

### MISSION STATEMENT

St. Jerome Early Childhood Center, a Catholic community, provides a loving and accepting environment that fosters respect for all people by modeling Christian values as our children grow and learn.

### THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER

Volunteers in the Catholic Schools/Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg add a great dimension and enrichment to the life of the center. Volunteers benefit students as they enhance student-adult ratio in roles as playground monitors, computer aides, classroom aides, etc.

Volunteers are valued members of the center community. Under the direction and supervision of the Administrator & center staff, volunteers assist in providing educational and other services to students, faculty and staff.

LICENSING REGULATIONS St. Jerome ECC is licensed with Pinellas County License Board and is accredited with NAEYC. Volunteers are asked to be familiar with childcare licensing regulations, which are located on their website at pclb.org. A copy of licensing regulations is also available in the ECC office. As a volunteer, you do not receive any form of payment or compensation such as money, free or reduced child care, or any other type of compensation for your time. As a volunteer, you must be under the constant supervision of a trained and screened staff person and may not be left alone or in charge of any group of children. If you volunteer 10 hours or more per month, or receive some form of compensation, you understand that you must submit background screening information in accordance with section 40.3055, Florida Statutes, and complete the mandated training requirements.

### SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN

As mandated by the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops), for the protection of young children, all schools and centers in the Diocese of St. Petersburg participate in the Safe Environment Program. All persons with direct supervision of children (all employees, including substitute staff) have completed the diocesan mandated Safe Environments training program. Volunteers are encouraged to complete the Safe Environment Training Course offered at local parishes and our diocese. Volunteers at St. Jerome ECC are never in a supervisory role with children, per our licensing and accreditation standards. As such, they are not required to complete the SE training, but St. Jerome ECC strongly recommends parents and volunteers participate in this training, as you will find it very beneficial in your role as parents and volunteers.

### SELECTING VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Volunteers may be involved in a variety of activities that span many programs within our center. The volunteer should carefully consider his/her special skills, interests, and talents when choosing a volunteer position. It is important that prior to accepting a volunteer position, the volunteer clearly understands the requirements and responsibilities of his/her assignment. Activities that involve specific physical, mental, or time requirements, such as a reporting time for playground monitoring, are noted on the attached Volunteer Option List. Prior to choosing an activity, the volunteer should be certain that it conforms to his/her preferences and schedule.

### SPECIFIC VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

The Volunteer Option List defines the areas in which St. Jerome Early Childhood Center would welcome volunteers. Please consider any and all areas in which you would like to assist. Volunteers are the core of our school and we appreciate all of your efforts to better our program. Some areas will require chairpersons. If you would be willing to serve in this capacity, please note where so indicated. Ideally, we will have co-chairpersons to share the duties.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of volunteer work, confidential information about students or teachers may be learned. This information must remain confidential in all settings inside or outside the center, just as one would wish his/her own privacy rights to be respected. A volunteer may come into possession of information about students that, if not shared, may bring harm to the student or others. This information must be shared with administrators who in turn will share this information with the affected parent(s).

### SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

The Administrator is responsible for the total center operation. The Administrator supervises all who serve in any capacity in the center and in official school related activities. The administrator may delegate the supervisory role to a designated member of the center staff for a specific activity. Badges identifying volunteers are to be worn by those assisting in the ECC. Volunteers should obtain their badge from the ECC office. Volunteers will be expected to review and adhere to Policies and Procedures contained in the Family Handbook and the Diocesan Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, Volunteers, and Visitors.

### BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

The goal of Catholic centers is to instruct students in the formation of a Catholic conscience so that they will choose behaviors which foster responsibility. In order to accomplish this, volunteers are requested to manage students in positive and constructive ways while they uphold the center's Discipline Policy. This can be accomplished through intervention and encouragement techniques and strategies, which are administered through proximity, eye contact, and privacy. In addition to supporting the Discipline Policy, volunteers are requested to support the decisions of administrators and teachers. A volunteer may not use corporal punishment as a means of controlling a student who has misbehaved. Our Disciplinary Policy can be found in our Family Handbook and on our website.

### HEALTH EMERGENCY & SAFETY PROCEDURES

All situations should be dealt with individually, with prudent, adult judgment as the primary response to any illness or injury. Simple scrapes, small cuts, bruises, etc. will be taken care of by the classroom teacher or by a staff member bringing the student to the school office. If a child falls or bumps himself/herself, the situation should be taken seriously. Please observe a few seconds and check vital signs. If everything seems to be normal, a staff member should accompany the student to the office for observation.

Serious injury, such as a broken bone, severe bleeding, or allergic reaction should be dealt with immediately and with caution. **DO NOT MOVE THE CHILD. DO NOT LEAVE THE CHILD.** Send someone to the office for assistance. Remove other students from the proximity of the situation as soon as possible. Keep the child as

still and comfortable as possible until assistance arrives. Never dispense any medication to any child. All volunteers are encouraged to undergo first aid and CPR training. Please take a moment to use protective gloves when there is a possibility of contact with any type of body fluids. Check with the teacher for the location of gloves in the classroom.

Per Health Department regulations all persons involved with food preparation and service (snacks and/or cooking activities) must wear proper head covering such as a hairnet or hat. To prevent contact with foods, you must use clean, disposable gloves, utensils or similar items in the food preparation area.

#### CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT REPORTING PROCEDURES

Chapter 415, 504, Florida Statutes protects children from abuse and/or neglect. Abuse is defined as an intentional act that could reasonably be expected to result in physical or mental injury to a child or active encouragement of any person to commit an act that results or could reasonably be expected to result in physical or mental injury to a child. Neglect is failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, health care, or needed supervision. Under Florida law, anyone who suspects child abuse is legally obligated to report that abuse. It is the volunteer's responsibility to inform the school administrator of any suspicions of abuse. If, for some reason, the administrator declines to make a report based on the volunteer's suspicions, the volunteer still has a legal obligation to report. The child abuse hotline number is 1-800-342-9152.

#### HARASSMENT POLICY

St. Jerome Early Childhood Center strives to establish a Christian, professional and supportive educational community for administrators, faculty and staff, parents, and students. The Diocese of St. Petersburg has adopted and promulgated a harassment policy for its schools that addresses behaviors that interfere with fulfilling the school's mission. We, at St. Jerome ECC, condemn any form of harassment and will address all credible allegations in accord with the diocesan policy.

#### REPRODUCTION & USAGE OF COPYRIGHT MATERIAL

Our school is closely following the legal guidelines for use of videos in the school and the reproduction of software, videos, and printed materials. All volunteers must be aware that the reproduction of copyrighted material is illegal. All videos and software must be approved by the administrator before being used in the school setting.

#### CODE OF CONDUCT

All volunteers should be familiar with and abide by rules set forth in "a Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, Volunteers, and Visitors of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg".

St Jerome Early Childhood Center extends our appreciation and thanks to our ever-faithful volunteers!

Rev. 7/19

# ST. JEROME



# EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK