

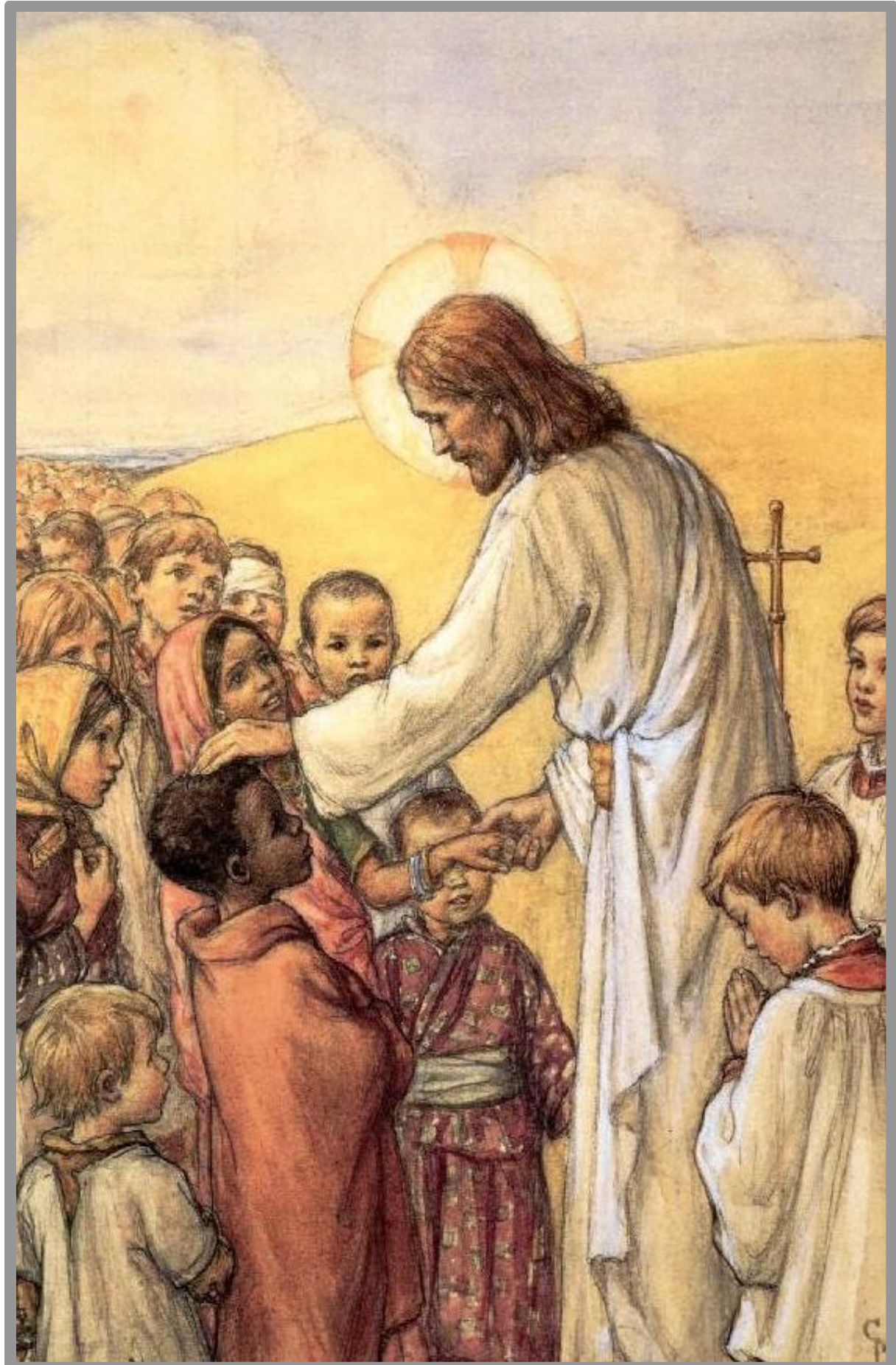


**St. Francis
Day Care Center**

Parent Handbook



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1.0 Welcome Letter from Mother

Dear Parents:

On behalf of The Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George, welcome to St. Francis Day Care Center! We are honored to serve your family by providing loving care for God’s most precious gift to you: your children!

You, as parents, are the primary educators of your children and we strive to assist you in the vocation entrusted to you by God by providing excellent care, guidance, and learning experiences for your children. Through communication and collaboration with you, we hope to help your children to develop spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically through a child-centered educational curriculum.

In order to work together, it is important to understand the practices established by St. Francis Day Care Center to foster this communication and collaboration. This handbook familiarizes you with the program and policies of our Day Care Center so that we can work together for your children’s development. Please read this handbook, sign and return the acknowledgement signature page in the registration packet, and save the handbook for future reference.

