

ST. MARK LUTHERAN

1516 Pech Road • Houston, Texas 77055 • gostmark.org

Extended Care Handbook

OPERATION HOURS

AM CARE

7-7:45AM

PM CARE

Preschool-PK: 3-6PM

Bridge-8th: 3:20-6PM

(Enrollment Required)

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MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

St. Mark Lutheran School Mission Statement

St. Mark Lutheran School seeks to introduce Houston families to the life-changing love of Jesus through Scholarship, Ministry and Leadership.

School Philosophy

St. Mark Lutheran School is dedicated to helping each student discover and develop his or her individual abilities and potential. All children should recognize their uniqueness in the sense that they are “fearfully and wonderfully made” by God’s perfect design. At the same time, St. Mark recognizes the importance of preparing students to assume their role as citizens of this world and of God’s heavenly kingdom. Our school program therefore emphasizes the necessity of cooperation, teamwork, and respect for others. In essence, St. Mark Lutheran School strives to develop the following key relationships:

- the child in relationship to God
- the child in relationship to self
- the child in relationship to the community
- the child in relationship to the world created by God

PROGRAM SCHEDULE AND FEES

Fees

5-Day(M-F): \$270 | 3-Day (MWF): \$165 | 2-Day (TTH): \$110

Note: St. Mark Extended Care does not have a drop in rate.

Late Fees

Enrolled Extended Care students must be picked up before 6PM. Students not picked up by this time will incur a late fee of \$1 per minute. Students who are not enrolled in Extended Care will be charged a \$15 flat fee per hour (1-59 minutes).

If a student is not registered in a supervised before and/or after school activity such as sports, music or tutoring classes, they must be in Extended Care when on our campus. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the teacher informed of their child(ren's) before and/or after school activities. Students are not allowed on campus unsupervised at any time. *If a child is not picked up from sports practice in a timely manner, the coach will take the child to extended care.*

Extended Care for Athletes

Participating student athletes may register for the Athletic Extended Care program. This will cover their time here on campus for Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 5-6PM as well as Wednesday and Friday 3-6PM. **The cost for this program is \$165/month.** You must register your child for every season he/she participates. If the student is a JV or Varsity sports player, the child will go to the gym directly after school unless otherwise specified. The parent will be responsible for being there to pick the student up at the end of practice. *If a child is not picked up from sports practice in a timely manner, the coach will take the child to extended care.*

Holiday Extended Care

During select school holidays, Extended Care will offer all day care. **Parents must pre-register** via the link publicized in The Cougar two weeks prior to the holiday to sign up for half/full day care in order for your child to attend. The full day fee is \$70/day and the half day fee is \$35/day. Please be aware that the days you have registered for are the days that you will be charged. St. Mark is required to stay in compliance with Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TXDFPS) Licensing with a teacher/student ratio. As such, our staff is scheduled based upon the registrations. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

PROCEDURES

Student Arrival

AM Care is 7-7:45AM and PM Care is 3-6PM for PS/PK & 3:20-6PM for K-8. For morning care, parents of PS/PK children will escort their children to the front desk at either entrance and hand their child off to a staff member to be escorted to class. Children in Bridge-8th grade may utilize the drop off zones for their child to walk into the building. Kindergarten-4th will meet in the SML Library and 5th-8th will meet in the Upstairs Commons.

On early dismissal days, the arrival procedures are the same as above. At dismissal time, PS/PK teachers will escort your child to their assigned Extended Care class. Bridge-8th grade students will meet their teacher in the assigned Extended Care class.

On full day extended care, parents of PS through 8th grade children will escort their children to the front desk to the assigned entrance and hand their child off to a staff member to be escorted to class.

Student Pick Up

A parent, legal guardian, or authorized person (noted on enrollment forms) must enter the building to pick up a child. Identification will be required to pick up a child. If someone who is not on your pick-up list will be picking your child up, please be sure to notify us by 2PM. These are security measures to protect you and your child.

Extended Care pick up for Infants-8th grade is at the Church Entrance from 3:30-6PM. If you are picking your child up before 3PM you must do so at the School Entrance.

If your child will be picked up earlier than 3:30PM, please contact the school office.

Campus Visitors

Any parent who wishes to visit the campus or class, please contact the director to make arrangements.

HOLIDAYS AND CLOSURE DATES - 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

August 12,13,15,16 Teacher In-Service

April 15 & 18 Good Friday/Easter Monday

August 17 First Day of School

May 27 All Staff Meeting - 12PM dismissal

September 6 Labor Day

May 30 Memorial Day

November 24-26 Thanksgiving Holiday

May 31- June 3 Summer Camp In-Service

December 10 All Staff Meeting - 4PM dismissal

June 6 First Day of Summer Camp

December 22-24 Christmas Holiday (observed)

July 4 Independence Day

December 30 & 31 New Year's Holiday (observed)

August 1-16 New School Year In-Service

Note: Dates above are the days the Extended Care program will be closed. The school calendar will have additional days when PS-8th grade will be out of school. The Extended Care program will be open on some of those days. *Please see Holiday Extended Care section for details.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Student Dress Code

Students should wear their school uniforms while in Extended Care. Children in 5-8th grade may wear their sports uniforms if they are coming from practice.

