

**Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center  
Parent Handbook**



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## **Introduction**

Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center is the pre-primary division of Mary, Star of the Sea Schools. We are a private parochial school under the direction of the Catholic Diocese of Honolulu.

The center began in 1980 in the former convent of the Sisters of Notre Dame. The school came into being to meet the needs of the families and children of Mary, Star of the Sea Parish. The new Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center campus was completed in December 2003 and opened its doors in January 2004.

The Early Learning Center is licensed by the Department of Human Services and has been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) since 1989, and is also accredited by the Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA).

The school is affiliated with the American Montessori Society (AMS) and with the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). The center is also an intern site for Chaminade University of Honolulu's Montessori Teacher Training Program.

Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center accepts children ages 2 to 6 and is licensed for 250 students. Our commitment is to provide quality early childhood education within a Catholic Montessori environment.

This handbook is provided to all parents of children enrolled at Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center. The handbook stipulates school policies that determine the terms of the parent's contract with Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center, and is further supplemented by the school policy forms included in the student registration packet.

**Policies and Procedures are subject to change and parents will be notified of changes as soon as possible.**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Catholic education in the Diocese of Honolulu is to form children who are nourished intellectually, spiritually, and liturgically to share the presence of Christ in the world.

Our Catholic educational institutions are obligated by our faith to shape our youth by immersing students in curriculum and experiences rooted in Catholic teaching and doctrine with emphasis on morality and Christian character building. This formation paired with 21st century academics and teaching methods are critical for success at any Catholic educational institution in Hawaii.

Each family has choices in the education and faith formation of their children. We expect all families who have chosen to enroll their children to share fully in the light of Christ and to cooperate and support the mission and activities of Catholic School education in the Diocese of Honolulu.

## **School Philosophy**

The purpose of Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center is to educate the whole child, spiritually, personally, physically, and intellectually. The curriculum is designed to be sufficiently flexible and varied so as to provide the experience necessary to achieve these ends. The schools exist to supplement the work of the parent in Catholic Christian education, and to foster in children a love of God and neighbor.

To attain these goals, the Center has the following objectives:

- To reach the greatest possible spiritual development, the environment for the young child will be prepared so that it provides an unfolding, integrated approach to discovering God's love. Through these experiences, the child may understand more fully the beliefs of the Catholic Church, develop a personal prayer life, and participate in the liturgy.
- Through these early experiences, the Center seeks to help the child form a healthy spiritual base on which to form values consistent with our Catholic beliefs.
- The physical and cognitive growth of the child is fostered through activity programs that are developmentally appropriate for the young child. The program allows the child to develop fitness, an understanding of health, a sense of well-being and a love for learning.
- All children are treated with equal respect and consideration.

## **School Year and Hours of Operation**

Our hours of operation are:

Regular Day: 8:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (Mini Day's pickup is at 11:15)

Extended Day Care: 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

The Center provides:

- A 10 month school year from August – May that allows the child to participate from 7:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- A day care program which provides the opportunity for working parents to place their child in an all day program from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- A summer program from June – August from 7:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. or 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The summer program is broken up into 2 sessions. It is highly recommended that new students and/or students who have not been in school before attend one of the summer sessions.
- A late fee will be assessed if you pick up your child after 2:30p.m. and 11:30a.m. on mini days for children enrolled in the regular school day. If your child is enrolled in the extended day a late fee will be charged if you pick up your child after 5:30p.m. The late fee is \$15 plus \$2 a minute that you are late (for example if you arrive at 2:31 you will be charged \$17).

The holiday schedule and administrative mini-days are listed on the school calendar.

### **Attendance**

The regular school day commences at 8:00 a.m. All students, except for toddlers, are to be in school no later than 8:00 a.m. Tardiness for all kindergarteners are recorded. Parents must notify the office for absenteeism or tardiness by 8:00 a.m., and for early and/or late pick up, or other emergencies. Students must be in school by 10am, the school will not accept children after 10am.

### **Admission Policy and Requirements**

Admission to Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center is based in part on the school's ability to serve the child effectively with the resources available to the school. Provisions for children with special needs are individually reviewed during an initial interview with the parents in order to determine whether or not the school is able to meet the special needs of the child. A special need is defined as a condition that exists which requires adjustments in the usual learning environment if the child is to develop to his or her potential.

In determining acceptance, decisions of acceptance will be made after the child observation and parent interview, and after we receive all required application forms and supporting documentation from the applicant. (Birth Certificate, Baptismal Certificate if applicable, Teacher Reference Report, Non-Disclosure form)

An observation session and parent interview is required for all incoming students. Parents are asked to share their philosophy, commitment, and support of our program through the parent interview and questionnaire.

Admission of a child with special needs is reviewed as needed in consultation with the parents, child's health care provider, and the program's administrative team. The final decision is made by the admissions team and takes into consideration whether or not the school is able to meet the needs of the child within the classroom environment.

Children in the Preschool and Kindergarten programs must be fully toilet trained prior to entrance. If your child is not fully trained they may be asked to stay home until they are fully potty trained or dis-enrolled.

Children in the Toddler division do not need to be toilet trained; pull ups are required, diapers are not allowed.

### **Financial Contract**

A financial contract for the 10 month school year must be completed and returned to the finance office prior to the start of each school year. Delinquency in tuition payments may result in your child being dis-enrolled. (Please refer to the section entitled "Financial Arrangements.")

### **Registration Requirements**

During the spring semester of the school year, currently enrolled students are required to re-enroll for the next school year. As acceptance for the upcoming school year is not automatic, the school reserves the right to accept, waitlist, or defer acceptance of re-registrants at the discretion of the Admissions Committee (director, teacher, and consultant/psychologist). Such decisions are based on parental cooperation, student behavior, and the school's ability to meet the needs of the child. Children who are eligible based on entry age requirements and who successfully complete the ELC program are recommended for placement at Mary, Star of the Sea School.

### **Parent Orientation**

Before the school year begins (in August), parents are required to attend a mandatory parent orientation meeting that is conducted by the classroom teachers.

## **Financial Arrangements**

### **Contract**

A tuition payment option agreement is included with your registration packet. All parents must enroll on-line with FACTS Management through the ELC website at [www.staroftheseaelc.org](http://www.staroftheseaelc.org). If you are making one payment, you may pay at school or through FACTS Management.

### **Financial Assistance**

Limited financial assistance is available; you can apply through FACTS Management. Currently enrolled students are given first preference. Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center participates with the following financial assistance: Child Care Aware, Child Care Connection. MCCYN, Kamehameha Schools Pauahi Keiki Scholars (Preschool); PATCH Preschool Open Doors (4 and 5 year olds).

