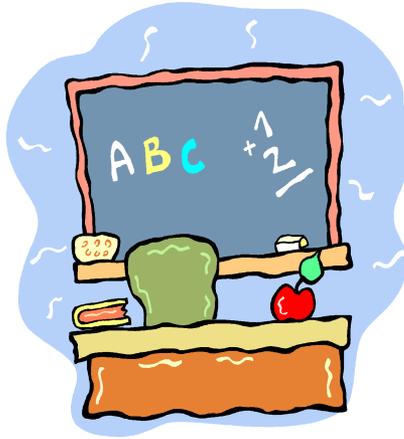


2021-2022  
Early Childhood Building  
Handbook



Saint Joseph School  
90 Pickering Street  
Needham, MA 02492  
781-444-4459

Early Childhood Building  
1350 Highland Avenue  
Needham, MA 02492  
781-896-2534

[www.saintjoes.com](http://www.saintjoes.com)

# **Welcome to Saint Joseph Elementary School**

This handbook was developed by parents and the school office to address questions you may have about our school and classroom procedures. We hope you will read this handbook thoroughly and keep it for reference. Research has clearly shown that when parents are involved in their children's education, they do better academically and behaviorally. With combined efforts, we can make this a successful and exciting year for your child!

**Mrs. Lauren Solomon, Principal**

## **Our School Mission Statement**

At Saint Joseph School we:

Seek God First,  
Strive for Academic Excellence,  
Share Our Gifts and Talents, and  
Serve Each Other and the World.

Please feel free to contact us:



**(781) 444-4459**

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Early Childhood

Administrative Asst.

Mrs. Kim O'Brien

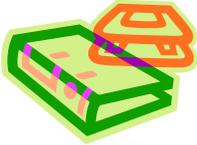
[kobrien@saintjoes.com](mailto:kobrien@saintjoes.com)

Principal

Mrs. Lauren Solomon

[lsolomon@saintjoes.com](mailto:lsolomon@saintjoes.com)

**In case of an emergency** if you need to reach your child or your child's teacher, call the school's main number 781-896-2534, Early Childhood Building administrative assistant.



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## School Hours



### Full Day Program

**8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

Please note, Grades 1-8 in the main school building are released at 2:40 p.m. Preschool, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children are released 10 minutes earlier to allow parents with children in the upper grades to pick up at the early childhood building first, then their older children. If your child does not arrive by 8:15 a.m. for morning prayer, he/she is marked tardy.

### Early Release Days

**8:00 a.m. - 12:05 p.m.**



School hours on early release days are 8:00 a.m. to 12:05 p.m. Preschool, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students are released 10 minutes earlier than grades 1-8, to allow parents with children in both locations time to pick up at the early childhood building first, and then their older children at 12:15 p.m. at the main building.

Please provide only a snack for your child on early release days. Bus service will be provided as usual. Children in kindergarten who live in Needham may take the bus, but children in preschool and pre-kindergarten are not yet eligible for bus service.



## Attendance

The school must be notified if a child is to be absent. There are two ways you may go about reporting your child(ren) absence, you may either send an email or leave a voicemail. The email address is : [attendance@saintjoes.com](mailto:attendance@saintjoes.com), or please call the office by 8:00 a.m. to report your child's absence. Parents should notify the teacher in writing if you know of an absence in advance.

### **Early Childhood Building:**

Early Childhood Building administrative assistant at 781-896-2534.



## Health Services

Nursing services are provided to Saint Joseph School by two full-time registered nurses. If your child requires medicine during the school day, either regularly or on occasion, consent forms must be filled out and on file in the school office in the main building on Pickering Street. These forms may be obtained from the health office. In some cases, it may be required that a signed medication order from your child's physician is on file. For field trips, the school will delegate and train an appropriate person to administer the medication.

