



ST. MARY'S  
BRYANTOWN  

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St. Mary's Little Angels Preschool  
Handbook

2024-2025



*"Nurturing a lifelong love for Jesus, each other, and learning"*

# **St. Mary's School**

## **Bryantown, Maryland**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

St. Mary's School provides a basic, traditional Roman Catholic education to the parish community of St. Mary's, Bryantown. St. Mary's School serves children in grades Pre-K-3 through eight by developing their intellectual, social, physical, moral, and spiritual life.

St. Mary's School views each child as a unique expression of God's love. Our staff exhibits professionalism in their approach to teaching the whole person. Our students build a solid foundation of skills needed for their adult lives.

St. Mary's School recognizes that parents are the primary educators of their children. St. Mary's School assists families in fulfilling their obligation for the Christian formation and education of their children. Together, we form a nurturing educational environment for the children of the community.

St. Mary's School fosters a sound belief in parish, family, and community involvement. The administration of St. Mary's School believes in a strong collaboration of staff, parents, church and parish within the school.

We adhere to all guidelines set forth by the Archdiocese of Washington. We are a nonprofit operation, funded solely by the tuition charged for each student.

Our model will always be Jesus, the "Master Teacher." Our aim in fulfilling our mission as a Catholic school is to pattern our services to all people as Jesus did for us.

### **MISSION**

Catholic education is an explicit expression of the evangelizing mission entrusted by Jesus to His church. Our mission at St. Mary's Bryantown is:

- To teach the message of Jesus Christ through prayer, word, and example,
- To promote self-esteem and moral and spiritual values, enabling the students to reach full awareness of the talents God has given them,
- To build within a parish setting, a strong community based on Christian faith and service,
- To provide a structured and enriched educational program in an atmosphere that empowers students to achieve their potential as children of God who will impact the local and global community.

This process is enhanced by students, parents, staff, and administrators, whose lives are modeled on Gospel values as they teach, serve, and build community as Jesus did.

**MOTTO:** "Nurturing a lifelong love for Jesus, each other, and learning".

### **Goals of Our Preschool**

- To provide creative and educational play experiences for children.
- To help them establish happy, secure relationships with other children, with other parents, and with their teachers.
- To broaden each child's spiritual, physical, intellectual, academic, emotional, and social experiences to provide groundwork for future education and daily life.
- To encourage positive work habits that include being expressive, constructive, thoughtful, and careful with school and other people's property.
- To teach self-discipline, self-control, and responsibility for his/her actions.
- To provide a learning opportunity to lead the little children to Jesus.

## **Academics**

Our preschool classes provide the opportunity for children to practice skills in a supportive environment. Each child's spiritual, social, emotional, and cognitive development is interrelated. Through developmentally appropriate practices, our programs encourage readiness skills by focusing on the whole child. We recognize that learning is a dynamic process requiring a curriculum closely matched to a child's emerging competencies, needs, and interests. Play is an important component of the early childhood curriculum, and is essential to a child's development. As a values-based program, rooted in the tradition of Catholic education, our preschool invites children to grow and learn in the nurturing love of our faith community.

## **School Readiness**

All children must be 3 years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> for PreK-3.

All children must be 4 years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> for PreK-4.

To be successful in the program, students should display a certain standard of school readiness. This includes but is not limited to:

- drinking from an open cup
- using a fork and spoon independently and successfully
- being able to put on shoes independently (separate from tying laces)
- pulling a shirt over their head
- pulling pants up and down
- able to follow one- to two-step directions
- able to effectively communicate needs to teachers

## **Toileting**

All children must be potty-trained and able to take care of their own needs in the bathroom. Pull-ups/training underwear are not permitted in the St. Mary's Little Angels Program.

Our Pre-K program has a variety of age-appropriate toys. We do not permit children to bring toys into the Center as they are often a cause of distraction and can become broken. The use of pacifiers is also not permitted due to health and safety reasons.

## **Opening and Closing Times**

St. Mary's Little Angels Preschool for 3-year-olds will operate on a set 5-day or 3-day schedule.

Pre-K-3 – 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (Full Day Program)

St. Mary's Little Angels Preschool for 4-year-olds will operate on a 5-day schedule. The schedule will be Monday through Friday 5 days a week.