### **Payments, Refunds, and Schedule Changes**

Schedule changes or withdrawal requests shall be made in writing and addressed to the Director at least 2 weeks prior to the date of change or withdrawal. No adjustments, refunds or credit is made for absent or elected vacation times, or if the child leaves to attend another school during the school year.

All fees and tuition deposits are non-refundable. Tuition is non-refundable due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. COVID-19 Pandemic).

Checks that are returned will be charged a \$25.00 fee.

All checks shall be made payable to Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center.

## **Clothing and Personal Items**

Uniforms are required for the Preschool/Kindergarten division and not required for the Toddler Division. Uniforms may be purchased at:

Dennis School Uniforms Located in: Nā Lama Kukui

Address: 560 N Nimitz Hwy Ste 107c, Honolulu, HI 96817

Telephone: (808) 396-9318 Website: [Dennisuniform.com](http://Dennisuniform.com)

Acceptable uniform attire includes navy blue or khaki colored shorts/pants and sneakers (athletic shoes) that your child is able to put on by his/her self. Extra clothes for your child does not have to be uniforms, please label all of your child's clothing.

Free dress is allowed on the last Friday of each month. Party attire and aloha attire are allowed on special occasions. Notices will be sent regarding special attire days.

The school will not be responsible for lost items; please do not send toys, jewelry, or other expensive items to school with your child as they may become lost.

### **Classroom Assignment**

Students are assigned to a class or teacher with the start of each new school year. These assignments may be subject to change during the first 2 weeks of the school year, and will remain the same for the duration of the school year and for the time that your child remains in the division. If a change in teacher or class is recommended, the recommendations will be discussed with parents before decisions are made. Teacher assignment requests will be considered and are not guaranteed.

### **Curriculum**

Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center is a Montessori Early Learning Center. The philosophical approach and organizational framework shall be consistent with the requirements of the Montessori Method. The program provides for activity-centered learning and integration with the areas of:

1. Religion – Catholic-value orientation permeates the entire day and prayers are part of the daily schedule.
2. Language Arts – Skills in the language area and extensions throughout all areas of the environment.
3. Math - Skills in the math area are extended throughout all areas of the environment.
4. Fine Arts – Art, music and movement, dance.
5. Cosmic – Science, social studies, technology.
6. Practical Life and Sensorial – Sensory-motor integration and development.

### **Health and Medical Requirements Children**

Newly enrolled children are required to have a current immunization health record, physical examination and Tuberculosis Clearance (TB). Parents are required to submit a current student health and medical information/form before the child starts school. All children must have a current Health Record (Form 14) on file in the office. Any child without a current health record is not eligible to enter school until the forms are completed. If a child is not immunized, a State of Hawaii vaccination exemption form needs to be completed. All unvaccinated children will be required to stay home if the school has a case of a vaccine preventable disease.

The forms are kept current by the secretary and updated on a regular basis. The secretary makes sure that all new students have the necessary health documentation prior to starting



school. Student files are kept confidential, with consent, the administrator, teachers, parent, legal guardian and regulatory agencies may have access to the file.

### **Allergies**

Allergies to food, including milk restrictions, shall be noted in writing by the parents and signed by or accompanied by a signed note from the physician. Allergies shall be noted on the child's emergency record and on the Student History form. A procedural plan of action from your child's physician is also required. The school will seek to accommodate the special dietary needs of children with allergies only. If the school is unable to meet these needs, parents may be requested to provide a home lunch for their child. Parents who have preferences due to dietary and or religious preferences for their child's meal may supplement their child's meal with alternative food items with the approval of the Director.

### **Pet Allergies**

If your child is allergic to pets, please also note that on your child allergy form. No pets are allowed on campus. If your child will have contact with a pet, written parental permission is required. There are no pets in classroom except fish.

### **Animal and Pet Policy**

The ELC does not have any animals with fur or feathers, or reptiles in the classroom due to risk of possible allergies and salmonella infection. Every so often a service animal or visiting animal (i.e. TSA "bomb sniffing dog", or an HPD "K-9 special unit" dog), may visit the school to display their skills as trained dogs with their handlers always in control. These dogs appear in good health and do not usually come into contact with the children. Teachers and/or volunteers are required to directly supervise any activity involving animals to insure the safety of children (and the animal). At enrollment and with an annual update of the child and staff emergency information, an Allergy Verification Form is included. This form asks parents to list known "allergens" their child may have, i.e. animal fur. The information is shared with all members of the teaching teams and appropriate modifications for the child are made.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Policy**

Chapter 350, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) states that §350-1.1 Reports. (a) Notwithstanding any other state law concerning confidentiality to the contrary, the following persons who, in their professional or official capacity, have reason to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or that there exists a substantial risk that child abuse or neglect may occur in the reasonably foreseeable future, shall immediately report the matter orally to the department or

to the police department. Due to this statute, all employees are “mandated reporters” of suspected child abuse, this is not an option it is a legal requirement.

Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center’s child abuse reporting procedures are as follow:

- Employees must notify the Director or designated person (Delegate) of the suspected child abuse.
- The Director or Delegate will follow “A Guide for Mandated Reporters” to file the report by first calling the Department of Human Services, Social Services Division, Child Welfare Services. Then follow up with a written report if instructed to do so. (See appendix for “A Guide for Mandated Reporters”).

### **Child Abuse Policy and Procedure Involving Staff**

If a staff member of Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center is accused or suspected of abuse or neglect of a child, the following procedure will be taken:

- The Director or Delegate will notify the Department of Human Services, Social Services Division, Child Welfare Services.
- The staff member will be placed on leave of absence, pending further investigation.
- If the investigation verifies that in fact the staff member was involved in abuse or neglect, the staff will be immediately terminated.
- If no justification was found for the allegation, the staff member will resume work.

### **Child Guidance and Management**

Teachers and staff have the responsibility to guide, role model, and facilitate the appropriate behaviors from children that are positive, proactive, and nurturing through developing one’s relationship with the child. Positive guidance and management are important because they promote self-control, teach responsibility, and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effectively staff can encourage appropriate child behavior, the less time and energy is spent correcting a child’s misbehavior. Actions that acknowledge the child’s efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small; are likely to encourage healthy development.

There is no perfect formula or one “right method” for child guidance and management, because each child is a unique individual and so are families in which they belong. As educators, we know that using physical force, verbal put downs, and coercion can interfere with a child’s healthy development, and have negative effects on children. As educators, we also know that being positive role models for children allow children to learn from us. Effective guidance and management focuses on the development of the child. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation, and understanding of the child and understanding of one’s own belief systems regarding child discipline.

