



**a Ministry of St. Michael's Episcopal Church**

647 Dundee Avenue Barrington, IL 60010

847-381-5490

[www.littleangelpreschool.org](http://www.littleangelpreschool.org)

**Parent Handbook**

**2014 – 2015**



**“Let the children come to  
me and do not hinder them,  
for the kingdom of God  
belongs to such as these.”**

Mark 10:14

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Kara Joy Baker, Director 847-381-5490  
[kbaker@stmichaelsbarrington.org](mailto:kbaker@stmichaelsbarrington.org)  
Sue Dreys, Assistant Director [sdreys@stmichaelsbarrington.org](mailto:sdreys@stmichaelsbarrington.org)  
The Rev. Patrick Raymond, Rector 847-381-2323  
[praymond@stmichaelsbarrington.org](mailto:praymond@stmichaelsbarrington.org)  
The Rev. Kevin Caruso, Associate Pastor 847-381-2323  
[kcaruso@stmichaelsbarrington.org](mailto:kcaruso@stmichaelsbarrington.org)  
Shan Atkins, Senior Warden [shanatkins@earthlink.net](mailto:shanatkins@earthlink.net)  
David Buckley, Jr., Junior Warden [dbuckley@kelleherbuckley.com](mailto:dbuckley@kelleherbuckley.com)

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St. Michael's Little Angels Christian Preschool accepts any child, regardless of race, sex, color, creed or religion who can benefit from this program.

### **Mission Statement**

*To know Christ and to bring others to know Christ in a nurturing Christian preschool environment.*

St. Michael's Little Angels Christian Preschool is a ministry of St. Michael's Episcopal Church. The Parent Advisory Board, Director and Staff are dedicated to providing a safe and loving Christian environment for all children who attend. Little Angels Preschool is a school where each child is accepted and loved, a school where laughter, play and learning are embraced; where each child is recognized as a gift from God.

### **Philosophy**

Little Angels Preschool program is designed to meet the developmental needs of children aged 18 months to five years old. Little Angels curriculum offers a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities and materials to allow children the opportunity to experience hands-on learning that fosters spiritual, cognitive, social emotional and physical development. All preschool activities, decisions, and educational approaches are based on Best Practices and a commitment to excellence. Our program is designed to provide the foundation necessary for children to grow into lifelong learners who are comfortable with themselves, their world and their relationship with Jesus.

As a Christian preschool our philosophy is based on the following core values:

- Dedication to a Christian environment where Christian values are introduced and where children and their families are valued and supported.
- Acceptance of any child who can benefit from the program regardless of their race, sex, color, creed, or religion.
- Appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle.
- Base our work on knowledge of how children develop and learn.
- Appreciate and support the bond between child and family.
- Recognize that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture, community, and society.
- Encourage and support parents in making the primary decisions about their children's needs.
- Support parents in advocating for their children when special services are needed.
- Respect the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual (child, family member, and colleague).
- Respect diversity in children, families, and colleagues.
- Recognize that children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect.

*Little Angels Preschool is a Christian preschool and part of our philosophy includes support and care for, not only the student, but for the well-being of the child's family. When a child or family experiences problems we want to extend help, support and also share any resource information we have available.*

*The director of Little Angels Preschool is always available to help parents and students in any way possible. The director and the entire preschool staff understand and respect the importance of confidentiality. Please feel free to contact any staff member with questions or requests for Resource Information, in particular resources for screening and diagnostic testing for "Early Intervention".*

### Admission Policy

Little Angels Preschool accepts all children regardless of race, sex, color, creed, or religion who can benefit from the program. Our preschool classes are designed for children ages 18 months to 5 years. Children are eligible for the programs offered based on their age as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. Each child will remain in the class they start the school year in thru the end of the school year.

### Curriculum

St. Michael's Little Angels Christian Preschool curriculum is based on the "Creative Curriculum" and promotes every aspect of a child's development: cognitive, social, emotional, physical, creative, and spiritual. Activities, room structures and layout, and lesson plans are all designed to contribute to this goal. Creative Curriculum draws from the theories of leaders in the field of early childhood development such as Eric Erikson, Jean Piaget and Howard Gardner. Using well-tested theories, Little Angels aims first, to recognize that children go through developmental stages, and strives to help each child gain maximum benefit from the stage he/she is in, as well as helping them to move to the next stage. Second, Little Angels takes seriously Jean Piaget's observation that play is essential to the development of the child, and actively seeks to incorporate play into all areas of the curriculum. Third, by using Gardner's "eight intelligences"-interpersonal, intrapersonal, bodily kinetics, musical, visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, mathematical-logical, and naturalistic- Little Angels builds on each child's strengths, and understands that not all children learn in the same way. Little Angels presents its learning materials and activities in concrete and tangible formats, which are designed to meet the specific developmental needs of each child in the preschool. To promote the children's spiritual growth, Little Angels incorporates a wide range of Christian learning materials, including flannel boards, Bible stories and Bible verses, songs and daily prayer into the curriculum. In addition, a certified music teacher and St. Michael's clergy regularly contribute to the curriculum of the Preschool. As well as Spanish for the four's and Pre-K classes.