**Children should be symptom-free (i.e. fevers, conjunctivitis, stomach ailments) for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school after an illness-related absence.**



## School Complex

The main entrance to the **Early Childhood Building** is located on Highland Avenue to the left of the church. There is a doorbell and intercom/buzzer system with camera. The two side doors are locked during the day.

The main entrance to **Saint Joseph School** (Grades 1-8) is located on Pickering Street. It is the 2<sup>nd</sup> door from the left end of the building. There is a doorbell and buzzer system. All doors are locked during the day. The school office is located inside the main entrance (first office on the right).

The “**Kennedy Center**”, where the September Back to School Night and various other events are held, is also the Elementary School gym. It is accessed either by the main school door, the double doors facing Pickering Street, or from the back parking lot.

The entrance to the school’s main **Parking Lot** is off Highland Avenue beside the rectory. It exits onto Pickering Street. There is no parking allowed during the day because recess is held there. There is a small school/church parking lot behind the Early Childhood Building which is accessed from Oakland Ave. This is a parking lot for **staff only**. There is plenty of parking available around the neighborhood. Please pay attention to all the parking signs.



## Before Care Program

There is no classroom supervision for students who arrive before 8:00 a.m.

We offer a teacher supervised Before Care Program between 7:15 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. in the HUB. Any student arriving before 8:00 a.m. must participate in the program. The cost is **\$3.00** day/per student.

In the event of a delayed opening, the Before Care Program **WILL** still be available with the adjusted time. Example: A two-hour delay: Before School will be open at 9:15 a.m.

## After-Care Programs



Our Saint Joseph School After Care Program has two options: 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. in the Early Childhood Building. Please check our website for specific forms and costs related to this program.

Please let your teacher know if your child is attending another After Care Program.



## Dismissal Changes

If your child's dismissal will be changing on any given day, we ask that you follow this procedure:

- Please email your child's teacher as well as the Early Childhood Building administrative assistant with the dismissal plans for that day.
- The administrative assistant and the teacher will send you back a confirmation email that they have received the new plans and will make the changes.
- If you do **NOT** receive back a confirmation email, then you will need to call the administrative assistant at 781-896-2534 and speak with her directly.
- If you are unable to reach the administrative assistant, then you should call the main office and speak with someone there that may relay the message.
- If we do **NOT** receive an email or a phone call with any changes, your child will be dismissed as usual.



## Bus Transportation

Students that are in kindergarten and live in Needham may take the bus. Students in the preschool and pre-kindergarten programs are not eligible for bus service. Needham residents should receive information from the Needham Public School Transportation Office regarding bus transportation. Depending on where you live your child may qualify for free transportation or you may participate in fee-based bus transportation. In either case it is important that you fill out and return the appropriate forms as soon as possible to ensure your child receives his/her bus pass.

If you have not received information by the end of August you should contact the Needham Transportation Office directly at 781-455-0400, ext 242. The Transportation Office is located next to the Early Childhood Building at 1330 Highland Avenue. The town's bus routes are published in the *Needham Times* during the last week of August. You will need to determine the bus stop closest to your home using this information. Please visit their website directly at [www.needham.k12.ma.us](http://www.needham.k12.ma.us) under student registration and then transportation for all necessary forms.

In the morning, a staff member meets each bus as it stops in front of the Early Childhood Building on Highland Avenue. In the afternoon, all students who take the bus home are escorted by a staff member from the Early Childhood Building to the main school building where they are then escorted onto the bus or their daycare van, which park on Pickering Street.

**Teachers must be notified, in advance, in writing of any changes to your child's transportation arrangements for any day.**



## Drop off/ Pick up

**Morning Drop-Off:** Please be aware of the many no parking zones.

**Parking is very limited. You are allowed to park on:**

- May Street along the side of the church
- Oakland Avenue on the nonresidential side of the street
- The Funeral Home lot across the street on Highland Avenue

**Parking is strictly prohibited on:**

- Highland Avenue in front of the church & Early Childhood Building;
- In the school administration circular driveway next door, off Highland Ave, and in their parking lot behind their building off Oakland Avenue;
- The residential side of Oakland Avenue
- Either side of Pickering Street

**Building Entrances:**

The kindergarten children will enter the building at the front door, with the number three on it. The pre-kindergarten children will enter the building at the side door, closest to the parking lot, with the number one on it. The preschool children will enter the building at the side door, closest to the sand box, with the number two on it.