## Discipline

- The teachers and staff are responsible for the behavior of the students in the classroom, playground, restrooms, church, field trips, etc. and any other place on the school campus where they are gathered in groups.
- Positive communication and classroom management are required. Teachers and staff must role model respect, care, and nurturance in their voice tone, choice of words, and gestures to students and other staff.
- **Physical punishment, Coercion, and Psychological Abuse disciplinary methods are never used. (i.e. spanking, pulling a child's body part, threatening, name calling, humiliating, and physically forcing a child to do something).**
- Students need to be treated gently, and never pulled at their arms or handled in a rough manner.
- Time-out may be used to remove a student from a disruptive situation; however time out is not more than the child's age; used too frequently; and the student are in view of the staff.
- Re-direction and proactive intervention are preferred methods of child management so that the student can be appropriately directed at making better choices.

## Drop off and Pick up Procedures

- During drop off and pick up, park your car and turn off your engine before proceeding to drop off or pick up your child from school.
- For rainy day drop off, if you are pulling up in front of the school put your car in park so that when we take your out of the car it is safe for your child and our staff member that the car will not move.
- If the staff feels that a parent is not fit to pick up their child from school, the staff will call someone to pick up the child that is authorized on the child's emergency contact form.
- **No speeding on campus and be aware of the children and surroundings.**

## Emergency Medical Care

- In case of an accident or emergency, it is the school's policy to notify the child's mother first and then the father, unless otherwise specified. If the parents cannot be reached, the child's physician who is noted on the emergency card is contacted and his/her orders followed. If a child needs immediate medical attention, we will call 911 for an ambulance, and the child will be taken to the nearest medical facility (Kapiolani Medical Center). Employees of Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center may not transport

children in their own car to receive emergency care. A staff member will accompany the child in the ambulance.

- If the reporting of injuries to parents requires a phone call, the child's teacher will make the call.
- At least one staff member has a current Pediatric first aid and child cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate per each group of children at all times. (99% of all staff has a current Pediatric First Aid and child CPR certificate as part of their training)

If a child requires a medical emergency treatment such as an Epi Pen, due to an allergic reaction, the parents must complete the Administration of Medication form and provide an action plan from the doctor on what to do in case of an allergic reaction. The consent form and medication is kept in a location out of children's reach and with easy access in case of an emergency. The secretary notifies all teachers and staff in writing regarding the emergency medical care for the child.

### **Grievance Procedures**

The grievance procedure for parents shall be first handled at the point of origination. The following applies:

- If a conflict arises or concern arises between a parent(s) and teacher/staff, the teacher/staff shall work to resolve the issue at that level.
- If the teacher and parent(s) cannot resolve the issue, the Lead Teacher seeks to resolve the issue with the teacher/staff and parent(s).
- If the Lead Teacher is unable to resolve the issue, the Director seeks to resolve the issue with the teacher/staff and parent(s).
- If the Director is unable to resolve the issue with the teacher/staff and parent(s), the Director will seek counsel of the Pastor, Hawaii Catholic Schools, and/or the Diocesan attorney.
- If you are not satisfied that your issues is resolved and have concerns you may call the state at (808) 587-5266.

### **Library and Audio-Visual Material**

Mary, Star of the Sea School library is available to kindergarten students attending the ELC. A rotating schedule provides the kindergarten children with the opportunity to visit the library and borrow books. Audio-Visual materials may be utilized to both supplement and complement our curriculum areas and are selected for their educational, cultural, and social significance.

### **Naptime**

Parents are to provide a sleep mat for your child to sleep on for naptime that is stored in their cubby and taken home every Friday to be washed.

## Nutrition

Nutritional meals and snacks meeting USDA CACFP food program guidelines are provided by the school and includes; breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack for children enrolled in the extended daycare. Please do not send in food as outside food is not allowed.

## Respiratory illness Policies (COVID, RSV, flu)

- Vaccine – Families are encouraged to stay up to date with vaccination.
- COVID-19 Testing and Notification – If your child or someone in your household tests positive for COVID-19, you must notify the school as soon as possible. Please keep your child home for 5 days from the positive COVID test result, and they may return to school on the 6<sup>th</sup> day as long as they are symptom free and have a doctor's note. When your child returns to school he/she is required to wear a mask for 10 days from the positive test result.
- Stay Home if Sick – If your child is sick, you are expected to keep them home from school and notify the school that your child will be absent that day. **A doctor's clearance note is required to return to school no matter what the symptoms are.**
- COVID Exposure – If anyone in your household has been notified that you were in contact with an individual infected with COVID-19, please test your child on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> day after exposure. Your child may come to school as long as they have no symptoms and need to wear a mask for 5 days from exposure.
- Travel – No COVID policies
- Face mask – Wearing a face mask is optional, if your child is excessively coughing or sneezing, and/or showing symptoms of being sick we will ask your child to wear a face mask

## Sick Child Policy

If your child has a fever, diarrhea, vomiting or a contagious illness or disease, he or she should not be sent to school, sick children are not permitted in school. If your child has a contagious disease, please notify the school as soon possible so that we can send an email notification to all of our families and staff. If your child is sent home sick he/she needs to be symptom free for 24 hours without medication (your child is not able to come to school the day after they are sent home unless it is on a Friday). Upon returning to school, a doctor's note is required certifying that he or she is able to return to school and not contagious.

## Communicable Disease Procedure for Notification of Exposure

The teacher will call parents of the ill child and the child is placed away from other children in the health room or classroom supervised by staff until the child is picked up. If the school is notified that a child or staff member has a communicable disease, an email is sent to parents

notifying them of what the communicable disease is and the number of cases that has been reported. The school works with a public health nurse for the Department of Health and also has a Pediatric Physician Consultant as needed. The Department of Health provides informational flyers on specific communicable disease reported and these flyers are available for the parents/staff. Sometimes information retrieved from a reputable source on the internet is also used to supplement the Department of Health flyer or parents are directed to a specific link that provides more detailed information.

