

*Assumption Parish  
Schools*



*Rooted in Faith,  
Growing in Grace*

## **ASSUMPTION EARLY LEARNING CENTER PHILOSOPHY**

We believe that when children are given the necessary components for learning that they will be successful. By providing a Christian environment full of dedication and love we feel that we have a head start in learning. Our program is packed full of age-appropriate lesson plans with goals and objectives and teaching the message of Jesus. As always in early childhood education, we will focus on discovery through play. Children will be challenged daily in their creativity and individuality through many opportunities. Choosing from self-guided interest centers, daily academics, large and small group activities, the day is packed full!

Our goal, along with the parents, is to unite children as people of God and to encourage them to be lifelong learners.

We the teachers at Assumption Early Learning Center look forward to providing a preschool where your child's mind will grow daily in a developmentally appropriate learning and spiritual environment!

Our handbook provides you with important information about our program, policies, and procedures. Please keep this book for your reference and contact us with any questions you may have regarding these policies.

Welcome to AELC!

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Assumption School & Early Learning Center

4709 Mattis Road St. Louis, MO 63128

(314) 487-6520

<http://www.assumptionstl.org/school>

### **School Organization**

#### **Pastor - Father Thomas Keller**

The Pastor is the chief administrator and is advised by the Parish Council and the School Board.

#### **Principal - Mrs. Jennifer Sykora**

The principal is the administrator of the school and is responsible to the pastor. The principal implements Archdiocesan and School Board policies through procedures, rules, and regulations.

#### **Early Learning Center Director - Mrs. Shelley Michael**

The AELC director is the administrator of the Early Childhood Center, After-School for both Schools and Summer Programming and is responsible the pastor and principal. The director implements the Archdiocesan policies through procedures, rules, and regulations.

#### **Early Learning Center Assistant Director - Mrs. Julie Coughlin**

The AELC assistant director supports both the APS principal and AELC director.

#### **Office Manager - Mrs. Diane Higgins**

The office manager acts as the point of communication for the school office.

#### **School Nurse - Mrs. Susie Cannon**

The nurse serves during the school year part-time to all nursing and health policies as directed by the Archdiocese.

#### **Faculty and Staff**

All school staff members are responsible to the principal of Assumption School and assist in implementing policies, procedures, rules, and regulations. Individual faculty contact information is posted on FastDirect or <http://assumptionstl.org/Assumption-Parish-Grade-School>

## **Assumption Home and School Association**

Every parent is a member of Home and School. Officers include President, President-elect, secretary, treasurer, volunteer coordinator, volunteer coordinator elect, communications officer, and AELC representative. Activities include fundraiser(s), hospitality, health screenings, and "labels for cash," among others. Contact an officer or the school office to get more involved.

### **Name**

Dina Davis	President
Mary Beth Hofer	Secretary
Angie Ryan	Treasurer
Lauren Ellsworth	Communications Director
Carrie Harmon	Volunteer Coordinator
Sarah Toppmeyer	Early Learning Center Representative
Lucy Pizzella	Early Learning Center Representative
Kelly Niemeyer	Angel Family Program Coordinator
Kelly Huckstep	Raffle Fundraiser

## **Mission/Vision/Goal/Values/Witness**

### **Mission**

To grow in love of God and neighbor and develop each child's potential through a Catholic, student-centered education.

### **Vision**

Rooted in faith, growing in grace

### **Goal**

Children of faith prepared for the world

### **Core Values**

1. Living the Catholic faith
2. Engaging and comprehensive academics
3. Developing the whole child
4. Fostering community spirit

### **Witness Statement**

For Those Whose Children Attend Catholic Education Programs

One of the supreme gifts of marriage is bringing forth new life. God entrusts children to parents who have a primary right and duty to educate their children in the practice of their faith. Parents carry out this responsibility by creating a home full of love, forgiveness, respect, and fidelity. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one honors God and learns moral values.

In the rite of the sacrament of Baptism, parents receive the call from God to evangelize their children, as here summarized:

*You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him (her) in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor... You will be the first teachers of your child in the ways of the faith. May you be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what you say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

No wonder, then, that the Church understands the home to be the domestic Church. It is in the intimate environment of the family that parents are, by word and example, the first heralds of the faith with respect to their children. This environment is enhanced and deepened through the parish Eucharistic community that is the heart of the spiritual life for Christian families. Catholic schools and parish religious education programs are in partnership with the family in proclaiming and witnessing to the person and life of Jesus Christ. They assist parents in fulfilling their responsibility as the primary religious educators of their children.

Aware, then, of the dignity of this holy parental call, and with a reverent awe for that responsibility which is mine, I commit myself to be, in word and deed, the first and best teacher of my children in the faith. Practically, this means I should:

- Regularly participate in the Sunday Eucharist [if not Catholic, regularly participate in worship and prayer] with my family.
- Commit to speak more with my children about God and to include prayer in our daily home life.
- Participate in and cooperate with School programs that enable me as a parent to take an active role in the religious education of my children, including sacramental preparation of Catholic children.
- Support the moral and social teaching of the Catholic Church to ensure consistency between home and school.
- Teach my children by word and example to have a love and concern for the needs of others.
- Meet my financial responsibilities in supporting the Catholic school.

## **ADJUSTMENT/PARENT VISITATION**

Going to school for the first time can be difficult for some children, where others may adjust with ease. When your child is enrolled we encourage parent to make a few visits prior to their first day. During these visits, you will stay with your child or follow the lead of the classroom teacher.

After these visits, please allow for enough time to help your child make the adjustment from home and to his/her new environment. Never “sneak out” and always say “goodbye” reassuring your child when you will be back to pick him/her up. An appropriate length of time to stay in the morning is about five to ten minutes. This will give your child time to become involved in an activity. Staying longer will send mixed messages and will make their adjustment more difficult. You can expect to see tears the first few days, or weeks which is completely normal. Our staff is always available to assist you, and they are aware of techniques which will alleviate anxieties. Parents need to relax also, as children will read into these emotions and will react accordingly. Keep in mind that we have an open door policy and you are always welcome.

