



2024-2025

Parent Handbook

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Mission Statement

St. John the Baptist Mother's Day Out provides a safe, nurturing, Christ-centered environment focusing on Catholic-Christian values where each child can grow and develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually, and socially.

Purpose and Philosophy

The Mother's Day Out program at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church is a ministry of the church to children and their parents. We will provide the highest quality, Christ-centered care for your child. We welcome you to our program and appreciate your confidence in us.

The staff at MDO strives to provide the highest quality of an educational program with each child's developmental needs in mind. We would like to give each child the opportunity to grow and learn at his or her own pace the way that God created him or her.

Each child will go through a somewhat predictable path of development – physical, emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual. In this way, each child is like every other child. However, every child has a pattern of growth unique to him or herself. In this way, each child is different from every other child.

We cannot produce, speedup or ignore readiness. When children are ready and only then, will they walk, talk, read and perform other academic and physical functions with ease.

In planning our program, we look at where the child is now, not where we think he/she should be.

Parents: Please read this entire handout. It is very important that you understand and agree to follow all MDO policies and procedures at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. Please sign the parent agreement form and return it to your child's classroom the first week of school.

Parent Expectations:

- Please read all of the information contained in this handbook and make sure you understand all policies and procedures. If you have any questions regarding policies, please contact the director.
- Always speak to your child's teacher(s) when you drop off and pick up your child, acknowledging you have arrived and are leaving.
- Sign your child in and out daily on the attendance log provided in your child's classroom.
- Parents are expected to maintain accurate records regarding their address, phone numbers, emergency information, immunizations, etc. for the safety and well-being of their child. Parents should notify the director immediately of any changes that need to be made.
- Email will be the primary mode of communication between MDO and parents.

- Parents are expected to inform their child's teacher of any special circumstances that may contribute to the child's behavior.
- Do not send your child to class with gum, money, personal items, toys or toy weapons.
- Parents are expected to inspect their child's bag/cubby DAILY for important papers and information sent home by teachers and administration.

Staff Requirements:

Staff members at St. John the Baptist MDO are required to display the following personal and professional qualifications:

- Demonstrate enthusiasm for working with young children
- Experience working with young children
- Good physical and mental health
- Desire to share God's love, truth and word with our children
- Respect for adults and children, promote positive relationships with children and adults

*CPR and First Aid Training is provided for all MDO staff.

Program Policy and Procedures

Enrollment

Enrollment is open to children 18 months of age through four years of age, provided our program can meet his or her needs. Children are enrolled for the school year on a first come, first served basis.

Documents required for registration include:

- Completed Registration Form
- Current Immunization Records from your child's physician

Registration fees are due annually for children registering in our program. Fees are \$150 per person and are non-refundable.

To best serve your children, we are committed to having low teacher to child ratios. Because of this, enrollment is limited so teachers can better meet the needs of individual children.

Application for Enrollment

Application for enrollment of children will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. However, priority will be given as follows:

1. Current families and their siblings
2. St. John the Baptist Church members
3. New Families

Children with Special Needs

Prior to enrollment, parents should inform the director of any special needs their child may have in order that we may assess whether or not our staff, program and/or facilities can accommodate the special needs. We would, however, like to accommodate as many children as possible, so the applications will be considered on a case by case basis to determine if our program is a good fit for both the child and teacher. If the MDO administration determines we cannot meet the needs of the child seeking admission or an enrolled child develops a special need that we are unable to meet, a notification will be sent for a meeting with the parents. In the event a child is asked to withdraw because of special needs, the registration fee will be refunded.

Monthly Tuition

2-Day week program

Parishioner Fee	\$175 per month
Non-Parishioner Fee	\$185 per month
Additional Children	\$10 per month discount for any additional child registered

3-Day week program

Parishioner Fee	\$240 per month
Non-Parishioner Fee	\$250 per month
Additional Children	\$10 per month discount for any additional child registered

Registration Fee of \$150 will be collected with the Registration Form. Supply Fee will be collected the first week of the MDO school year \$50.00 (1-3 yr old) \$60.00 (4 yr old).

Monthly tuition is due by the FIRST of the month and considered late after the 5th of the month.

A monthly envelope will be given to parents in their child's cubby. Payments may be placed in the tuition box located in each classroom. **Tuition plus late charges not paid by the 15th of the current month will result in the child's place being forfeited.** Monthly tuition remains the same for each month, with no deductions for absences, vacations, illness, holidays or program closure.