### **Storage and Administration of Medication**

The school will only administer medication if the medication is in the original prescription container. The parent or guardian must complete an Administration of Medication form. All medication is kept out of reach of the children in a locked cabinet behind the secretary's desk or in an administrative office not accessible to children. Medication that needs to be refrigerated will be kept in the administrative office and kept out of reach of children. Medication for allergic reactions (i.e. Epi Pen, Benadryl) will be kept in the child's classroom along with a copy of their action plan, and out of reach of the children. The secretary administers the medication, however in the absence of the secretary, the child's teacher, or Director may administer medication.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Arrival and Dismissal of children**

The parent and/or staff is responsible for signing children in and out. If someone picks up a child that is not recognized by staff, he/she will be asked for identification to verify that the person picking up the child is authorized on the emergency form. Children will not be released to any person whose name is not on the emergency card or without parental consent.

#### **Broadcast Communication System**

Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center uses **Connect-Ed and Mailchimp**, which allows us to send personalized voice messages to your family's home, work, or cell phones, and also by e-mail. We can communicate with parents and staff regarding school events, emergency situations, and other relevant school-related issues, updates, or activities.

#### **Building Security and Access**

- All areas of the building is secured when school is not in session.
- A door code is needed to enter the school office

- Classrooms and other areas must be disarmed and armed properly upon entering and leaving the premise.
- All areas of the ELC are armed automatically at 9:30 PM.
- Security cameras are installed in all main areas of the building and monitors of the cameras are available in the main office and Director's office.

### **Cleaning and Sanitation**

- All classrooms are fogged (hypochlorous acid is used in the fogger machine) at the end of the each day and cleaned by our janitorial service.
- All cleaning products are kept locked and clearly labeled in our janitorial storage room.

### **Containers for Soiled Pull-Ups**

A container with a lid that opens and closes using hands-free device and locked is located within the bathroom area in the toddler classrooms. The bathroom area is supervised by staff; the container with the soiled pull-ups is kept closed and locked and not accessible to children. All food is prepared in the kitchen by the kitchen staff, whose primary function is to prepare meals; classroom staff does not have food preparation duties.

### **Toddler Supplies**

The toddler teachers will let parents know if they need pull ups, extra clothes, or other supplies for their child. Each child has their own basket for their pull ups. They will either communicate with the parent verbally when they see the parent, through transparent classroom, or send home a written note on what supplies their child needs.

### **Diapering and Toileting Toddler Division**

The changing area for the toddlers is located outside the bathroom area. The changing bench is low to the ground. If a child is able to independently change him/her self they will get a paper towel and place it on the bench, sit down and change, then discard the paper towel when they are done and wash their hands. The staff will assist the children in changing their pull-up and clothes. The bench is sanitized after each group of children.

The following procedures are followed for diapering (pull up) changing:

- The children are checked every 2 hours from the time they arrive and changed as needed, they are also changed/checked before and after nap.
- Each child brings in their own pull ups.
- Children are changed in the bathroom area only.

- For children with a bowel movement, they are changed in the bathroom, placing newspaper under the child and disposed of in a plastic bag.
- Soiled clothes are bagged and marked with the child's name and put in their designated bin.
- The bathroom area is cleaned after every toileting shift. (Morning, after lunch, after naptime)
- Children are taught to independently take off and put on their pull up when they are ready.
- All pull ups are disposed of in a locked trash can with a step on lid to open it.
- All staff must wear gloves when changing a child's soiled clothes or bowel movement pull up.
- Any staff preparing or serving food is not allowed in the bathroom area until they are done with food preparation.

### **Hand Washing and Sanitizing Hands**

Effective hand washing helps prevent the spread of communicable diseases and is required of all staff, volunteers, and children.

All staff must wash their hands:

- Upon arrival
- Before handling or serving food and eating
- After using the restroom
- After sneezing, coughing, blowing or wiping noses and tending to a sick child
- Any time any activity that may result in cross contamination or soiled with bodily fluids
- Before and after feeding a child
- Before and after handling medication
- After taking out garbage
- After Cleaning
- Before and after toileting a child
- After wiping a child's face or sores
- After handling pets and or animals/insects
- After playing in dirt/sand (sandbox, gardening)

If soap and water is not available, hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol may be used. If hand sanitizer is kept in the classroom it is monitored and kept in an area with adult supervision.



Proper hand washing procedures are followed and demonstrated to the children. (See appendix for hand washing procedure).

All children must wash their hands:

- Upon arrival
- Before and after eating
- After blowing their nose or having contact with bodily fluid
- After using the restroom
- After cleaning
- Before and after water activities

### **Conferences**

Conferences are arranged so that our teachers can share their observations and recommendations with you. Your conference is a time when we hope that you will share your insights about your child.

If you need to speak to your child's teacher at any other time please contact the teacher to arrange a time to meet. If an emergency arises please contact the office.

### **Confidentiality**

We are committed to maintaining the confidentiality of your child's personal information and will not release any of your child's personal information to any third party without the prior written consent of the child's authorized parent and/or guardian. Access by employees to confidential information will otherwise be limited to those who have a business need for the access and who have entered into confidentiality agreements with us.

### **Developmental Screening**

Developmental screenings are generally conducted within the first three months of entering our program. They are completed by the family via survey. The results of this assessment is confidential and shared with the family and the teaching team to support the development of the student's individualized learning and care plan. If there are further questions, our psychologist/consultant will advise the family. If there are no further questions or concerns following the initial screening, no further assessment is conducted, unless other concerns arise at a later time. All screening results are kept confidential and are not retained in a student's confidential folder.

## **Disaster plan for emergencies for children with disabilities and special needs**

The school's health consultant will review written procedures for providing the needs of children with disabilities and children with special needs during an emergency. (If applicable to enrolled children; disaster plan is in the appendix).

## **Emergency Contact Information**

Parents must notify the ELC office if there are any changes in telephone, address, and other important information to keep the student's emergency contact forms updated.

## **Excursions**

Parental permission for participation is required in writing. Parents sign an inclusive excursion permission form at the beginning of the year and are required to sign a form for each event. We ask for parent volunteers to make sure we have enough adults to help supervise the children when they are on a field trip and have a ratio of 1 to 6 for children ages 3-6 or lower ratio if required by the excursion location. The children are also talked to on how we sit on the bus and always staying with their group. Children in the toddler division do not go on excursions. The school uses Gomes bus service or Ground Transportation for excursions, the company and the vehicle/driver meet the state school bus and traffic laws. School buses are not required to have seatbelts.

## **Fund Raising**

The Early Learning Center participates in the Mary, Star of the Sea East Honolulu Food Festival. Parental support and commitment for this event is expected. Children and staff shall not be exploited in activities which would be detrimental to the children or the program.

## **Parent Teacher Guild (PTG)**

Parent volunteers organize the PTG along with staff. The PTG engages the families of the school with organizing social events for the school community to participate in. If you are interested in joining the PTG please let the office or your child's teacher know.