Pre-K-4 – 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (Full Day Program)

## **Before and After Care**

Before and After Care is available for all students for an additional cost. The Before and After Care Registration fee is \$150 per family. Please see the Before and After Care Registration form on our website for rate information. The hours of operation for BAC are 7:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Tuition Information Tuition and Fees for St. Mary's Little Angels Preschool will be as follows:

**Fee Information:** A \$200 Registration Fee, a \$50 Admission fee for new students, and 1<sup>st</sup> Month's Tuition (for new families) are due at the time of Registration.

- A 2% discount for tuition is given if paid in full by September 1st
- Except for the SMB \$60,000 raffle obligation of selling five \$100 Raffle tickets, Pre-kindergarten families are exempt from volunteer commitments but are encouraged to participate

- Tuition and Fees are non-refundable.
- Families not paying in full, must set up a monthly payment plan through TADS Tuition Management for 10 or 11 monthly installments from July or August to May or June.

**24-25 Tuition Rate  
Pre-K 5-Day - \$7,250**

Extensive fundraising, tuition assistance, and the subsidy from St. Mary’s Parish all help to offset the difference between the actual cost to educate each student and the more affordable adjusted tuition for registering families.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**Allergies**

Please notify the Pre-K Teacher of any allergies your child has, including allergies to foods, insects, and medications. These will be posted in the Pre-K building so the staff are aware of them.

**Illness**

Children who have any sort of communicable disease will not be permitted to attend school. St. Mary’s should be called if your child contracts communicable diseases such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, scarlet fever, pink eye, COVID-19, etc. Please keep your child home if there is any doubt concerning illness. If a child is absent from school for three days or more a physician’s note is required before returning to class.

**Immunizations**

Children must stay current on all required immunizations. It is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to ensure that St. Mary’s Little Angels Preschool receives a note from the physician of updated shots. Any child not current will have 15 working days to become current or bring in proof of a scheduled appointment at which time the child will become current in his or her immunizations.

**Lead Screening**

All children aged six and under must have a lead screening before entering Pre-K. Since this screening is mandatory in the State of Maryland, most doctors do this screening during a routine visit or when a child is having an immunization. Every child must have this form, signed by a physician, whether you are in listed zip codes or not.

**Medications**

The Archdiocese of Washington, in compliance with the State of Maryland, mandates that schools must have proper documentation from a physician to administer ANY prescription or Over-the-Counter MEDICATION. If ANY medication must be administered during the school day, the parents must complete a “Student Medication Authorization” form from the School Office.

If a child must take medication during the school day, parents must submit a completed “Maryland State Dept. of Education Office of Child Care Medication Administration Authorization Form” signed by a physician and the parent.

**POSITIVE GUIDANCE/DISCIPLINE STATEMENT**

St. Mary’s Little Angels Preschool believes that positive guidance leads to positive learning experiences that set behavior limits and guide children to maturity. Guidance fosters achievement and steers the child to

self-discipline so that he/she does what is expected. The guidance sets clear and precise limitations.

Discipline is a means to teach children what is acceptable behavior and helps them develop the inner controls needed to function as positive, productive individuals. Our discipline policy gives positive guidance, allows for redirection, and sets behavior limits. The following is St. Mary's Little Angels Preschool's positive guidance policy:

- 1) **Redirection:** If a child is experiencing difficulty with an activity, either with another child or with the level of involvement in the activity, the teacher or assistant will calmly direct the child to another area or activity in which the child may be more successful.
- 2) **Think about it Chair:** This provides time for the child to be away from an activity for a brief time to "cool off" him/herself. Time away lasts only as long as the child remains agitated and needs to remain away. Once the child is collected he or she will rejoin the group and demonstrate that they can appropriately engage in the activity. If the situation warrants it, the child may be taken to the school office to discuss his/her behavior with the principal.
- 3) **Exclusion for Off-site Activities:** If a child's behavior poses a serious threat to the safety of the child's self or others, the child may be excluded from activities that occur outside of St. Mary's Little Angels Preschool. Children may be required to cross or be near a busy street, or parking lots, or mingle in crowds at public places while on field trips. Children must be in control of their behavior and listen to the instructions of the adults with them to be safe.
- 4) **Dismissal:** A child whose behavior is not in compliance with classroom policy and who cannot be redirected will be dismissed from Pre-K for the day. A referral to an appropriate child or family agency will be made to assist the family if a child demonstrates the following behaviors: physical aggression towards others resulting in injuries to the child, staff, or others; consistent use of foul or abusive language; throwing of chairs and other items; not responding to direction from supervising adults; leaving the group without permission from supervising adults; leaving the group without being supervised and refusing to return to the group or classroom; or leaving the building unsupervised.
- 5) **Withdraw:** A child who must frequently be dismissed from the program will be withdrawn from the school if no sustained change in the unruly behavior occurs and the program is unable to ensure the safety of the child and others.