### Staff

Little Angels' staff members meet the State of Illinois DCFS requirements for preschool teachers and teacher aides. Each staff person is hired on the basis of his or her commitment to demonstrating Christian values in his or her teaching and everyday life, and on their knowledge in teaching early childhood education. Staff members profess a strong love for God and His children, and are warm, nurturing role models for the students. Staff members use the team approach of "parents and teachers" which is essential to a successful preschool experience.

The Preschool requires three written references attesting to the professional and personal character of each staff member, a background check, fingerprints and an updated physical. Staff are required to attend 15 hours per year of continuing Early Childhood Education training. All staff members are trained in child abuse prevention and recognition. They are trained in CPR and First Aid on an annual basis. Staff members are also required to meet the teacher and teacher aide requirements established by NAEYC. On-going Professional Development training is required of all staff members. Each staff member develops their own plan for Professional Development which is overseen by the director.

### Tuition

Tuition may be paid in full annually on May 1<sup>st</sup>, or in three installments: May 15<sup>th</sup>, Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, and Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>. A late fee of \$15.00 is charged to any payment received after the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month due. **The \$175.00 registration fee is non-refundable.** Our staffing is based on the number of children enrolled in the daily classes. No refunds are given for absences due to illness, vacations, or snow days. Absences cannot be made up.

### **Discharge and Withdrawal**

If you choose to withdraw your child from the program for any reason, Little Angels requests a two week written notice. This allows us time to notify any families on our waiting list. If the child is unable to adjust to the program and every effort has been made to work matters out with the family, the child may be discharged upon the director's recommendation. In this event, the tuition will be prorated and the balance refunded. However, the annual \$175.00 Registration Fee is non-refundable.

In all instances, where Little Angels decides that it is in the best interest of the child to terminate enrollment, both the child's needs and the parents' needs shall be considered. The director will be available to parents to plan on how to meet the child's needs as he or she leaves the school, including referrals to other agencies or facilities.

### **Days and Hours of Operation**

The Preschool is open from the day after Labor Day in September thru the Thursday before Memorial Day in May. St. Michael's Little Angels Christian Preschool follows Barrington Unit School District 220's calendar as much as possible.

Little Angels Preschool is committed to the health and safety of every student. With regard for safety, the preschool limits free access to the building until **15 minutes before** class begins and 15 minutes before class dismissal. Children must be supervised by their parent or guardian in the hallway until classroom doors open promptly at 9am & 12:30pm. Classroom hours are 9am - 11:30am and 12:30pm -3:00pm.

Please go to the Dist. 220 Website: [www.barrington220.org](http://www.barrington220.org) or the Emergency School Closing Website at [www.emergencyclosingcenter.com](http://www.emergencyclosingcenter.com) for details about school closings due to bad weather conditions. An email will also be sent from the Little Angels Director informing all families of a school closing. Missed days because of bad weather conditions will not be made up.

### **Daily Classes**

The following schedules are *examples* of a typical day for the different age groups. Schedules may vary as a result of field trips, special guests, activities or presentations.

#### **Toddler Class**

9:00	Children are signed-in and enter classroom with parent.
9:00-9:20	Wash hands with parent's assistance and have a gentle separation from parent or guardian.
9:20-10:40	Free choice time with materials and toys in the learning centers. This is a time of classroom exploration for the child.
10:40-10:45	Clean-up Time
10:45-11:00	Snack and juice/water are offered and a prayer is led by the teacher. Teacher sits with the children and models communication and appropriate behavior.
11:00-11:15	Large motor play in the Undercroft
11:15-11:30	Group time – story, songs, finger plays, or flannel board story.
11:30	Dismissal

### **Twos Classes and Jr. 3 T/TH AM Classes**

- 9:00-9:30 Children are signed-in, coats and backpacks put away, parent/guardian escorts child into the room if needed and assists the child in hand washing. Children explore the room and enjoy tabletop activities.
- 9:30-10:40 Structured activities are offered in an open classroom environment where children are encouraged to explore activity centers.
- 10:40-10:45 Clean-up time
- 10:45-11:00 Grouptime – story, songs, finger plays, or flannel board story.
- 11:00 –11:15 Snack time – Children wash hands, say a prayer and enjoy the snack. Teacher sits with the children and encourages socialization and models appropriate behavior.
- 11:15-11:30 Outdoor time. Large motor activities take place in undercroft on inclement weather days. Self-help and socialization skills are emphasized and reinforced.
- 11:30 Dismissal- Parents collect their children on the east side of the playground or in the undercroft. Sign-out sheet is available where children are at the time of dismissal.