**Insurance Coverage:** The Early Learning Center has liability and student accident insurance.

**Parking:** Parking is permitted in the church parking lot and the first floor of the parking structure. Please do not park in the drop off area in front of the Parish Center and Early Learning Center or in the Fire Lane at the back of the Early Learning Center (red zones). Two designated parking stalls in front of the Parish Center are reserved for disabled parking. All parents and visitors are urged to use caution when entering and leaving parking stalls. Please do not leave young children unattended in the car.

### **Physician and Psychologist Consultant**

As part of the services we offer, we have a pediatric physician available who serves as a consultant to the school. We also have a psychologist/consultant that supports our families and school staff. Specific guidelines as they apply to student observations are available upon request to parents of enrolled students.

### **Release and Disclosure of Information**

Both parents have access to their child's records unless a court order prohibits the release of information. Information is released only with written parental consent. Release of information forms is available at the ELC office. If an emergency arises that endangers a child, the school does not need parental consent to disclose or release information about the child.

### **Suspension Policy**

A child may be suspended if they are not fully potty trained and enrolled in the 3-6 division, they may return to school once they are fully potty trained (the child is able to go to the bathroom by his/her self and take on and off their clothes and wipe themselves without assistance).

### **Termination Policy**

Families are expected to cooperate and be involved in their child's development with the school. If families do not cooperate with the school and/or the needs of a child are not able to be met the school may terminate your child. (Explanation of the suspension/termination prevention policy is in the appendix)

**Transportation:** Transportation is not provided to and from school.

### **Visitors/Observers**

Observations are by appointment only and all visitors (parents or otherwise) shall check in with the office and review and agree to the observation guidelines before entering the classroom.

### **Assessment of Children**

All teachers and staff are trained to use the assessment tools used to evaluate the children and have taken classes on how to do assessment and observation. During professional development we offer staff to train and take courses to help with assessment, observation and other tools that we use to help assess children in the classroom.

## **NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct**

Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning center is NAEYC accredited therefore our teaching staff follow the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct that is included at the end of the handbook.

## **Safe Environment Program Policy**

The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops require dioceses and eparchies to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, volunteers, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children and young people. The children's education program consists of age-appropriate lessons built upon the Church's teachings that "the human body shares in the dignity of the image of God" (CCC364). That dignity leads us to foster in every person the belief and awareness that as a person of God they are deserving of love and respect. Because dignity is a gift given by God at birth, abuse of all kind is harmful to that dignity. Children being among the most valuable require us to protect that dignity. Consistent with diocesan policy. Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center, will conduct Safe Environment training as part of the preschool and kindergarten religious education curriculum. Prior to the presentation of the curriculum, parents will be provided with an opportunity to review the safe environment training materials.

## **Wellness Policy**

This policy supports the mission of Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center, a Hawaii Catholic School. The school community recognizes that a poor diet, combined with lack of physical activity has a negative impact on student's health and their ability to learn, both short-term and long range.

The National Catholic Education Association statement on Accountability and Assessment in Catholic Education states that: "We hold a sacred trust to educate and form the whole person - mind, body, and spirit." As Catholic educators, we believe in providing consistent school activities and an environment in which students can learn to make lifestyle choices that promote their health futures.

The Wellness Policy of Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center seeks to:

1. Provide a positive environment and appropriate knowledge of healthy food choices and the benefits of daily physical activity that:
  - Ensures that students have access to healthy food choices and safe physical activities at school and at school functions.
  - Provides a pleasant eating environment and secure playground for students and staff.

- Allow sufficient time for students to eat lunch and to engage in social activities for physical fitness prior to consuming meals.
  - Enables students through a health and physical education curricula to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy food and physical activity choices for a lifetime.
2. Reduce student access to foods of minimal nutritional value and ensures the integrity of the school lunch program by:
    - Discouraging food and beverage sales that are in conflict with the USDA food program.
    - Encourage teachers, students, and parents to make healthy, nutritious food choices when food is used as part of a curricular lesson.
    - Food and beverages served at school will meet or exceed the nutrition recommendations of the United States Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
  3. Provide opportunities for school community involvement in the development, review, assessment, and implementation of Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center's Wellness Policy. To ensure that this policy is being met, recommendations to improve, add, or revise policies will be reported to the director and/or designee.

**Hawaii Catholic School Policy Code of Christian Conduct for Students and Parents/Guardians**

The students' interest in receiving quality, morally based education can be served if students, parents, and school official work together. Normally, differences between these individuals can be resolved. In some instances, however, the school may find it necessary, in its discretion, to require parents and/or guardians to withdraw their child.

It shall be an express condition of enrollment that the student behaves in a manner, both on and off the campus that is consistent with the Christian principles of the school as determined by the school in its discretions. These principals include, but are not limited to any policies, principles, or procedures set forth in any student/parent handbook of the school.

These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Parents/guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of the school.

2. Students and parents/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school operation and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive.
3. These expectations for students and parents/guardians include but are not limited to; all school sponsored program and events (e.g. extended care, athletics, field trips, etc.)

The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, which actions fall short of meeting the Christian principles of the school, and to determine which conduct is of such severe nature as to warrant immediate action without warning and/or without any intermediate step. Failure to follow these principals will result in disciplinary action short of a requirement to withdraw from the school (e.g. suspension of student, or suspension of parent/guardian's privilege to come on campus grounds and/or participate in parish/school activities, volunteer work, etc.)

### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

### **This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer**

*This handbook is intended to describe the philosophy, services, and structure of the school's educational program. The director is the final interpreter of the content of this handbook.*

**Revised 10/14/24**



# Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment

Revised April 2005,  
Reaffirmed and Updated May 2011

**A position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children**

*Endorsed by the Association for Childhood Education International and  
Southern Early Childhood Association  
Adopted by the National Association for Family Child Care*

## Preamble

NAEYC recognizes that those who work with young children face many daily decisions that have moral and ethical implications. The **NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct** offers guidelines for responsible behavior and sets forth a common basis for resolving the principal ethical dilemmas encountered in early childhood care and education. The **Statement of Commitment** is not part of the Code but is a personal acknowledgement of an individual's willingness to embrace the distinctive values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood care and education.