We reserve the right to terminate a child's enrollment at the school at any time if we deem it necessary, without going through the above steps. This judgment will be discussed and determined by the Pre-K Teacher and Principal.

### **Discipline Policy**

Children are always treated with love and respect. When a minor discipline problem exists, the child will be given verbal direction and redirection as the main means of guidance. If the problem persists, the child will be separated from the group while being supervised at all times. Most problems are corrected by sitting in the "Think about chair" for a few minutes **which** will help the children to resolve **behavioral challenges**. **Children will be given prompts on what they should be thinking about.**

Our program uses positive behavioral supports and strategies with children that include:

- providing choices
- using redirection, reflection, and problem-solving
- clear rules and expectations are developed with input from the children

Parents are encouraged to question staff if they are unclear about the handling of an incident.

### **Positive Behavior Practices**

In the classroom, students will be given opportunities to develop decision-making skills to create a sense of responsibility and positive self-esteem. They will be given opportunities to make choices for themselves

throughout the day, to help them be more proactive in making positive choices. Opportunities to make positive choices will be given. Some of these choices would include which area to play in during Learning Centers, what materials they would like to use in craft activities, snacks to eat from home or school, and where they would like to sit. Guidance will be given based on the doctrine of the Roman Catholic church so that they will find success in their decisions.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are held once per year. Parents may ask for a conference at any time during the year. For annual conferences, parents will be notified by the School notification system with Information on the date and times available. Parents follow the information provided by the school to sign up for a conference with their child's teacher.

### **Accident/Incident Reports**

All accidents and incidents are documented and parents will be asked to sign an acknowledgement. Parents will be called at the time of an injury if it appears serious or requires medical attention. If a parent cannot be reached, the child may be transported to the hospital via ambulance. Ambulances do not transport children with non-life-threatening injuries without the parent present.

Incident reports record behavior-related events and are intended to inform the parent of the situation and follow-up discipline/guidance procedures. These reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school.

### **Pets**

Pre-K will occasionally have pets in the classroom. We may occasionally have an opportunity to have a pet visit the classroom for the day. If your child has a fear or allergy that is related to pets/animals, please let the teacher know so that she can prepare accordingly.

### **Transportation**

Charles County Public Schools provides bussing for St. Mary's School students that are zoned for T. C. Martin Elementary School. St. Mary's School has mandated that PreK 3 and PK 4 students may not ride without an older sibling.

All students should be dropped off in their designated (upper or lower) parking lot between 8:45 and 8:55 a.m. and proceed to their classrooms. Pre-K, 1st, 2nd, & 3rd grade students are dropped off in the upper parking lot. Students in grades K, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8 are dropped off in the lower parking lot. No students should be dropped off until the teacher on duty is present. All doors are locked at 9:00 a.m. If it is after 9:00 a.m., parents must sign students in at the main office and they are considered tardy after 9:00 a.m. Parents are not permitted to bring students to the PreK building after 9:00 a.m. Parents must bring their child to the main office and a staff member will walk them to their classroom.

### **Uniform**

The uniform is the official St. Mary's School Physical Education clothing, which is purchased from Flynn and O'Hara ([www.flynnohara.com](http://www.flynnohara.com)). This uniform consists of a sweatshirt, shorts or sweatpants, and a t-shirt. Black or navy tennis shoes and white crew socks are to be worn every day. Student uniform items should be labeled with a child's last name. Students are allowed to be out of uniform on their birthday.

### **Snacks**

Birthdays can be celebrated with a small, special snack at snack time that may be brought in by the parent. Ideas include cookies, donuts, and small cupcakes. All treats must be the same. Notify the teacher in advance, if you wish to provide a snack for your child's birthday. We must be careful of children with food allergies. No party invitations can be handed out unless the entire class is invited. Sensitive feelings need to be protected.

## Field Trips

Educational Field trips may be planned throughout the year. There will be permission slips and information about the trip sent out in advance for the parents to sign and return. Parents must comply with the Archdiocese of Washington's Child Protection Program to volunteer or chaperone at St. Mary's School. It is recommended that all children have a chaperone on field trips for safety purposes.

