

St. Edmund's Nursery School

Parent Handbook 2009-2010

St. Edmund's Nursery School
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Head of School

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St. Edmund's Parent Handbook

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Parent’s Handbook

Dear Parents:

We are delighted that you have chosen St. Edmund's Nursery School for your child's first school experience and we extend a very warm welcome to you as a family and to your children as individuals. On behalf of the entire staff, it is our pleasure to welcome and serve you.

We shall strive in every possible way to make our relationship with you satisfactory and rewarding. We shall endeavor to guide your child's development in physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual growth by presenting a program that enriches everyday experiences.

This Handbook contains a great deal of information that will be helpful to you during the entire school year. Please read through it now and print it for reference as the school year progresses. We have tried to anticipate and answer most questions in the following pages. Feel free to come and visit with me at any time. ***Remember that our doors are always open and visitors are always welcome, but do announce your arrival to a staff member.***

Nursery School is not a substitute for a loving, supportive home or for an active church life, but it supplements the home and church in many ways. If you already have a church home, we encourage you to continue to attend there with your child. If not, we welcome you to our church family here at St. Edmund's Episcopal Church in San Marino.

We will give to your child affection, acceptance, academics and approval in a warm, loving, caring, nurturing, and Christian atmosphere.

Sincerely,

Darlene Porter, Head of School
and the Staff of St. Edmund's Nursery School

Background

St. Edmund's Nursery School was established in 1957. It is a California State licensed, non-profit school, sponsored by St. Edmund's Episcopal Church. Admission is open to pre-school aged children without regard to race, religion or national ancestry.

Mission

The Mission of St. Edmund's Nursery School is to offer young children an outstanding learning environment and an excellent foundation for future academic, social and spiritual development. Emphasizing basic skills, values, manners and an inclusive religious curriculum. St. Edmund's Nursery School strives to nurture knowledgeable, responsible, and caring children well prepared to meet the challenges of family, school and community life.

Goals

- To create a child's world in a positive atmosphere, where the individual and group needs of young children will be met.
- To increase each child's understanding and acceptance of self and others.
- To increase the children's awareness and knowledge of the world around them. To give them the freedom to discover.
- To establish and maintain a strong, mutually beneficial relationship between the school and its families. To share information and support activities helpful to parents.
- To foster an environment wherein the children can feel comfortable about God and learn about God's love for them.
- To create self esteem, self respect and self confidence.

Staff

Our staff is composed of persons with a genuine love for and interest in young children. Our teachers have professional training and education in Early Childhood Education and are selected because of their understanding and sensitivity to children in their early years.

All staff members participate regularly in growth and development programs and workshops.

Programs offered at St. Edmund's Nursery School

To enter St. Edmund's Nursery School in September, a child must be three years old on or before December 2nd of that year.

The School offers:

Tuesday/Thursday session for 3-year olds

(3 years old by Dec. 2)

Monday/Wednesday/Friday session for 3-year olds

(3 years old by July 15th)

Monday/Wednesday/Friday session for 4-year olds

(4 years old by Dec. 2)

Five-day session for 4-year olds

(4 years old by Dec. 2)

Pre-Kindergarten session for 5-year olds

(5 years old by Dec. 2)

Pre-Kindergarten is for the child who is eligible for Kindergarten in public schools, (5 years old by December 2 of that year), but has decided to continue Nursery School one additional year. It is also designed for the child who is not eligible for Private School enrollment, because of that schools' September 1st cut-off date.

In addition to the regular day (8:45 to 11:40), the School offers four *Picnic Days* (11:40 to 2:45) on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons for all students attending St. Edmund's Nursery School, at an additional fee of \$18.00 per picnic afternoon. On occasion, there is an optional enrichment activity which would incur an additional charge.

Daily Program

A carefully supervised and balanced program is offered to assist in the learning process of the child. This includes varied activities of play, pre-reading and pre-math readiness, music appreciation, stories, creative art, science, and health, all of which provide an educational experience of lasting value in the physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual growth of your child.

School Hours and Policies

The Nursery School is open Monday through Friday. School begins promptly at 8:45 and ends at 11:40. The child must be accompanied by a parent or designated person for admission by the Head of School. At the gate, the Head of School will check each child for colds or other obvious symptoms of illness.

