

situations, or teachers while within the Saint Rita grounds or on campus. Please follow the PROCEDURES FOR CONCERNS if any questions or problems arise.

HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

The last official act of enrollment and acceptance of each student of Saint Rita Preschool is the signing of a contract that states this handbook has been read and accepted as the governing vehicle between home and school. This contract must be returned as soon as possible. The form "Handbook Governance Agreement Clause" can be found at the end of this Parent/Student Handbook.

Both parents/legal guardians are required to sign this agreement. Two of these forms are provided for you. If you need additional forms, please go to the website (www.saintritarish.org) and click on St. Rita Preschool Handbook. Each form is to be returned to each student's teacher. If the handbook agreement form is not signed and returned, a conference with the school administration will be scheduled to determine appropriate action.

**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
Handbook Governance Agreement Form**

We have read the Saint Rita Preschool Parent/Student Handbook and we agree to be governed by it. Parent Signatures are below and we understand that my child's form will be kept on file with his/her teacher.

Student's Name (Please Print)

Parent Signature

Parent Name (Please Print)

Parent Signature

Parent Name (Please Print)

Student's Teacher

Date

Please return this form to your child's teacher as soon as possible (within the first week of school) after you have read the Parent/Student Handbook. If you have more than one student, please fill out a form on each student in your family. Thank you! We appreciate your cooperation.

**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
Handbook Governance Agreement Form**

We have read the Saint Rita Preschool Parent/Student Handbook and we agree to be governed by it. Parent Signatures are below and we understand that my child's form will be kept on file with his/her teacher.

Student's Name (Please Print)

Parent Signature

Parent Name (Please Print)

Parent Signature

Parent Name (Please Print)

Student's Teacher

Date

Please return this form to your child's teacher as soon as possible (within the first week of school) after you have read the Parent/Student Handbook. If you have more than one student, please fill out a form on each student in your family. Thank you! We appreciate your cooperation.

The following prayers are those that will be said with your child while at Saint Rita Preschool. We encourage you to pray with your child each day. Thank you.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

**In the name of the Father,
And of the Son,
And of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

GRACE BEFORE MEALS

**Bless us, O Lord,
And these your gifts,
Which we are about to receive
From your bounty.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

MORNING PRAYER

**Dear Lord,
We thank you for the morning light,
And for the dark skies at night.
For rest and food and loving care,
And all that makes the day so fair.**

**Help us to do the things we should,
To be to others kind and good.
In all we do in work or play,
To grow more loving every day.
Amen.**

Saint Rita Preschool Staff and Board Members

Saint Rita Church office 267-2558

Saint Rita kitchen 267-1145

Director

Ali Barrett 830-5679

Board of Directors

**Sister O'Connell
Jackie Adams
Mary Pat Fortson
Venus Roberts
Ruth Anne Stevens
Memori Spence
Alea Dragon
Kristen Mitchell**

Staff

**Cindy Gallion 4K Teacher
Tina Abicca 3K Teacher
Lisa Brooks 3K Teacher
Roxie Hebson 2K Teacher**

Pastor

Father Tom Collins 267-2558

Office Manager

Ellen O'Connell 267-2558

**ST. RITA PRESCHOOL
PROGRAMS AND FEES FOR 2010-2011:**

<i>Daily Programs</i> (8:30am-1:30pm)	<u>Registration</u> (Due with application 2/2/10)	<u>Insurance and Supply</u> (Due by 5/18/10)	<u>Tuition</u> (Due monthly by 5 th)
<u>4 Year Old Programs (must be 4 by Sept. 1, 2010)</u>			
5 Day Program	\$100.00	\$320.00	\$475.00
4 Day Program	\$100.00	\$290.00	\$408.00
3 Day Program (MWF or TRF)	\$100.00	\$250.00	\$340.00
2 Day Program (MW or TR)	\$100.00	\$170.00	\$230.00
<u>3 Year Old Programs (must be 3 by Sept. 1, 2010)</u>			
5 Day Program	\$100.00	\$320.00	\$475.00
4 Day Program	\$100.00	\$290.00	\$408.00
3 Day Program (MWF or TRF)	\$100.00	\$250.00	\$340.00
2 Day Program (MW or TR)	\$100.00	\$170.00	\$230.00
<u>2 Year Old Programs (must be 2 by Sept. 1, 2010)</u>			
2 Day Program (MW or TR)	\$100.00	\$170.00	\$250.00

Registration fees are due with child's application – this fee is non-refundable and occurs on a yearly basis.

Insurance and supply fees may be paid with registration fee or no later than May 18, 2010 – this fee occurs on a yearly basis and is non-refundable.