**Parents of preschool children are expected to bring their child to the preschool Classroom each morning.**

**Parents of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children are discouraged from staying in the Classroom in the morning with their child. After the first week of school, parents are asked to leave their child at the doors of the Early Childhood Building.**

## **Afternoon Pick-Up:**

Preschool, pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten children are dismissed at 2:30 p.m. (10 minutes earlier than grades 1-8) to allow parents with children in the upper grades to pick up at the Early Childhood Building, and then pick up their older children at the main building.

Afternoon pick-up happens in the back parking lot of the Early Childhood Building. The preschool children will be dismissed at the side door, with the number two on it, where you drop off in the morning. The pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers will bring their class to the black gate and once there is contact with the parent or approved pick up person, the student will be released.

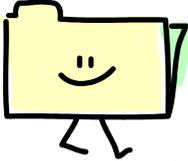
Older siblings of preschool, pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten students, who are dismissed as “walkers”, will be escorted to the walkway next to Mary's Garden for pick-up.

As with morning drop-off, parking is *strictly prohibited* on Highland Avenue in front of the church and Early Childhood Building, in the school administration driveway and parking lot, on the residential side of Oakland Avenue, and on either side of Pickering Street.

**Teachers must be notified in writing of any changes to your child's transportation arrangements.**

**Please send a note or email if your child is going home with another child for a play date.**

## School - Home Communications



At the end of each week, you will receive an email from your child's teacher called a "**weekly blast**". This will highlight news, activities, and curriculum that their class covered that week.

The **school newsletter**, called **Saint Joe's Scoop**, includes important information from the principal, details about upcoming school events and meetings, and classroom news. The newsletter is distributed via email and may also be accessed on the school's website.

**Check Out Our Web Site!**

For announcements & updates during the school year

**[www.saintjoes.com](http://www.saintjoes.com)**



## School Calendar

All dates for the 2021-2022 school year are posted on our school website. Any changes to this calendar will be noted in Mrs. Solomon’s newsletter and on the monthly calendar on the website. Newsletters will be e-mailed and posted on the school website: [www.saintjoes.com](http://www.saintjoes.com).

## Curriculum



The preschool, pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten curriculums consist of instruction in religion, reading readiness, mathematics, social studies, and science. These subjects are reinforced by having our students do “hands on” activities in small groups. In addition, students attend, music, STREAM, library, Spanish, art, and gym classes once a week. **A schedule of Specialist Classes will be announced in September.**



## Uniforms

### **Preschool and Pre-kindergarten**

Preschool and pre-kindergarten students wear the school gym uniform daily. This consists of navy blue shorts or sweatpants with school logo, and t-shirt and/or sweatshirt with logo. Sneakers are worn year round in preschool and pre-kindergarten.

### **Kindergarten**

Kindergarten students are required to wear the Saint Joseph School uniform.

#### **Boys:**

- Khaki pants or shorts (shorts until 11/1 and after April vacation)
- Navy polo shirt with the Saint Joseph School logo

#### **Girls:**

- Plaid jumper with a white peter-pan style blouse
- Plaid skort with a Navy polo shirt with the Saint Joseph School logo
- Solid white ankle socks or navy knee socks or tights

**Sneakers may be worn all year long.**

## **Gym Uniform:**

Regulation gym uniforms will be worn by all kindergarten children in place of their regular school uniforms on gym day.

- Navy blue shorts with school logo
- Navy blue sweatpants with school logo
- A Saint Joseph School gray tee shirt with school logo
- A navy sweatshirt with school logo

Starting on November 1<sup>st</sup> and until April vacation students must wear sweatpants.