### **Threes M/W/F AM and PM**

- 9:00-9:10am
- 12:30-12:40pm Arrival, hand washing and children check themselves in. Parents sign-in their child.
- 9:10-9:30am
- 12:40-1:00pm First Circle: explanation of the day's activities, the weather, calendar, job schedule, and discuss the different learning centers. A letter per week is also introduced in both written form and sign language at the first circle time.
- 9:30-10:30am
- 1:00-2:00pm Free choice time where children explore the learning centers and table-top activities such as process art. Children are encouraged to participate in self-initiated play activities and some teacher-directed activities.
- 10:30 -10:40am
- 2:00 – 2:10pm Children participate in a clean-up time and prepare to go outside. Self-help skills are emphasized and reinforced.
- 10:40 -11:00am
- 2:10 - 2:30pm Outside time with large motor activities. Large motor room is used on inclement weather days. Socialization is facilitated and encouraged.
- 11:00 -11:15am
- 2:30 - 2:45pm Wash hands, prepare for and enjoy a snack . Children pray before snack. Teacher sits with the children and encourages socialization and models appropriate behavior.
- 11:15 -11:30am
- 2:45 - 3:00pm Group time with a story, finger-play, or songs.
- 11:30 am
- 3:00 pm Dismissal. Parent/caregiver signs-out their child.

## **Fours AM and PM Classes, Pre-K**

9:00-9:10am

12:30-12:40pm Parents sign-in their child. Child checks in and prepares to go outside for large motor activity. Age appropriate self-help skills are taught and reinforced.

9:10-9:45am

12:40-1:10pm Children go outside, weather permitting, or to a large motor room for large motor activities. Socialization is facilitated and encouraged. Emphasis is placed on social skills involved in play such as inclusion of all persons, turn-taking, etc., along with reinforcing virtues such as patience and kindness.

9:45-10:15am

12:45-2:00pm First Circle: prayer, weather, and day's activities are explained. Letter and phonics lessons are presented. Emphasis is placed on extending the child's attention span and listening skills while encouraging self-expression and individuality. Show-and-Tell activities are on Fridays.

10:15-10:45am

2:00-2:15 pm Children explore prepared activity centers. They are encouraged to move freely between each center. Both teacher-directed activities and self-initiated activities are supported.

10:45-11:15am

2:15-2:45pm Snack time occurs where children, wash hands, enjoy a snack and interact socially. Independence and self-help skills are promoted. Teacher sits with the children and encourages socialization and models appropriate behavior.

11:15-11:30am

2:45-3:00pm Closing Circle: recap of the day, bible verse, song and story. This Circle is also where clergy visits; Spanish instruction or Music/Movement class may be presented depending on the day of the week. Dismissal: Parents must sign-out their children.

### **Learning Centers**

**DRAMATIC PLAY:** This center encourages the child to use their imagination by role-playing. This center is changed periodically, at least monthly, to spark the interest of each child. Examples include a pizza parlor, a bakery, an igloo, pet store or a construction site.

**BLOCKS:** The block area has many different kinds of blocks to foster a child's creativity. As children work together to build roads, buildings, airplanes and other creative work, they develop gross and fine motor skills, literacy, socialization, and problem-solving skills. Extended play is encouraged. This is where the child continues to expand the play from one day to the next. For example, working on a block structure that is maintained and then signage and/or action people figures are added to the block area for the child to enhance their play activity the next time they come to class.

**SENSORY TABLE:** A number of different items are used at the sensory table. This center encourages children in tactile experiences through creative play by using sand, water, dried beans, rice and/or other materials. The sensory table also introduces basic math and science concepts through the use of science toys such as a strainer, measuring cups, cooking or gardening utensils and containers.



**ART/ART EASEL:** In this center, children are encouraged to express themselves through open-ended art projects while enhancing their fine and large motor skills. Numerous mediums and types of non-toxic paints and paper, along with crayons, markers, glue and scissors, and two dimensional craft supplies are available to support open-ended creativity and process art.

**SCIENCE:** The science center is filled with a variety of interesting discovery items for the children to investigate. The science area changes on a weekly to monthly basis. Nature, along with other science concepts is presented throughout the year. Pine cones, magnets, seashells, plants, insects, prisms, and a variety of fruits and vegetables are just some examples of what they can explore in this area.

**BOOK CENTER:** This quiet center encourages the child to relax and look at a wide variety of books either alone or with a friend. We strive for cultural diversity and different writing styles in our selection of literature available to the children. We have books in the following areas of interest: Bible stories, nature, numbers and letters, nursery rhymes, popular classics, and favorite characters, and classic children stories.

**COMPUTER CENTER:** This center introduces the child to computers through interactive software like ABC Mouse. Children become familiar with moving the mouse and the keyboard for shape, color, number and letter recognition, matching and sorting exercises, and problem-solving games. Children are usually seated with another child at the computer to encourage social skills such as sharing and turn-taking. Each classroom is also equipped with two iPads for the children to use. Appropriate applications will be available for the children to use during choice time.