During **full day holiday Extended Care**, children may wear regular clothes that adhere to these guidelines:

Students should wear clothes that are comfortable since they will be active every day. Both girls and boys may wear pants or shorts. Girls may wear a skirt as long as they have shorts underneath. All clothing must be tasteful and have no wording or pictures that are offensive. All clothing must cover the midriffs. The student's shoes must be a closed toe. Tennis shoes are preferred but not required.

Field Trips

Extended Care may take field trips during school closures. If so, students will be transported by the St. Mark school bus driven by a licensed driver. Parents will be notified in advance and children are required to have a signed permission form to attend. Failure to follow directions/rules will result in disciplinary action, including possible removal from field trips and future field trips. Your child's safety is our main concern.

If you are late on a field trip day, you may meet us at the field trip destination to drop off your child. The entire staff will leave with the bus, therefore you may not drop-off your child during field trip hours at St. Mark.

Daily Schedules

All Extended Care teachers are provided with a schedule to follow. Although it is not an academic schedule, it will ensure everyone has quality time in different areas of our school such as gym, playground, library, etc.

Nuisance Items

Parents are asked to help ensure that nuisance items are not brought to school. These include (but are not limited to) gum, candy, trading cards, comic books, inappropriate magazines, matches, audio devices, electronic games, squirt guns, dolls, games, and handheld electronic devices. These items may be confiscated and will be returned at the discretion of the teacher or administration.

Cell Phones

Cell phones and smart watches are not to be used during the school day or Extended Care. They should be kept in a student's backpack and turned off. Used in any other way, a cell phone or smart watch is considered a nuisance item and will be confiscated. An electronic device used in violation of this policy will be confiscated the first time and given to the student the following day. A second violation will result in the parent having to pick up the electronic device from school administration.

Snack and Meals

During Morning Care, children are allowed to bring breakfast. **They must be in the classroom by 7:45AM.** Otherwise, there is not enough time for them to finish their breakfast.

For afternoon Extended Care, students will be provided with a nutritional snack that meets the standards of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Students with food allergies may choose to bring their own snack.

For Holiday and Early Dismissal Extended Care, children will be provided with a morning and an afternoon snack. **All students will need to bring their own lunch** as the cafeteria is closed on these days.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Per the guidelines set by the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services in the Minimum Standards for Licensed Child-Care Centers, the following policies will be upheld.

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child;
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

Staff will use only positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Our discipline policy requires a cooperative effort from teachers, parents and the children. The following is the process through which a child will be disciplined while in the program.

When a child misbehaves, the teacher will first attempt to redirect his/her behavior towards an appropriate activity. If the child does not respond to redirection, he/she will receive a warning. After the warning the child may be separated from the group for an appropriate length of time. The teacher will talk with the child about the behavior which was not acceptable and discuss behaviors which would be acceptable as replacements. After three time-outs, the child will be sent to the director who will talk with the child about his conduct.

Behaviors such as bullying, hitting, biting, intentionally harming others, throwing with intent to harm, repeated disruption of class, being disrespectful towards others, foul language, destruction of property, and uncontrollable behavior will result in a written notice home to parents. If improvement is not seen in a reasonable time and the behavior occurs again, the parents may be called and asked to pick up their child for the remainder of the day.

Any child who continually jeopardizes the safety of him or herself, other children, and/or staff will be asked to leave the program if corrective measures are not successful.

HEALTH & SAFETY RULES

Illness or Accidents

St. Mark Lutheran School does not have the facilities or personnel to offer medical care beyond routine first aid treatment. If a student is injured or becomes ill at school, the school nurse or office personnel will comfort the child and contact a parent or guardian to pick him up. ***It is expected that the parent will do this within an hour of being contacted.*** Parents are responsible to ensure that each child has a current emergency response form on file with the school office with all parent contact numbers and several alternative numbers. In the unlikely event of a medical emergency, an ambulance may be called before the parent is notified. Our primary concern is for the health and safety of the child.

At the request of the school nurse, parents will be called to pick up a child if any of the following are observed:

1. fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
2. vomiting or diarrhea
3. excessive coughing
4. a significant rash
5. ongoing complaints of pain
6. any injury that appears serious
7. head lice or scabies
8. recurring or heavy yellow or green nasal discharge
9. pink eye

Our school is also required by the law to uphold the following recommendations and guidelines provided by the Texas State Department of Health. Both staff and parents must comply for the health of all of our children.