As stated in the parent handbook, please feel free to contact the leadership team or I for an appointment to discuss any questions you may have about your children or the activities at the Center.

It is my hope that between the collaborative efforts of you, as parents, and the St. Francis Daycare staff, each child who attends the Day Care will receive the foundation upon which to grow and mature into the person God is calling them to be. May that endeavor bring gratitude, increased wisdom, hope, and joy to you and your families!

Sincerely in Christ,
 Mother M. Mediatrix, FSGM
 Provincial Superior

2.0 Philosophy



St. Francis Day Care Center has been established for your child. A child is a gift of God to you and to the world. God loves your children, you love your children, and we love your children.

Christ said, "Let the little children come to Me for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven" (Luke 18:16). To you we say with His words: "Let the children come to us while you are working, and when your child returns to you, we hope he or she will be more loved, more loving, and happier every day".

Each child in our day care center is recognized as an individual whose gender, ability differences, personal privacy, choice of activities, cultural, ethnic, and religious background shall be respected.

We want to provide the environment, time, and materials for joyful play, which we believe is the basis for developing skills in a child.

We want to help your child to grow spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically by providing an environment that will stimulate and create interests.

We want to encourage and give many occasions for your child to explore the mystery of God's creation through nature and other materials, helping him or her to be at home in this world.

The Center will offer ample opportunity for your child to grow in openness, in trust, and in concern for those around him or her.

For the total well-being of your child, we look forward to a good relationship between you, the parents, and our employees in the Center.

3.0 Our Program

St. Francis Day Care Center is a childcare facility licensed by the state of Illinois for children between the ages of 6 weeks to 12 years, although the Center may not offer enrollment to all age groups at all times. The Center is open year-round. The hours of operation are from 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Office hours are from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The Center offers an educational program geared to the developmental needs of each child. The teachers carefully plan and coordinate a balanced, flexible curriculum offering conceptual experiences in language arts, math, science, dramatic play, music, and creative arts plus ample opportunity to develop small and large motor skills.

The current program is divided into the following age groups:

Room	Age Groups	Maximum Number	Staff: Child Ratio
1	6 weeks – 9 months	7	1:4
3	6 weeks – 9 months	8	1:4
2	9 – 15 months	8	1:4
2B	15 – 18 months	6	1:5
6	1 ½ – 2 years	15	1:5
4	2 – 2 ½ years	16	1:8
5	2 ½ – 3 years	16	1:8
8	3 - 3 ½ years	12	1:10
9	3 ½ – 4 years	17	1:10
PreK	4 – 5 years	19	1:10
Summer Program (Pre-K, 4-6 years)		26	1:10

4.0 Schedule of the Day

St. Francis Day Care Center operates on a scheduled routine and is staffed accordingly. The daily schedule is given below:

TIME	ACTIVITY
6:00 AM	Day Care Center opens for the day
7:15 AM – 7:50 AM	Breakfast is served and the opportunity for free play is given
8:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Classroom activities, free play, gym and/or outside time, morning snack
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	Lunch (individual class times may vary)
12:00 PM – 2:30 PM	Nap time/rest (individual class times may vary)
2:30 PM – 5:30 PM	Classroom activities, free play, gym and/or outside time, afternoon snack
5:30 PM	Day Care Center closes for the day

5.0 Admission Requirements

The items listed below must be completed before admission:

1. Application for Enrollment
2. Application/Record of Child Information
3. Medical report
4. Parental permission for child pick up
5. Developmental history
6. Infant information (if applicable)
7. Consent forms
8. Tuition agreement form
9. Receipt with signature for DHS pamphlets
10. Parent Handbook agreement
11. Birth Certificate
12. Emergency/Family card
13. Failure to pick up form

14. Guidance and discipline agreement
15. Pest management summary
16. Allergy sheet
17. Photo release form
18. Registration fee

Each child is required to have a physical examination and appropriate immunizations before admission, within two weeks of his/her first birthday, and every two years thereafter. The medical form is to be signed by the physician and a parent. Forms are provided by the State of Illinois and by the Center for the convenience of your child's physician.

Please notify the Center in writing of any changes in address, pick up policies, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and/or allergies.

6.0 Arrival

Rooms 1, 2, 3

Babies in these rooms are welcome to come in after 9:30 a.m. as long as the Center has been notified. They can be picked up at any time throughout the day.

Rooms 2B, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10

Please drop off your child each morning by 9:30 a.m. Any drop-offs after 9:30 a.m. will not be accepted. If your child has an appointment and will arrive after 9:30 a.m., please notify the Center before the day of the appointment. If you are running a few minutes late, please call the Center. Nap time is from 12:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Children may not be dropped off or picked up during nap time without prior approval from a Director.