When a child enters our program, it is imperative for us to get to know the parents, as well as the child. We would like to familiarize ourselves with the personal manner in which you interact with your child. Please be sure to read the handbook carefully and ask a staff member if you have any questions. All required paperwork needs to be completed within thirty days of the child’s first day of school.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Please check your child for signs of illness before leaving home. If your child will be absent for the day, please enter into Brightwheel or call the main office at 314/487-6520 ext. 2123. Attendance will be taken daily every morning at 9:00 am. If you are not present by 9:30 am an office staff will contact you at your home phone.

Out of respect for your classroom teacher and the daily schedule, it is important that your child is on time for the start of school. If your classroom teachers notice you are continually late, they will speak to you personally regarding this policy. Credits or refunds are not given for missed class days.

## ACADEMICS & CURRICULUM

Each age level will follow a daily lesson plan that includes: centers, developmentally appropriate activities, religion, snacks and lunch (full day only), nap or quiet time (full day only), large motor (indoor & outdoor) and centers. Specific goals and objectives will be implemented in each classroom and will coordinate with the daily activities. Our curriculum includes religion, letter recognition and identification, number concepts and math readiness, personal data, fine motor, identification of body parts, speaking skills, listening skills, self-reliance, social emotional, music and large motor. Preschool and PreK children will participate in Mass, PE, Music and Library each week. Your classroom teacher will keep a student portfolio for each child's progress and mastery of the goals and objectives for each age level. (See student assessment for more detailed portfolio information).

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

All families are able to access the following information:

- Your child's records: Pertinent information is kept in your child's file in the office. You may request copies of any of the information at any time. In addition, portfolios of current work are kept on each child in their classrooms.
- Staff child abuse and neglect record forms: All of our staff is registered with the Family Care Safety Registry.
- Program lesson plans: Lesson plans can be reviewed in your child's classroom.

## RECORDS

### **Transfer of Student Records** (Archdiocesan policy 4601.4)

There should be no release of student records to other schools, institutions, agencies, or individuals without the prior written consent of parent/guardian, or the former student if age eighteen years or older. Records are not released to parents or students but are transferred directly from the school to the institution designated to receive them. Contact the school secretary for the proper form to transfer records or information.

## **INTERNET, ELECTRONIC MEDIA AND PRIVACY**

### **Electronic Media**

Electronic Media at Assumption School is utilized for educational purposes only. Electronic media includes SmartBoards, laptops, iPads, Chromebooks, televisions/DVD, computers, and the internet. These tools enable students to efficiently and responsibly employ current and emerging technologies as tools for accessing information, communicating with others, and managing data.

The internet is filtered via software according to our electronic media acceptable use policy. The following guidelines apply to electronic media use:

- All users or their parents/guardians will be made aware of and sign the acceptable use policy (see Appendix A, C4).
- Appropriate language is used at all times.
- No use without the authorized permission of a staff member.
- No accessing property of individuals or the school's private files, including but not limited to administrative software, and e-mail.
- No photographs may be taken or posted without permission; any authorized postings will include first names only.
- No use of social media, monetary transactions, or sharing personal information.
- No accessing pornographic, violent, illegal, extremist, or other content that is does not uphold the teachings of Assumption School.
- Users must cite any source obtained from electronic searches. Claiming ownership of any content cut or copied from the internet is prohibited.

Consequences of violations may include:

- Confiscation of devices
- Parent notification
- Suspension
- Loss of school media privileges
- Legal action
- Withdrawal for cause

### **Internet and Electronic Communications Conduct**

A safe environment for all members of the school community should be a hallmark of a Catholic school. This is accomplished, in part, by fostering a climate based on Gospel values that emphasize the dignity of and respect for all persons. Words, actions, or depictions which violate the privacy, safety, or good name of others are inconsistent with that goal. Whether occurring within or outside of school, when students jeopardize the safe environment or act contrary to those Gospel values they can be subject to disciplinary action by the school.



This policy applies to communications or depictions through e-mail, text messages, or website postings, whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communications, which: (1) are of a sexual nature; (2) threaten, libel, slander, malign, disparage, harass or embarrass members of the school community or (3) in the principal's discretion, cause harm to the school, or the school community (collectively referred to as "Inappropriate Electronic Conduct"). Inappropriate Electronic Conduct shall be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences, including withdrawal for cause. (Archdiocesan policy 4303.4)

### **Acceptable Use Policy**

Communications or depictions through e-mail, text messages or web site postings, whether they occur on the school computer network or through private communications, which: (1) are of a sexual nature; (2) threaten, libel, slander, malign, disparage, harass or embarrass members of the school community or (3) in the principal's discretion, cause harm to the school or school community (collectively "Inappropriate Electronic Conduct"), shall be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences, including withdrawal for cause, as described in 4302, Serious Disciplinary Consequences. (see above, Internet and Electronic Communications Conduct) (Archdiocesan policy 5202.71)

### **Social Media Policy**

#### **Purpose**

- To continue the mission of Jesus Christ through the Catholic Church and Assumption Parish.
- To provide information about Assumption Parish, School, and ELC events for friends and family.
- To establish and maintain a camaraderie between past, present, and future Assumption families.

#### **Pertaining to All Social Media Platforms**

- All material is to maintain a positive and Catholic premise.
- Only posts and comments relating to Assumption Parish and its organizations are allowed.
- No advertising is permitted for other activities, businesses, or events not directly associated with Assumption Parish unless approved in advance by the parish administration.
- Assumption social media is not an open forum for discussing parish policies, issues, or problems nor is it an outlet for personal opinion.

- No vulgarity, profanity, or negativity is permitted and will be removed immediately. The person/s responsible for the post will be blocked from the site and will be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action as determined by the parish administration.