To comply with state law, each child must be signed in and out which includes the time **after** being accepted into school by the parent or guardian. **Please sign your first and last name including the time legibly.** A written note must accompany your child if you wish your child to be released to anyone other than those designated on your Green Authorization Form. At 11:40, the gate will be opened to allow parents to drive through and safely pick up children at the door. *A late fee of \$15.00 will be charged after 12:00 noon.*

A child should not remain in school if lack of self-control makes the child dangerous to him/herself or others, or if it is determined by the Head of School and the Staff that the child needs a different type of program.

We may close for a maximum of two teacher in-service days. The dates will be posted well in advance.

***All children must be toilet-trained before entering Nursery School
Diapers are not allowed at St. Edmund's Nursery School.***

Signing “In and Out” Procedures

Please read the following very carefully! It pertains to every child in our school each school day, and must be followed as outlined. This is a regulation of the State Department of Social Services requiring that every child in every pre-school in California must be signed in and out which includes the time by a responsible adult every time he/she attends school. **It is State mandated that each parent or carpool parent sign their full name (first and last names) including the time. No children's signatures, please.**

1. Bring the child(ren) to the gate for the usual health inspection and acceptance.
2. After acceptance, sign the child(ren) IN with the time on the clip boards on the gate.
3. Any child(ren) who arrive late must be brought to the office and signed IN.
4. Any child(ren) who leave early must be signed OUT at the office.
5. Pick up the child(ren) at their usual time and place and sign them OUT with the time on the clip boards provided by the teachers.

On rainy days, the clip boards will be brought to your car and the children will be accepted into school.

Tuition

Tuition is an annual fee that may be paid in one payment at the beginning of the school year or divided into two equal installments with such payments due on the first of September and February. If there is a financial problem, speak to the Head of School for other arrangements. Tuition should be remitted by check and made payable to *St. Edmund's Nursery School*. If it is necessary to withdraw a child during the year, parents should give written notice as far in advance as possible, but no later than 30 days prior to withdrawal. The School will reimburse parents for any pre-paid tuition covering the months after their child's withdrawal, provided that child's spot at the School is filled by a new student. However, if a child has attended any part of the month, tuition for that month is not refundable. In the event that a child is withdrawn at the request of the school, the School will reimburse the parent for any pre-paid tuition covering the months after the child's withdrawal, regardless of whether or not that child's spot at the school is filled by a new student.

For information on Scholarship availability, contact the Head of School.

Tuesday/Thursday - \$295/month - \$1180/semester - \$2655/year

Mon/Wed/Fri - \$380/month - \$1520/semester - \$3420/year

5-Day - \$640/month - \$2560/semester - \$5760/year

Pre-K - \$640/month - \$2560/semester - \$5760/year

Health and Safety

All children entering the Nursery School are required to have a pre-entrance physical examination with required immunizations (Title 22:101220.1). The *Health Form* and the *Medical Release Form* must be returned before school starts in September.

For the safety, health, and welfare of the children and faculty, do not send your child to school if any of the following conditions is present:

1. If he/she has a temperature, diarrhea, or vomiting within the previous 24 hours.
2. A cold less than three days old or a runny nose.
3. Red throat/persistent cough.
4. Swollen neck glands/earache.
5. Reddened eyes.
6. Unexplained skin rash or skin eruptions.
7. If he/she acts listless, drowsy, has a headache, flushed face, lack of appetite, or shows behavior that is noticeably out of the ordinary.

St. Edmund's Nursery School reserves the right to refuse to admit any child who appears to be ill.

Allergies of any kind should be brought to the attention of both the Head of School and the child's teacher in addition to being noted on the child's *Health Form*.

Any special needs or problems should be brought to the attention of the Head of School and also written on the child's *Health Form* and *Social History Form*.

Any student who provides the school with an epi pen to counteract the ingestion of a food allergen must bring his/her own snack each day to school. We will not give the student any food items. Should you desire, a copy of the snack menu will be sent home so that you can bring in foods similar to what is being offered.