1. Chicken Pox: You must have a physician's permit to re-enter school. The last crop of lesions must be scabbed over, and the child must be examined by the school nurse.
2. Diphtheria: You must have a physician's permit to re-enter school.
3. Hepatitis: You must have a physician's permit to re-enter school. By law, parents of classroom contacts must be notified by a school official.
4. Impetigo: You must have a physician's permit to re-enter school. All lesions must be healed, and the child must be examined by a school nurse prior to returning to school.
5. Measles: You must have a physician's permit to re-enter school. Child must be free from rash, and the child must be examined by a school nurse prior to returning to school.
6. Mononucleosis: You must have a physician's permit to re-enter school.
7. Mumps: You must have a physician's permit to re-enter school.
8. Pink Eye: May return to school after using physician prescribed eye drops/ointment for 24 hours. If it is viral in nature, the child may not return until being evaluated by a school nurse, and it may be as long as 14 days.
9. Pediculosis (Lice): Children will be allowed to return to school once the prescribed treatment has been administered, and the child is checked by the school nurse before re-entering class.
10. Ringworm of scalp and skin: Child may return to school with a permit from the physician, provided prescribed treatment has been initiated, and the area is covered.
11. Streptococcal Infection: Also referred to as Strep throat, Scarletina, or Scarlet fever. Child may return to school with a physician's permit, AFTER having been free from symptoms (fever, sore throat, and rash) and on antibiotic therapy for 24 hours.
12. Tuberculosis: Child must have a physician's permit and must be taking the prescribed medication.
13. Whooping Cough: Child must have a physician's permit to re-enter school.

Children with contagious diseases must remain at home until a doctor releases them to return to school. Children with fever should be kept at home until they are fever-free **without medication** for 24 hours. When your child has a fever, keep him home for 24 hours after the fever has broken. For example, if the fever breaks in the afternoon on Monday, do not send your child to school until Wednesday. The temperature should remain below 99.0 for 24 hours. Parents are requested to use their better judgment and consideration when deciding whether a child is well enough to attend school. Although it may be inconvenient to keep a sick child home, the well-being of the child, his classmates, and his teachers must take first priority.

Staff is recommended but not required to abide by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Medication Policy

Many medications are sent to school for the nurse or, in her absence, a designated staff member, to give to students. Teachers do not dispense medication. For the safety of our students, the school staff will follow strict policies and procedures for administration of medication. No medication is supplied by the school. Medication purchased in a foreign country will not be given. All prescription and non-prescription medication must be kept in the nurse's office and must be registered with the nurse when a student arrives at school. A medication form (either over the counter or prescription) must be completed by the parent and turned in along with the medication before it can be dispensed. *Please note: Prescription medications also require the authorized signature of the prescribing physician.*

Prescription Medication - This form is available on our website: gostmark.org/forms.

Prescription medication may only be administered when a signed Prescription Medication Form with complete dosage instructions has been received from the prescribing physician or dentist licensed to practice in the United States. Prescription medication must be provided by the parent/guardian in the original container appropriately labeled with the name of the student, name of the medication, and complete dosage instructions. In cases of repeated daily doses, parents are responsible for providing a one week supply, picking up the empty container at the end of the week, and returning the container with the following week's dosage to the nurse's office. *Note: For medications prescribed by a doctor given three times daily, you are encouraged to give one before school, one after school, and one at bedtime, unless otherwise advised by your physician.*

Over-the-Counter Medication - This form is available on our website: gostmark.org/forms.

Non-prescription medication may be administered when a signed Over-the-Counter Medication Form with dosage instructions written specifically for your child has been received from a parent/guardian. All over-the-counter medications must be FDA-approved and must be in the original container. Only the dosage indicated on the container will be given. If there is not an age-appropriate dosage on the container, you must have a physician complete a Prescription Medication Form with dosage instructions in order for the medication to be given.

These procedures have been implemented with the safety and protection of the students in mind. Parents are encouraged to work with the school nurse to minimize any inconvenience.

MISCELLANEOUS

Gang-Free Zone

Under Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties under state law.

Texas Health and Human Services – Child Care Licensing

TDFPS – dfps.state.tx.us

Licensing – 713-287-3238

1330 E. 40th St., Houston, Texas 77022

Child Abuse Hotline – 1-800-252-5400

Minimum Standards and Most Recent Licensing Report

Parents can review a copy of the Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Care Centers and a copy of our most recent Licensing inspection report. These items are available any time and are posted in the hallway by the Motor Lab.

Movies and Music

Movies may be shown once a week. Any movies shown will not have a rating higher than PG and any music played will be tasteful and suitable for the children.

Immunization Requirements

Each child must meet the applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A signed statement from each child's parent verifying that each child immunization record is current and on file at their school is required.

Inclement Weather

When St. Mark School is closed for inclement weather, extended care is also closed. St. Mark will notify the media in such an event. Parents should check for school closing broadcasts in cases of severe weather or other emergencies. **Typically, St. Mark closes when Spring Branch ISD is closed.**

Parent Communication

Parents may email, call or meet face-to-face with the assistant director to discuss any questions or concerns about any of St. Mark's Extended Care policies or procedures. You can email the Extended Care Director, Brenda Palacios at bpalacios@stmarkhouston.org. You may also call at 713 468 2623. Feedback is always welcomed and appreciated.

Exceptions to the Handbook

In regards to any of the parent handbook policies, the school administration reserves the right to make the final decision and will always do its best to make decisions on the basis of what is best for the entire program.