All Rooms

Children must be brought into the Center by the parent/guardian or by a responsible person (at least 18 years of age) who has been authorized by the parent/guardian. The person accompanying the child must check-in the child on one of the provided tablets.

Please remove your child's coat, hat, etc., and put them in the designated location. For parents of infants and/or toddlers, please also put clothing, bottles, etc. in the place(s) provided for such items. The parents are also required to wash their child/children's hands upon arrival at the Center.

We recommend keeping goodbyes quick, less than 5 minutes. Long drawn-out goodbyes are hard on everyone. We are experts on transitioning kids. We will call if we think there is a reason for concern.

7.0 Pick-up

No child shall be released from the Center into the custody of any person other than the known parent/guardian or those directly authorized by the parent/guardian on the parental permission for child pick up form. All those authorized for pick up must be at least 18 years of age. Persons unknown to the staff will be required to provide a driver's license or photo identification before the child is released to them.

When you, or an authorized pick up person, picks up your child, please make sure the child's teacher knows that he or she is leaving and sign out the child on one of the provided tablets. Once a child is signed out, the authorized pick up person is then solely responsible for supervising the child while on St. Francis Day Care premises. Children may not wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms, and/or playground. All business issues should be handled prior to signing out the child.

8.0 Scheduling and Billing Policies

8.1 Tuition and Fees

All payment and fee processing will be done through the Kangarootime app. Tuition fees must be paid bi-weekly and in advance.

Tuition rates increase every January. Additional rate increases might be implemented throughout the year and will be announced with at least 30 days' notice.

8.2 Sibling Discounts

We offer our families with multiple children a sibling discount per tuition period. The discount rate is dependent on full or part-time status.

8.3 Enrollment Agreement

Families reserve a specific weekly schedule: full-time or part-time (either Monday/Wednesday/Friday or Tuesday/Thursday). Payment for this reserved schedule is required bi-weekly, year-round, whether or not your child attends. Because our program and licensing requirements dictate staffing based on the number of children enrolled, we cannot provide tuition refunds for days when your child is absent. No credits are given for sick or vacation days, holidays, professional development days, or closure due to inclement weather or other emergencies beyond our control. If there is a day without charge, it will be communicated to you.

To request a change from one schedule to another, please contact a Director. No make-up days will be given for part-time care. You cannot switch your scheduled days for other days, but you can pay for an additional day using the drop-in feature on Kangarootime as it is available.

Our yearly scheduled holidays are:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- 4th of July
- Thanksgiving Day + Friday
- Christmas Day

We also close one day each semester for professional development.

Each third Thursday of the month, there will be a 4:45 p.m. dismissal for staff professional development. We will also close early on some days before holidays.

We will provide a calendar which will show any days we are closed and closing early. St. Francis Day Care Center reserves the right to close for additional days beyond what is listed in this handbook.

8.4 Changes in Rooms and Tuition Changes

When a child moves up into a room that is in a different bracket on the tuition scale, the lower tuition rate will not begin until the new bi-weekly billing cycle begins.

8.5 Drop-In Days

With the use of Kangarootime, we offer a drop-in day feature. This feature is only available if there are openings in a classroom on a particular day. Please check the KT Connect app to see if there is an open spot for your child to attend when he or she is not scheduled. The fee per drop-in day is \$63. You

may cancel a drop-in day and not be charged for it, as long as you have not yet paid for the day as a part of the bi-weekly payment plan. If the day is already paid for, you will not be refunded if your child does not come on the drop-in day.

8.6 Leave of Absence

A leave of absence (either partial or full) is any period of time that a child is absent from their reserved schedule for more than five days. In the case of both planned and unplanned leaves of absence, full tuition is required for the first five days. If additional time is required, the parent/guardian can ask the Director for an application for a leave of absence and submit it for approval. Some examples of extenuating circumstances that would require a leave of absence include, but are not limited to, vacation over a week, hospitalization, or absence due to a serious contagious disease or illness. A written doctor's note is required for the opportunity to receive credit in the case of illness. If approved by the Director, you will receive a 50% credit for the days absent beyond the first five days.

A leave of absence will be granted at the discretion of the Director and *on a first come, first served basis*.

8.7 Payment

All families, unless with approval from a Director, will be set up to pay through automatic electronic funds, either through ACH (automatic debits) or a debit/credit card.

Payment will be automatically withdrawn on the Friday prior to the new tuition period as outlined in the Tuition Agreement. Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, sick or vacation days, holidays, professional development days, or closure due to inclement weather or other emergencies beyond our control.

Families will be charged a \$20 late fee if payment is not entered into Kangarootime by 12:00 a.m. on Friday of the bi-weekly payment period.

A non-refundable registration fee of \$100 (per child) is due annually during the first tuition period of August or whenever the first tuition period after the child registers between August and December. The registration fee is \$50 for children enrolled after January 1st but before August 1st.