Medication will be administered *ONLY* in special cases, and *ONLY* with the written permission of the parent, giving dosage and directions. Medications must be in the original container with an unaltered label prescribed specifically for your child. (Title 22:101226(e)). *Contagious or infectious diseases must be reported immediately to the Head of School.*

Emergency Procedures

Fire and earthquake drills are practiced regularly so that everyone knows exactly how to do "what", "where", and "why". If a fire or earthquake should occur, the faculty will follow the Emergency Procedure and lead the children to an assembly area on the school's playground. All *Emergency Authorization Forms* must be on file in the school office for each child. Parents are responsible for keeping the school informed of any changes in emergency information during the school year. Your child will not be released to anyone that is not on your *Emergency Authorization Form*.

Insurance

Each student at St. Edmund's Nursery School is insured against school time accidents, with benefits up to \$10,000.

Transportation

Transportation to and from St. Edmund's Nursery School is the responsibility of each family. During the first week of school, a list of students and their addresses will be sent home so that "Car Pools" may be arranged. The green *Authorization Form* with your "Car Pool" listed and other authorized people that can pick up your child(ren), must be on file at school by the first day of school.

When entering the north parking lot in the morning, please use the north driveway to enter and the south driveway to exit. When entering the north parking lot in the afternoon, please use the north driveway to enter, drive through to pick up your child and exit the most southern driveway. **ALWAYS ENTER THE NORTH DRIVEWAY AND EXIT THE SOUTH DRIVEWAY!**

REMEMBER TO BUCKLE UP, NO CELLULAR PHONES IN CARPOOL LINE AND NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN IN CARS UNATTENDED! SMOKING IS PROHIBITED ON THE PREMISES OF A CHILD CARE CENTER (Title 22:101231)

Clothing

When dressing your children, please remember that they are in school to have fun, not to stay clean! Choose clothes that allow the child freedom to enjoy both the play equipment and the materials available for art and science projects. Help your child toward independence by selecting clothing that is **MANAGEABLE** - for instance, elastic-waist trousers. Buttons, snaps, zippers or buckles may pose a problem. In addition, please, no open toe shoes, crocs, or slip on shoes. For playground safety, tennis shoes are best. **Coats and sweaters should be clearly and permanently marked with the child's first and last name.**

Sharing

Thursdays and Fridays are set aside for bringing favorite toys to school. Toys of educational value are encouraged but beloved teddy bears are always welcome, too! However, any toys of a nature that initiate violent play - in particular, guns, Ninja Turtles, Ghostbusters, Power Rangers, swords - are not acceptable.

In February, the older classes will substitute "Homework" for sharing. (Bring something that feels "rough" or bring something in the shape of a triangle.) Assignments go home on Monday/Tuesday and homework is due on Friday.

Please label all sharing and homework with your child's first and last names.

Marvelous Munchies

“Marvelous Munchies” is St. Edmund’s term for nutritious and delicious snacks. Good nutrition is important to us! We teach good nutrition and limit both sweets and very salty foods. There is a mid-morning snack time each day. To help instill the value and importance of good nutrition, each child is asked to provide a wholesome snack for half the school three or four times per year. A Marvelous Munchies calendar with assignments will go home each month for those families responsible for the snack for that month. Due to State requirements and the increase in allergies, you will be assigned a specific snack to bring for 45 children. Milk is provided on Tuesday and Wednesday, and juice is provided on Monday, Thursday, and Friday. Water is also offered as an alternative. Holidays and birthdays are the only times that sweets will be served. **Because of the importance of food allergies, we will not serve anything with nuts, peanuts or peanut butter.** The snack menu will be posted in the Head of School’s office for review.

Birthdays

A birthday will be celebrated at snack time. We have a special “pretend” cake so that the children can blow out their candles. We also have a special birthday crown. *Please bring 24 small cookies - no cupcakes or ice cream, please! Please do not send birthday invitations or gifts to school.* In consideration for those children who may not have been invited, please do not have your child come to school dressed up for an after-school birthday party. If your child has a summer birthday, arrange a “Special Un-Birthday Day” with his/her teacher. Each child will receive a special “Birthday Blessing” in Chapel during the month of his or her birthday.