Late Fees

- Tuition – After the 5th day tuition is late, a charge of \$10.00 per child will apply.
- Late Child Pick Up – A late fee will be charged if a child is picked up after 1:00pm. A fee of \$10.00 will be charged for any portion of the first 10-minute period overtime, in addition to \$1.00 per minute thereafter.

Withdrawals and Schedule Changes

During the school year, a two week notice is required for withdrawals from the program. Payment is required for the two week notice and your child may attend school during this time. Please inform the director if you plan to withdraw.

Dismissals

A child may be dismissed from MDO if:

1. A problem continues which negatively affects other children
2. Tuition and payments are delinquent
3. Failure to meet SJB MDO policies and procedures

Health – Illness and Medication

We have established policies to minimize risks, and we expect and appreciate your full cooperation in compliance with the following.

If your child has shown signs of any of the following within the last 24 hours, they may NOT attend school:

- **Fever (99.4 or higher) without fever reducing medication**
- **Cold**
- **Heavy nasal drainage (discolored)**
- **Vomiting**
- **Diarrhea**
- **Sore Throat**
- **Skin Rash**
- **Earache**
- **Eye Discharge (white or yellow)**
- **Head Lice**
- **Unusual behavior or lethargic**
- **Symptoms of any Communicable disease**

Returning to School

- The decision on when a child may return to school lies solely with the MDO administration and not with a family, a physician or a pediatrician.
- Our illness policy requires a minimum of 24-hours symptom free; however, given the onset of sickness and/or the nature of the illness, more than 24-hours symptom free may be required before a child can return to school.
- For questions as to when your child may return to school following a specific illness, please contact our director.

If a child becomes ill at MDO

-Parents will be called to pick up their child promptly. Children must be picked up within 30 minutes of parents receiving notification. Please have current phone numbers on file with our office. Parents must be able to be reached at any time during the MDO school day.

-Sick children will not remain in their class. Children will wait with the MDO director outside of the classroom (Director's Office) until parents arrive.

Communicable Diseases: Parents are required to notify the director of any communicable disease your child has, such as the flu, Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease, chicken pox, measles, mumps, etc. You will be informed of any known cases of communicable diseases experienced by any of the children or teachers in your child's class.

Medication: SJB MDO will not give medication. Please do not ask a teacher to administer any medication to your child. A parent may give a teacher standing authorization for up to 9 months to apply over-the-counter diapering creams to a child when needed. The authorization shall be in writing. See the director for more information.

Arrival, Departure and Parking

Operating Hours: 9:00am – 1:00pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

Arrival: Children can arrive starting at 8:50 am. There are no provisions for earlier arrival. Families are welcome to play outside until class begins if you arrive earlier than 8:50 am.

Departure: Children must be picked up by 1:00pm. A late fee will be charged if a child is picked up after 1:00pm. A fee of \$10.00 will be charged for any portion of the first 10-minute period overtime, in addition to \$1.00 per minute after.

***Children will only be allowed to leave with those persons listed and authorized by parents on registration forms.**

Cell Phones

Please refrain from using your cell phones in our MDO hallways and classrooms at pick up and drop off times. Teachers may need to visit with you briefly about your child at this time.

Entrance to Building

For the protection of our students and teachers, doors will remain locked at all times. At normal drop off and pick up times, a faculty member will unlock the door. If you are dropping your child off late or picking him or her up early, you will need to call the director to be let into the building. If you are picking your child up early, we ask that the director go into the classroom to get the child because the other children do not know the time and will begin to think that their parents are coming to get them at this time also.

Lunch and Snacks

Snacks will be provided by MDO. Parents are responsible for providing their child's lunch and a water bottle filled with beverage of their choice. Lunch should be packed in a lunch box or container with a "cold pack." All foods must be ready to serve, cut into bite size pieces for your child's age. Grapes and other foods with choking hazards should be cut to be served to the child. We are not equipped to heat meals.

You will be notified if there is a nut allergy in your class. If a class has a nut allergy, NO NUTS will be served in that classroom. ****Please let the teachers and director know of any food allergies.****

Please make sure all children have plastic containers and silverware for their lunches. If bringing fast food for lunch, please remove it from the packaging and place it in plastic containers.

Birthday Celebrations at MDO

Children love to celebrate birthdays at school, as it is a memorable time to share with their teachers and friends. We can't wait to celebrate your child's special day! Teachers will have a special sticker or hat for your child to wear on their birthday. We will also sing "Happy Birthday" during lunch. We want to promote a healthy, safe environment for all our children, so please follow these guidelines when celebrating your child's birthday.