Sweatpants should not be worn, except on gym day. Both boys and girls may wear a navy blue sweater in the cold weather if desired.

Regarding **jewelry**, pierced earring studs only and one chain necklace may be worn. Long necklaces, layers of necklaces, or layers of bracelets may **NOT** be worn. Long drop earrings or loop earrings may **NOT** be worn.

Boys may not wear earrings.

## **Uniforms may be purchased at:**

Lands' End (800) 469-2222

Our preferred school number is 9000-5442-0

J.B. Pride (844) 527-8643

Our school code is 101

## Volunteer Opportunities

Classroom visits are encouraged but must be scheduled in advance with your child's teacher. There are many opportunities for parents to volunteer in the classroom.

All volunteers must have attended the CAP class and have completed an annual CORI background check prior to assisting at school in any capacity. If you are unsure of your CORI status, simply stop by the office.



Classroom volunteer opportunities include lunchroom/recess duty, reading to the class, and chaperoning a field trip. In addition, designated Room Parents (two per classroom) function as liaisons between the teacher and other parents regarding non-academic activities in the classroom (i.e.; holiday parties).

Visit the school website ([www.saintjoes.com](http://www.saintjoes.com)). Then:

- Go to the Community Tab
- Choose Volunteer Now
- Scroll down until you get to “Click here to sign up for ECB”
- Then click on your class or lunch playground volunteer.

The links provided will lead you to full descriptions of volunteer opportunities, and by entering your name and email address, you will receive confirmation and reminders of your selections.

## Lunch/Snack



Please make sure your child's snack/lunch box is clearly marked with his/her name.

You will need to provide a snack as well as lunch for your child. The preschool children will eat their snack and lunch in their classroom. The pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children will eat their snack in their classroom and their lunch in the cafeteria in the Early Childhood Building. Pizza is offered for lunch on Fridays for students for a nominal fee. You should include a beverage in your child's lunchbox for lunch as well as a beverage for snack time.

Please be sensitive to children with food allergies. If there is a child in your classroom with a severe food allergy, all parents will be notified by the school nurse.

The Early Childhood Building follows the “green” policy of the school in encouraging parents to send snacks, lunches, and drinks in reusable containers. This policy has two main goals: to reduce the amount of trash we generate as a school and, to allow parents to observe what their children are eating. Messy items, such as partially consumed yogurts, puddings, applesauce, or juice boxes, will be thrown away at school.



## Birthdays

In order to make each child's birthday special we celebrate birthdays by having parents come in and read to the class. Uniforms do not have to be worn, and each child will get to hear Mrs. Solomon announce his/her name to the whole school after morning prayers.

We do not allow celebration with food or goody bags. If your child's birthday is during the summer months please arrange an alternate date with your child's teacher.

The Birthday Book Program is the primary source of funding to purchase new books and replace old books for the school library. Parents are invited to donate a fixed fee to celebrate their child's birthday or other special event and a bookplate commemorating the event is placed in the book. The birthday child may select a book from the book cart in the library and be the first to take it out. There are two ways to donate – prepay at the beginning of the school year (form is online) or receive an email at the beginning of the child's birthday month. The librarians or parent coordinators are always available to answer questions or to take special requests. We have an incredible collection of books and other media thanks to this important program!

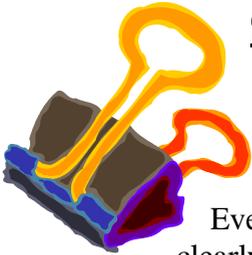
## September Back to School Night



On **September 23, 2021**, the school will hold a Back to School Night in the “Kennedy Center.” Enter through the double doors facing Pickering Street or from the back parking lot. This is an important evening to attend. Mrs. Solomon addresses all parents and then you have an opportunity to meet with your child’s teacher to hear about the year ahead in your child’s classroom.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Formal conferences will be held on **December 3, 2021** and again on **April 1, 2022**. You will be notified in advance of the time of your conference. The conferences cover information regarding your child's adjustment to school, his/her academic progress, strengths, and areas for improvement. In addition to attending these formal conferences, you should feel free to contact your child's teacher at any time with questions or concerns.