Picnic Days

Picnic Days are held on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 11:45 until 2:45 p.m., the last week of September through the first week of June. A late fee of \$15.00 will be charged after 3:00 p.m. Each child should bring their own picnic lunch in a bag or lunch box with their first and last names. However, due to a “no nut” policy no nuts of any kind or peanut butter is allowed for lunches or as a snack. The school will provide a beverage. Sign- Up Boards will be available at the gate in the morning. On the last Monday and Tuesday of each month, Picnic sign-ups for the next month will be available. You may sign-up for a Picnic at any time as long as there is room available. *A maximum of 30 children will be accepted for any one afternoon. If fewer than 10 children are signed up, Picnic Day may be canceled for the day and parents notified accordingly.* There is a \$18 charge for these afternoons and a coupon will be given if the child is absent. **Payment is due at sign-up time.** Make checks payable to St. Edmund’s Nursery School and indicate your child’s name and desired picnic dates on the check. Children may attend any Picnic Day, even if they do not attend school that day.

Special Events and Activities

Every parent at St. Edmund's Nursery School has a chance to be more involved in the operation of the school and the education of their children. Each parent will have an opportunity to meet with other parents in order to develop friendships and to be able to share and communicate common concerns. They will be able to support the staff, help with fundraising events, and help plan very special events and activities to benefit all children attending St. Edmund's Nursery School. EACH FAMILY IS EXPECTED TO SIGN UP FOR A MINIMUM OF TWO VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES PER YEAR.

Scrip Program

St. Edmund's Nursery School has a SCRIP program to raise ongoing funds to support the excellence of our school. SCRIP is a terrific no-cost way to support St. Edmund's Nursery School. We are encouraging every family to sign up for E-Scrip as an easy way to support this program. Information will be sent home to explain how easy it is for you to participate in our E-Scrip program.

T-shirts and Sweatshirts

In the fall our special "I Love St. Edmund's Nursery School" T-shirts, Caps and Sweatshirts are available for purchase. The children and teachers enjoy wearing these at any time and also during our special "spirit days" which are noted on each newsletter. They are inexpensive and very functional for our activities at school.

School Photos

In October, the children will have an opportunity to have their pictures taken by Julie Lilly. She is an excellent photographer that offers several pre-paid packages. Children bring home envelopes, then the parents take their choice of packages and return the envelope to school. You will be notified when your child's picture will be taken. This is available to all children. In May, Julie Lilly will come to school and take individual Graduation pictures and after the Graduation Ceremony, a group Graduation picture will be taken.

Field Trips

Field trips will be scheduled only for the Pre K class when the trip enhances the particular study or theme of the class. The trips will be supervised by the Nursery School faculty with the assistance of parent volunteers. Permission slips and details as to location, transportation and time will be given to parents prior to each trip.

Chapel

Being an Episcopal Nursery School, we incorporate into our class curriculum, Christian values regarding family and friend relationships, sharing, and expressing one's feelings. Books are read, songs are sung and stories are told.

All children attend Chapel Services each month. These Services are led by the clergy of St. Edmund's Episcopal Church and include songs, prayers and most likely, a story or two. We encourage parents to come and join their child in Chapel. Chapel dates are published in the monthly newsletter. The children especially like it when it is their birthday, during Chapel they receive a special "Birthday Blessing" and we sing "Happy Birthday, Jesus Loves You."

Discipline

We keep the rules at school as simple as possible. Basically these rules fall in two areas. (1) We will not permit actions that will harm anyone, and (2) we will not permit inappropriate use of equipment. That is, blocks and sand are *not* for throwing; tricycles are not for crashing.

We will try to discipline the children in three ways: *reasoning, re-direction and removal*. We reason and talk with the children about the results of their actions and try to explain feelings. We *re-direct* them (or the whole group) to different activities in different locations. If these fail, we *remove* the child to a quiet space until he/she feels like playing in a socially acceptable way. We try to make the child responsible for their own actions. We teach them to use their words.

However, ensuring the safety of all children and staff is our most important job. Should a situation arise that compromises the safety of children and/or staff, the Head of School has the authority to "dis-enroll" a student for cause.

Child Abuse Reporting

St. Edmund's Nursery School has written guidelines that list procedures for prevention, detection and reporting child abuse. The faculty is knowledgeable in reporting suspected child abuse and is aware that this is mandated by law.

This is a "Mission Statement on Child Abuse" by the Episcopal Churches and Schools: "*God embraces children with love placing their nurture and care in our hands. We believe that children should be safe from all forms of abuse and neglect. We the church will be advocates for children and establish clearly defined safeguards, policies and procedures for their protection*".