- You are welcome to bring a treat for your child's birthday – it may be edible or non-edible.
- You must arrange a date in advance with your child's teachers when bringing treats to the class. Please do not show up the morning of with a treat unless that is the prearranged date with the teacher.

- Birthday celebrations take place at snack time. Be sure to have your child's birthday treat here at drop off.
- Edible treat ideas: cookies or mini cupcakes
- If you do not wish for your child to eat birthday treats sent to MDO, please let your child's teacher know. You may either send another treat of your choice to have on hand to substitute (i.e. cookies) or we can give them another snack.
- No party favor bags.
- Invitations to birthday parties may be passed out at MDO when the ENTIRE class is invited. We can't just "slip it into a backpack or cubby of certain children."

Clothing and Shoes

Children should wear comfortable clothing suitable for indoor and outdoor playing, and clothing should be free of complicated fastenings. Please label all outer garments such as coats, hats and gloves. Children wearing diapers should wear disposable diapers while they are attending our program. Please bring a complete and labeled change of clothes and diapers to be left in the room at all times in case of an accident. Please be conscious of the change of weather and the growth of your child and make changes as needed. Children who are not potty trained should bring diapers to stay in the classroom.

Children are often running, climbing and playing on playgrounds, riding bikes, building with blocks and much more throughout their day at MDO. All children are required to wear shoes while at MDO. Shoes should be comfortable and provide protection for children's feet during indoor and outdoor play. Shoes must be **closed toe**. Shoes are to be fastened, buckled or tied to remain on your child's foot. The following types of shoes may not be worn: flip-flops, flats, open-toe sandals, crocs, jelly shoes, etc. as they can present safety hazards. Boot: rain boots or cowboy/cowgirl boots may not be worn. Boots with soft rubber soles that remain securely on your child's foot and allow for safe play may be worn. If your child wishes to wear rain boots into MDO, parents must change their child's shoes prior to dropping them off to MDO. Parents please do NOT ask teachers to change your child's shoes.

Diapers Toys and Personal Items

Each child not potty trained, will be required to either purchase a case of fragrance free wipes or two packs of latex gloves one time during the year. A schedule will be sent home. Parents will also provide diapers from home. If your child is in pull-ups, please provide the pull-ups with velcro sides.

Please leave your child's toys at home or in your car. Each room is supplied with age-appropriate toys. A teacher may ask your child to bring items for show and tell, nature activities or special days. Guns, knives and other play weapons are not allowed.

Parent Involvement

We welcome parents to our program and encourage parents to become involved in our program by assisting with special activities. Please talk to your teacher or the director on ways you may become involved. Please remember that children often have difficulty when parents are seen or nearby. For that reason, we ask that you please not visit classrooms during operational hours without visiting with your child's teachers and/or director first.

Monthly Wrap-up

Since this is mostly a child-directed learning environment, at the end of each month, a weekly wrap up will be provided to inform parents of skills addressed. This will allow parents to know the skills taught each month and reiterate them throughout the next month.

Discipline

Understanding that each child is loved by God and made in His image, we view discipline as a process of developing appropriate behaviors. Discipline is not punishment, but a form of constructive guidance. It is our policy to discipline children in a loving and gentle way. We practice indirect guidance technique(s); and non-physical methods such as talking with the child, redirection and time out. If a discipline problem continues, a parent conference will be held. If the problem persists, the child may have to be removed from our program.

Indirect Guidance techniques used are:

- Inviting room arrangements and stimulating classroom activities.
- Regular routines and schedules used daily.
- Warnings will be provided in advance. "You have five more minutes to play before it's time to clean up."
- Choices will be offered when appropriate. "You may play in the block center or read a book."
- Acceptable behavior is encouraged by verbal praise to reinforce the child's appropriate behavior and serve as an example for other children.

Discipline and Guidance must be:

- Individualized to meet the child's needs.
- Consistent for each child.
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Directed towards teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

In general, the following Discipline and Guidance Policy is used at our program. Again, each child and each behavior situation is unique and taken into consideration.

Discipline and Guidance:

- Talk with the child, reinforcing positive behavior and clearly stating the behavior expected.
- Redirect, redirect, redirect the child from the problem.
- Removal from the group for a short period of time. Time-out is brief (generally one minute per year of age) and appropriate to the circumstances.
- Visit to the Director's Office
- Call parent/conference

No physical discipline of any form is ever used in our program.