**WRITING CENTER:** Children are always encouraged in their practice of communication skills. Writing, as a form of communication, goes through a number of steps during the child's preschool years. For example, scribbling is a very important step in the child's ability to eventually write. Thus, opportunities for the child to work on "writing" are found through out the classrooms. Clip boards, paper and pencils, markers, etc. are visible and made available to the children.

### Children's Birthdays

The staff at Little Angels Preschool believes each child is a gift from God. We celebrate each child's birthday with a prayer of thanks and sing "Happy Birthday". Teachers provide birthday crowns and parents may bring in a **pre-packaged, no nuts product, that is on our birthday list of suggested items. Parents should check with the teacher if they are unsure whether the treat is in compliance with the No-Nut policy.** (The Department of Health and DCFS do not allow any homemade foods.) Summer birthdays are celebrated on a date arranged by the parent with the teacher. Remember, we are a "nut-free" environment which also excludes any products prepared in a facility that uses the same equipment used in the preparation of their products containing nuts.

Birthday Party Invitations may be put in the children's cubbies **ONLY IF ALL CHILDREN IN THE CLASS ARE RECEIVING ONE.** Each family will receive a school directory which will allow invitations to be mailed or emailed if the party invitations are not going to ALL children in the class. **Gift/Party bags are discouraged for birthdays and ALL Holidays.**

### Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

Parents should park in the parking lot(s) or in parking areas near the East entrance of the school building. Use extreme caution and keep all children "in hand" and on the sidewalk when entering or leaving the building. All parents or authorized guardians must sign-in and sign-out the child each day.

This is required by DCFS of Illinois. Children will be released only to persons designated in writing to receive them. The staff shall refuse to release to anyone, whether related or unrelated to the child, unless they are listed on the proper forms held at school. To insure the safety of your child, photo identification may be required at any time of any person(s) picking up your child.

The preschool doors open 15 minutes before the beginning and the end of the child's class.

Classroom doors open for class start time at:

**9:00 am for AM classes and 12:30 pm for PM classes.**

Classroom doors open for dismissal at:

**11:30 am for AM classes and 3:00 pm for PM classes.**

**Consequences related to pick-up policy:** Children must be picked up no later than 5 mins after class is over.

Dismissal times are:

- 11:30 am for morning classes
- 1:00 pm for children attending a morning class who participate in the Lunch Pals Program
- 3:00 pm for afternoon classes

**\*\*There is a late fee for any parent whose child is not picked-up within 5 minutes of dismissal time. Parents may be charged a late fee of \$5.00 for every 10 minutes after the designated pick-up time.\*\***

Any late fees will be added to the child's tuition expenses and billed on the child's tuition statement. If the final tuition payment has already been paid a separate invoice will be presented to the parent for immediate payment.

Children often do not understand why they are not being picked up on time and the delayed pick up can be upsetting for a child. If a parent is going to be late, they should call the preschool office so the child can be reassured and made aware that the parent is on their way. Contact information and emergency contact information must be current. It is the parent's responsibility to provide updated information in writing to the director whenever necessary.

If a parent does not arrive at the appointed pick-up time, staff will attempt to reach the parents using the phone numbers provided by the parents. **Three phone call attempts** will be made within the first 15 minutes of tardiness, again using the numbers provided by the parents. If we are still unable to reach the parent, the emergency contacts (names and numbers provided by the parents) will then be called. If all attempts to reach the parents and the emergency contact person(s) are unsuccessful; the director has the option to call for police assistance in reaching the parents. The school will hold the child for a maximum period of 1 hour before seeking police assistance.

If the director is made aware of a family emergency which precludes the timely pick-up of the child and no emergency contact(s) can pick-up the child, the school will take responsibility for the protection and well-being of the child until the parent, designated emergency contact person(s) or outside authorities arrive. The director or the director's designee will be responsible for staying with the child on the school premises.

Staff members will not hold the child responsible for any tardiness situation and discussion of this issue will be held only with the parent or guardian and never with or in front of the child.

## **Health Policy**

Little Angels Preschool holds classes for students who are well and who do not present a health risk to other children or staff members. Children, who are *mildly* ill, such as with a minor cold, may remain at school only with the approval of the director. Children must be able to fully participate in all activities, including outdoor activities. Appropriate clothing for outdoor play should be provided by the parents on a daily basis.

1. Parents must provide documentation of the child's immunizations and record of health prior to the first day of school. The medical form must be updated every two years. Parent may request medical/immunization(s) exemptions for religious reasons. This exemption must be in writing and signed by the parent or parents.
2. Parents must indicate current health insurance information on the child's application. It is the parent's responsibility to update this information in writing to the director if there is a change in coverage.
3. **Parents should notify the preschool each day their child will be absent by calling 847-381-5490 or email [kbaker@stmichaelsbarrington.org](mailto:kbaker@stmichaelsbarrington.org).**
4. For children unable to use the toilet consistently; disposable diapers are required, unless there is a documented medical reason from the child's doctor. Parents must discuss this medical situation with the director.
5. Parents are required by the Dept. of Health and DCFS to notify the director immediately if their child contracts a communicable disease *for example* chicken pox, measles, strep throat, RSV, or head lice. The director will notify all parents of children in the same classroom within 24 hours, or as is reasonably possible, via email.

DCFS prohibits having your child at school with any of the following symptoms/conditions. If the teacher or director sees a child with any of the following, the child will be sent home:

- Temperature of 100 degrees F or higher. The child must be free from fever for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.
- Continuous coughing, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, swollen glands, rash or open sores, inflamed eye with discharge.
- The presence of head lice or pinworms.
- Conjunctivitis or *evidence of the possibility* of conjunctivitis.
- Diarrhea or vomiting. Child must be free from either of these conditions for 24 hours while on a normal diet.
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing.
- Infected skin patches or open, draining wounds.
- Pain of which the child complains, and which interferes with normal activity.
- Excessive fatigue or lethargy.

If the teacher feels that the child is not well, they will consult with the director and the parents will be called.

## **Safety of Children**

Little Angels is dedicated to providing a safe and peaceful environment for all the children and the staff. The procedures listed below will help to ensure your child's safety and well-being.

1. All parents must sign their children in on arrival and out at dismissal. No child is ever left alone or unsupervised and must be in the care of staff or a parent at all times. This includes the preschool hallway.
2. A child is released only to his/her parent or responsible person whom the parent has authorized. If a child is going home with another adult, written permission is to be sent with the child, a release form is to be completed by the adult or an email can be sent to [kbaker@stmichaelsbarrington.org](mailto:kbaker@stmichaelsbarrington.org) . Any person who is not recognized by the teacher will be asked to show a valid driver's license or photo identification.
3. In the event of carpooling, each parent must notify the director of all persons in the carpool who are authorized to drive the child home. Car seat laws must be adhered to as prescribed by the state of Illinois. This is the parents' responsibility, not the school staff.
4. Regular fire drills and tornado drills are conducted, with a record of these drills located in the director's office.
5. Parents must sign an emergency authorization form, as well as a health record form, for any allergies, special needs, or health conditions requiring special procedures or precautions, including medications the child is taking.
6. Little Angels does not provide health insurance for children, nor is the preschool responsible for covering medical costs related to injuries or accidents on the preschool premises. Parents are responsible for providing the child's current Health Insurance information to the preschool. Changes in health coverage should be given to the director in writing, i.e. insurance carrier, policy number, etc.
7. When a field trip is taken, a permission slip must be signed by a parent or guardian. Parents must provide an emergency phone number for the time their child is on the trip. Sign-in and sign-out procedures, as mandated by DCFS, remain in place on field trip days.
8. Children's hands will be washed routinely with soap and water, and in the following circumstances: upon arrival at school, before and after snack, after using the toilet, wiping or blowing their nose, after outdoor play, and before and after using the water table.
9. At no time are firearms or weapons of any kind allowed in the preschool or on St Michael's property. Toy replicas of any type of weaponry are also prohibited.
10. Children are not allowed to bring any live pets into the school. This is to ensure an allergy free environment for those children who may be allergic to certain animals. Photos of a child's family pet(s) are encouraged.
11. Poisonous plants are not allowed in the classroom. The program has an Integrated Pest Management plan in place to guard against insect pests.
12. All cleaning and sanitation practices are followed as prescribed by the Cook County Health Department, DCFS and NAEYC.
13. When a child is injured or involved in an accident, the teachers or director will assess the injury and take the following actions:

### **If the injury is not serious:**

The teacher or director will administer first aid and fill out an accident report. The teachers or director notifies the parent(s) either by telephone before the departure time, or when the child is picked up.

**If the injury is deemed a serious emergency:**

- a. The teacher or director will call 911 while the child's teacher stays with the injured child. At no time will the child be left unattended;
- b. The director will notify parents or guardians and advise them on where the child is being taken;
- c. One of the child's teachers will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's complete medical file and remain with the child until a parent or guardian arrives.

Please note: Little Angels Preschool does not provide medical emergency insurance for the children. Financial responsibility is assumed by the parent or guardian. The decision of which hospital is used will be determined by the medical emergency personnel treating the child.

**Administering Medications**

Prescription medication may be administered only under special circumstances and ONLY if the medication is appropriately labeled and submitted with a written consent form from the parents and physician, including complete instructions on proper dosage, times to be given, and in the original pharmacy container. All medication is kept in a locked cabinet in the child's classroom. **It is the parent's responsibility to be aware of expiration dates and provide the preschool with prescribed medication that is current and not beyond the expiration date.** All arrangements for medication must be made through and approved by the director in advance.

No over the counter medications will be administered to the children while at preschool, including cough drops and throat lozenges. Medication of any kind may not be kept in a backpack or placed in the child's cubby for any reason. Sunscreen and insect repellants are used at the discretion of the parent and must be applied by the parent or guardian prior to attending school or going on a field trip.

If a child has a diagnosed allergy with any food restrictions or environmental concerns, the parents must contact the director and complete the Allergy Action Plan form. This form will insure that all necessary precautions will be taken for the safety and medical treatment of their child. If your child requires an epi-pen for an anaphylactic reaction, we do require an epi-pen be left at school in the event of an emergency.

**Clothing**

Children should attend preschool dressed in play clothes which allow them to move about freely without concern about getting messy. **A complete change of clothing must be in the child's backpack each day in the event of any "accidents"**. They should wear shoes that are safe for both the classroom and the outdoor area.

Sandals, "cros", open-toes shoes, shoes with slippery soles, and shoes/ boots with a high heel are NOT appropriate preschool foot wear. These types of shoes are often dangerous and may put the child at risk of injury, especially on the large play equipment.

The comfort and health of the child is important during the winter months. All children must wear mittens, hats, coats, snow pants and boots as the weather requires. To preserve the carpet, snow boots should not be worn in the classroom. A pair of shoes or slippers, kept in the child's backpack, is suggested for the winter months.

### Snacks

Little Angels will provide snacks/juice/water for the children. All Cook County Health Dept. regulations, DCFS regulations and NAEYC standards on storing and serving food items will be enforced. We do not serve peanuts or any food item that may contain nuts or has been processed in a plant that handles nut products. If a child has food allergies and cannot eat certain foods, the parent needs to provide a substitute prepackaged snack for their child. This should be arranged with your child's teachers.

### Parent Participation

Little Angels Preschool encourages parents to be actively involved. Here are some of the opportunities: Birthday treats, class parties, field trips, classroom activities unique to the age level, (i.e. "mystery reader" in the Threes), Scholastic Book Fair, Christmas program and reception, Yearly Fundraiser Event, Week of the Young Child activities, All School Picnic in May. We encourage parents to bring "their family's culture" to the child's classroom via any special presentation or instruction the parent may want to share, i.e. Chinese New Year celebration, a special St. Patrick's Day story or a family tradition. Contact your child's teachers to discuss and arrange a developmentally appropriate classroom presentation.

We welcome all parents and all family cultures. Parents have the legal right to visit any area of our facility at any time during the hours their child is present on site. We do ask that you contact the director or teachers if you wish to visit the preschool. Guided tours are also available to interested family members or prospective families by contacting the director.

**ROOM PARENTS:** Two parents from each class are responsible for organizing the parties and special events in the classroom. They coordinate activities with the teachers and enlist other parent volunteers for items needed for the event.

**CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION:** The child benefits when the parent is in his/her classroom sharing gifts and talents. Parent involvement in the following areas is appreciated: reading stories to the children, sharing personal interests, hobbies, talents, and cultural backgrounds. In addition, parents are always needed to assist with field trips. You are encouraged to volunteer at the start of school and throughout the school year. Learning about and having children and their parents share their family culture is highly encouraged.

**FIELD TRIPS:** Field trips are an important part of the curriculum for our threes, fours and Pre-K classes. We believe off-site field trips build confidence in children and encourage them to learn about and explore the world beyond their classroom. Safety is of the utmost concern for any field trip and all the measures outlined in our Field Trip Guidelines are followed including all sign-in and sign-out preschool procedures. The bus used for transporting the children and chaperones has seatbelts which must be used at all times. Children with any disabilities are encouraged to attend the field trips and every effort will be made to accommodate the child with safety as the primary concern.

### Parent Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are conducted twice a year, in the fall and spring. The staff conducts regular informal observations and determines where the child is developmentally based on those observations. These assessments are used to guide curriculum and to share information with the families. Teachers work to achieve consensus with the families regarding assessments. Teachers also welcome meeting with parents at any time throughout the year to discuss the child's development. To request a meeting, simply ask the teacher to call you or give the teachers a note at the door requesting they call you. Do not hesitate to ask for a conference immediately if you have a serious concern. You may also contact the director at any time with questions, concerns or suggestions. Your input is essential to the success of your child's education and we encourage open communication at all times. Teachers strive to be sensitive to your family culture, values, and identity.

### **Parent Communication**

In addition to this parent handbook, classroom information boards and conferences, parents also have access to classroom calendars and newsletters via the website at [www.littleangelspreschool.org](http://www.littleangelspreschool.org). Please plan to visit the preschool website monthly to view your child's class calendar and for up to date news regarding the preschool and your child's specific classroom activities. We also have a Facebook page, Little Angels Christian Preschool. Please "like" our page to receive posts of the most up to date information about the preschool.

Community news regarding local events and opportunities appropriate for young families with children are shared via the cubbies at the discretion of the director. If you are aware of a community event you feel is appropriate for the Little Angels parent community which is also age appropriate to preschool children and you would like it publicized in the preschool, please contact the director who will make a final determination regarding appropriateness. Private endeavors or business advertising/promotions are not considered appropriate; i.e. private music lessons, retail store advertising, support of a personal charity, etc.

### **Assessments & Screenings**

Each child is screened within the first three months of their entry to our program. The screening tool used is "Ages and Stages" which is completed by the parent and scored by the director. If a score indicates a potential developmental delay, then the director recommends to the parents additional screening options for the child. The results of any screening are placed in the child's file for future reference. Assessments, both formal and informal, are ongoing throughout the year. The formal assessments are based on the Creative Curriculum assessment program where a developmental continuum is referenced and applied to the observations of the child's behaviors and growth.

The program's assessment and screening results are used:

- To identify where each child is developmentally.
- To become aware of the interests and areas of needs of individual children.
- To be knowledgeable and able to objectively discuss the child's stage of development with the child's parents.
- To provide a record of where the child is on the developmental continuum.
- To guide curriculum in addressing areas of need for continued growth for all children.
- To help in planning for the program's overall goals, especially with respect to improvement.

Parents may request a conference to determine where their child is developmentally or to discuss any concerns they may have throughout the school year.

### **Discipline and Positive Guidance**

#### **Philosophy**

Little Angels' philosophy is based on the premise that all children should experience success and the wonder of learning. We strive for an environment that gives children the opportunity to explore and experiment within consistent, age-appropriate limits. In this climate, most problems are prevented. Little Angels' goal is to help each child develop a positive self-concept and an understanding of his or her importance to God. No child will be humiliated, shamed, frightened or subjected to verbal or physical abuse by the staff or any parents on school premises or during field trips.

## **General Definition**

Discipline means setting limits, guiding behavior and helping children to know what appropriate behavior is. Discipline should be solution-oriented and designed to help solve problems.

## **Methods of Discipline:**

**Distraction** - Involves changing a child's focus from an activity that is unacceptable to one that is acceptable without confronting inappropriate behavior. Examples: Handing a toy to a child who is attempting to take another child's toy. Physically putting yourself between two children that are warming up to an argument or fight without even commenting on the situation.

**Redirection** - Puts the teacher in a more interactive role than does distraction. Redirection is preventative in nature and involves anticipating problems and intervening with a solution, before the problems occur.

Examples: Suggesting the child move away from the water table and play in the block area because the child is splashing water at the other children. Offer to read a book to a child rather than allowing the child to topple block structures another child is building.

**Ignoring** – Teacher asks, “Is this a behavior we can live with in the classroom? If it is, they ignore it. Make sure the behavior does not harm anyone or destroy the environment and/or any materials.

**Time Out**- The purpose of Time-Out is to help the child calm down, regain control and feel comfortable. Time-outs typically last between 1-3 minutes for preschool age children. Time-outs are always guided by the teacher.

## **Registration and Class Placement Policy**

### **Registration Procedure:**

Registration for Little Angels Christian Preschool commences in January of each calendar year for the next consecutive school year. Registration is on-going until all classes are full. Wait lists are created and considered throughout the year as openings occur.

### **Registration Fee:**

There is a **non-refundable registration fee of \$175.00** for each child registered. At the time this registration fee is paid, the family is aware of the class placement for the student. If the parent desires a different class placement than was assigned, he or she may also place the student's name on a class wait list for the preferred class designation.

### **Wait List Consideration:**

A wait list is established for both program enrollment and class preference during the registration process. As openings occur throughout the year, consideration is given to the individuals on the wait list. The process outlined in the category designations of the following registration policy do not necessarily apply to the process for wait list consideration.

## **Priority Process for Registration and Class Placement**

Registration and class placement occur by following a sequential process of consideration.

### **Category I: In-House Families**

(Defined as families with children currently enrolled in the preschool program)

In-house families are given first consideration for registration. Consideration for class placement for in-house families is applied in the following order:

- Children with special needs
- Siblings of currently enrolled students
- Children of St. Michael's parishioners

If a student gets registered for the program, but the parent is not satisfied with the class placement, the parent can place the student's name on a wait list for the preferred class.



## **Category II: Parish Families**

(Defined as registered members of St. Michael's Episcopal Church where there is no child currently enrolled. The Rector of St. Michael's church will determine any question regarding member status.)

Once the registration and classroom placement process has occurred for all children who apply to Category I, children from parish families who are not currently participating in the preschool program are considered for registration and class placement. If there are more families interested in registration than there are openings in the program, a lottery system is applied to select the students for the program and subsequent class placement. If a student gets registered for the program, but the parent is not satisfied with the class placement, the parent can place the student's name on a wait list for the preferred class.

## **Category III: Community Families**

(Defined as any family not covered in Categories I and II above)

Once the registration and class placement process has occurred for all children who apply to Categories I and II, children from the community are considered for placement. These children are registered on a first come first served basis. If a student is accepted into the program, but a different class preference is desired, the parent can place the student's name on a wait list for the preferred class.

### **Little Angels Preschool Emergency Plan**

**FIRE:** Teachers will have children lineup in the classroom and then proceed by class with teachers out of the building using the primary evacuation route (East door of the school), if possible, or the designated secondary evacuation route (as posted in the evacuation plan by the classroom door). A head count will be given to the aide by a teacher as the children are leaving and will be counted again by the aide as the children proceed out of the door. When it is deemed clear of traffic hazards, the children will be taken to the parking lot south of the Sturtz house located directly behind the church's northwest parking lot. There the children and staff will wait for further instructions or pick-up by the parents or designated guardians. Staff will call parents as soon as reasonably possible to let them know of the situation.

**TORNADO:** In the event of a tornado warning, children will be escorted through the hallway out the west double doors into the adjacent hallway and kept in that hallway, away from windows until the threat of tornado has been lifted.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCY:** If a staff member thinks a child or another staff member is in a serious, possibly life threatening, medical situation or condition, the staff member is to call 911 or have another staff member call 911 immediately using the telephone in the classroom or a personal cell phone if necessary. After the call has been placed to 911, the Director is to be alerted to the situation. One staff member will escort all the other children out of the classroom and take them to the undercroft. The other staff member remains with the person who is in the medical crisis. The director will notify the church office of the medical emergency as soon as possible.

**RED ALERT:** If the Red Alert requires that children to be picked up at a time different than the regularly scheduled time, Parents will be notified via telephone as well as an all school email. The pick-up procedures will follow the current DCFS requirements that are in use at that time. Each parent will be asked to use the East entrance which is the regularly used preschool entrance to pick up their child and all sign out procedures at the classroom doors will be adhere to for all children. In the event that the Red Alert requires children stay contained within the preschool, all necessary precautions will be taken to secure the safety and well-being of the children. If the classroom is deemed safe by the Director, the children will remain in their classrooms with teachers until it is safe for them to be dismissed. If a parent wants to pick up their child during that time, they must come to the East entrance doors and sign-out their child. Additional snacks and juice are kept on site for emergencies that necessitate an extended class time for the children.

If the classrooms are deemed unsafe due to windows, the children will be moved to the undercroft space until it is safe for them to return to the classrooms or they are picked up by a parent. In all instances children will be dismissed from the East entrance which is the regularly used preschool pick up entrance.

### **Procedure for Parent(s) in Resolution of a Grievance**

In the event a preschool parent has a complaint or feels an injustice has occurred with respect to their position or their child's position in the preschool, they should act in following manner.

First, contact the Director. Depending on the severity of the situation a meeting will be held immediately or scheduled for a later time, convenient for the parent and the director.

Should a satisfactory resolution not be reached at the initial meeting, the director will contact the St. Michael's Rector, who will schedule another meeting. Depending on the circumstances presented, the rector may elect to include other neutral parties such as the Preschool Advisory Board Chairperson to assist in the resolution of the conflict.

If resolution still cannot be reached during the parent/director/rector meeting, the rector will set-up an appointment for the director and rector and possibly the Advisory Board Chairperson to meet to determine options for resolution of the issue(s). After the meeting with the St. Michael's Rector, options agreed upon by the director and rector, will be presented to the parents by the Director whereupon the parent and director will finalize the action(s) to be taken. Written notice of the final actions to be taken will be sent to the rector.

We respectfully request all preschool parents follow this procedure to expedite a solution and avoid undo stress on all parties involved.

### **Confidentiality**

The child's application, medical records, initial screenings and annual assessment/conference forms are kept in the child's file which is in a locked cabinet in the director's office. These records may be made available to the child's parents or legal guardians upon request; to the child's teachers throughout the school year, to any authorized employee of DCFS during a licensing visit, and to a NAEYC assessor if requested during any assessment visits. While it is a parent's legal right to view the child's file, a request to see a file must be made to the director and viewed in the director's presence. This also applies to all DCFS employees and NAEYC assessors.

All screenings and assessment forms are shared with parents at conferences where the method of assessment is explained and parents are free to ask questions regarding the method of assessment and the results. The formal assessment tool used is the Creative Curriculum assessment package where the Creative Curriculum's Developmental Continuum is used. The screening tool used is "Ages and Stages" which is completed by the parent at the beginning of the child's initial school year at Little Angels. These assessment and screening tools are used to provide the parent and the child's teachers with as accurate a picture possible regarding the child's growth and development.

If, at any time, a parent has a question regarding confidentiality, results of a screening, or the formal assessment presented by the teachers, they are welcome and encouraged to contact the director.

### **Little Angels Preschool is a Ministry of St. Michael's Episcopal Church**

St. Michael's Little Angels Christian Preschool embraces not just the children enrolled in the program, but also their entire family. Each family is a welcome and vital part of the St. Michael's Church community and Little Angels Preschool community. Every family is invited to attend St. Michael's Church for worship and fellowship. In addition, Christian education programs for adults and children are offered during the school year. Contact the parish office at 847-381-2323 for times and schedules.

Dear God,

We pray our school will be filled with love  
We pray our learning will be full of truth  
We pray our playground will be full of joy  
We pray our friendships will be full of forgiveness  
We pray our teachers will be full of wisdom  
We pray our community will be full of hope

May we run with your love  
Build on your truth  
Play with your joy  
Share your forgiveness  
Rest in your wisdom  
Every day

Amen