Home-School Communications

At the beginning of each month, your child will bring home a newsletter from the Head of School. Basically, it will inform you of everything of importance happening at school that month: the theme the number, color, shape and concept to be learned; visits scheduled from the police officer, fire fighters, dentist, doctor or similar professional; chapel and puppet show dates; dates when the children will have their eyes or ears tested or their speech and language screened, etc.

We encourage parents to be involved in our school program and we seek to support the family in their child rearing. Parents are welcome to observe their children at school at any time. When observing, please remember that the teachers' time and attention belong to the children, so this is not an appropriate time for discussion/conference.

Each family will have scheduled conferences between parents and teacher. Additional conferences are available at the request of the parent, teacher or Head of School.

All families experience times of joy and sorrow that may have special impact upon your child. Please tell your teacher or the Head of School when family changes may cause adjustment problems for your child. This will allow the staff to support you during these times and give extra care to your child. *The Clergy of St. Edmund's Parish is always available for conferences and for support.*

Coffee Hour Mornings

During the last weeks of September, all parents are invited to meet with the Head of School and learn more about the events and activities. You will then meet with your child's teacher to learn about her program and goals for the year. At this time, you will have an opportunity to observe your child "in action" through our "peek holes" or in the classroom. Your teachers will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Parent Conferences

During the year the teacher will confer with the parents to give them the overall progress of each child. Before the next year's enrollment, the teachers will help the parents make decisions on what is best for their child. Individual Parent Conferences are scheduled for parents and teachers to meet and discuss the child's progress and development in school. However, at any time parents or teachers may request a conference during the school year.

Parent Observations

Parents may visit and/or observe their children at any time. Children generally do not function as well when a parent is present in the classroom, therefore, observations may be made through the peek-holes into the classrooms or from the library windows onto the playground.

Parent Enrichment

Parent enrichment is offered throughout the school year. This program is designed to help parents develop a better understanding of themselves and their children. We may have an special speaker or we may send home interesting articles or give ideas for interesting books to read. If there are topics of interest you would be interested in learning about, please do not hesitate to confer with the Head of School.

St. Edmund's Nursery School's Staff

2009-2010

Pre K -

Mrs. Janice Board, and Mrs. Patty Robles, Assistant

5 Day Class-

Mrs. Sylvia Grimes and Mrs. Carol Schraer

4 Year Olds - MWF

Old 4's: Mrs. Cheryl Elffers and Mrs. Carole Fowler, Assistant

Young 4's: Mrs. Sharon Medeiros and Mrs. Liz Westphal, Assistant

3 Year Olds - MWF

Mrs. Susan Norman and Mrs. Leslie Long

Mrs. Carol George, Assistant

3 Year Olds - TTh

Old 3's: Mrs. Stephanie Doering and Mrs. Susan Norman, and Mrs. Liz Westphal, Assistant

Young 3's: Mrs. Wendy Gute and Liz Stanton, and Michele Canzoneri, Assistant

Staff Assistant: Mrs. Sue Youngson

Musical Director: Mrs. Barbie Dalzell

Administrative Assistant: Mrs. Angela Hopf

Assistant to Head of School and Staff: Mrs. Sue Wickhem

Head of School: Mrs. Darlene Porter

St. Edmund's Nursery School's

Board of Directors

2009-2010

Rector – Rev. George Woodward

Assistant Priest- Rev. Hui Liang Ni

Head of School – Darlene Porter

Chair – Kirsten Clougherty

Treasurer – Jennifer Keefer

Assistant Treasurer – Lyn Beecher

Secretary – Nicolette Fuerst

Personnel – Cathy Giddings

Scrip/ Minor Fundraising – Julie Woo

Special Events and Room Mother Coordinator – Megan Casani

Enrichment – Laura Grinnell

Building and Grounds– Maggie Sabbag

Hospitality – Shana Hayden

Vestry Representative – Bob Higgins

Major Fundraising- Ashley Neglia

Long Range Planning- Casey Park

If I Had My Child to Raise Over Again

If I had my child to raise all over again,

I'd finger paint more, and point the finger less.

I'd do less correcting, and more connecting.

I'd take my eyes off my watch, and watch with my eyes.

I'd take more hikes and fly more kites.

I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.

I'd run through more fields, and gaze at more stars.

I'd do more hugging, and less tugging.

I would be firm less often, and affirm much more.

I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.

I'd teach less about the love of power,

And more about the power of love.