If there is a recurrent behavioral problem, parents and MDO staff will consult to discuss what disciplinary measures have been effective in the home and how we can move forward together to reach the desired goal.

In an absolute last resort, a parent will be asked to remove a child from the program if uncontrollable behaviors persist and all of the above approaches have been exhausted with no improvement.

Biting Policy

One of our primary goals is to provide a safe and loving environment for our children. When a biting incident occurs, there are many upset feelings. When it does occur, we take it very seriously and try to find the reason why the child bit and try to extinguish the behavior as quickly as possible and assist in developing positive social skills.

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. They are in the process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not. Toddlers bite other toddlers for many different reasons including teething, overly tired and frustrated and experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or their peers. Toddlers have poor verbal skills and are impulsive without a lot of self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. The program will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will maintain a close and constant supervision of the children at all times.

The program's biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs. Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

For the child who is bitten:

1. The bitten child will be separated from the child who bit and will be comforted.
2. Appropriate first aid will be administered.
3. An incident report will be completed (in writing).

For the child who bites:

1. Staff will remove the child who bit from the situation, telling the child firmly words such as these: “No biting, that hurts.” “We don’t bite people.”
2. Staff will stay calm and not overreact.
3. The child will be talked to on a level that the child may understand. “I see you want the truck. You may not bite. Let’s find another toy.”
4. The child will be redirected to another object or play area.
5. Parents will be notified via phone call that their child has been bitten at school.
6. If a child bites 2 times on any one day then the child will be sent home for the remainder of that day.
7. If a child is sent home due to biting or biting is occurring frequently, a conference with the teacher, parents and director will be called to further assess the concern and work together jointly in developing a strategy for change.

To minimize biting, our staff will:

1. Shadow the child who is biting so that he or she is near the providers, attempting to prevent biting before it occurs.
2. Provide lots of language such as “biting hurts” and “We use our teeth for food.”
3. Provide supportive information to parents who are worried about their child biting and offer information on how to stop the biting habit.

If the persistent biting continues, further steps to ensure the safety of the children in our care may be necessary, including removal of the child from our program during the stage of biting. This measure will only be used as a last resort and after working collaboratively with parents to resolve the matter.

Curriculum

Our teachers use developmentally based activities that are mostly child initiated while teacher’s facilitate their learning. Teacher directed activities are also incorporated when necessary. Your child’s teachers will provide you with more information specific to your child’s class and activities.

Religion

We will gather weekly for a religion lesson in all classes. This will be specific to the liturgical season or to a Saint that we will learn about. Sometimes, we will read a story to learn about people/events or we’ll do an activity. Each class will also have a monthly/bi-monthly bible verse that will be taught and rehearsed daily.

Abuse and Neglect

We are all considered mandated reporters, so all staff will report any suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the attention of the director. If necessary, the director will report the suspected case to the local child protection agency.

Emergency Plans

Emergency plans for fire and tornado are in place. Teachers are aware and knowledgeable on all emergency protocols and evacuation routes. All children will be evacuated to the front parking lot in the event of a fire.

School Closing: Including Severe Weather

Our MDO will loosely follow the West Baton Rouge Parish public school holiday and closure schedule. When WBRP is closed for severe weather, MDO will be closed. However, under certain severe conditions such as facility crisis (i.e. loss of water or power) or inclement weather, the director in conjunction with the parish priest, may close the program for the protection of the children and staff.

Complaints and Grievances

In the event a problem or misunderstanding arises, the parent should attempt to resolve the issue through discussion with the staff member involved. If the parent is unable to resolve the issue in this manner, he/she should contact the director. If there is still a concern, the problem will be brought to the parish priest.

2024-2025 Parent Agreement

Parents: Please read the following statements carefully and sign below to indicate your agreement:

I hereby affirm that I have read the St. John the Baptist Mother's Day Out Handbook. I consent to and will operate in agreement with all policies and procedures. If I have any questions, I will contact the director.

I understand that the services of the school are engaged by mutual consent, and that either the school or I reserve the right to terminate any or all services at any time. I understand I am required to give a two week paid notice of any withdrawals or schedule changes in writing to the director, as stated in the handbook. I also understand this Handbook does not contractually bind St. John the Baptist Mother's Day Out and is subject to change without notice by the decision of the parish.

Child/Children's Name(s): _____

Signature of Legal Guardian _____ Date _____