8.8 Subsidy Tuition Payments

Childcare Assistant Program reimbursements will be applied to your Kangarootime billing upon receiving them from Brightpoint (formally known as CHASI). Families must go through the Brightpoint application to be approved for subsidy.

Parents are responsible for the copay amount that is determined by Brightpoint. Parents agree to pay the amount on a monthly basis. If you request an extra day other than your contracted day, you must pay a regular drop-in fee.

8.9 Rejected Transaction Charges

Rejected ACH or debit/credit card transactions will be charged a fee of \$20. This charge will be collected electronically. Two rejected transactions will result in termination of care.

8.10 Late Pick-up Fees/Late Pick-up Policies

Late fees of \$1 per minute begin accruing at 5:31 p.m. and will be charged to your account in the next bi-weekly billing period. Late fees also apply on days when the Center closes early. Three times of tardiness in picking up your child from the Center will result in a verbal warning. If a child is picked up late again, it will result in termination of care.

We are responsible for the care of your child from the time you drop them off until 5:30 p.m., our closing time. If we have not been able to contact you or any of the individuals listed as emergency contacts by 6:00 p.m., the next course of action will be to call the police or other outside authorities. It is crucial that you have up-to-date emergency contact numbers on file at the Center. We will be sure to be responsible for your child's protection and well-being until the parent, an emergency contact, or outside authorities arrive. Our staff will not hold your child responsible for the situation nor discuss the matter with them.

8.11 Building Closures/Snow Days

In consideration of the needs of our working families, we try to remain open under almost all situations. However, on occasion, the weather or some other emergency situation may cause a necessary closure of the Center.

Should the Center need to close in the middle of the day, the Center staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, those who are listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick-up arrangements can be made.

If, because of unforeseen circumstances, including snow days, we need to close for an entire day, we will communicate the closure in a variety of ways. Our decision will always be made by 6:00 a.m. We will first send an announcement on Kangarootime as well as post it on our website and Facebook page. We will also contact News Channel 2 in the case of a snow day.

9.0 Withdrawal or Termination

Two weeks' written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. You will be charged for all scheduled time during the two-week notice period. If the proper notice is given, any unused tuition after the two-week notice period will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged tuition for two additional weeks.

St. Francis Day Care Center reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time, with or without cause. Parents will be refunded any unused tuition within one month after the dismissal. A check will be mailed to the address indicated in the child's file. Any past due balances will be charged on Kangarootime immediately after the dismissal.

Some reasons for refusing service or immediately terminating a childcare contract are but are not limited to:

1. Failure to turn in necessary forms
2. Two rejected transactions or two missed payments without approval of a Director
3. Three times of tardiness in picking up your child/children from the Center will result in a verbal warning. If a child is picked up late again, it will result in termination of care.
4. Failure to pick up an ill child within an hour of being notified
5. Failure to notify Center of changes in address and/or telephone number and/or to provide proper emergency information
6. Failure to comply with policies of the Center after a reminder from a Director and/or causing undue stress to center staff or operations
7. Harmful behavior toward other children and/or staff members
8. Disrespectful behavior towards our staff or program
9. Posting or discussing derogatory information or concerns about our program or staff on social media or any other public forums

10. The use of tobacco in any form, the use or the possession of alcoholic, illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances, bringing in knives or firearms (including but not limited to pellet or BB type guns) loaded or unloaded, is strictly prohibited at the Center
11. The Center cannot meet the physical, mental, or emotional needs of the child

Please know that dismissal is perhaps the hardest part of the job for any director. Should it become necessary for us to dismiss your child, it was a decision that came after a lot of thought, prayer, and consideration and is not a reflection on you as a parent or your child. Centers, like children, are different, and our Center may not be the best one suited for your child.

Early intervention is crucial when a child exhibits concerning behaviors or significantly delayed developmental milestones. Our approach involves observing and documenting the child's behavior, then communicating these concerns to the parents. We work collaboratively with parents to create a classroom action plan and provide resources, allowing external health professionals to visit the daycare for therapy or assessments if needed.

If, after these steps, we determine that our daycare is not the best environment for the child's specific needs, we will communicate this decision and assist in transitioning to another care setting. Our goal is to ensure the child receives the appropriate care and support to thrive.

10.0 Illness

If your child has or has been exposed to a communicable disease, please notify the Center so that we can watch for symptoms in the other children.

If your child develops a fever (of 100.4° F or higher) or other symptoms of illness (example: three loose bowel movements, etc.), you will be called and requested to pick up your child. Your timely cooperation will assist us in safeguarding the health of all the children in the Center. We ask that you pick up your child within one hour of being notified by the Center.

Diseases/conditions which would prevent your child from coming to the Center are found in the chart at the end of this section. The list contains some of the more common illnesses and some of those mentioned in the Illinois Daycare Licensing Standards. It is not exhaustive.

