

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

HANDBOOK

\*Infant/Toddler

\*Preschool

\*Latchkey

St. Michael Early Elementary School

510 W. Front St.

Monroe, MI 48162

(734) 241-3378

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**INTRODUCTION TO OUR PROGRAMS**

This Early Childhood Handbook is a guide for parents and guardians whose children are enrolled in the infant, toddler, preschool, childcare or latchkey programs at the St. Michael campus of Monroe Catholic Elementary Schools.

This handbook contains both policies and guidelines to help parents and students understand the basic operational procedures of the infant, toddler, preschool, childcare and latchkey programs. All school guidelines may not be contained in this handbook.

The handbook constitutes an agreement among school, parent, and child. We endeavor to provide a quality education and to ensure that every opportunity for that quality education is maximized.

**Mission/Philosophy Statement:** We are dedicated to providing quality programs for children between the ages of six weeks and preschool age, as well as latchkey for school age students. Our goal is to provide care that parents can trust in an age appropriate and supportive environment. We believe that each child is a unique individual. Our programs and curriculum are designed to meet the developmental level of each child, encouraging individuality and promoting self-confidence.

**Reservation of Right to Change Policies and/or Procedures**

Monroe Catholic Elementary Schools (MCES) reserves the unilateral right to add, delete, modify, or amend the policies and procedures provided in the program, or program handbook.

**Nondiscrimination Policy**

MCES subscribes to a policy of nondiscrimination and no applicant shall be excluded based solely on race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry. It shall be our responsibility to develop guidelines for admission to early childhood programs and said guidelines shall be listed in this handbook. The guidelines shall address, but not be limited to, admission if class size becomes an issue. The program director may make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

**State Requirement**

The State of Michigan requires that all members of the child care community report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect. The staff and administration of MCES will file a report with Protective Services and the police any time abuse or neglect is suspected.

**SCREENING OF STAFF**

In compliance with licensing rule 400.5102, dictated by the State of Michigan, all volunteers and staff must be cleared by an internet background check before being allowed to help in our programs. This process is completely confidential, but an authorization form must be turned in, and the background check completed before beginning work or volunteer services. In addition, all MCES staff are required to sign a “Zero Tolerance Child Abuse and Neglect” statement.

MCES employees and volunteers also attend a Protecting God’s Children Workshop. Protecting God’s Children is a program to increase our awareness of the habits and behaviors of child predators, the warning signs of abuse, and ways to ensure that we, as adults do not put ourselves in questionable situations. Workshop participation is required by the Archdiocese of Detroit for all paid staff and volunteers who work with children on a one-time or regular basis. This is a one time commitment and there is no need to renew on a yearly basis. Please check [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org) for a list of workshop dates and locations. Please remember that the safety of our children is our number one goal. Upon completion of the internet check, staff and volunteers have six months to complete this workshop.

**CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

To protect the rights of your child and your family, children’s records are only available to MCES administrators, authorized staff of MCES, and authorized employees of the Department of Human Services/Child Day Care Licensing, and the child’s parent or legal guardian.

Confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of MCES who have a “need to know” in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents as a means to protect everyone’s right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and health related information.

In our programs, you may observe children who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate. You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child’s privacy. Employees of MCES are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. Information concerning any child in our programs will not be released in any format to any individual or agency without the approval of the parent, unless such disclosure is mandated by child care licensing rules, other statutes, or by a court of law.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Please notify the office of any change of address or phone number, including work, cell phone, or emergency contact numbers, and e-mail addresses.

**MEDICAL POLICIES**

MCES has developed illness policies that are in the best interest of the children and staff. We understand that sick child care exclusion guidelines that are too strict can be an enormous burden for working parents. On the other hand, lax standards can cause increased illnesses among children, staff and families. Because caring for sick children is ultimately the responsibility of the parents, please have alternative care arrangements in place.

During certain outbreaks, it may be necessary for MCES to put into effect additional policies and procedures for the well-being of all children and families.

Parents will be notified and may be asked to pick up their child if any of the following conditions have occurred;

* Fever of 100 degrees or higher
* Undiagnosed rash
* Diarrhea (increased number and water content of stool, 3 or more times during the day)
* Vomiting one time

Following guidelines from the Academy of Pediatrician’s report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases, children with any of the following conditions must be excluded until the symptoms/conditions have been resolved and the child has been symptom free for at least 24 hours or have been on medication for 24 hours.

* Herpes Gingivostomatitis, thrush, mouth sores, or ulcers
* Conjunctivitis
* Children with specific infections such as but not limited to: Pertussis, Whooping Cough, Strep Throat, head lice and scabies, Coxsackie disease, Hand, Foot and Mouth disease, Chicken Pox, impetigo, mumps, measles, Rubella, Hepatitis A
* Influenza
* Discolored eye, ear, or nose discharge
* Evidence of severe illness: lethargy, unusual sleepiness, irritability, prolonged crying, inconsolability, obvious discomfort, and labored, difficult or rapid breathing, extreme or uncontrollable coughing, wheezing, poor appetite

A child may be excluded from MCES when illness and/or symptoms prevent the child from participating in activities, when the illness/symptoms result in greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children, or when staff is not trained in specific methods of care.

Parents will be called to make arrangements to pick up a child too ill to remain in care. We ask that children be picked up within one hour of notification from the office. Your child will be immediately separated from the children and wait in the office until someone has picked up. Children absent due to a contagious disease may not return without written clearance from a physician. Once a child returns after being absent from an illness, they must be well enough to be able to participate in all activities. Unfortunately due to staffing purposes, children cannot be left inside the building during outdoor play without a note from a physician.

In case of a medical emergency, MCES has permission to administer first aid or obtain emergency medical treatment in child’s best interest.

At least one staff member shall be present in the building at all times that is trained in:

* Communicable Disease Prevention Management
* Infant, Child, and Adult CPR
* First Aid
* Blood borne Pathogens

**Medication Policy**

MCES staff will administer prescription medications to children when the following criteria have been met:

* A current written prescription from a doctor stating the exact dosage and frequency of the medication provided
* The medication is in the original container and labeled with the child’s name, current date and dosage, additional instructions, possible side effects and storage information.
* A medicine spoon must be provided for any oral medication
* Medication parental permission forms are filled out completely on a weekly basis. Included on this form are the exact time(s) the medication is to be given and the signature of the parent/guardian.

MCES staff will administer non-prescription medications to children when the following criteria have been met:

* Children under two years of age must have a doctor’s note stating the exact dosage and frequency of the non-prescription medication provided.
* Children over two years of age can be administered non-prescription medication without a note from the doctor as long as the medication is in the original container. Medication will be administered based on what the instructions to the medication state unless a parent requests a lesser dose be given.
* Medication parental permission forms are filled out completely for non-prescription medication. Included on this form are the exact time(s) the medication is to be given and the signature of the parent/guardian.

Medication that is over one year old cannot be administered. Parental instructions for medicine dosage will not be followed if they contradict the instructions of the physician.

Due to possible contamination, MCES staff can only administer eye and eardrops as long as a physician has prescribed it. Genital ointment cannot be applied on children over 2 ½ years of age. We suggest that parents apply or administer such medicine at drop-off and pick-up times.

**Injuries**

When a child is injured, regardless of the nature of the injury, an accident report is filled out at the time of the incident. The parent will be asked to sign the report which will be kept in the child’s file. A copy of the report will be provided to the parent. First aid kits are present in the building at all times. First-Aid is administered following specific guidelines:

* If the injury requires further evaluation and/or treatment, the parents will be notified immediately
* Any time a child has a head injury, no matter how slight, a call is placed to the parent
* In the event of serious injury your child information card gives MCES permission to call 911

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

MCES has established procedures for all emergencies, including fire, weather, building, medical and Fermi. Evacuation routes and procedures are posted in each classroom. Emergency drills are practiced on a regular basis. Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are routinely checked.

Please do not call during an emergency evacuation. The staff will be busy quickly, calmly, and efficiently escorting the children to designated shelters or safe areas. In the event of an evacuation, MCES staff will notify you once we have all the children safely evacuated and secure in our safe area. In case of an evacuation related to Fermi II our designated location is Bedford High School- 8285 Jackman Rd.