## Sample Pre-K Daily Schedule

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 8:45-9:00 A.M.   | <u>Arrival/Morning Work</u> (Transition Time)   |
| 9:00-9:15 A.M.   | Morning Prayers   |
| 9:15-9:30 A.M.   | Morning Meeting (Calendar, Weather, Songs, etc.)  |
| 9:30-10:00 A.M.  | Snack   |
| 10:00-10:30 A.M. | Letter/Phonemic Awareness Activity/Small Centers/Work Time <b>*(Individual Learning Activity)</b>   |
| 10:30-10:45 A.M. | Clean Up/Recess <b>(Individual Learning Experiences)</b>  |
| 10:45-10:50 A.M. | *Circle Time (Story, Whole Group Lesson, etc.) <u>Transition Time</u>                               |
| 10:50-11:50 A.M. | * <b>Individual Learning Activity</b> Small Groups/Centers <b>(Individual Learning Experiences)</b> |
| 11:50-12:20 P.M. | Lunch   |
| 12:25-12:45 P.M. | Bathroom Break  |
| 12:45-1:50 P.M.  | Nap   |
| 1:45-2:00 P.M.   | Movement/Gross Motor/Outdoor Play   |
| 2:00-3:10 P.M.   | Afternoon Activity/Religion/Centers <b>*(Individual Learning Experiences)</b>                       |
| 3:10-3:20 P.M.   | Pack Up/Dismissal   |

**\*During this time teachers or classroom aides may work individually with children who need modifications, additional reinforcement, or reteaching.**

## Screen Time Policy

Our Little Angels Preschool offers a variety of teaching tools so children are not exposed to screen time daily. We do not have televisions or video games in our classrooms. The teacher's computer in the classroom is used for teacher-parent communication and is not used by the children. The computer is connected to a projector that is occasionally used to help the teacher convey movement activities or for other educational purposes. There will be a limit of no more than thirty minutes per week of "Passive Technology". Passive Technology is defined as non-interactive television, videos, and streaming media.

## Including All Children

Our early learning program welcomes all children with special developmental or healthcare needs. If a child has special needs, we will ask families to share their IEP, IFSP, CAP plan, or other documentation that will help us plan for the child's full participation in all activities. The school employs a resource teacher who acts as a teacher liaison between the families and outside organizations that may provide services. The team determines the type of support that can be offered. **\*\*Currently we have no children enrolled that require additional modifications\*\*.**

**By taking the following steps, we demonstrate our commitment to ensure the success of children with disabilities and special health care needs in all areas of our program.**

- A. Individual Meetings with families to learn about the child's specific needs and develop a plan for the necessary accommodations.**
- B. Collaborating with therapists, doctors, health care professionals, and any other specialists.**
- C. Training for staff that includes inclusion, positive behavior management strategies, managing medical accommodations, differentiated instruction, supporting children's needs for sensory input, and etc**

#### **D. Participate in the IEP / IFSP meeting process**

To help support children and their families we can guide or direct families to and have working relationships with these local organizations

- **The Promise Resource Center:** The Promise Resource Center provides training, resources, and certification for those who care for children in the Southern Maryland area. They provide an array of resources to support parents, grandparents, foster parents, and licensed family and center childcare providers in the areas of
- **Child Find of Charles County:** Families of children three through five with concerns about their child's learning and development can contact Preschool Child Find to schedule a screening appointment. Children may be eligible for services if they are not able to learn, speak, or play like other children who are the same age. Preschool Special Education provides services for children, three through five, with developmental delays and disabilities. Special education services for preschool-age students are determined by the needs of the student and their family and may include specially designed instruction, speech therapy, or occupational therapy. Many students attend inclusive prekindergarten programs located in most elementary schools. However, some students may attend the Early Intervention Program located at the F. B. Gwynn Educational Center.
- **Center for Children:** Promotions positive Mental and Behavioral Health through crisis intervention, therapy, and education.





# St. Mary's School

13735 Notre Dame Place  
Bryantown, Maryland 20617

Catherine C. Silverstone  
*Principal*

*"Nurturing a lifelong love for Jesus, each other, and learning"*

301-932-6883 301-843-3387  
Fax: 301-274-0626

## **2024-2025 Pre-K Acknowledgment Form**

I am registering my child/children for:

- Pre-K-3 5-Day Full-Day Program (9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)
- Pre-K-3 3-Day (TWTH) Full-Day Program (9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)
- Pre-K-4 Full-Day Program (9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)

Child/Children's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the contents: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's/Guardian Signature

**\*Please sign and return this form to**