

MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. DAVID'S EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL

The mission of St. David's Episcopal Day School is to provide our children with loving and enriching programs which meet their needs at each developmental level. All programs are set within the St. David's Episcopal Church tradition.

Episcopal Identity

Adopted from the National Association of Episcopal Schools' "Principal qualities that distinguish a school as Episcopal" As embodiments of Christian faith, Episcopal schools are created to be communities that honor, celebrate and worship God as the center of life. They are created as models of God's love and grace.

They are created to serve God in Christ in all persons, regardless of origin, background, ability, or religion. They are created to "strive for justice and peace among all people and [to] respect the dignity of every human being." Episcopal schools seek to integrate religious and spiritual formation into the overall curriculum and life of the school community. They are clear, yet graceful, about how they articulate and express their basic identities, especially in their religious curricula and traditions. They invite all who attend and work in them – Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians, Christians, and non-Christians, people of no faith tradition – both to seek clarity about their own beliefs and religions and to honor those traditions more fully and faithfully in their own lives. Episcopal schools exist not merely to educate, but to demonstrate and proclaim the unique worth and beauty of all human beings as creations of a loving, and empowering God. By weaving these principles into the very fabric of school life, Episcopal schools are built on the foundation of a Christian love that guides and challenges all who attend to build lives of genuine meaning, purpose and service in the world they will inherit.

PHILOSOPHY

At St. David's Episcopal Day School, we recognize our students reflect a range of learning styles. In accordance with developmentally appropriate practices, outlined in the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) rigorous standards, we try to adapt our methods to each child's unique learning needs. We also believe in play-based learning, which means children learn about science and math through discovery and develop language skills, social skills, self-help skills, fine and gross motor skills through meaningful play activities.

HISTORY

St. David's Episcopal Day School opened its doors in 1997 as a Mother's Day Out program and has since grown to be accredited by the highly regarded National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We teach and care for children 18 months through Pre-K 5 following NAEYC approved techniques on early childhood development. Our stellar teachers and low teacher/student ratio enable children to learn, play and make friends in a safe, nurturing and structured environment.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Rector:

The Rector of St. David's Episcopal Church ultimately oversees St. David's Episcopal Day School.

Board of Directors:

The school is governed by a Board of Directors. This Board oversees school policy and finance.

Head of School:

The Head of School (Director) reports to the Rector and Board of Directors. The Head of School is responsible for the school's daily operations, curriculum development, faculty and staff.

Assistant Director:

This position reports to the Head of School. The Assistant Director is responsible for fiscal and operational duties as assigned by the Head of School in compliance with the Assistant Director job description. This position acts as Director in the Head of School's absence.

Lead Teacher:

The Lead Teacher reports to the Head of School. The Lead Teacher is responsible for the daily operations of their assigned class as stated in this job description.

Teacher Assistant:

This position reports to the Lead Teacher in their assigned class and ultimately to the Head of School. The Assistant Teacher is responsible for classroom operations within the scope of the job description as assigned by the Lead Teacher.

Admissions Policy

SDDS, a Texas non-profit 501(c)(3) Organization, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability. SDDS considers all applicants equally and fairly.

To be enrolled in the PreK class your child must be potty trained by the first day of the school year.

Application Process

Apply for admission on our website, stdavidsdayschool.org . Once an application is submitted, a tuition contract is issued as space allows. A non-refundable enrollment fee is due at that time to complete the enrollment process. All families with children on our enrollment list will be invited to reapply each year. When more families request placement in a class than we can accommodate, currently enrolled students are given enrollment priority, followed by children with siblings currently enrolled at SDDS, followed by members of St. David's Church. Prompt return of the application, tuition contract, and enrollment fee is required to reserve your child's place.

Wait list

Children will be placed on the waitlist when a classroom has reached capacity. Waitlist enrollment will follow the same guidelines as open enrollment. The fee to be placed on the waitlist is \$50 (nonrefundable). The fee is charged per semester to remain on the wait list.

Required Documentation

SDDS is licensed as a childcare center by the State of Texas. Childcare licensing REQUIRES records of children to be maintained by our school. Documentation includes:

- Signed statement from a physician indicating a child is fit to participate in school (**required annually**)
- Required immunizations or signed affidavit of exemption (**required annually**)
- **Complete** application on file
- Signed medical waiver
- Photo waiver
- Emergency contact information

To be enrolled at SDDS students MUST have this documentation provided prior to the first day of regular classes. When a child is overdue for routine health services evidence must be provided of an appointment for those services before a child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program. Families must provide an affidavit to be exempt from immunizations for religious or philosophical reasons. Under immunized children may be excluded from care if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs to which children are susceptible or other pertinent conditions exist. For additional information regarding immunizations, visit the [Texas Department of State Health Services and Human Services](http://www.dhs.texas.gov) website.