Staff members are certified in CPR and First-Aid. In the event of a medical emergency a staff member will make every effort to first notify parents before transporting a child in an ambulance.

Your signature on the child information card gives Monroe Catholic Elementary Schools staff permission to administer first aid or obtain emergency medical treatment in the best interest of the child.

**PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

School initiated conferences will be scheduled at the end of the first quarter. If a conference is desired at another time, please request an appointment. Communication by parents concerning curriculum, school rules, classroom procedures or homework should first be directed to the teacher. Because teachers are responsible for supervising students, teachers may not leave their classrooms during the day to talk with parents. They are, however, available to confer with you at a more convenient time.

**DISCIPLINE**

The purpose of discipline is to help a child retain control of his/her emotions and actions, not to stop the expression of feelings and moods. Above all, a child needs love, patience, and understanding. The only worthwhile discipline is prompted by motives from within and is based on the gospel values of Jesus Christ. Respect for God, self, and others will be stressed. Developmentally-appropriate expectations help children to choose suitable behavior. Staff members are trained to provide positive discipline methods, which encourage self-control, self-direction, cooperation and self-discipline. Such methods include redirection, diversion from negative behavior, encourage alternative activity, removal from the situation and communication. Repeated unacceptable or dangerous behavior can result in the child’s removal from the program for the safety and well-being of all children.

Corporal punishment is never considered an acceptable method of discipline.

We ask parents to assist in guiding our children in the acceptance of responsibility and in teaching them early to accept the consequences of their actions. If parents feel that they cannot support and accept the responsibility for helping enforce our rules and policies, the parents may be requested to withdraw their child from our program.

Discipline will be handled primarily by the teacher. In the event this is insufficient, the director will assist the teacher. If there is any misunderstanding in a disciplinary procedure, please confer with the teacher first, then contact the director.

**ALLERGY AWARENESS**

MCES abides by federal mandates as stated in Laws for Peanut Allergies in Private Schools. Precautions will be taken in order to protect students who have life-threatening allergies without creating undue burdens for students without the same needs. Every child who is identified with a serious allergy or health issue will have an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) and an Emergency Health Care Plan (EHCP) as well as a MCES allergen policy signed by the doctor that will be kept on file.

Empathy and compassion are key elements in helping your child understand that allergies can be potentially life threatening. You can help by not sending nut products to school and explain how this will protect those with nut allergies. Consider non-food related birthday items for all to enjoy, or check ingredients on all labels to see if it was made in a nut-free environment.

**OUTDOOR PLAY**

MCES is proud of our Garden Classroom and playground. Outdoor play is an integral part of our curriculum. All children, including infants, go outside on a daily basis, weather permitting.

To ensure proper staff/child ratios at all times, we cannot keep a child indoors. If a documented medical reason stipulating restrictions is provided, we will try to accommodate the request.

Under certain weather conditions, if a child is dropped off and is not dress appropriately for outdoor play, the parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to bring the appropriate articles of clothing. Please make sure all items are labeled with your child’s name.

**POSSESSIONS FROM HOME**

Our classrooms are well-equipped and your child will be engaged during the time he/she is with us. Experience tells us that a child’s personal toys and possessions can cause unhappiness if lost or broken. Because MCES cannot be responsible for any lost or damaged items, it is in your child’s best interest to leave toys and personal items at home, with the exception of naptime buddies and “show and tell” days.

In keeping with the curriculum and goals of our program, toys in the form of weapons, guns, warriors, action figures, etc. should be kept at home at all times.

We also ask that any electronic games, trading cards, videos and CD’s not be sent with your children. Again, we cannot be held responsible for anything that is lost or damaged.

Please check your child’s travel bag on a daily basis. The children may have projects, artwork, notes or other time-sensitive communication to share with you.

**RELEASE POLICY**

MCES reserves the right to ask anyone picking up a child to show picture identification. This includes parents or guardians. Refusal to show proper identification will result in MCES refusing to release the child.

**Authorized Pick-Up Form**

It is mandatory that every child has a child information card on file, which identifies all persons who are authorized to pick up the child. MCES asks that you provide at least two individuals with whom your child may be released. Children will only be released to individuals listed on the card. MCES is not responsible for an injury or harm to a child who has been released to a person on the child information card or identified in the written exception request process.

**Written Exception**

Should a parent wish to have their child released to someone other than a person designated on the authorized pick-up form, a request must be submitted in writing. The written request must include the name of the person authorized to pick up your child as well as be signed at dated.

**Court Order Releases**

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) MCES must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments. The orders of the court will be strictly followed.

In the absence of a court order on file, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by the law. Without a court order, MCES cannot limit the access of one parent by the request of another parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, it is suggested that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

**PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

MCES requires the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner based on the Gospel values of Jesus Christ. This includes acting in a way that is decent, courteous and respectful at all times. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on the property thereafter.

**Swearing and Cursing**

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on the school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At no time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

**Addressing of Other Children**

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. If a parent should witness another parent’s child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or director.

It is also inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child’s behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the attention of the teacher or director. At that point, the teacher and/or director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, MCES employees are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

**CLOTHING**

Parents are advised to dress your child appropriately, in play clothing. Please refrain from sending your child in “good” clothes, as they are apt to get soiled stained or damaged. Clothing should allow for active participation in class activities.

Gym shoes are the recommended footwear for our early childhood programs as they provide maximum safety for running, jumping, and walking. Shoes should stay securely on the child’s feet. Please refrain from sending your child in sandals, flip flops, crocs, shoes with a high heel, cowboy boots, or other fad shoes.

Children are taken outside daily and should be dressed accordingly. Fall and spring require light jackets, hats, and rain gear. Winter gear includes heavy jackets, snow pants, boots, gloves, and hats.

Please label all clothing items including outdoor wear. Inappropriate attire will be addressed on an individual basis.

Parents should send in two complete changes of clothes to be kept in the classroom. The clothes should be brought in a Ziploc bag with your child’s name clearly labeled. These clothing items will be used in case the child soils the clothes he/she is wearing. Soiled clothing will be sent home and a new, clean set should be brought back the next day. Please remember to change the bag of clothes as the seasons change or as your child outgrows the current size he or she is wearing.

If your child is toilet training we ask that you send at least four sets of extra clothing and sufficient training pants (no pull-ups or plastic pants can be used) so that we can keep your child comfortable at all times.

**PETS**

Please do not bring any pets into the building without prior authorization from the administration. Children may have allergies or fears that we are unaware of. We also ask that you not tie up your dog outside the building, as children may be walking by or at play nearby.

**INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS**

**Days and Hours of Operation**

The hours of operation of the MCES infant and toddler programs are Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

The center is closed for the following holidays:

 New Year’s Day Labor Day (2 day Friday/Monday)

 Holy Thursday Thanksgiving (2 day Thursday/Friday)

 Good Friday Christmas Eve

 Memorial Day Christmas Day

 Independence Day New Year’s Eve

A full operational calendar is available on our website [www.MCESmonroe.com](http://www.MCESmonroe.com) . For the convenience of parents, our infant and toddler programs will remain open during inclement weather.

\*In cases of extreme weather or unforeseen circumstances, MCES may cancel all programs. Notification of these closures will be communicated via e-mail and School Reach.

**Daily Program/Activities**

The MCES infant and toddler programs begin at 6:30 a.m. and run until 6:00 p.m. Each day’s routine promises activities that allow your child time to grow, room to explore, experiment, discover, and play. In our infant program, the daily routine is determined by the individual needs and developmental level of each child.

In compliance with licensing rule 400.5106, MCES provides a daily program of activities and relationships that offer opportunities for the developmental growth of each child in all of the following areas:

* Physical development, including fine and gross motor
* Social development, including communication skills
* Emotional development, including positive self-concept
* Intellectual development

Each teacher creates his/her own weekly lesson plan that will follow the *Creative Curriculum*, based on developmentally appropriate practice. Our main objective is to provide a positive atmosphere that promotes spiritual, social, physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of children.

MCES has integrated policies, procedures, and practices that reflect and respect each families cultural competence and special needs. We ensure all children feel valued regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity, language, or background. Each teacher encourages families to send in family pictures to share with the class. We partner with families on an individual basis to make accommodations in regards to communication, meal plans, and other needs that fall under cultural beliefs and needs. We are able to partner Spanish speaking families with our Hispanic Ministries through the Catholic Church and partner with our local ISD and health department for resources to assist families with children of special needs. We feel having a written cultural and special plan is important for the children, families and staff because we are able to give support and make accommodations for all families within our program. Continuous training focused on culture and diversity, as well as special needs, are completed annually with all staff.

**ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

MCES accepts children from ages 6 weeks to 2 ½ years, on a full-time or part-time basis. The program requires that children be enrolled for a minimum of **two** days per week and must attend the same days each week. Rotating or varying schedules are not accepted. Placement in classrooms is based on availability. When the program is on a wait list status, admission preference is given in this order: MCES faculty and Staff, Families of currently enrolled children in our infant/toddler programs, families with children currently enrolled in MCES Preschool and grades K-8.

**Enrollment/Registration Fees**

At the time of enrollment, and every August thereafter, a registration fee per child is required. These fees are non-refundable, unless your child is not accepted to the program, and under no circumstances will the enrollment fees be used to pay for program tuition.

**Child Information Cards**

The Department of Human Services/Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing mandates that each child have a completed child care information card on file. One card will be provided for you to complete and must be on file by the first day of attendance.

It is the responsibility of the parent and/or guardian to ensure that the information contained is completely filled out and up-to-date. It is of utmost importance that MCES have the most recent work phone number, emergency contact, etc. in the event that there is an emergency and the parent/guardian needs to be reached. Parents are required to review and update all forms every August.

**Health Environment/Appraisals**

Our program believes it is vital for children to be regularly seen by a physician. We believe it is important for children to be up to date on vaccinations, or go through proper education when waiving immunizations. The Department of Human Services/Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing requires that MCES have a completed and current health appraisal, including immunization records for your child upon enrollment.

For all children, a health appraisal must be completed annually for children birth through 2 ½ years of age. You will be notified at least one month prior to the expiration date of the physical examination.

MCES cannot allow a child with an expired health appraisal or incomplete immunizations to attend the program. All health records are submitted to the local county Health Department.

Some parents may choose to waive certain or all vaccinations for their child for religious, philosophical or medical reasons. The Health Department requires that if a parent or guardian chooses to waive vaccinations then a waiver will need to be completed by the parent or doctor (if it is a medical reason) and be kept on file at MCES. A copy of the waiver will also be submitted to the Health Department.

**It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the program director of any immunization updates your child may receive.**

Prior to enrollment and before each transition, parents will be given information on different developmental milestones their child is achieving and progressing towards. At each yearly transition (around your child’s birthday), your child should have their well-visit with their pediatrician and an updated physical needs to be submitted to the director.

The MCES childcare staff will provide screenings on children twice each year at conference time for parents to fill out. If there is a concern of development, screenings will be provided more frequently to families at each age interval and information will be shared with families to community resources and health providers (such as the local health department, ISD, dentist, etc).

**Infant Food Agreement**

For all children enrolled in the infant program, an Infant Food Agreement must be signed and returned on the infant’s first day. With this agreement you acknowledge that it is your responsibility to provide formula, breast milk, or other liquids in a clean, sanitary, ready to feed assembled bottle that has been sterilized or is disposable. Each bottle is to be labeled with your child’s full name and date. For breast milk the date should reflect the date of collection. In addition, sufficient formula, milk and food will be provided by you to meet the minimum needs of your child. At the end of the day, any formula or milk in an unopened ready to feed-bottle or perishable shall be returned to the parent or discarded.

**Developmental History Form**

MCES asks that each child have a developmental history form on file. This provides the teachers and caregivers with information about your child that will help provide the best quality program for each individual child. Parents of infants under 18 months are required to submit a daily schedule of feeding and sleeping times for the infant.

Developmental history forms can be updated at any time at the request of the parent.

**MCES Parent/Guardian Handbook Agreement**

The parent agreement form completes the enrollment process. Upon signing the agreement, you acknowledge that you have read and agree to comply with the policies, rules, and responsibilities as outlined in the handbook.

**INFANT AND TODDLER TUITION AND FEES**

**Basic Tuition and Fees**

Your tuition is determined by the number of days you have contracted for and the program your child is enrolled in. Children are required to be enrolled for a minimum of 2 days each week. These days must be the same days of attendance each week. Our current fee schedule is:

*Enrollment Fee*  $200.00 per child

*Annual Re-enrollment Fee* $150.00 per child

*Infants & Mobiles – 6 weeks-24 months* $220.00 week, 5 full days

 $50.00 individual full day

*Toddlers - 24 months and older* $210.00 week, 5 full days

 $50.00 individual full day

*Late Fee* $25.00 per family

*Early Drop Off/Late Pick Up* $1 per minute

**Contracted Days**

Our staffing schedule is based on the days you have contracted service for. If a schedule change is necessary, please contact the director by 5:00 p.m. Monday, two weeks prior to the desired schedule change.

Please be as accurate as possible with the anticipated drop off and pick up times, as the staff schedule is based on these arrival and departure times. Please inform the director if your child is going to be dropped off earlier or picked up later than their contracted time.

**Absences (Vacation, Sick Time, and Extended Leave)**

Vacation time is available and not charged as long as written notice is received at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled vacation day(s).

 If a child that is scheduled does not show and the director did not receive notice, you are responsible to pay the charges for that day. Sick and absent days are non-refundable. Parents are responsible for payment of these days, whether the child is here or not.

If you are in need of an extended leave of absence from childcare (i.e. teacher summer vacation, maternity leave, etc.) written notice needs to be submitted at least 30 days prior to the scheduled leave of absence. A return date must be included in the notice in order for your child’s space in our program to be reserved.

**Early Drop-Off, Late Pick up and Drop-In Rates**

Children dropped off before 6:30 a.m. will be charged an early drop off fee of $1 per minute they are dropped off before 6:30 a.m.

Children picked up after 6:00 p.m. will be charged an overtime rate of $1 per minute after the center closes. Overtime rates will be added to your weekly tuition rate.

Drop-in additions must be approved by the director more than 24 hours before the child is to attend.

**Due Date for Payments**

Payment is due the first day of attendance or per contracted schedule set up with the director. A $25.00 late charge will be added if payment is not made. Two weeks of nonpayment will result in your child being dismissed from the program. Payments that are paid consistently late will result in your child being dismissed from the program.

**Acceptable Forms of Payment**

MCES accepts payments by check or cash. Checks must be made payable to MCES. **Please include the child’s name and what dates are being paid for in the memo section of the check.**

**INFANT AND TODDLER ATTENDANCE**

**Drop-off and Pick-up**

Staff is on hand to welcome families at 6:30 a.m. Children and parents cannot be admitted before that time. Parents must escort their child directly into the room and sign them in. If you have an additional child using our morning care, please drop off the older child first. Rooms may be combined from 6:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Parents must pick up their child/ren directly from the classroom, playground, etc. Parents must sign their child out from a caregiver before leaving. If you have two or more children, we request that you pick up the younger one first. To ensure safety, older siblings should not be brought into the infant/toddler classrooms. We ask that anyone picking up children carry a picture ID with them at all times.

MCES will not release children to their parents in the hallways or parking lots. Children are considered under the supervision of our staff only when the parent/guardian is not on-site. For the well-being of your child/ren, never leave them unattended in our facility or parking lot.

The St. Michael campus closes at 6:00 p.m. At 6:05 p.m. staff will begin calling emergency numbers if you cannot be reached. It is imperative that you call if you are running late. A substantial late fee of $1 per minute has been established to discourage late pick-up which is considered unfair to your child and our staff. Habitual tardiness is grounds for dismissal from the program.

**Withdrawal and Termination**

MCES and a parent/guardian have the right to terminate the care agreement upon written (not verbal) notification to the other party.

MCES requires a 2-week written notice prior to termination. Full tuition is due for the notice period whether your child attends or not. There are no refunds.

On occasion, due to family, work, or medical circumstances, a parent/guardian may choose to withdraw their child on a temporary basis. Proper termination notice and procedure must be adhered to. Once a child is withdrawn, MCES cannot guarantee re-enrollment for the child in the program.

**INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAM NUTRITION**

**Infant Food and Formula**

Parents who have children in our infant program are asked to provide all food and formula until your child is ready to enjoy our meal program. To get your baby off to a good start and make the transition easier, we ask that you give the first feeding each day at home. A spare container of ready to feed formula and/or spare bags of frozen breastmilk should be kept at the center in case of emergency.

In accordance with licensing rule 400.5205, the following criteria must be adhered to:

* All food and plastic bottles must be labeled with the child’s name and dated on a daily basis
* Bottles must be premade at home by the parent. Items not properly labeled cannot be dispensed
* Only unopened jars of food may be brought into the center
* All partially used formula and food will be disposed of daily
* Each bottle and nipple supplied by the parent shall be used for a single feeding only and then returned to the parent

MCES is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers. Well-defined research has documented a multitude of health benefits to both the mother and infant. MCES subscribes to the following policy:

* Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk
* A refrigerator will be made available for storage of expressed breast milk
* Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies
* Staff will be trained in handling breast milk
* Expressed milk must arrive to the center in clean, sanitary, ready-to-feed assembled bottles labeled with the child’s full name and bearing the date of collection

When formula is discontinued, the following provisions shall apply:

* MCES shall provide and use whole homogenized vitamin D fortified cow’s milk, unless otherwise directed by the parent or licensed physician
* Milk shall be poured into clean cups. Excess milk left in cups shall be discarded
* Solid foods shall be introduced to the individual child according to the parent’s or licensed physician’s instructions

MCES shall maintain a continuing food intake record for children up to 12 months of age.

**Tooth Brushing**

The health of a child’s mouth is vital to their overall health and wellbeing. Baby teeth are important for many reasons such as eating, speaking, smiling and to maintain the space for the new adult teeth. Children should be encouraged to brush their teeth from an early age, this includes children who have yet to develop teeth. A baby’s gums can be wiped with a clean damp cloth after each feeding. For children in our Mobile and Toddler classrooms, they will brush their teeth daily after lunch before naptime. Parents need to provide a toothbrush for their child. All toothbrushes will be clearly labeled and kept in separate containers to ensure proper health standards. Toothpaste will not be used during the tooth brushing process at the child care center. It is the act of practicing and creating the routine that is most important in forming healthy habits.

**Nutrition Plan**

Our nutritional plan is to provide meals that follow the outlined nutritional guidelines in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to promote growth and development in all children. We also find it important for children to eat in a family style setting where socialization and learning can occur and use child size tables and chairs to easily transition children to and from meals. Once your child is on table food, MCES will provide breakfast, morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack. Daily nutritional requirements are always met. Menus are posted in the classroom and provided to parents with each monthly newsletter. On occasion changes in the menu may occur. Such changes will be listed on the posted classroom menu. Menus are continuously evaluated and revised. Our program takes part in the NAP SACC program through the local health department to continuously learn the importance of food nutrition and physical activity. Children are served appropriate portion sizes and foods are cut into small pieces to be easily eaten and prevent choking. Children use child-size utensils to help promote fine motor skills.

The total cost of food and meals provided is included in your tuition. If, due to dietary or medical restrictions, parents must provide the meals, we cannot offer any cost adjustment or refunds. On occasion it may be necessary for parents to provide lunches for their toddlers.

If a child requires special food accommodations due to documented medical reasons, parents may be asked to provide the meals. We ask that parents please arrange to meet with the director and nurse to review the child’s needs and determine whether an accommodation is possible. Community resources will be provided to families in need of support, such as through the local health department, ISD, or pediatrician. MCES cannot guarantee the ability to meet every special request. We feel having a nutrition plan for our programs is important for all people involved, including children, families, and staff. Consistency in the menu and how the food is served creates a cohesive, healthy environment.

For special occasions, such as classroom parties, birthdays, etc. we ask that parents check with the director before bringing in treats. It is preferable that a healthy snack is brought in to celebrate a birthday.

**REST PERIODS**

For children at MCES attending full days, a peaceful rest period is essential.

* Each child under school age shall be provided an opportunity to rest
* Children under 18 months of age are permitted to sleep on demand per Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers R 400.8188
* Children under the age of 12 months are provided with cribs designed for comfort and safety
* Cots are provided for children from 12 months of age through toddler
* Parents of children 12 months and older shall provide a small sheet and blanket. Sleeping bags are not allowed
* Naptime items are to be labeled and brought in a plastic zipper bag.
* Quiet activities are provided for preschool children who are not asleep after 30 minutes

**SAFE SLEEPING POSITION**

In accordance with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and licensing rule 400.5204a, infants are placed to sleep on their backs. Infants who fall asleep in swings or bouncy seats will be moved to their crib and placed on their backs to sleep. Infants nap in their own assigned cribs according to their own individual schedules. If you request that your infant sleep in a different position other than their back, a physician’s note that explains why your baby should not use a back sleeping method is required. Blankets and stuffed toys are not permitted in the crib with your infant.

**DIAPERING AND TOILET TRAINING**

Parents shall provide disposable diapers and wipes to be used at the center. Please label packages with your child’s first and last name on them. Parents are expected to provide enough diapers so that a child can be changed when soiled or wet. Space will be provided at the center to store your child’s items.

If a child’s health condition necessitates or parental preference is to use cloth diapers, licensing rule 400.5209 states that no rinsing of the contents shall occur at the center. Parents will provide a waterproof outer covering that shall be changed and not reused until thoroughly washed and sanitized. The soiled contents will be placed in a sealed bag and sent home daily with the child.

Diapering shall be done in a designated area. MCES shall maintain a diapering area and all supplies and equipment in a safe and sanitary manner. Staff shall thoroughly was his or her hands after each diapering and after cleaning up bodily fluids, using soap and running water.

Toilet training is planned cooperatively between MCES staff and the parent so that the toilet routine is consistent between center and home. Parents are expected to bring a minimum of 4 sets of extra clothes for a child who is toilet training and provide at least 6 pairs of extra underwear.

**BITING POLICY**

MCES recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 3 year old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bit, or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember that this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations which provoke, or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish, or harshly discipline children for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with the staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. If excessive biting incidents occur in one day or if skin is broken during a bite, the biter’s parent will be called to pick up their child to be excluded for the remainder of the day.

Our caregivers keep a log of all biting incidents so that we can track the causes of and incidents of biting in the toddler room. Rarely, the director may suggest a 1-2 week break from group care if a child seems unusually stressed. In cases of persistent biting (i.e., biting on a daily basis without signs of improvement in spite of a concerted response), we may confer with the parents and executive director to help us make the difficult decision as to whether our program is the appropriate setting for the child who is biting.

Children older than 3 years of age may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children in this age group who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with the staff to help their child control this behavior. If a child over the age of 3 bites, the biter’s parent will be called to pick up their child to be excluded for the remainder of the day.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed.

**PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

**Preschool Program Goals**

* To provide a positive initial preschool experience
* To provide opportunities through play based learning on individual needs, interests, and abilities
* To create a desire to learn
* To develop a positive attitude toward self and others
* To provide opportunities for growth spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically
* To provide activities that are both self and teacher directed
* To develop readiness skills for the Monroe Catholic Schools Kindergarten program

**Preschool Admission Guidelines**

All children enrolled in the preschool program must be 3 or 4 years old by September 1. **All children must be fully toilet trained to enroll.** Students enrolled in the Monroe Catholic Elementary Schools preschool program must be able to use the bathroom on their own and spend the day without having an accident. Unfortunately, MCES staff cannot change children who have accidents because it violates the State of Michigan required ratio of adults to children when one teacher must leave the classroom to change a child. Pull-ups​ ​and​ ​diapers​ ​are​ ​not permitted. We understand accidents may happen, especially at the beginning of the year; parents will be called to bring a change of clothes, clean up any mess, and to change their child when necessary. If the child is capable of cleaning themselves and changing clothes, they will be able to remain at school. If more than one accident occurs in one day, parents will be asked to take their child home for the remainder of the day, even if the student is capable of cleaning themselves. Students will have a four week trial period from the start of school until Friday, September 15th. An accident log will be kept in each preschool classroom during this time to document accidents. A notice will be sent home for each accident that occurs while in our care and a phone call will be made each time to notify the parents. Students who continue having accidents after this date will not be able to return to MCES until they are bathroom trained. Once bathroom training is complete, students will be allowed to return on a trial basis.

Selection of new students will occur in the following order.

* All students currently enrolled in Monroe Catholic Elementary Schools preschool
* Children from families with siblings currently enrolled in MCES
* Children from registered families of St. John the Baptist Parish, St. Mary Catholic Parish or St. Michael the Archangel Parish
* Children from registered families of neighboring Catholic parishes.

The following forms must be on file before the child starts the preschool program:

* Child information cards
* Enrollment form
* Health appraisal
* Record of vaccinations
* Birth certificate
* Baptismal certificate (if Catholic)
* State Licensing Form
* Court custody papers (most recent if applicable)

**Program Schedule of Activities**

1. Exploratory Play: The children explore areas of the room such as dramatic play and participate in activities of their choice. At this time, social skills will be developed.
2. Circle Time: The children will gather to say morning prayer, sing songs, discuss the weather, calendar, theme of the week or listen to a story
3. Outdoor/Indoor Playtime: The children are provided with various play equipment and participate in activities which focus on large motor skills.
4. Snack Time: Children will enjoy a healthy snack. This is a time for social interaction and to review manners.
5. Learning Centers/Classroom Instruction: Children will participate in art and learning activities or visit the library for story time.
6. Language Time: The children will end their preschool day with songs and story time. This is also time for review of what was discussed and learned that morning.

**Preschool Hours**

Parents have a choice to enroll their child in a three day or a five day program. Our preschools offers a 5 day half day option from 7:45am-10:30am or a 3 or 5 day full day option 7:45am-2:30pm. Before/after school childcare is available for an additional cost. Detailed program schedules will be provided by the child’s classroom teacher.

**Absences/Attendance**

The teacher takes attendance and the school office follows up on any child absent from the program if a parent note has not been provided prior to that day. If it is necessary for your child to be absent from school, please call the office before class time and leave a message giving the reason for the absence

**Arrival/Departure**

Parents are responsible for escorting their child/ren to and from the preschool room each day. The teacher or teaching assistant must be aware that your child is present. Likewise, never leave with your child without informing the adult in charge. Additional instruction on arrival/departure procedures will be provided by your child’s classroom teacher.

If your child is going to be picked up by someone other than you, they must be on the Authorized Pick-Up Form and must be prepared to show a picture identification card. No one may have access to any child without written permission of the custodial parent. If it is necessary for someone to pick up your child that is not on the Authorized Pick-Up form, please send in a note with the teacher.

We are proud of the fact that we do run a structured preschool program. In order to do so, we need to begin our activities on time. Please have your child in the preschool room before the start of the class session.

Please pick up your child on time. He or she will worry if you are late. If you are more than 10 minutes late, your child will be signed into childcare and applicable fees will be applied. If you cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency numbers provided on your Authorized Pick-Up form. If you know that you are going to be late (special circumstances), please let us know.

**Bathroom Guidelines**

Children enrolled in the 3 and 4 year old preschool programs must be fully potty trained and able to use the bathroom with minimal adult assistance. **Pull-ups or diapers are not permitted**. The teacher or teaching assistant will be available to assist as needed and the doors to the bathrooms are kept partially open for the child’s safety. Please dress your child in clothing he or she can easily manage when using the bathroom. Class-wide bathroom time is scheduled periodically through the day, but the children may use the bathroom as needed.

**Birthday Party Invitations**

Most of our preschoolers have not yet begun to differentiate their friends by gender. We require that any birthday party invitations handed out in school are for the entire class. Whole class invitations should be given directly to the classroom teacher and be assured that they will be sent home in a timely manner.

We realize that it is very difficult to invite the entire class to your child’s off-site birthday party. To avoid breaking little hearts, invitations not sent to the entire class must be mailed rather then left in cubbies or backpacks.

**Closings/Delays**

The preschool will close due to inclement weather conditions on the days Monroe Catholic Elementary Schools are closed. MCES follows Monroe Public School regarding weather closings or delays.

Please do not call the school office for information about closings/delays. Any changes in the school schedule due to inclement weather or other emergency will be e-mailed to each parent as soon as we receive notification of the change. In addition, you will also be contacted via our School Reach system.

Latchkey for 3 and 4 year old preschoolers will still be available on days when school is delayed or cancelled for students who have already registered and paid the registration fee.

\*In cases of extreme weather or unforeseen circumstances, MCES may cancel all programs. Notification of these closures will be communicated via e-mail and School Reach.

**Concerns or Problems**

If a parent has a special concern or feels that the program and/or its staff should take a course of action, the proper steps should be followed for a quick resolution:

* First, speak with the teacher. Most problems can be solved efficiently at this level
* If you feel the matter needs further attention, contact the program director

**Conferences**

We have found that drop-off and pick-up are not the best times to discuss concerns with your child’s teacher. The teacher wants to give the children arriving for class and the parents with concerns his/her total attention and cannot effectively do both at these times. If you would like to meet with the teacher please send an e-mail or note to the teacher to set up an appointment.

Conference days are scheduled in November to discuss evaluations completed by the teacher and to answer questions about your child’s progress. Progress reports will be provided to the parents at regular intervals throughout the school year.

**Snacks**

A daily snack will be provided that consists of servings from two of the food groups. Parents may be asked to provide snacks and shall be provided with information on nutritious and allergy-safe snack choices. Snack menus for the entire month will be posted on the parent bulletin board and will reflect the snacks to be served by the program. Any substitute foods served will be from the same basic food group and will be recorded on the posted menu on the day the substitute food is served. Food allergies or food restrictions are to be documented on the Health Appraisal form and appropriate snack arrangements will be made through teacher/parent contact.

Further instructions regarding daily snack time will be provided at the Preschool Orientation in August.

Snack time is not intended to be a substitute for breakfast. All children should be fed breakfast before arriving at preschool.

**PRESCHOOL TUITION AND FEES**

Tuition and fees will be determined annually. Please check the MCES website for most current pricing.

**PRESCHOOL Latchkey**

MCES is proud to offer extended care services for our 3 and 4 year old preschoolers. Our program is another way of meeting the additional needs of our parents and to keep the children in a safe and happy environment. Only currently enrolled MCES preschool students are eligible to use our childcare.

**Hours of Operation**

The St. Mike’s campus will be open beginning at 6:30 a.m. for childcare until preschool class sessions begin. Likewise childcare is available after preschool classes until 6 p.m.

As an added convenience to parents, MCES will be offering childcare on days when the preschool programs are delayed or cancelled. Children must be registered and have paid the $25.00 registration fee. Please indicate on your enrollment fee if you plan to use childcare when school is delayed or cancelled.

\*In cases of extreme weather or unforeseen circumstances, MCES may cancel all programs. Notification of these closures will be communicated via e-mail and School Reach.

**Program Structure**

During the childcare program, preschoolers are provided with ample time for active play, snack time, story time, and a variety of puzzles, games and creative materials. It is not necessary for students to bring toys or games from home, as we cannot be held responsible for lost or damaged items. Electronic games and devices are not to be used during childcare.

**Drop-off and Pick-up**

Children should be dropped off to the gym. Children dropped off after 7:45 a.m. are considered tardy and should be brought directly to the office to be signed in.

Parents must pick up their child directly from the classroom, playground, etc. Parents must sign their child out from the caregiver before leaving. If you have two or more children, we request that you pick up the younger child first. Photo identification may be requested of anyone picking up students. Childcare may be combined with latchkey from 5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m in the childcare center.

MCES will not release children to their parents in the hallways or parking lots. Children are considered under the supervision of our staff only when the parent/guardian is not on-site. For the well-being of your children, please never leave them unattended in our facility or parking lot.

The St. Michael campus closes at 6:00 p.m. At 6:05 p.m. staff will begin calling emergency numbers if you cannot be reached. It is imperative that you call if you are running late. A substantial late fee has been established to discourage late pick-up, which is considered unfair to your child and our staff. Habitual tardiness is grounds for dismissal from the program.