The primary focus of the Code is on daily practice with children and their families in programs for children from birth through 8 years of age, such as infant/toddler programs, preschool and prekindergarten programs, child care centers, hospital and child life settings, family child care homes, kindergartens, and primary classrooms. When the issues involve young children, then these provisions also apply to specialists who do not work directly with children, including program administrators, parent educators, early childhood adult educators, and officials with responsibility for program monitoring and licensing. (Note: See also the "Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators," online at [www.naeyc.org/about/positions/pdf/ethics04.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/about/positions/pdf/ethics04.pdf) and the "Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Program Administrators," online at [http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05\\_supp.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05_supp.pdf))

## Core values

Standards of ethical behavior in early childhood care and education are based on commitment to the following core values that are deeply rooted in the history of the field of early childhood care and education. We have made a commitment to

- Appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle
- Base our work on knowledge of how children develop and learn
- Appreciate and support the bond between the child and family
- Recognize that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture,\* community, and society
- Respect the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual (child, family member, and colleague)
- Respect diversity in children, families, and colleagues
- Recognize that children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect

\* The term culture includes ethnicity, racial identity, economic level, family structure, language, and religious and political beliefs, which profoundly influence each child's development and relationship to the world.

## Conceptual framework

The Code sets forth a framework of professional responsibilities in four sections. Each section addresses an area of professional relationships: (1) with children, (2) with families, (3) among colleagues, and (4) with the community and society. Each section includes an introduction to the primary responsibilities of the early childhood practitioner in that context. The introduction is followed by a set of ideals (I) that reflect exemplary professional practice and by a set of principles (P) describing practices that are required, prohibited, or permitted.

The **ideals** reflect the aspirations of practitioners. The **principles** guide conduct and assist practitioners in resolving ethical dilemmas.\* Both ideals and principles are intended to direct practitioners to those questions which, when responsibly answered, can provide the basis for conscientious decision making. While the Code provides specific direction for addressing some ethical dilemmas, many others will require the practitioner to combine the guidance of the Code with professional judgment.

The ideals and principles in this Code present a shared framework of professional responsibility that affirms our commitment to the core values of our field. The Code publicly acknowledges the responsibilities that we in the field have assumed, and in so doing supports ethical behavior in our work. Practitioners who face situations with ethical dimensions are urged to seek guidance in the applicable parts of this Code and in the spirit that informs the whole.

Often “the right answer”—the best ethical course of action to take—is not obvious. There may be no readily apparent, positive way to handle a situation. When one important value contradicts another, we face an ethical dilemma. When we face a dilemma, it is our professional responsibility to consult the Code and all relevant parties to find the most ethical resolution.

### Section I

#### Ethical Responsibilities to Children

Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the human life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide care and education in settings that are safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive for each child. We are commit-

ted to supporting children’s development and learning; respecting individual differences; and helping children learn to live, play, and work cooperatively. We are also committed to promoting children’s self-awareness, competence, self-worth, resiliency, and physical well-being.

#### Ideals

- I-1.1**—To be familiar with the knowledge base of early childhood care and education and to stay informed through continuing education and training.
- I-1.2**—To base program practices upon current knowledge and research in the field of early childhood education, child development, and related disciplines, as well as on particular knowledge of each child.
- I-1.3**—To recognize and respect the unique qualities, abilities, and potential of each child.
- I-1.4**—To appreciate the vulnerability of children and their dependence on adults.
- I-1.5**—To create and maintain safe and healthy settings that foster children’s social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development and that respect their dignity and their contributions.
- I-1.6**—To use assessment instruments and strategies that are appropriate for the children to be assessed, that are used only for the purposes for which they were designed, and that have the potential to benefit children.
- I-1.7**—To use assessment information to understand and support children’s development and learning, to support instruction, and to identify children who may need additional services.
- I-1.8**—To support the right of each child to play and learn in an inclusive environment that meets the needs of children with and without disabilities.
- I-1.9**—To advocate for and ensure that all children, including those with special needs, have access to the support services needed to be successful.
- I-1.10**—To ensure that each child’s culture, language, ethnicity, and family structure are recognized and valued in the program.
- I-1.11**—To provide all children with experiences in a language that they know, as well as support children in maintaining the use of their home language and in learning English.
- I-1.12**—To work with families to provide a safe and smooth transition as children and families move from one program to the next.

\* There is not necessarily a corresponding principle for each ideal.



## Principles

**P-1.1—Above all, we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are emotionally damaging, physically harmful, disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative, or intimidating to children. This principle has precedence over all others in this Code.**

**P-1.2—**We shall care for and educate children in positive emotional and social environments that are cognitively stimulating and that support each child's culture, language, ethnicity, and family structure.

**P-1.3—**We shall not participate in practices that discriminate against children by denying benefits, giving special advantages, or excluding them from programs or activities on the basis of their sex, race, national origin, immigration status, preferred home language, religious beliefs, medical condition, disability, or the marital status/family structure, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs or other affiliations of their families. (Aspects of this principle do not apply in programs that have a lawful mandate to provide services to a particular population of children.)

**P-1.4—**We shall use two-way communications to involve all those with relevant knowledge (including families and staff) in decisions concerning a child, as appropriate, ensuring confidentiality of sensitive information. (See also P-2.4.)

**P-1.5—**We shall use appropriate assessment systems, which include multiple sources of information, to provide information on children's learning and development.

**P-1.6—**We shall strive to ensure that decisions such as those related to enrollment, retention, or assignment to special education services, will be based on multiple sources of information and will never be based on a single assessment, such as a test score or a single observation.

**P-1.7—**We shall strive to build individual relationships with each child; make individualized adaptations in teaching strategies, learning environments, and curricula; and consult with the family so that each child benefits from the program. If after such efforts have been exhausted, the current placement does not meet a child's needs, or the child is seriously jeopardizing the ability of other children to benefit from the program, we shall collaborate with the child's family and appropriate specialists to determine the additional services needed and/or the placement option(s) most likely to ensure the child's success. (Aspects of this

principle may not apply in programs that have a lawful mandate to provide services to a particular population of children.)

**P-1.8—**We shall be familiar with the risk factors for and symptoms of child abuse and neglect, including physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse and physical, emotional, educational, and medical neglect. We shall know and follow state laws and community procedures that protect children against abuse and neglect.

**P-1.9—**When we have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, we shall report it to the appropriate community agency and follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken. When appropriate, parents or guardians will be informed that the referral will be or has been made.

**P-1.10—**When another person tells us of his or her suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected, we shall assist that person in taking appropriate action in order to protect the child.

**P-1.11—**When we become aware of a practice or situation that endangers the health, safety, or well-being of children, we have an ethical responsibility to protect children or inform parents and/or others who can.

## Section II

### Ethical Responsibilities to Families

Families\* are of primary importance in children's development. Because the family and the early childhood practitioner have a common interest in the child's well-being, we acknowledge a primary responsibility to bring about communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the home and early childhood program in ways that enhance the child's development.

### Ideals

**I-2.1—**To be familiar with the knowledge base related to working effectively with families and to stay informed through continuing education and training.

**I-2.2—**To develop relationships of mutual trust and create partnerships with the families we serve.

**I-2.3—**To welcome all family members and encourage them to participate in the program, including involvement in shared decision making.

\* The term family may include those adults, besides parents, with the responsibility of being involved in educating, nurturing, and advocating for the child.

- I-2.4**—To listen to families, acknowledge and build upon their strengths and competencies, and learn from families as we support them in their task of nurturing children.
- I-2.5**—To respect the dignity and preferences of each family and to make an effort to learn about its structure, culture, language, customs, and beliefs to ensure a culturally consistent environment for all children and families.
- I-2.6**—To acknowledge families' childrearing values and their right to make decisions for their children.
- I-2.7**—To share information about each child's education and development with families and to help them understand and appreciate the current knowledge base of the early childhood profession.
- I-2.8**—To help family members enhance their understanding of their children, as staff are enhancing their understanding of each child through communications with families, and support family members in the continuing development of their skills as parents.
- I-2.9**—To foster families' efforts to build support networks and, when needed, participate in building networks for families by providing them with opportunities to interact with program staff, other families, community resources, and professional services.
- P-2.7**—We shall inform families about the nature and purpose of the program's child assessments and how data about their child will be used.
- P-2.8**—We shall treat child assessment information confidentially and share this information only when there is a legitimate need for it.
- P-2.9**—We shall inform the family of injuries and incidents involving their child, of risks such as exposures to communicable diseases that might result in infection, and of occurrences that might result in emotional stress.
- P-2.10**—Families shall be fully informed of any proposed research projects involving their children and shall have the opportunity to give or withhold consent without penalty. We shall not permit or participate in research that could in any way hinder the education, development, or well-being of children.
- P-2.11**—We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness working with their children.
- P-2.12**—We shall develop written policies for the protection of confidentiality and the disclosure of children's records. These policy documents shall be made available to all program personnel and families. Disclosure of children's records beyond family members, program personnel, and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality shall require familial consent (except in cases of abuse or neglect).
- P-2.13**—We shall maintain confidentiality and shall respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we have reason to believe that a child's welfare is at risk, it is permissible to share confidential information with agencies, as well as with individuals who have legal responsibility for intervening in the child's interest.
- P-2.14**—In cases where family members are in conflict with one another, we shall work openly, sharing our observations of the child, to help all parties involved make informed decisions. We shall refrain from becoming an advocate for one party.
- P-2.15**—We shall be familiar with and appropriately refer families to community resources and professional support services. After a referral has been made, we shall follow up to ensure that services have been appropriately provided.

## Principles

- P-2.1**—We shall not deny family members access to their child's classroom or program setting unless access is denied by court order or other legal restriction.
- P-2.2**—We shall inform families of program philosophy, policies, curriculum, assessment system, cultural practices, and personnel qualifications, and explain why we teach as we do—which should be in accordance with our ethical responsibilities to children (see Section I).
- P-2.3**—We shall inform families of and, when appropriate, involve them in policy decisions. (See also I-2.3.)
- P-2.4**—We shall ensure that the family is involved in significant decisions affecting their child. (See also P-1.4.)
- P-2.5**—We shall make every effort to communicate effectively with all families in a language that they understand. We shall use community resources for translation and interpretation when we do not have sufficient resources in our own programs.
- P-2.6**—As families share information with us about their children and families, we shall ensure that families' input is an important contribution to the planning and implementation of the program.

## Section III

### Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

In a caring, cooperative workplace, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are developed and sustained. Based upon our core values, our primary responsibility to colleagues is to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive work and meet professional needs. The same ideals that apply to children also apply as we interact with adults in the workplace. (Note: Section III includes responsibilities to co-workers and to employers. See the “Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Program Administrators” for responsibilities to personnel (employees in the original 2005 Code revision), online at [http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05\\_supp.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05_supp.pdf).)

#### A—Responsibilities to co-workers

##### Ideals

- I-3A.1**—To establish and maintain relationships of respect, trust, confidentiality, collaboration, and cooperation with co-workers.
- I-3A.2**—To share resources with co-workers, collaborating to ensure that the best possible early childhood care and education program is provided.
- I-3A.3**—To support co-workers in meeting their professional needs and in their professional development.
- I-3A.4**—To accord co-workers due recognition of professional achievement.

##### Principles

- P-3A.1**—We shall recognize the contributions of colleagues to our program and not participate in practices that diminish their reputations or impair their effectiveness in working with children and families.
- P-3A.2**—When we have concerns about the professional behavior of a co-worker, we shall first let that person know of our concern in a way that shows respect for personal dignity and for the diversity to be found among staff members, and then attempt to resolve the matter collegially and in a confidential manner.

**P-3A.3**—We shall exercise care in expressing views regarding the personal attributes or professional conduct of co-workers. Statements should be based on firsthand knowledge, not hearsay, and relevant to the interests of children and programs.

**P-3A.4**—We shall not participate in practices that discriminate against a co-worker because of sex, race, national origin, religious beliefs or other affiliations, age, marital status/family structure, disability, or sexual orientation.

#### B—Responsibilities to employers

##### Ideals

- I-3B.1**—To assist the program in providing the highest quality of service.
- I-3B.2**—To do nothing that diminishes the reputation of the program in which we work unless it is violating laws and regulations designed to protect children or is violating the provisions of this Code.

##### Principles

- P-3B.1**—We shall follow all program policies. When we do not agree with program policies, we shall attempt to effect change through constructive action within the organization.
- P-3B.2**—We shall speak or act on behalf of an organization only when authorized. We shall take care to acknowledge when we are speaking for the organization and when we are expressing a personal judgment.
- P-3B.3**—We shall not violate laws or regulations designed to protect children and shall take appropriate action consistent with this Code when aware of such violations.
- P-3B.4**—If we have concerns about a colleague's behavior, and children's well-being is not at risk, we may address the concern with that individual. If children are at risk or the situation does not improve after it has been brought to the colleague's attention, we shall report the colleague's unethical or incompetent behavior to an appropriate authority.
- P-3B.5**—When we have a concern about circumstances or conditions that impact the quality of care and education within the program, we shall inform the program's administration or, when necessary, other appropriate authorities.