Payment of Tuition

Tuition can be remitted by utilizing Brightwheel's online billing. Monthly payments are managed through Brightwheel only.

There is a service fee when using a credit card. For more information regarding Brightwheel, visit the school website. There is no credit given or schedule changes offered for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather or acts of God.

Withdrawal

Once a tuition contract is signed and returned, families are obligated to fulfill the financial obligations of said contract. If a family wishes to withdraw a child, for any reason, notification must be given to the Head of School in writing with 30 days notice.

Communication

Families receive communication from the Head of School and teachers via Brightwheel electronically and in written form. Your child's teacher will keep you informed of general classroom happenings daily.

SDDS allows families to add grandparents or other caregivers to class communication through Brightwheel. The school calendar as well as handbooks, policies, and guidelines are available on the school website and Brightwheel.

Concerns and Conflict Resolution

Teachers are the first level of contact in issues regarding classroom happenings and individual needs. The Head of School should be contacted only after discussion in good faith with the classroom teacher. Generally, conferences on these levels are successful if all parties concerned are consistently open, honest, and maintain a high level of good faith in their intentions. Every effort should be made by each party to come to a resolution at this level.

Conferences

Teachers will offer conferences with families twice a year. Written assessments will be provided at that time. Teachers are available for additional conversations and informal conferences; those can be held with teachers at any time throughout the year.

Discipline

Discipline will be individualized and consistent for each child; appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements
- Using brief supervised separation away from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development

There must be no harsh, cruel or unusual treatment of any child.

The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment; Punishment associated with food, withholding or threatening to withhold food; naps or toilet training; Pinching, shaking or biting a child; Hitting a child with a hand or instrument; Putting anything in or on a child's mouth; Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child; Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language; Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age. (Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance)

SDDS employees receive training regarding the prevention and signs of child abuse. If parents have concerns that a child is being abused, it should be reported to the [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services](#) at 1-800-252-5400.

Drop Off

Drop off and pick up locations are assigned for each class. Children must be signed in via Brightwheel by the individual who is dropping them off.

A daily health check for each child will be conducted upon the student's arrival at school. The caregiver will observe the child's general mood and behavior, as well as look for any signs/symptoms of disease, including, but not limited to severe coughing, sneezing, breathing difficulty, skin rashes, spots, swelling, bruising, or elevated body temperature.

Children will then wash their hands upon entering classrooms.

Drop off is a busy me of day for teachers, please refrain from engaging them in prolonged conversations during this me period unless it is an emergency. Their focus needs to be on their students. If necessary, ask the teacher to contact you in private after the school day.

If your child finds morning drop off difficult, please communicate with your child's teacher. Their arrival process might be altered to accommodate their specific needs.

Drop off begins at 7:30. There is no designated drop off time, but to make the most of your child's education and experience at SDDS **please arrive by 10am.** Drop off during nap time is not permitted, unless previously arranged with the Head of School.

Pick Up

Children wait with their teachers and classmates until handed off to parents by SDDS staff members. This ensures proper child headcounts and safety. Pick up is a busy time of day for teachers, please refrain from engaging them in lengthy conversations during this me period so their focus can be on their students. If necessary, ask the teacher to contact you in private later. Children must be signed out via Brightwheel by the individual who is picking them up.

Playdates/Carpool/Alternate Pick

If your child will be leaving SDDS with someone other than who is listed on your authorized pickup list, please notify the office via email or Brightwheel. SDDS will ask for picture identification of persons on campus who are unfamiliar to staff.

Late Pick-Up

If your child is registered for just the school day, which ends at 3:30, you have a grace period until 4pm to pick them up. If you arrive after 4pm, you will be charged a late fee of \$1/minute after the first 5 minutes. Consistently late pick-ups can result in additional fees. If your child is enrolled in the extended day program, pick up ends at 5:30pm. Late fees will apply after the first 5 minutes and consistently late pick-ups will result in additional fees. Please call the office (512) 610-3534 or message through Brightwheel if you will be arriving late.

Absences

SDDS does not have a formal attendance policy. We strongly encourage consistent attendance to foster a child's sense of belonging and bonding with their peers and teachers, in addition to getting the best experience at SDDS. Please keep your child's teacher informed of possible absences, late arrivals, or early dismissals. If your child is ill, please notify your child's teacher via Brightwheel.

Students are allowed to attend on their contracted days only. Any absences cannot be made up on non-contracted days.