**Snacks and Lunch**

Children attending preschool latchkey will be provided an afternoon snack each day. A menu is available to see what is served each day. Lunches should be packed a brought from home each day. A refrigerator or microwave is NOT available. Breakfast is not provided to preschool children. We will have a table set up in the gym for early arriving children who bring a light breakfast from home to eat upon their arrival to childcare.

**Rest Time**

Careful consideration has been given regarding rest time in the preschool childcare setting. Children attending our program are in our care an average of eight to ten hours a day. We provide the opportunity to rest each day which keeps us in compliance with the State of Michigan Childcare Licensing Regulations. In addition, we provide a quiet atmosphere for resting for a duration of an hour to an hour and a half based on the standards set forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics in Caring for Your Baby and Child and our experience with children participating in our active daily programs. These time frames may vary based on the needs of the majority of the children in the program. Children who are not sleeping after one half hour of rest may do quiet activities in a separate area of the room, while being respectful of the children who are sleeping.

Please send in a small pillow and blanket, and a fold up or roll up style rest/yoga mat. All rest items will be sent home weekly to be washed and returned. Please provide a reusable shopping bag to store nap items in and label all items clearly.

Remember, children don’t need to be doing something all of the time. Scheduled downtime each day is an opportunity for your child to rest his/her busy mind and body. It also reinforces the skills of independent play and creative thinking. A recent study by the University of Massachusetts Amherst links naptime in preschoolers with increased memory capability and retention of concepts learned. Our rest time policy has been established to provide the best practices for the developmental needs of the children that we care for.

**Payment**

Timesheets will be kept for each child. Monthly invoices will be sent home around the first of the month, indicating the amount owed. Payment is expected by the 15th of the month and may be sent directly to the office. Payment by check is preferred and payments should be labeled “latchkey” on the memo line of the check. Accounts unpaid after 30 days will be placed under review and may be cause for suspension or removal from the program.

Please provide 24 hour notice of schedule changes to the program director.

As an added convenience to parents, MCES will be offering latchkey on days when the preschool programs are delayed or cancelled. Children must be registered and have paid the $25.00 registration fee. Please indicate on your enrollment fee if you plan to use latchkey when school is delayed or cancelled.

\*In cases of extreme weather or unforeseen circumstances, MCES may cancel all programs. Notification of these closures will be communicated via e-mail and School Reach.

**Overtime Rates**

If a child is picked up after 6:00 p.m. a fee of $1.00 per minute will be charged. Assessment will be based on the school’s clock.

**Medical and Emergency Policies**

Please do not send children to childcare if they are sick or if you have strong suspicion that they may be unwell. Not only is it better for the child’s emotional and physical well-being to remain at home, but a contagious child can affect the health of everyone at school.

If a child becomes ill while in childcare he/she will be isolated from the other children and monitored. A parent will be contacted so that the child may be picked up and cared for at home. In the event that a parent is unable to be reached by phone, the person listed as your emergency contact will be called to take the child home.

It is a state licensing regulation that a child who has an illness that may be contagious or easily passed to another child be on medication for 48 hours before returning to the program. Please make sure your child is symptom free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before your child returns.

For complete MCES Medical and Emergency Policies, please see the Early Childhood Handbook.

**LATCHKEY PROGRAM**

Latchkey will be provided for MCES children in Young Fives through age 12 at the St. Michael Campus before school (6:30 a.m. until 7:30 a.m.) and after school (2:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.). Our staff members are all trained in CPR, First Aid, and Blood borne Pathogens. Although state regulations require us to have a ratio of one staff member to 18 children, our St. Michael Campus will be staffed to meet a ratio of 1 caregiver to 15 students.

**Our general mission statement is based on the belief that we can provide much more than after school care; we provide an enrichment program!**

**MCES LATCHKEY HAS THREE RULES: 1. Safety 2. Kindness 3. Fun**

**OUR PROGRAM STRIVES TO REACH THREE GOALS :**

**1. TO ENRICH, EDUCATE AND CARE FOR STUDENTS, IN A SAFE CATHOLIC ENVIRONMENT.**

We use a wide variety of creative activities, thematic projects and special events that are both educational and recreational for children’s enjoyment.

**2. TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN WITHIN THE “CHOICE SYSTEM”.**

Students will be presented with a list of activities and then encouraged to choose something that interests them. Children are empowered by good decision-making. Although we do offer some activities that are grade/age specific, students are not separated by grade. Children have a lot of input and often lead projects for other students.

**3. TO HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN POSITIVE PEER RELATIONSHIPS.**

We promote problem solving, listening, discussion, student self-esteem and responsibility through intervention and mediation. Children learn an important social skill when they learn how to make and keep friends.

Within this structure, we offer a variety of daily activities which are based on our monthly themes. In addition to our thematic events we have these other exciting activities:

- Homework Club - Arts and Crafts - Board Games and Puzzles

Memberships, Enrollment and Fees

We are pleased to offer flexible enrollment plans that offer parents a choice of supervision for one to five days a week both morning and afternoon. We also provide half and full day care when school is not in session due to teacher work days and holiday breaks. We are able to receive DHS supplement; please contact the director for information.

**Membership Options:** We take the total number of days in the school year and divide the charge out into 9 equal monthly payments, with a payment due every month from September-May. If you have had the same membership all year, there is no payment for that membership due in June! PM Memberships also include care on days when school is delayed or closed due to inclement weather. (All current prices are available on the website and are subject to change. If you register after September or change your membership type throughout the year, additional payment may be required as determined by the Director. See our Membership and Billing Policies for more information)

**AM Unlimited Membership-** Student may attend up to five a.m. sessions per week

**AM Standard Membership-** Student may attend up to three a.m. sessions per week

**PM Unlimited Membership-** Student may attend up to five p.m. sessions per week

\*Includes care on days when school is closed or delayed due to inclement weather

**PM Standard Membership- Student** may attend up to three p.m. sessions per week

\*Includes care on days when school is closed or delayed due to inclement weather (must not exceed 3 days of inclement weather or afterschool care within a week).

**Full Day Membership**

MCES provides Full Day care on days when school is not in session due to teacher work days and holiday breaks. This membership allows your child to attend each of these Full Days at a discounted rate. **You cannot cancel or change this membership.**

**Non-Membership Options:**

**Drop-In Care-** You may choose to register your child with us but not have a membership. Drop-In Care allows parents to send their child only as needed and to be billed only for the days a child actually attends. Fees for this service will be billed on the next month invoice. Advanced authorization required to ensure proper staffing. (Registration Fees still apply)

Care and Membership Questions and Answers

**If you have questions that are not answered below, please feel free to stop by our office or contact us via phone (734-241-3378) or email (****welton@monroecatholicschools.com****).**

**How does a membership plan benefit me?** Because the cost is calculated and then divided out equally into 9 payments, plans make it easy for families to budget by knowing exactly what the monthly cost for child care will be. No guess work is required. We have set up plans that suit the needs of families who need childcare everyday as well as plans for families who need care a few times a week or even just on occasion. Our membership plans allow for flexibility in scheduling while keeping a predictable monthly bill.

**What if my needs for child care change throughout the year? Can my type of membership be adjusted?** Has your situation changed? No problem. We can change your membership. **Membership changes must be submitted in writing (such as via email) by the 15th of the month prior to when you wish to have the change occur**. This lets us to make sure your invoice is correct and that we have enough staff to make sure kids are safe and that the program keeps its quality. The only membership that cannot be cancelled is the Full Day Membership.

**What if I only need care periodically?** We know that things come up and we want to make sure our families are supported. If you need occasional care (Less than two days each week), just fill out the attached paperwork, pay the registration fee and we’ll be available to you when you need us. We will only charge you for the days you actually use. For our drop-in families, we do ask that you contact us about your drop-in early enough for us to make sure that kids can safely get to us. Email works great if you know a day or two in advance. If not, please give us a call. Also, please don’t forget to let the school office and your child’s teacher know when the after school schedule has changed. (You can reach the St. Michael Office at 734-241-3378). Only need care a few days all year? Check out our Guest Program!

**What if I don’t need all of the Full Days?** You can attend full days without the membership if you think you won’t need them all. You pay the drop-in rate listed on the rate sheet above. Like with other drop-ins, we need you to let us know in advance so we can staff appropriately.