Children who have been confined to a hospital, have had surgery, or have been treated for a fracture or broken bone must have a physician's release and instructions on file before they may be readmitted.

The Center will not accept telephone calls for a doctors' release but will accept faxed releases before a child returns. Our fax number is 618-463-2767.

Illness, Infection, Symptoms	Should the child stay home (or be sent home if at the center)?	When can the child come back?
Fever (100.4° or higher) with behavior change or symptoms of illness	YES	After free of fever for 24 hours
Diarrhea- an occurrence of loose stools that is above normal for the child	YES, if it has occurred once in the last 24 hours (or after 3 loose bowel movements)	24 hours after symptoms have subsided

Vomiting – throw up that is beyond a spit up	YES	Child has not vomited in the last 24 hours
Mouth Sores	YES	Once the child's physician or the local health department states that the child is not infectious
Rash	YES, if it occurs with fever or behavior change; NO, if no other symptoms occur	Symptoms have subsided and released to return by child's physician as non-contagious
(Conjunctivitis) Pink Eye	YES	24 hours after treatment has been initiated
Impetigo	YES	24 hours after treatment has been initiated
Strep Throat	YES	24 hours after treatment has been initiated AND the child has been fever-free for 24 hours
Head Lice	YES	24 hours after the first treatment AND all live lice and nits have been eradicated
Scabies	YES	24 hours after the first treatment AND all mites have been eradicated
Chicken Pox	YES	At least six days after onset of rash AND all blisters/pox have scabbed over
Whooping Cough	YES	At least 5 days of antibiotic treatment have been completed
Mumps	YES	At least 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling
Measels	YES	At least 4 days after the disappearance of the rash
Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease	YES	The child has been fever-free for 24 hours AND all sores are dried up
Influenza	YES	After fever- and vomit-free for 24 hours
Ringworm	YES, if affected area cannot be covered; NO, if area can be covered	If affected area cannot be covered, 24 hours after treatment begins
RSV	YES	Until all active symptoms, including fever (for 24 hours), have subsided
Ear Infection	NO	N/A
Hepatitis A	YES	At least seven days after onset of illness AND fever-free for 24 hours

10.1 Chronic Infectious Diseases

Children will not be accepted into the Center if they have the following diseases:

1. Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) or AIDS-Related Complex (ARC)
2. Hepatitis B & C until after review of health records and approval by the physician

3. Congenital Rubella Syndrome – until after 1 year of age and evidence of negative cultures approved by physician

Children will be excluded (terminated) from the day care program if they contract any of the above listed infectious diseases.

Children with Herpes Simplex (HSV-1 and HSV-2) will be excluded from the Center until the infectious condition is no longer present.

11.0 Medication

Medication may be given at the Center only under the following conditions:

1. The consent form is signed when the child is enrolled.
2. All medications must be provided by the parent/guardian.
3. All prescription medication must be in its original container and labeled with the child's name, directions for administering the medication, the date, the physician's name, the prescription number, and the name of the drug store or pharmacy.
4. Non-prescription medication will be given only with the parent's/guardian's written permission. These medications must be in the original packaging and labeled with the child's name and date. The medicine will be administered in accordance with the package instructions.
5. An adult staff member will give all medications and write the necessary information on the child's medication log.
6. No fever-masking medications will be given, such as Tylenol or Aspirin.
7. Expired medications will not be given to any child.

11.1 Antibiotics

A child may return to the Center 24 hours after starting an antibiotic without a doctor's release. Please notify your child's teacher when he/she is taking an antibiotic.

12.0 Accident or Injury

In case of accident or injury, the Director and/or a staff member using his/her discretion, will follow the procedures listed below.

1. Emergency first aid will be administered.
2. The parent/guardian may be called and requested to come immediately and attend to the child's needs.
3. If the Center cannot reach the parent or another emergency contact, the child's physician will be phoned for instructions.
4. If a child requires emergency medical care, he/she will be taken to the emergency room and the parent/guardian will be notified immediately.
5. An accident report giving an account of the incident by the staff member who witnessed it will be completed and kept in the child's file. Parents are informed either verbally or on Kangarootime.

12.1 Insurance

St. Francis Day Care Center carries Medical Expense Excess/Limited Accident Insurance. This is included in the annual re-enrollment fee.

13.0 Pest Management

St. Francis Day Care Center uses a pest management company to maintain a pest-free environment on our premises. The pest control regimen includes monthly visits. They conduct inspections and address any additional issues with appropriate measures. Any extensive extermination of pests or rodents shall be conducted under the direct observation of a staff member to ensure that residue is not left in areas accessible to children. In the springtime, the company performs an annual exterior spray around the building. We will provide two weeks' notice before the scheduled annual spray. To ensure the safety of the children, outdoor play is restricted for twenty-four hours following the exterior spray.

14.0 Nutritious Snacks and Meals

We recognize the importance of providing a nutritious and balanced diet to support the growth and development of the children in our care. Our nutrition policy aims to create a positive and healthy environment for all children while acknowledging certain dietary restrictions.

Our kitchen staff is committed to preparing and serving well-balanced meals and snacks that meet the nutritional needs of growing children. We strive to include a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy products in our menu to ensure a diverse and wholesome diet. The menu for each month is posted on our website.

The children will be served breakfast, fruit as a morning snack, a hot lunch, and an afternoon snack. Meals and snacks are served at regularly scheduled times.

All food consumed by children at the Center will be provided by the Center. Exceptions are that parents provide food for infants not yet consuming table food or for any child requiring a special diet.

14.1 Special Dietary Needs:

Our kitchen staff is dedicated to working with parents to ensure each child's dietary needs are met. We appreciate open communication regarding any changes in a child's dietary requirements.

Our kitchen cannot prepare dedicated gluten-free meals due to limitations in our facilities. Parents must communicate any specific dietary requirements or restrictions their child may have, including gluten intolerance, celiac disease, and/or lactose intolerance.

For children requiring gluten-free and/or dairy-free meals, parents must provide substitutes or alternative meals that comply with their child's dietary needs. Parents who are providing substitutes for their child's meals are required to notify the Center's staff in advance. Substitutes should be clearly labeled with the child's name, date, and any relevant instructions for serving.

According to State Regulations [407 (82) j], "When providing a special diet causes undue hardship or expense for the childcare center, meals or portions of meals may be provided by the parent upon written agreement of the parent and the center. The parent shall be responsible for the safety of food brought into the center (#3)." "Special foods provided by parents shall be clearly labeled with the child's name, date, and identity of the food and shall not be shared by other children (#5)."

No discounts or refunds will be given for food provided by families.

15.0 Excursions

At St. Francis Day Care Center the children are able to take walking excursions to the convent, the Sisters' two chapels, and the convent backyard. The only transportation we have for the children to do the above things is by foot. We do not take children out in any type of vehicle.

16.0 Emergency Preparedness

The Center conducts monthly fire and occasional emergency/evacuation drills. Parents, staff, and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans. During a fire/emergency drill or real fire/emergency situation, parents may not sign children in or out of the Center. Parents must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building to check their child in or out of the Center. Parents may feel free to wait with the child's class in the designated safe-zone outside of the building until the drill is complete. In the event of a real fire/emergency situation, the Director or designate will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation.

A monthly fire drill and two seasonal tornado drills will be established and implemented to assure prompt evacuation of the building in case of an emergency. This will be done in a manner as not to frighten your child, but to assure him of his safety. We feel that a continuing education program will be more effective and less stressful on everyone in case of a real emergency.

Our Center's philosophy is to keep your child safe at all times when he or she is in our care. We have developed an emergency plan that will be put into place in the event that special circumstances require a different type of care. Plans for these special types of care are reviewed annually. Staff is trained in the appropriate response and local emergency management is aware of these plans. The specific type of emergency will guide where and what special care will be provided.

16.1 Shelter-In-Place

This plan would be put into place in the event of a weather emergency or unsafe outside conditions or threats. In this plan, children will be cared for indoors at the Center and the Center may be secured or locked to restrict entry. If local authorities consider the outside air contaminated, the Center will be locked and openings in doorways or windows will be sealed shut. A sign on the door will indicate "Shelter-In-Place". No parents, children, or staff will be allowed to enter or exit the building during a shelter-in-place until we receive official notification that the danger has passed. Any time a shelter-in-place is needed, the parent will be notified no later than at pick up time that day. Parents will be notified if they need to pick up their child before their regular time.

16.2 Lockdown

There could be situations that may result in harm to persons inside Center, including shooting, hostage, intruder, trespassing, disturbance, or any other situation deemed harmful at the discretion of a Director. In these cases, a lockdown procedure will be followed. In this plan, the children will be cared for inside their classroom or other designated safe location away from danger. The building will be locked and no parent, child, or staff will be allowed to enter or exit the building during a lockdown. Anytime a lockdown is needed, the parent will be notified no later than at pick up time that day.

16.3 Fire

Fire drills are conducted once per month at various times of day. Should we have an actual fire, please refer to "Emergency Evacuation" policies. The parents will be contacted through Kangaroo time to make them aware of the situation and inform them of where they can pick up their child.

16.4 Tornado

Tornado drills are conducted twice a year. In the extreme event that we would have to evacuate the center after a tornado has passed through, please refer to “Emergency Evacuation” policies.