Accidents at School

All classrooms contain first aid kits. Minor scrapes and bruises will be treated at school and parents will be notified via Brightwheel. An incident report may be filled out and sent to the parent via their child's feed on Brightwheel.

If an accident requires more attention than the school can provide, parents will be contacted immediately. If necessary, 911 will be contacted. In the event a parent cannot be reached, the school will contact the emergency contacts in the student's file. All children attending SDDS are covered by a general accident insurance policy during school hours.

Illness Policy

Caregivers must work together to maintain a healthy and safe environment for the school. Please keep your child at home if he or she has any of the following: evidence of a cold (consistent cough, constant runny nose); a temperature of 100 degrees or more; an upset stomach (this includes vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours); evidence of any contagious disease; unidentified rash. We reserve the right to send a child home at our discretion; children who develop any of these symptoms during the day will be sent

home. Children too ill to play outside need to be kept at home. If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious virus or disease, please let the school know immediately.

Allergies, Medications, and other Medically Diagnosed Conditions

Each child with a known medical condition that has been diagnosed by a healthcare professional, such as a food allergy, seizure disorder, asthma, or diabetes, and those requiring the use of an epinephrine auto injector (EpiPen), must have a medical emergency plan on file with the school. A copy of the plan will be available in their classroom and in the child's file.

In addition, a list of all children with known conditions will be available in each classroom but kept confidential.

Staff may administer medicine following guidelines set by HHSC childcare licensing. This is only at the request of the parent or guardian and requires written instructions, as well as medication in the original and labeled container. Children are not allowed to administer their own medication while at school and it is strongly recommended that medications not be administered at school unless necessary.

Sunblock and bug sprays should be applied prior to school drop off.

Challenging Behaviors

Teachers will address challenging behaviors using positive support strategies. When behaviors such as biting or causing injury to a classmate persist past one incident, the parent might be required to pick up the child from school immediately. With additional incidents, parents and teachers will conference to establish solutions which could include professional intervention.

When a pattern of behavior persists that endangers self, others or property, or significantly disrupts the program, we will work with the child's family to find solutions, up to and including referral for outside services or exclusion from the SDDS program. Exclusion will always be a last resort, after all other possible interventions have been exhausted and it is in the best interest of the child. In that circumstance, the program will work with the family in accessing services and, as able, securing an alternative placement. Our actions will comply with federal and state civil rights laws.

Chapel

Students attend a simple chapel service twice a week in the church sanctuary. Parents are encouraged to attend but please check in with the front desk.

Meals and Nutrition

Children must bring a **reusable** water bottle, lunch, and at least two snacks each day. The school will only provide Cheerios or applesauce when lunches or snacks are forgotten. We will not provide your child with any other food without permission. We are a nut free school.

SDDS strongly encourages healthy eating habits. Please leave candy, fast food, sports drinks, soda, chips, etc. at home. Special treats at school will be reserved for birthdays, parties, and special occasions only.

We are not able to heat up or refrigerate any drinks, snacks, or meals.

Communicable Diseases and Environmental Hazards

St. David's Episcopal Day School will notify parents if children have been exposed to a communicable disease or environmental hazard following the guidelines provided by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission and the Travis County Health Department.

Custody, Separation, and/or Divorce Issues

St. David's Episcopal Day School recognizes that families can be thrown into crisis because of separation or divorce. Teachers and staff will respond with compassion and discretion, and work to maintain a safe, loving, and consistent environment for your child at school. Each case is unique, so the specifics of each family's situation should be discussed with the classroom teacher and the Head of School. SDDS will require divorced and/or separated parents to provide unaltered certified copies of the current court order or decree relating to the custody/conservatorship of the child.

Distracting Objects/What to Leave at Home

Bringing toys and unessential items to school is strongly discouraged, as these things can easily get lost. Please follow your teacher's guidelines regarding acceptable items permitted in their classroom. No toy guns, knives, or other war toys are allowed at school. Weapons, drugs, and alcohol are not allowed. Electronic devices of any kind are not allowed.

Donations

St. David's Episcopal Day School accepts gifts that are consistent with its mission. Donations will generally be accepted from individuals, partnerships, corporations, foundations, government agencies, or other entities, without limitations. During its regular fundraising activities, SDDS will accept donations of money and in-kind services. Certain types of gifts must be reviewed prior to acceptance due to the special liabilities they may pose for SDDS.

By signing this enrollment contract, parents and students in the school community agree to abide by all terms of this handbook. The school reserves the right to supplement or modify the terms of this handbook at the sole discretion of the Head of School, with or without prior notice to parents and/or students.

Printed Name _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student's Name: _____

Please sign and return this page to the school office.