**What is the Registration Fee?** The Registration fee is paid once annually and covers our cost to get you signed up and ready to go. Registration Fees are non-refundable.

**How will you invoice me?** We will send your invoice as a PDF file attachment to the email address you provide on the Registration Form. Keep an eye out for this invoice and program information around the first of each month. If you discontinue care with us, we will send you a final invoice that shows your last payment and zero balance. Your invoices also act as receipts of payment. It’s a good idea to add our email address to your address book so that your invoice email doesn’t end up in your spam box. welton@monroecatholicschools.com

**What forms of payment does MCES accept?** MCES accepts checks and money orders as forms of payment. Please write your child’s name in the memo line so we can make sure to credit the payment to your account. You can drop your payment off at any MCES campus office or mail it to MCES Latchkey

 St. Michael School

 510 W. Front St.

 Monroe, MI 48161

Typical Daily Schedule

**PM Session:**

2:30- St. Michael Students signed in

2:40-3:10- Shuttle arrives; St. John’s and St. Mary’s students signed in, students wash hands, snack is served

3:10-3:15- Daily announcements

3:15-5:30- Homework Club and Outdoor/Gym Play Time available

3:30-5:30- Choice Time: Art Activity, Group Board Games, Manipulatives Carpet, Dramatic Play Carpet, Gross Motor Play

5:30-5:45 Clean up

5:45-6:00 Group Big Game/Free Play Time

6:00- Close

**Full Days**- Each Full Day will have different special activities and events planned. Students will need to pack a lunch and beverage for the day. Snacks will still be provided. Close time will still be 6:00pm

Latchkey Policy Statement

**Billing and Membership Policies**

**Admissions Policy-** Child must be enrolled in MCES and be in Kindergarten through age 12. For admission to be granted, registration paper work (registration form, Medical/ Emergency forms and policy signature form) must be filed out completely and submitted, physical form and immunization record must be on file in the MCES offices, registration fee must be submitted, and any balance from previous years latchkey charges must be paid in full.

**Invoicing-** Bills are distributed to parents via email at the beginning of the month and must be paid by the due date of the month unless otherwise noted on the billing statements. It is the responsibility of parents to check their email for the bill during the first week of the month. It is a parent’s responsibility to tell the director if the bill was not received. A $25.00 late fee will be added to the next bill if it is not paid in full by the deadline specified on the invoice.

**Separate House-Hold Families-** MCES creates one invoice per family and will not separate charges for two parents. We will send a copy of the invoice to two separate email addresses and we are able to accept multiple payments per month from parents who wish to split the charges amongst themselves. However if one parent doesn’t pay their portion, the child’s membership may still be suspended. See Sign Out Policy regarding court orders prohibiting parent pick up.

**Membership Changes and Cancelations- Membership changes and cancellation requests must be submitted in writing by the due date of each month for the following month. The Full Day Membership may not be canceled.** If request is not made by the deadline, parents will be charged in full. For a request to be honored the family must also pay all outstanding charges in full. If outstanding charges are not paid, the membership cancelation or change request will not be granted and the account will continue to be charged based on the original contract. When requests are granted, no refund of fees already paid will be given. Should a family choose not to use care in June, no payments paid toward June will be refunded.

**Suspension of Membership**- MCES reserves the right to suspend a child’s membership due to non-payment by the set due date. Should MCES choose to suspend membership; the child will be unable to attend until all outstanding charges have been paid. During this time, the monthly contracted charges will continue to be billed along with late payment fees. See Discipline policy for more information on Disciplinary suspensions.

**Early Drop-off and Late Pick-up Fees-** Using the St. Michael clock, parents will be charged $1.00 for every minute a child is dropped off before 6:30AM and a $1 late pick-up fee for every minute after 6:00PM. If parents bring a child early, they risk having no supervision for him/her. No exceptions are made for bad weather days. It is parents’ responsibility to watch the weather and make appropriate arrangement for children to be picked up on time. As a courtesy, the staff will try to begin calling parents at 6:05PM if they have not arrived. In the event that neither parent can be reached by 6:15, the Emergency contact person will be called. A staff person will stay with every child until he/she is picked up. If an hour has elapsed and no one on the emergency list can be contacted, MCES will call the Michigan Department of Human Services.

**Refunds, Prorating, and Partial-Month Memberships-** There are no refunds for a child’s sick or personal vacation days, as well as snow or emergency days when the program may be cancelled. Partial month enrollment is not offered at the membership rates and will be charged at the per day Drop In rate.

**Drop-Ins-** Parents may drop off their children at or after 6:30 a.m. Once a child has been signed in for AM Care, they are considered in attendance and parents are required to pay for their care on that day. Any child dropped off prior to 7:30 a.m. (when students are allowed to report to their classrooms) will be charged for care on that day.

For PM Care, if a child checks in and is served snack, parents will be charged for that day, even if (s)he has attended in error. MCES will not be responsible for calling parents if a child attends on a day that is outside of the normal schedule. As a safety precaution, MCES will never send a child away if (s)he says (s)he is supposed to attend on that day.

**Account Audits-** All families who have made membership changes throughout the year or who registered after September, will have their account audited in May. The audit will take the number of days contracted and times that by the appropriate per day rate to determine the amount owed for the year. If that amount has not been covered, the difference will be charged and owed in May and/or June.

**Scheduling and Attendance Policies**

**Schedule Changes-** MCES requires notification of any change in a child’s schedule**. Parents must give notice both to Mrs. Welton and the child’s teacher when they wish to change a child’s schedule. These changes must be submitted in writing.**

**Routine Absences- Parents must notify Mrs. Welton when a child will not be in attendance** so no MCES Latchkey staff or teachers will have to search for them. If a child is routinely absent or at a special class on a specific day, parents must be sure to provide this information in writing so the child can be placed on a “no call” list.

**Sign-In/Out Procedures-** Parents are required to walk children inside and sign them in with the caregiver on duty. Parents are also required to come in and sign children out when picking up from PM Care. **The sign-in and sign-out sheets are legal documents. They must reflect the time and initials of the person who is bringing or taking the child; MCES is not responsible for the child before they are signed in or after they are signed out. A child cannot sign himself/herself in or out.** If a student is going to leave Latchkey to go to another event on school grounds, Latchkey staff cannot be responsible for telling the student when it is time to go to the event. If the parent cannot come to get the student, arrangements should be made with another parent or with the coach/leader of the group/team/class to come and sign the child out of Latchkey.

**Court Orders:** MCES is required, by law, to release children to either of their parents even if one of the parents is not the custodial parent. To deny a parent pick up, we must have a copy of a court order clarifying that said parent may not pick the child up.

**Authorized Adults-** Afternoon students are required to be signed out by a parent or authorized adult. Children will not be released to an unauthorized adult. Parents may list other authorized adults on the Registration Form/Emergency Contact Card, in the Notes from Parents section of the sign-in book, or notify us via email or phone. All adults will be asked to show photo ID when they pick up for the first time and each time thereafter until the Latchkey staff become familiar with each pick up person. Adults should bring in ID each time they pick up a child just in case it is requested. After a child is signed out they must remain supervised by the parent/adult who signed them out. They should not be left unattended in the building or on the playground.

**Call Ahead Policy-** Parents cannot “call ahead” to request that Latchkey staff have a child ready for pick-up, as it takes away from the supervision of groups of children to monitor one or two children who are getting ready to go.

**Inclement Weather/ Emergency Days-** MCES provides care on days when school is delayed or cancelled due to inclement weather. Students will need to pack and bring their own lunch. Depending on the situation, it may be necessary to cancel all programs at the St. Michael Campus. If programs are cancelled you will be notified through the School Reach System.

**Outdoor Play, Outerwear and Sunscreen Policies**

**Outdoor Play-** Outdoor play will be offered each day as long as weather and schedule permit. On occasion special events, school events, or playground maintenance may prevent the outdoor play option. Outdoor play will take place on the school playground and playground equipment after a basic walk around safety inspection by Latchkey staff. **According to R 400.8170, (19) School-age centers operating in school buildings approved by the Michigan department of education are exempt from subrule (11) of this rule, provided the licensee informs parents, in writing at the time of enrollment, if the center plans to use a public school’s outdoor play area and equipment that does not comply with this rule. We are not required to meet the same playground safety regulations that other licensed centers are required to meet, and therefore do not have the playground regularly inspected.** All play will be supervised by the latchkey staff and will remain in ratio while outside at all times.