16.5 Emergency Evacuation

This plan would be put into place in the event that it is not safe for the children to remain at the Center. The Center will first notify the parents on Kangarootime via the announcements. The Center will then call parents or emergency contact persons with information about the pick-up location. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location.

17.0 Guidance and Discipline

At St. Francis Day Care Center, we are committed to fostering a safe and nurturing environment where positive discipline and behavioral guidance help children grow into loving disciples of Jesus. These guidelines reflect our dedication to promoting healthy development while maintaining respect, consistency, and confidential communication between parents and staff. The expected code of conduct for all children is based on Christian behavior. All teachers will help the children to understand the expectations of their classroom.

We believe that building quality relationships with our students is the foundation of guidance and discipline. Our teachers incorporate positive guidance techniques such as modeling, encouraging expected behaviors, and giving simple choices with clear and reasonable limits. By establishing routines, expectations, and natural consequences, children are encouraged to learn from their mistakes. Our teachers and environment create opportunities for children to work together and learn as well as develop social skills in the areas of cooperation, helping, and talking with others to solve conflicts.

The goal of discipline is to help children to develop social-emotional regulation; therefore, it is necessary for children to understand rules and the reasons for them and to understand the consequences of their actions. The following techniques are used at St. Francis Day Care Center:

- Distracting and redirecting children from potential problems
- Reminding children of the rules
- Helping children to solve problems and to make appropriate choices
- Noticing and reinforcing positive behavior
- Helping children to articulate their feelings
- Helping children to understand the consequences of their actions
- Allowing children to take time away from the group to regain control, if necessary

For children ages 3 and older, teachers use a calm down period (formally known as time-out) to help children manage their behavior and learn from their actions. It's not meant to be punitive but more of a teaching moment. When someone is having difficulty following the class rules or needs time to calm down, the teacher may implement a time-out period (the minutes being no longer than the child's age). During this time, the child can reflect on his/her behavior and think about how to make better choices. It's a way for the teacher to create a positive learning environment and promote responsible behavior in the classroom.

The following actions will never be used with children at our Center:

- Corporal punishment, verbal abuse (including addressing a child harshly), emotional abuse (including intimidating, ridiculing, humiliating and rejecting the child), or threats
- A child or group of children disciplining another child
- Unsupervised isolation of a child

- Threatening or withholding of basic necessities, including food, rest, or use of the bathroom, as punishment

Early intervention is crucial when a child exhibits concerning behaviors or significantly delayed developmental milestones. Our approach involves observing and documenting the child's behavior, then communicating these concerns to the parents. We work collaboratively with parents to create a classroom action plan and provide resources, allowing external health professionals to visit the daycare for therapy or assessments if needed.

If, after these steps, we determine that our daycare is not the best environment for the child's specific needs, we will communicate this decision and assist in transitioning to another care setting. Our goal is to ensure the child receives the appropriate care and support to thrive.

18.0 Diapering and Toilet Training

Diaper changing and toilet training are very important at St. Francis Day Care Center.

All children in diapers will be checked at least every two hours, and the diapers will be changed if necessary. If we notice a need for a change at another time, we will change the child's diaper.

Children being toilet trained will progress through stages from diapers to pull-ups and then wearing underwear until they are completely trained. Toilet training is an important step in the child's development. It takes time, consistency, and a lot of patience. When toilet training, the teachers will encourage the child with lots of praise for his/her efforts. Please expect many possible accidents. Teachers will do their best to assist parents with toilet training, but it must be a team effort at both home and the Center. You can discuss with your child's teacher what your expectations are and how you can best work together to make toilet training a success.

St. Francis Day Care Center does not enroll children who are three years old or older who are not toilet-trained.

19.0 Biting

St. Francis Day Care recognizes that biting is a developmental behavior for children in the infant and toddler classrooms. Children biting other children is unavoidable and common in any group childcare program especially with those under the age of three. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their child may be bitten or may bite another child. When it happens, and sometimes continues, it can be difficult for children, parents, and staff. It is important to understand that because a child bites, it does not mean that the child is "mean" or "bad" or that the parents or teachers of the child are "bad" parents or teachers or that they are not doing their job to prevent biting from happening. Biting is not something to blame on the child, parents, or teachers. Biting is purely a sign of the developmental age of the child.

19.1 Reasons for Biting

Every child is different. Some bite more than others; some may not bite at all. Group care presents challenges and opportunities that are unique from home. The children are surrounded by many others for hours at a time. Even though there are plenty of toys and materials available for all the children, two or three children may want the same toy. The children are learning how to live in a community setting. Sometimes that is not easy.