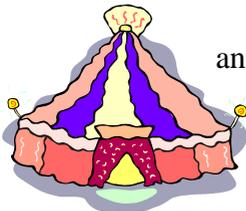
## Supplies

Every child is asked to bring in the following items clearly labeled for their cubbies:

1. An art smock (over sized t-shirt works best: adult size)
2. A change of clothing (blue sweat pants and gray shirt) including socks and underwear in a big zip lock bag with their name on it.

Your child will also need to bring a backpack and lunchbox to school every day. The backpack should be able to hold a lunchbox, folders and other items. **Please make sure both are clearly marked with his/her name.**

## Field Trips



You will receive consent forms in advance of any field trips, which must be signed and returned to the school. A specific number of parent chaperones are required for each field trip. Parents who are not officially class chaperones on a particular field trip are strongly discouraged from meeting the group on site.



## First Friday Mass

On the first Friday of every month the school children sponsor and attend the 9:00 a.m. Mass in the Upper Church. Kindergartners are accompanied by their “8<sup>th</sup> Grade Buddies.” Pre-kindergarten children will join later in the school year. Pre-kindergarten students will be accompanied by their “5<sup>th</sup> Grade Buddies”. Parents, siblings, and other family members are welcome to attend.



## Snow Days

Saint Joseph School follows the Town of Needham school closing announcements. If a two-hour delay is announced, school will start at 10:00 a.m.

In the event NPS does not cancel and the Saint Joseph School principal determines that weather conditions make traveling unsafe, we will notify parents and guardians of our decision to close school via:

1. A text message to your cell phone through our emergency contact system. The principal will use this system in case of emergency and/or to remind families of important events.
2. A No-School Announcement posting on our web site.

Watch the local TV news channels for closings and delays.

In the event of a delayed opening, the Before Care Program **WILL** still be available with the adjusted time. Example: two-hour delay: Before Care will be open at 9:15 a.m.

## Special Events School-Wide

There are many special events that preschool, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children are welcome to participate in. Details are published in the school newsletter, **Saint Joe's Scoop**.

**Halloween Party/ Trunk or Treat:** It's loud, but the kids love it! This will be held on **October 29, 2021**.



**Santa's Workshop:** On **December 15, 2021**, students have the opportunity to visit "Santa's Workshop" during school hours and purchase inexpensive presents for family and friends.

**Grandparents and Special People Day:** This is will be held on **April 29, 2022**. Children's grandparents or other special people in their lives (another relative, a family friend) are invited to attend Mass, enjoy refreshments, attend a school-wide assembly, and visit the children's classrooms.

**Field Day:** **June 10, 2022**, a fun team building experience.

**End of the Year Party:** **June 14, 2022**, a night to celebrate a wonderful school year.

## Parent School Association (PSA)

Co-Presidents: Kate Hinman and Daniela Jennison

There are over 20 PSA committees providing a wide variety of volunteer opportunities, from helping with the Halloween Party to coordinating the annual Field Day in June. There are plenty of opportunities for both stay-at-home and working parents to get involved. Please help out! If you have questions regarding the online volunteer opportunities, which provides information on all committees, please contact Kate Hinman at [katehinman@gmail.com](mailto:katehinman@gmail.com) or Daniela Jennison at [Daniela.jennison@gmail.com](mailto:Daniela.jennison@gmail.com)

In addition to managing school-related volunteerism, the PSA enhances school-parent communication and organizes parent enrichment programs. PSA meetings are held monthly; check the school newsletter for exact dates. Attending PSA meetings are a great way to learn about school issues, offer suggestions and ideas, and become involved. Feel free to bring your young children to meetings.

Cherish this Wonderful Year!