**Outerwear-** Latchkey staff warns children of mud and puddles, but cannot keep children from getting dirty. If your child tends to be adventurous and goes in the mud, gets cold/wet easily or has bathroom accidents, please send extra clothes. Children are required to wear all outdoor clothing that they bring. If it is below 60 degrees, parents must send a coat with their children. If the Latchkey staff feels that a child’s clothing is not appropriate for the weather, they reserve the right to keep the child inside. If the temperature is at or above 60 degrees F., children will not be required to wear a coat. Outdoor play will not be allowed if the temperature is below 20 degrees F. Snow pants and boots are required for snow play. The Latchkey staff will attempt to remind children, but it is each child’s responsibility to wear the appropriate outerwear for recess.

**Sunscreen** - On hot days, Latchkey staff will apply sunscreen to children. Parents should provide sunscreen and notify staff if they wish for sunscreen to be applied.

**Food and Health Policies**

**Food Policy-** Snack will be provided each day, activities will occasionally be planned which include food, and unless written notice is given to the contrary; children will be allowed to eat this food. Latchkey staff also provides prizes in the form of small toys, school supplies and candy for occasional games and contests. Parents should notify the staff if they prefer to have children receive only non-food items.

**Food Allergies-** If a child has a food allergy, Latchkey staff must be notified. MCES makes every effort to provide nut free snack, but **cannot** 100% guarantee that food will be free of any ingredient. For this reason, any child with a severe food allergy should bring their own snack each day.

**Allergies and Medical Conditions-** Parents must notify the director and staff of any severe allergies or life threatening medical conditions their child may have and have planned for special emergency measures. If a child has a severe allergy that may necessitate immediate emergency medication, medications must be provided as instructed below. If your child requires an epipen, please make sure one is given to the latchkey staff to be kept on hand during latchkey.

Parents are responsible for any medical/dental emergency treatment that a child might need. By agreeing to the MCES Food and Health Policies, parents give permission to MCES to secure any emergency care deemed necessary or advisable including emergency medical transport. Parents will be responsible for any and all costs associated with medical care or emergency transportation.

**Medication-** If a child needs medication while attending Latchkey, prescriptions must be in the original container with the pharmacy label which must include physician’s name, child’s name, instructions, name and strength of medication. Non-prescriptions must be provided in the original package. A medication form must be completed. Parents must make sure that the medication is sufficient in quantity, properly identified, current and available with special instructions, especially for full days. Latchkey staff must follow label instructions unless a physician's written instructions say otherwise. Latchkey staff will try to help parents to distribute medicine; however, our first obligation is to the entire group of children. Staff may be unable to dispense on schedule or at all. Any medicine distributed is done without liability.

**Change in Condition-** Parents must notify MCES Latchkey in writing if a child begins a new medication, or discontinues use of any current medication, has any medical procedure or medical situation that will create any physical or emotional limitations or has had any other physical or emotional change that would affect ability, limitations, or behavior.

**Contagious Illness-** Any child that does not attend school due to illness may not attend Latchkey that day. Parents must notify MCES if their child has a contagious illness. Any child with evidence of lice must be treated and verified to be lice-free prior to returning to the program. Families will not be reimbursed for days missed due to contagious illness.

**Children Illness/injury during Latchkey-** Parents will be notified if their child seems ill or health changes are perceived, or if they have an accident or injury. A child too ill to remain with the group will be supervised in a separate area until parents arrive. If staff feels it may be necessary or if parents request, emergency services will be called and child may be transported to the hospital by ambulance.

**Cleaning and Sanitizing-** To help prevent spread of infection, illness or germs in general, staff sanitizes toy bins after each use, vacuums rugs daily, requires children to wash hands before eating, and requires staff to stay home anytime they are ill. The school custodial staff cleans and sanitizes daily.

**Discipline, Property Damage and Liability Policies**

**Discipline-** Children and families must adhere to the discipline policy of Monroe Catholic Elementary Schools and children must treat people and property with respect. Every child must stay with the staff in the area designated and will not leave designated areas without permission. Latchkey staff will discuss inappropriate behavior with students and repeated behaviors will be handled by the onsite Director. Discipline methods will have positive focus centered on Self-control, Self-direction. Self-esteem and Cooperation and will always be age appropriate. The following forms of Discipline by staff members is prohibited: Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, corporal punishment, restricting child’s movement by binding or tying; inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming or threatening; depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or toilet use; confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle. The Director will work with staff, parents, and children to set up an environment that best suits the child as well as to set up reasonable behavior expectations for the child. Every effort and intervention will be utilized by the staff for problem-solving; however, if a child has consistently disruptive or threatening behavior, or if (s)he behaves in a dangerous manner, or injures another child, (s)he may be suspended from the program for at least one day. In extreme cases, the child will be removed from the program completely. No refund will be given for such suspensions or terminations. Also, any parent that acts in an extremely offensive or abusive way toward children, or staff will be subject to a suspension or termination from the MCES Latchkey program as determined by the Director and MCES Executive Director.

**Personal Items-** MCES is not responsible for the loss or damage to toys or personal items that are brought to the program. Children can only bring toys on full days and are responsible for their care.

**Photos and Recordings-** Children may be photographed and/or video-taped for display and promotion of the program and activities at Latchkey. If parents do not want their children to be photographed or videotaped, they must inform MCES in writing.

**Mandatory Abuse/Neglect Reporting-** MCES staff is required, by law, to notify Child Protective Services when they observe evidence of or suspect abuse or neglect. If no one arrives to pick a child up at the end of program and no one on the child’s emergency card can be contacted within one hour of closing time, child protective services will be contacted and the child will be turned over to their care.

**Liability-** The school, director, or staff will not be held liable for any problem or injury that may arise during the program.

**Damages-** Parents take full responsibility for any damage or injury to person or property caused by their child. Parents agree to pay the replacement cost as assessed by the Director and/or the MCES Executive Director.

**Communication/Parent Concerns/ Open Door Visiting**

**Communication with School Personnel-** Parents agree to allow Latchkey staff and MCES School personnel to communicate about students relating to discipline, special needs, special circumstances, educational needs, social concerns, or any other issue that either party may deem is in the best interest of the student.

**Homework-** MCES Latchkey offers Homework club most days. A Staff person will be available to assist, to the best of their ability, with homework questions. Latchkey does not offer one on one tutoring and cannot work one on one with students on entire homework assignments. We are happy to make a list of children whose parents prefer that Homework be done before outside play so we can remind the children. But it is the child’s responsibility to attend and complete the homework. We do not check children’s homework for accuracy (unless the child asks us to), check their back packs, etc… If we have a special event planned, it is possible that homework time will not be available.

**Open Door-** Parents are always welcome to come to Latchkey to observe their child’s care, take part in activities, and spend time with the staff. We also welcome all parent input. Parents are welcome to speak with our staff, or Director about anything, be it concerns, questions, recommendations, or new ideas. Our relationship with parents is valued greatly by all of our staff.

**Classroom Entry**- Children may not enter their school classrooms unless their classroom teacher is in the room. For this reason, we will not allow children to go to their classrooms before school or return to them after school unless the teacher requests this. The school custodial staff is not authorized to allow parents or students into classroom.

**Parking-** Parents should park and pick-up at the back parking lot doors.

**Shuttle-** All students attending St. John’s or St. Mary’s will need to fill out and return a Shuttle Bus Request form. Students will be transported using the shuttle bus from their home campus to St. Mike’s for latchkey.

**MCES Parent/Guardian Handbook Agreement**

I acknowledge that I have read the policies and information contained in the Monroe Catholic Elementary Schools Early Childhood Handbook. I understand the contents therein are part of a cooperative agreement between parents and school to ensure a quality education and care for my child.

I agree to share the information found in this handbook with those who play a role in my child’s experience at MCES.

Please sign and date this form and return it to the school office.

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(Child’s Name)

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(Parent Printed Name) (Parent Signature)

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(Parent Printed Name) (Parent Signature)

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(Date Signed)