### **All Social Media Posts**

- Status Updates may include, but are not limited to, reminders of upcoming events, expressions of gratitude, accolades, prayer requests, and/or information that may be found in the Assumption Parish bulletin.
- Any mention of an adult (over the age of 18) by individual name does not need prior approval and the adult will be referred to by first name only. If the adult objects to the mention, the post or update will be removed upon notification to the administrators of the page.
- Current students or children under 18 years of age will only be mentioned by first name and only if their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) approve(s) according to the media release form.
- All likes and interests must be related to Assumption Parish, Catholicism, or programs in which the parish participates.

### **Photos**

- Photos of parishioners may be posted by page administrators provided a current media release is on file with the Assumption Parish administration.
- Published photos may be reposted, i.e. photos from newspapers or other websites.

### **Website**

Parental permission must be obtained in writing on an annual basis before a student's photograph or school work can be posted on the Assumption Parish website. The Assumption School website will not list any surnames of students.

### **Privacy**

#### **Maintaining School Privacy (Archdiocesan Policy 4402.4)**

Assumption School understands that students/parents have access to technology that enables them to record, either visually or audibly, a student or staff member.

In order to ensure the respect for and privacy of students and staff, students and parents are not to record school staff members, students, classroom activities or school events without their express permission. Likewise, students and parents shall not publicly post any videos, pictures or audio recordings of staff members or students without their express permission. This includes, but is not limited to, online photo-sharing and posting videos to YouTube or similar applications.

Use of images is expected to meet the above guidelines. Images or recordings should not be used commercially or in ways that harm the reputation of Assumption School community and its members. If in question, ask the school principal.

### **Copyrighted Materials**

#### Instructional Use of Copyrighted Materials

All Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of St. Louis should adhere to the current copyright laws governing printed material, videotape, computer software, music, multi-media presentations, and Internet websites and resources.

No unauthorized copies of copyrighted materials in any form should be made or used on equipment owned by or borrowed or leased from a school. No school staff, students, or others should use any form of unauthorized copies of copyright materials for any purpose within the school's instructional programs. "Fair use" of copyrighted materials is allowed for specific instructional purposes within the limits of the "fair use" limitations. (Archdiocesan policy 5202.6)

### **Equipment**

School equipment does not leave the school premises except at the discretion of the school administration.

### **Elevator**

Student use of the elevator is limited to recycling and physical impairment. In order to protect both students and adults the following procedures are in place

1. A second student will be assigned to ride the elevator with the student in need. Those same two students should ride between all classes.
2. Students will be instructed on emergency procedures including phone inside the operation panel.
3. If an adult accompanies a student, there should be no less than two students present.

### **Firearms and Weapons** (See Appendix A, Policy 3.2)

In order to provide a safe environment, the carrying or possession of any type of firearm or other dangerous weapons on the premises of [Assumption School] is strictly prohibited. This prohibition expressly includes those persons licensed to carry concealed firearms. (Archdiocesan policy 6202.1)

*The possession of firearms and weapons on school premises is not to be tolerated except by law enforcement officers.*

Our procedure regarding any student caught in possession of firearms or weapons is as follows:

- The parent of the student will be called.
- The pastor will be informed.
- The St. Louis County police will be contacted.
- The student will be immediately suspended from classes.
- A student found to be involved may be expelled from school.

**Substance Abuse and Tobacco** (See Appendix A, Policy 3.3) Assumption School is a smoke free environment. Tobacco product use is prohibited at all times. (from Archdiocesan policy 4303.1)

Use or abuse of alcohol and possession or use of illegal drugs (marijuana, narcotics, or other “hard” drugs) or chemical substances (including unauthorized medicines) is not permitted. Any student caught in possession of any illegal or controlled substance is subject to serious disciplinary consequences in accordance with the following procedure:

- The parent of the student will be called.
- The pastor will be informed.
- The St. Louis County Police will be contacted.
- The student will be immediately suspended from classes.
- A student found to be involved may be subject to withdrawal for cause. (from Archdiocesan policy 4303.2)

**Violence** (See Appendix A, Policy 3.4)

**Violence and the Threat of Violence**

Catholic schools shall provide a safe learning environment for all members of the school community. The climate of Catholic schools shall reflect Gospel values including an emphasis on the dignity of all persons which is necessary for respect, the interdependence of all persons that is the basis of community, and the rights and responsibilities of all persons which are the foundation of justice.

Violence is inconsistent with the unity and peace which are essential to living the Catholic faith in community. Violence also inhibits human development and successful learning. Therefore, violence is not tolerated in Catholic schools.

Violence consists of words, gestures, and actions that result in or have the potential to result in hurt, fear, or injury. Violence includes threats of injury, harassment; assault, possession, and/or use of a weapon; and theft or vandalism of property.

A weapon is anything used or intended to be used to threaten, intimidate, and/or harm persons. The possession or use of firearms, other weapons, or explosive devices on school/parish premises is not permitted.

All reported or observed instances of threatened or actual violence must be addressed by the school administration. Appropriate actions may include parent/guardian conferences, mandatory counseling, suspension, withdrawal for cause, and legal action depending on the severity of the incident. (Archdiocesan policy 4303.3)

### **Child Protection** (See Appendix A, Policy 3.7)

#### **Responsibility to Report**

Assumption School is committed to the prevention of child abuse and to assisting those who are affected by incidents of child abuse. Assumption School is also committed to complying with legal requirements for mandated reporting. The archdiocesan SafeTouch program is part of our curriculum. Parent communication explaining the program will be offered each year before we teach the program.

Students and parents/guardians are expected to report concerns regarding potential acts of violence to the principal immediately. Teachers must report pertinent concerns and/or pertinent information regarding specific students to the principal immediately. All adults and students are expected to report any suspected bullying or harassment (patterns of unkind words or actions) towards themselves or others.

### **Grievances** (See Appendix A, Policy 4.3,4.4)

#### **Addressing Assumption School Policies**

Concerns pertaining to Assumption School policies should be directed to the School Board. Contact any member of the School Board to be placed on an upcoming agenda.

#### **Addressing Personnel Matters**

Problems involving school personnel:

1. First contact the teacher or staff member directly to resolve the problem.
2. If more problem-solving is necessary, involve the principal.
3. If the problem is still not resolved, involve the pastor.

*Personnel issues are **not** School Board issues.*

#### **Addressing Educational Matters—At Board Meetings**

Time is set aside at the beginning of each School Board meeting for non-board members to bring education related issues to the attention of the board. Contact the board president before the meeting.

### **Conflict-Resolution**

It is in the best interest of the school and the parish community for complaints to be resolved as soon as possible. **Direct communication with the persons involved is the best starting point for conflict resolution.** This complaint procedure model is rooted in Holy Scripture. The levels of responsibility involved in complaint resolutions are: teacher, principal, pastor.

The resolution of a conflict ordinarily takes place nearest to the problem; however, a complaint may be registered with any level of responsibility. **It will be referred to the faculty/staff member nearest to the problem.** The following procedure should be followed:

1. The parent should contact the faculty/staff member who is most closely involved with the problem/incident. Any other faculty/staff member contacted should refer the parent to the immediate faculty/staff member involved. The complaint should be discussed in an informal manner. Most problems should be resolved at this level

### **ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL**

The center will be open daily from 6:30AM to 6:00PM. Parking spaces will be reserved for drop-off and pick-up in front of the school. It is very important that you bring your child into the building daily. Also be sure to check your child's cubby, classroom folder and bulletin board for parent notes and reminders.

Please do not leave children unattended in your car. If you need assistance, please contact the center office. Leaving your child unattended in a locked car is considered child abuse and we are obligated by law to contact the local police department.

Our full day school day will start at 9:00AM and be completed at 3:30PM. Before school (6:30AM-9:00AM) and after school (3:30PM-6:00PM) the children will all be together. You can check the before and after school location board located by the front door. If you are come during school hours, you will need to go directly to your child's classroom.

Our ½ day school will start at 9:00AM and will be completed at 12 noon, (this is for Parishioners only). Please be sure to pick your child up promptly at 12 noon.

### **PICK-UP PROCEDURES:**

Children will be released from the school only to the child's custodial parent(s)/guardian(s), listed on the child's registration form as authorized to pick up the child. Any changes or additions to the authorization list must be made through our office in writing. At any time, you

and/or the people on the authorized list may be asked to provide picture identification upon picking up your child. This policy is strictly for the safety of your children.

In the event that a court ordered legal custody situation develops, whereby a parent is not allowed to pick-up the child/children without consent, we require that original court documents be submitted to the office verifying legal custody. The director will review this information and a copy of the information will be placed in the child's file. Once reviewed and approved, pertinent information will be relayed to appropriate personnel at school. All information will be kept confidential.

Staff will not release a child to any person who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or who appears incapable of transporting that child home safely. Another authorized person will be contacted to pick up your child.

If any emergency arises, please notify the school office. Authorization by phone should be done in emergencies only. The person will be asked to show identification.

### **VISITING THE SCHOOL**

The school building is locked at all times. Parent/Guardians and visitors must ring the bell located by the main doors and identify themselves in order to enter the school building. All parents/guardians, volunteers, and visitors must report directly to the school office when entering the school building, sign in, and obtain a Visitor Badge while in the school building. Visitors must sign out when leaving the school. No pets are allowed.

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS/PARTIES/TREAT POLICY**

We love to celebrate birthdays at our center. Each child will receive a special crown, book or pencil, (NO food items) from school on their birthday. Due to the increase with food allergies, you are not allowed to bring a treat for your child to school. This policy is implemented for the health and safety for **ALL** the children enrolled at AELC. If you are planning a party away from school, please keep in mind that invitations may not be given out at school unless everyone in the class is invited. You may utilize your buzz book for classroom roster information or contact your classroom teacher.

Throughout the school year the classrooms will have parties. Room parents will plan and schedule all events. See additional volunteer requirements under the parent involvement section. If you would like to be part of that process, you may sign up outside the office to volunteer. A notice of party days will be on the school calendar. Our AELC calendar is posted on our web page at [assumptionstl.org/AE](http://assumptionstl.org/AE).

## **CALENDAR**

You will receive a copy of the school calendar at the beginning of the school year. The calendar will indicate when the program is closed and center family events.

## **CHANGES IN INFORMATION**

In the event of an emergency we need to be able to contact you at any time. Any changes in personal data on your child's registration form (i.e. address, phone numbers, marital status, authorized/emergency persons, medications, etc.) must be provided in writing to the office. In order for everyone to have accurate records, we will make changes to the child's permanent file and pass to the classroom teachers.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

Assumption Early Learning Center is committed to the prevention of child abuse and assists those who are affected by incidents of child abuse. Assumption Early Learning Center is also committed to comply with legal requirements for reporting child abuse. Every teacher is a child abuse advocate and must follow all mandated laws by the State of Missouri. AELC performs a criminal record check and child abuse neglect screening on all AELC faculty and volunteers upon hire and every year in September.

## **CLASSROOM STAFF**

Our teachers have appropriate training, certifications and degrees. Each teacher is selected for his or her commitment to early childhood education. Each teacher is responsible for writing and implementing meaningful lesson plans while following a developmentally appropriate curriculum and the benchmarks for their age group. All teachers observe and evaluate the children's progress and work as a team to provide a quality program for our families.

AELC is committed to professional development for all staff members. Ongoing training is provided to staff through classes, workshops, and seminars in all phases of child development and education.



## **CLEANING**

The center is cleaned each evening after school hours by an independent cleaning company. The classroom teacher utilizes a three step procedure for sanitizing the classroom equipment and materials. These procedures are completed daily or weekly depending on the usage and age of the children. The maintenance for the center is completed by the parish maintenance staff. All non-teaching employees complete the same criminal record checks and safe environment as mandated by the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Any family interested in the facility will first be invited to tour the center. Families will be shown the entire center and introduced to the center staff. All registered materials are on the webpage at [assumptionstl.org/aclc-registration](http://assumptionstl.org/aclc-registration). Every January the school hosts an open house during Catholic School Week.

Once registration is completed, each family will receive a teacher welcome information packet upon enrollment and in July. This provides parents with all the information that you will need for your child's classroom.

Each child will have a classroom system for projects, art, etc. You are to check this file every week and remove all information. Please pay special attention to calendar items; they will remind you of days off and special classroom events.

Ongoing communication is encouraged at all times. Please do not hesitate to contact your classroom teacher or the director whenever you have a question or concern, or need information.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Photographs and videos will be taken during the school year. This assists us with individual and class experience stories, class books, photo albums, and documentation of child's work.

Photographs and videos may also be taken during the year for release to the media, for the school website and parish web site. All AELC families will complete a media release form each year.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

We believe that children learn through play. By providing a variety of activities for children to expand their imagination & creativity, social skills, language & listening skills and cognitive skills, we believe that they will be successful in their learning.

Each child's day will include a variety of topics. Each classroom will include; time in centers, small and large group activities, developmentally appropriate activities, snack, outdoor play, lunch (full-day only), nap or rest time (full-day only) and religion. Children are encouraged, but never forced, to participate in all activities throughout the day.

### **FULL-DAY CHILDREN**

#### **Naptime**

Accreditation requires our children in the full day program to have a rest period during the course of the day. Our toddlers and preschoolers take their nap from approximately 12:30 PM till 2:30 PM depending on the classroom and the age of the children. If after thirty minutes, a child cannot fall asleep, they may choose to do quiet activities alone on their cot. All children are up by 2:45 PM so that they can fall asleep at home at an appropriate time. During naptime, teachers have the lights turned off and soft music plays. The rooms still receive a good bit of natural light. All infant and toddler schedules are defined by parents and teacher.

Parents are responsible for providing a blanket or any other items to assist their child to be comfortable during naptime. We will send home all bedding on the last day in attendance for that week for you to launder. Please be sure to bring all items back the following week. We do not have extra bedding for each child.

### **SNACK/LUNCH PROGRAM**

All full-day children will receive two snacks and lunch every day. All half-day children will receive one snack in the morning. All snacks and meals are nutritious and will follow the Missouri Department of Health Nutrition Standards. Calories, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrates, protein, fat, fiber, vitamin A and vitamin C levels are all dictated based upon the age of the child. School menus are analyzed to assure the daily allowance of the guidelines is strictly followed.

We will serve a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins each day. Children will eat lunch between 11:00 AM and 12:30 PM depending on their age and classroom schedule.

Please be sure your child's teacher is aware of any concerns you have with certain foods relating to your child's likes and dislikes.

For the health and safety of all children, we are a peanut free school. No snacks or meals provided will contain peanuts or prepared on a peanut processing plant.

### **CLOTHING/PERSONAL ITEMS/SUPPLIES**

There is no formal dress code for the Early Learning Center. However, we encourage you to dress your child appropriately for daily indoor and outdoor activities. Remember that children are encouraged to participate in all activities (including daily art projects), so please do not dress them in anything that you do not want to get dirty. In order to be safe, all children **MUST** wear tennis shoes to school. Please remember to dress your child for cold days with coats, hats and gloves. We will go outside if the weather is between 32-95 degrees. During summer, please bring sunscreen and a hat for you child.

**Personal Items Needed:** Because accidents do happen, we ask that you provide a complete change of clothing, which will be kept in your child's classroom. These items need to be marked with his/her first and last name. Be sure to check these items seasonally for fit and comfort.

**Classroom Supplies:** Each year in August you will be asked to bring the following classroom supplies to school. **Each child needs to bring 2 rolls of paper towels, 2 boxes of kleenex, 2 boxes Crayola Washable Markers (Crayola brand so we can interchange the marker caps) and 2 packages of wet wipes.**

We discourage children from bringing toys or items from home. Please try to keep these items in the car. It is difficult to keep track of these items and we do not want them to get lost or broken. If a toy does show up at school we will send it home with the parent. We appreciate your cooperation.

### **TOILET TRAINING POLICY**

In order to make toilet training a positive experience for you and your child, we have incorporated a plan to assist in achieving this goal. We have devised an agreement for the parent and the classroom teacher to follow. Parents interested in starting the toilet training process need

to speak to their classroom teacher to sign and begin the agreement. A copy of the agreement is on the webpage. There is NO toilet training in the Toddler 1 classroom.

### **STAFFING**

A 1 to 4 teacher/child ratio for infants will be maintained or exceeded, a 1 to 8 teacher/child ratio for toddlers classrooms will be maintained or exceeded and 1 to 10 teacher/child ratio for the preschool classrooms will be maintained or exceeded at all times. Volunteers, practicum students, and parents may also be working in the classrooms, but do not figure into the ratio.

### **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

#### **Developmental Screening:**

Each child will be tested two times per year with the Brigance screening by the director and/or other AELC faculty. The test takes about 10 minutes and provides information for the classroom teacher and parent about progress of their child. Parents refusing their child to be tested are required to contact the center at the beginning of the school year.

#### **Observations:**

Your child's teacher will observe and assess your child during the school year. They will be taking anecdotal notes and follow a play based curriculum for goals and indicators that are developmentally appropriate for your child. We want to provide you with the best possible, up-to-date information about your child. The teachers will find it helpful when parents share their observation about a child's activities at home with their child's teachers.

#### **Portfolios:**

A portfolio will be kept of your child's work during the school year. This will serve as a record of your child's abilities and accomplishments. Each teacher has developed their own style with their portfolios. Portfolios may include a developmentally appropriate checklist, the developmental screenings, your child's work samples and teacher observations. This portfolio will be kept on your child the whole time your child is in our program and your child will take it home when they leave the program. We hope you will ask your child to share their portfolio with you on occasion.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

All children exhibiting signs of a possible developmental delay or disabling condition in the areas of speech, language, hearing or vision, cognition, behavior, fine and gross motor will be

handled with the utmost sensitivity. Documentation (observation, interview, screenings) of all behaviors will be kept by the classroom teacher to use as tool in communication with parents and other special education specialists. All documentation and information about any child must have written consent from the parents before sharing with any service provider. All children will be referred to their corresponding school district to obtain information about qualification for classroom or community based services.

Children in the center who have special needs will be serviced on individualized education plan (IEP) or an individualized family service plan (IFSP). The IEP/IFSP will be developed by a special education provider, director, classroom teacher and the child’s parents in order to make appropriate decisions regarding the services needed. The IEP/IFSP will be used as a plan of action to meet the needs of the child for the placement in the program. Open communication between the special education provider, Assumption center staff and the parents is encouraged. Special services designed in the IEP/IFSP will be delivered within the child’s daily routine and administered by the child’s classroom teacher. A center-based IEP/IFSP may also be used with a child who has not been diagnosed with a disability and may need some modifications to their school environment.

Due to our private school status, we do not have early childhood special education professional staff to assist with implementation of any special educational plans. If your child has an IEP or IFSP we can help make arrangements to receive services here at AELC.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS REFERRALS**

ADA Information Line.....	800/514-0301
National Information Center for Children with Disabilities.....	800/775-8267

#### **School District Contact Numbers:**

Affton School District ECE/PAT.....	314/633-0019
CDCA (Child Daycare Association) Inclusion Services.....	314/531-1412
Fox School District ECE/PAT.....	636/282-1476
Lindbergh School District ECE/PAT.....	314/729-2400
Mehlville School District ECE/PAT.....	314/467-5302
PS Kids, LLC Positive Support for Kids.....	314/845-7751
St. Louis Public Schools PAT.....	314/331-6150

Please go to the website below for more information!

<https://dese.mo.gov/special-education/early-childhood-special-education>

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Assumption Early Learning Center has made preparations to deal effectively with emergency situations that should occur in or around school while the center is open.

We will practice our emergency exit procedures and safety plans each month to ensure that the staff and the children are ready if an emergency should arise. Records of these drills are kept on file in the AELC office.

**Please be sure to complete your child's emergency information and inform the office of any changes.**

## **FAMILY EVENTS**

Throughout the year, we will have planned events for our families. These events are paid for with your registration. At these events, all siblings are invited and encouraged to participate. We will give you advance notice of each event, noting them on your yearly school calendar and on our webpage. Events will be planned for different days and different times of days in order to make them accessible for our families.

Short walks may be added to our weekly activities around the Assumption campus. All teachers will take cell phones and emergency backpacks to ensure the safety of all children when away from school.

## **HEALTH CARE**

All children will be required to have their current immunizations on file. Children will not be allowed to stay in the program unless the file is complete. If your child becomes ill or contracts a contagious illness while at school, the nurse or teacher will notify you immediately. We will provide a quiet area for your child to rest until you can arrive. We will also inform you of any possible exposure to any communicable diseases. **Once a parent or guardian has been called, your child must be picked-up within 90 minutes.**

If your child is ill, they must be Tylenol-free and fever-free (fever being 100 degrees or more when taken under the arm) for at least 24 hours and 48 hours for pink eye before they return to school. If your child has more than one episode of diarrhea, he or she will be sent home and may not return until the condition has been stabilized. We reserve the right to send any child home if we feel they are showing signs of illness or a contagious disease and may ask for medical

permission to return to school. **There will not be any reduction of tuition due to absences or illnesses.**

**The following symptoms could indicate a contagious disease:**

Fever/Pain Extreme Fatigue/Nausea or Vomiting  
Diarrhea/Skin Eruptions or Open sores/Rash Red/Weeping or Glassy Eyes  
Constant sneezing/Constant Coughing  
Swelling and/or Redness of the Throat

Staff cannot administer any prescription or non-prescription medication without the provided release form signed by the child's parent. All prescribed medication needs to be in the original bottle with the child's name and dosage clearly marked. All medications administered will be recorded and kept on file.

In the event that a child is injured, an accident report will be filled out and will need to be signed by the child's parent and kept on file. Small scrapes or bumps will be cleaned and dressing will be applied if necessary. If an injury requires further treatment and the child needs to go to the hospital, the parent will be notified immediately. If the parent cannot be reached, we will attempt to contact someone on the emergency list. We will take your child to the hospital you requested on your enrollment form or will follow directive of the Emergency Medical Service Professional. The center Director and/or classroom teacher will accompany your child to the hospital.

Medication that is to be kept at school for emergencies only (asthma, bee sting, peanut allergies, etc.), must include special instructions. They must be submitted in writing from parent.

## **Health and Safety**

### **Healthcare, Illness and Injury**

Health Room personnel will follow the guidelines set forth by the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Medical information is collected and maintained on each student. All medical information is maintained in a secure area separate from school educational records in order to maximize confidentiality. Included are:

- a medical history (annually updated) and/or physical form (K, 3rd, 6th ) (from Archdiocesan Policy 4401.3)
- a cumulative health record with all mandatory immunization dates
- a completed family information form (annually updated) (from Archdiocesan Policy 4401.2)

Communications about student health concerns must come directly to the school office.

- Medication (see below)
- A physician's note is required if it becomes necessary for a student to limit physical activity during the school day, PE, or at recess. A release form indicating that the student may resume normal activity will also be required.

Catholic Schools of the St. Louis Archdiocese will follow the recommended policies and procedures on communicable diseases – life threatening diseases with no known cure – established by the Missouri Department of Health. (Archdiocesan Policy 4401.1)

The Missouri Department of Health regulations are followed concerning communicable disease/contagious conditions and the child's return to school. Chickenpox, head lice and conjunctivitis (pink eye) are the most commonly reported. If your child contracts these or any contagious conditions, notify the school office.

### **STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

A student enrolled in a Catholic school who has a significant or potentially life threatening medical condition may require special consideration. Schools should take steps to obtain the information necessary to understand the condition, its manifestations in the school setting, and any specific adjustments or plans for an emergency response which may be necessary in order to provide the student with a healthy and safe environment. (Archdiocesan Policy 4401.6)

**Illness or injury at school** (Archdiocesan Policy 4401.21) All students with health concerns, illness, or injury will be seen by the school nurse or trained office staff as they arrive in the health room. Those requiring the most immediate attention will be assessed first. First aid will be administered in the case of an emergency.

The family information form indicating parents'/guardians wishes regarding physical/medical emergency and contact information will be utilized. Parents will be contacted if:

- A student has sustained a head injury that was severe enough to cause a bump, laceration, or other distinguishing mark.
- Students require immediate emergency attention (e.g. broken bone, stitches)
- Students make frequent trips to health room without obvious signs of illness (fever, vomiting, etc.)
- A student was injured because of another student (biting, hitting)
- A student has any illness that requires being sent home



### General Guidelines for Sending an Ill Student Home

- Fever (>100.0) or 1-2 degrees above student's normal temperature and/or ill-appearing
- Rash with fever
- Rash of unclear cause that has not been evaluated by a physician
- Difficulty breathing (esp. asthmatic not relieved with medication)
- Sore throat with fever
- Eye drainage (clear or yellow) with itching and history of crusting on lashes at waking
- Vomiting at school
- Diarrhea, sleepiness and abdominal cramping
- Mouth sores with inability to control saliva
- Chickenpox or other communicable disease

Guidelines for returning to school: students must be fever-free and/or not vomited for 24 hours before returning to school.

### **Medication and personal care items**

#### **Prescribed medications – the following procedures are in place:**

1. The direct order/consent of a licensed physician, licensed physician's assistant or nurse practitioner, signed and properly filed with the school. "The current prescription label on the container may serve as a physician's order and physician's orders may be faxed or mailed to the school."
2. Written consent of the parent/guardian for school personnel to administer the medication.
3. The medication in the original container.
4. Proper training of personnel on medication administration. (from Archdiocesan policy 4401.4)

**Inhalers** - Students requiring inhalers must follow the same procedures as other medications. In the handling of inhalers, individual needs must be arranged with the school nurse, principal, or secretary. If a student must carry an inhaler with him/her, a parental consent form, a physician's order, a Student Asthma Action Card/Emergency Plan and an Inhaler Procedure form must be completed and on file in the school office.

**Epinephrine injector (EpiPen)** – EpiPens should accompany students during lunch and outdoor activities (via supervisor).

**Cough Drops** - All cough drops must have written permissions and, as with all medications, are not to be carried on the student.

**Chapstick** - Students are allowed to carry Chapstick on their person. They are not to share their Chapstick with other students. Vaseline is available in the Health Room and in some primary homerooms for your child's use.

## **Physical Examination and Immunization**

### **Immunizations**

Upon entering, students must have all immunizations as required by Missouri State Law. All students at any grade level not complying with state regulations for immunizations will be referred to the principal. Admittance to school may be refused.

### **Physical Exams**

A physical examination by the family physician or health clinic is required for a new student and before entering Kindergarten, 3rd and 6th grades. Any physical taken after January 1 of the current year will be accepted.

Screenings Conducted at School – annually for vision for children 6 months and older. Parents are notified of problems observed during any of these tests.

### **Emergency Contact Information**

Parents/Guardians are required to complete a Family Information Form annually. Should an emergency involving a student occur, the Family Information Form is the school's guide for making contact with a parent/guardian, physician, or close relative/friend. The information on the Family Information Form also instructs the school on the procedures for immediate medical care for the student, information regarding allergies, and medical conditions (pre-existing, on-going, or newly diagnosed). The school will review all information and determine if a medical intervention plan is necessary. It is the legal responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that the school has correct and updated information (address, phone numbers, and medical information) for each student. If the school is unable to contact a parent/guardian due to incorrect, inaccurate, or out-of-date emergency information, the incident will be reported to the proper authorities.

### **Student Insurance**

Contact school for information regarding student accident insurance.

### **Safety Drills** (See Appendix A, Policy 3.1)

The emergency preparedness plan is reviewed annually to provide for the safety and security of students and staff in the event of a natural disaster or other extraordinary situations.

At various times during the school year the principal will conduct drills that will help evacuate the building and take cover in the classroom or hallway, depending on the danger and the response needed according to our Emergency Preparedness Plan and Procedures. These may include but are not limited to:

- Fire Drill (Evacuation Drill)
- Tornado Drill
- Earthquake Drill
- Intruder/Shelter In Place Drill
- Reverse Evacuation Drill
- Active Shooter at Recess

In the case of emergency, the following procedures are in place for parents: Be certain that your Family Information Form is accurate and current.

- Tell child(ren) the name of the emergency contact person (on the Family Information Form) in case you are unavailable.
- Do not telephone the school; check FastDirect. It is essential that the telephone system be available for emergency communications.
- If you enable texting and emergency email in your parent profile in FastDirect, you will receive emergency messages in your personal email and phone.
- **DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.** It may be necessary to keep the streets and parking lot clear for emergency vehicles. If evacuation is required, students may be transported to a location away from the school. You will be notified of any necessary procedures through FastDirect and Brightwheel messages.
- Talk to your children and emphasize how important it is for them to follow directions from their teachers and school administration during any emergency.
- Support and reinforce the emergency procedure information you receive from the school. You may receive updates about our safety procedures from time to time.
- An earthquake would pose the most chaos with possible loss of communication, including cell phones. The staff (wearing green vests) is organized into response teams, is prepared to deal with circumstances until emergency personnel arrive, and is in charge until that time. Once emergency personnel arrive, they are in charge and everyone will follow their directions.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

If it becomes necessary to close school or start later due to inclement weather, announcements will be posted at FOX (2), KMOV (4), and KSDK (5). Television and FastDirect will be our main communication. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL OFFICE OR THE RECTORY FOR THIS INFORMATION.

If the announcement indicates “snow schedule,” doors to school will open at 9:10 a.m., classes will begin at 9:30 a.m., with a regular dismissal at 2:45 p.m. All personnel arrive at 9:00 am, earliest student arrival at 9:10 am. Once school is in session, there will be no early dismissal for inclement weather. If you choose to pick your child up early if weather begins to deteriorate, you must come to the school office and sign your child out. Carpool students will only be allowed to leave with you if those students' parents have given prior written permission.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found items will be in the main office and we will keep items for one month. Unclaimed articles are then sent to St. Vincent DePaul for donation. It is highly recommended that all articles be marked with the child’s name to eliminate lost articles.

### **NEGOTIATING DIFFERENCES**

We are all here to make this a pleasant experience for you and your child, but on occasion, difficulties may erupt. If you may have any questions about your child, or the program, please talk with your teacher first. If you are unable to come to an agreement over a situation, please talk with the Director. Shelley Michael is the Director of Childcare Services, or Julie Coughlin is the Coordinator.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE CENTER**

### **Pastor**

The Pastor is the spiritual leader of Assumption Parish. By virtue of his position, he is responsible for those matters within the center, which affect worship, the ministry of the Lord, and the spiritual welfare of the students. The Pastor is the chief administrator.

### **Director of Childcare Services**

The Director of Childcare Services is responsible to the pastor and to the community for all center matters. The Director of Childcare Services oversees the AELC and ASAP programs and implements all the program policies.

### **Before and After School Director**

The Before School and After School Director is responsible to the Director of Child Care Services. The Before School and After School Director works daily at the center and oversees the AELC program and implements all program day to day activities.

### **Teachers**

All teachers are responsible to the Before and After School directors and the Director of Assumption Early Learning Center.

## **HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

The HSA is composed of volunteer parents and school representatives from both APS and AELC. This committee acts as a board for our program providing recommendations for improving services and operations. Parents interested in serving on this committee should inform the Director.

## **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Formal Parent-teacher conferences will be held once per school year in the month of January. Each parent is assigned a 15-minute conference with his or her child's classroom teacher. Visits by parents at other times are always welcome. Teachers are always available for phone conversations during various times throughout the day.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

We know that our parents are great resources! We hope that you can volunteer in our classrooms in the same capacity. It is appropriate for young children to experience a variety of activities at their center. Throughout the year, teachers will schedule guests and/or parents to come talk with our children about specific topics of interest.

In the past we have had a fireman, a policeman, a dentist and more come in and talk with the children. We encourage you as a parent to volunteer your time and expand on the classroom experience. We encourage you to share your talents with us with such activities as becoming a room parent, reading with a small group of children, doing an art activity with your child, attending walking field trips, sharing a special hobby or skill or anything else you might think of! Please talk with your child's teacher about how you can be an asset to your child's classroom.

All parent volunteers will need to complete the Archdiocese Safe Environment required per the Archdiocese. Please contact the office for more detailed information or go to the website at: **[archstl.org/sep](http://archstl.org/sep) archdiocese safe environment training**

## **SECURITY**

All guests must ring the doorbell and be buzzed in by an AELC staff. All parents and guests must ring the bell for entry. Children are not to be left unattended in cars or in front of the building.

## **SEPARATED OR DIVORCED PARENTS**

The center will honor all legal documents regarding child custody and parental visitation. If one parent is to have limited access to the child, we must have a copy of the custody ruling on file in the office. The center will not intercede on behalf of one parent if the custody decision has not been specifically defined. We cannot refuse a parent the right to take a child from the center unless that parent has legally been denied permission to do so. In case of emergency, both parents will be notified. The custodial parent will receive the first call. Responsibility for tuition must be determined between the parents. The center will not become involved with requesting payment from an ex-spouse.

### **Custody Documents—Parenting Plan**

If a custody agreement or parenting plan exists for your children, the principal needs current copies of the court documents for the protection of your children and so school personnel can effectively and correctly release the children. The only section needed by the office is the parenting plan.

### **FINANCES**

Families interested in the center will pay a non-refundable registration fee and deposit per child. This will hold your space in the program. Deposits are refundable by mail when a child exits the program or graduates and tuition is paid in full. Tuition is withdrawn every month on the 15th and the last day of the month.

In order for us to be fiscally responsible to the church, we must have all accounts paid in full each month. No balance should be carried over to the next. If you are having financial difficulties, please see the Director. If delinquencies continue, children will lose their place in the program without any refunds.

If you chose to remove your child from our program, you must give the Director a 2 week written notice to receive your deposit. Once tuition is paid in full, the deposit is sent by check to the address listed on file.

### **CHILD CARE INCOME TAX CREDIT**

Many parents may be able to claim a credit against their federal income tax for a portion of the fees paid to AELC. The income tax credit is generally available to taxpayers if the child care expense is incurred to enable parents to work, or look for work. Please visit the website for more information: <https://www.irs.gov/publications/p503>

There are various limitations and restrictions on the amount of the credit, which can be claimed on your federal income tax return. Upon request, AELC will provide parents with an annual statement indicating the amount paid for childcare. These statements are sent every January. If you have any questions concerning whether or not you might qualify for this tax credit, please consult your tax advisor or the internal revenue service.

Some parents may be entitled to exclude from their income, payments made by their employers for childcare, under a dependent care assistant plan. You should contact your employer to determine if your employer offers a dependent care assistant plan.

## **STANDARD OF BEHAVIOR**

Children of Assumption Early Learning Center are expected to behave in a Christian and courteous manner treating each other and the staff with respect to keep discipline to a minimum. We encourage children to use their words to express their feelings and respect the feelings of others; this in turn will assist in helping children succeed in developing problem solving skills. If a discipline problem occurs, children will first be re-directed from the adverse behavior. If the behavior persists, the child will be removed from the area, asked by the classroom teacher to take a break to cool down and they will discuss the problem afterwards.

Other disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to: teacher-child-director conference, teacher-child-parent-director conference or including the pastor in the conference. If necessary and appropriate, children may be dismissed from the program. The director will determine the seriousness of the offense and the corresponding disciplinary action will be taken.