There are many possible reasons as to why an infant or toddler may bite:

1. Teething
2. Impulsiveness and lack of control: children sometimes bite just because there is something there to bite. They do not intend to hurt, but rather they are exploring their world.
3. Making an impact: sometimes children will bite to see what reactions happen.
4. Excitement and over-stimulation: Simply being very excited, even happily so, can be a reason a child may bite. Very young children don't have control over their emotions and behaviors.
5. Frustration: frustrations can be over a variety of reasons – wanting a toy someone else has, not having the skills needed to do something, or wanting a teacher's attention. Infants and toddlers simply lack the language and social skills necessary to express all their needs, desires, and problems. Biting is often their quickest and easiest way of communicating.

19.2 Follow-Up Procedures

When a child is bitten, he/she will immediately be treated with first aid.

An incident report will always be filled out and placed in the child's file and the parents will be notified via Kangarootime. Each classroom keeps a confidential biting log, which includes the name of the child who bit, the name of the child who was bitten, the time of day, and the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Confidentiality is always practiced with biting. We will always inform the parents of the child who bit and the parents of the child who was bitten. We cannot tell a parent who bit their child.

20.0 Dress Code/ Personal Belongings

Children should come to the Center wearing adequate and appropriate clothing for the current weather and activities. Children will be engaged daily in outdoor play (weather permitting) as well as potentially messy activities. Because of this, children should be dressed in seasonably appropriate and comfortable clothing.

Coats, hats, gloves/mittens, scarves and winter boots must be provided in the winter months. It is not necessary for the children to wear their winter boots to school; teachers will help the children change into their boots when they go outdoors.

Please do not dress children who are toilet training in overalls, onesies, or clothing with difficult closures.

Children are not permitted to wear sandals, open-toed, and/or open-backed shoes. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in Center activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes although any closed-toed and closed-back shoes are acceptable.

Parents/guardians must provide two full changes of clothing (including socks) for each child to keep in his/her cubby. Please include an extra pair of closed-toed shoes with rubber soles (i.e. tennis shoes) for safe outdoor and gym play. We will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and boots. St. Francis Day Care Center is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

We are a Christian facility, so we ask that you avoid sending your child in clothing that displays logos, characters, or advertisements directly or indirectly promoting anti-Christian values.

20.1 Supplies

Diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and diaper cream are supplied by the parent/guardian. An electronic notice will be sent via Kangarootime when a child's supply of any of these items is low. We do not use cloth diapers at St. Francis Day Care Center.

20.2 Accessories/Jewelry:

When choosing accessories for your children, be mindful of the potential safety issues they present not only for your child but also for other children attending the Center.

Children are discouraged from wearing jewelry of any kind. It is a safety hazard for your child as well as the other children enrolled in the program. In addition, St. Francis Day Care Center will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables.

21.0 Religious Instruction

St. Francis Day Care Center is a Roman Catholic institution. The children will be exposed to the teachings of the Catholic Church (e.g., Bible stories, saints, prayers, devotion to Mary the Mother of God, etc.) and to religious activities (e.g., visiting the Adoration Chapel, daily prayer, seasonal religious celebrations, etc.). No child will be excluded from these presentations.

22.0 Parent Involvement

22.1 Parent Visits

Parents are welcome to visit the Center during our normal operating hours. In order to ensure that we can provide the best possible experience for our children, visitors and staff, please call or send a message through KT Connect in advance to inform us of your intended visit.

The Center welcomes parents to attend any programs such as the Christmas program to see their children perform. Parents may be invited to join the children for any special activities which are planned for specific classrooms such as holiday parties, outside water play, special crafts, etc.

We have a shoeless policy for adults in infant rooms 1, 2, and 3. Children in these age groups spend the majority of their time on the floor, therefore we require that all parents, or anyone picking up the children, please use the provided shoe coverings when walking into the rooms beyond the designated area.

22.2 Birthdays

Parents are welcome to send treats to celebrate their child's birthday. Parents must communicate at least one week in advance with the teachers about a good day to bring in treats. According to the licensing standards, any food brought in by the parents to be shared with the entire class must be commercially prepared and arrive in its original package and unopened if the children are going to consume it. This means that the Center cannot accept homemade foods for the children in the facility. The food must be peanut-free.

Do not bring invitations to personal birthday parties unless the child's entire class is invited.

22.3 Conferences

The Director and teachers are available to answer your questions regarding your child. Conferences may be scheduled when the need arises. Please ask for an appointment if you would like a conference so the Director and/or teacher(s) can be available.

For the children in our Pre-K program, parent-teacher conferences take place every November and March. A digital sign-up will be sent out at least two weeks in advance of the conference dates.

22.4 Communication

We communicate through announcements in the Kangarootime Connect app. Please make sure your notifications are turned on.

The parent bulletin board is located in the lobby. Please check it frequently since we post all social functions, events, timely news issues, etc. there.

Parents are encouraged to follow our Facebook page. We regularly post pictures of daily and special events. Please know that our lead testing report and mitigation plan is found on the dress in the gym.



“Let the little children come to me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Luke 18:19

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