## Section IV

### Ethical Responsibilities to Community and Society

Early childhood programs operate within the context of their immediate community made up of families and other institutions concerned with children's welfare. Our responsibilities to the community are to provide programs that meet the diverse needs of families, to cooperate with agencies and professions that share the responsibility for children, to assist families in gaining access to those agencies and allied professionals, and to assist in the development of community programs that are needed but not currently available.

As individuals, we acknowledge our responsibility to provide the best possible programs of care and education for children and to conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity. Because of our specialized expertise in early childhood development and education and because the larger society shares responsibility for the welfare and protection of young children, we acknowledge a collective obligation to advocate for the best interests of children within early childhood programs and in the larger community and to serve as a voice for young children everywhere.

The ideals and principles in this section are presented to distinguish between those that pertain to the work of the individual early childhood educator and those that more typically are engaged in collectively on behalf of the best interests of children—with the understanding that individual early childhood educators have a shared responsibility for addressing the ideals and principles that are identified as “collective.”

#### Ideal (Individual)

**I-4.1**—To provide the community with high-quality early childhood care and education programs and services.

#### Ideals (Collective)

**I-4.2**—To promote cooperation among professionals and agencies and interdisciplinary collaboration among professions concerned with addressing issues in the health, education, and well-being of young children, their families, and their early childhood educators.

**I-4.3**—To work through education, research, and advocacy toward an environmentally safe world in which all children receive health care, food, and shelter; are nurtured; and live free from violence in their home and their communities.

**I-4.4**—To work through education, research, and advocacy toward a society in which all young children have access to high-quality early care and education programs.

**I-4.5**—To work to ensure that appropriate assessment systems, which include multiple sources of information, are used for purposes that benefit children.

**I-4.6**—To promote knowledge and understanding of young children and their needs. To work toward greater societal acknowledgment of children's rights and greater social acceptance of responsibility for the well-being of all children.

**I-4.7**—To support policies and laws that promote the well-being of children and families, and to work to change those that impair their well-being. To participate in developing policies and laws that are needed, and to cooperate with families and other individuals and groups in these efforts.

**I-4.8**—To further the professional development of the field of early childhood care and education and to strengthen its commitment to realizing its core values as reflected in this Code.

#### Principles (Individual)

**P-4.1**—We shall communicate openly and truthfully about the nature and extent of services that we provide.

**P-4.2**—We shall apply for, accept, and work in positions for which we are personally well-suited and professionally qualified. We shall not offer services that we do not have the competence, qualifications, or resources to provide.

**P-4.3**—We shall carefully check references and shall not hire or recommend for employment any person whose competence, qualifications, or character makes him or her unsuited for the position.

**P-4.4**—We shall be objective and accurate in reporting the knowledge upon which we base our program practices.

**P-4.5**—We shall be knowledgeable about the appropriate use of assessment strategies and instruments and interpret results accurately to families.

**P-4.6**—We shall be familiar with laws and regulations that serve to protect the children in our programs and be vigilant in ensuring that these laws and regulations are followed.

**P-4.7**—When we become aware of a practice or situation that endangers the health, safety, or well-being of children, we have an ethical responsibility to protect children or inform parents and/or others who can.

**P-4.8**—We shall not participate in practices that are in violation of laws and regulations that protect the children in our programs.

**P-4.9**—When we have evidence that an early childhood program is violating laws or regulations protecting children, we shall report the violation to appropriate authorities who can be expected to remedy the situation.

**P-4.10**—When a program violates or requires its employees to violate this Code, it is permissible, after fair assessment of the evidence, to disclose the identity of that program.

### **Principles (Collective)**

**P-4.11**—When policies are enacted for purposes that do not benefit children, we have a collective responsibility to work to change these policies.

**P-4.12**—When we have evidence that an agency that provides services intended to ensure children's well-being is failing to meet its obligations, we acknowledge a collective ethical responsibility to report the problem to appropriate authorities or to the public. We shall be vigilant in our follow-up until the situation is resolved.

**P-4.13**—When a child protection agency fails to provide adequate protection for abused or neglected children, we acknowledge a collective ethical responsibility to work toward the improvement of these services.

## Glossary of Terms Related to Ethics

**Code of Ethics.** Defines the core values of the field and provides guidance for what professionals should do when they encounter conflicting obligations or responsibilities in their work.

**Values.** Qualities or principles that individuals believe to be desirable or worthwhile and that they prize for themselves, for others, and for the world in which they live.

**Core Values.** Commitments held by a profession that are consciously and knowingly embraced by its practitioners because they make a contribution to society. There is a difference between personal values and the core values of a profession.

**Morality.** Peoples' views of what is good, right, and proper; their beliefs about their obligations; and their ideas about how they should behave.

**Ethics.** The study of right and wrong, or duty and obligation, that involves critical reflection on morality and the ability to make choices between values and the examination of the moral dimensions of relationships.

**Professional Ethics.** The moral commitments of a profession that involve moral reflection that extends

and enhances the personal morality practitioners bring to their work, that concern actions of right and wrong in the workplace, and that help individuals resolve moral dilemmas they encounter in their work.

**Ethical Responsibilities.** Behaviors that one must or must not engage in. Ethical responsibilities are clear-cut and are spelled out in the Code of Ethical Conduct (for example, early childhood educators should never share confidential information about a child or family with a person who has no legitimate need for knowing).

**Ethical Dilemma.** A moral conflict that involves determining appropriate conduct when an individual faces conflicting professional values and responsibilities.

### Sources for glossary terms and definitions

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The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a nonprofit corporation, tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, dedicated to acting on behalf of the needs and interests of young children. The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (Code) has been developed in furtherance of NAEYC's nonprofit and tax exempt purposes. The information contained in the Code is intended to provide early childhood educators with guidelines for working with children from birth through age 8.

An individual's or program's use, reference to, or review of the Code does not guarantee compliance with NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Performance Criteria and program accreditation procedures. It is recommended that the Code be used as guidance in connection with implementation of the NAEYC Program Standards, but such use is not a substitute for diligent review and application of the NAEYC Program Standards.

NAEYC has taken reasonable measures to develop the Code in a fair, reasonable, open, unbiased, and objective manner, based on currently available data. However, further

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### NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct 2005 Revisions Workgroup

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## Statement of Commitment\*

As an individual who works with young children, I commit myself to furthering the values of early childhood education as they are reflected in the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. To the best of my ability I will

- Never harm children.
- Ensure that programs for young children are based on current knowledge and research of child development and early childhood education.
- Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children.
- Respect colleagues in early childhood care and education and support them in maintaining the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- Serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in community and society.
- Stay informed of and maintain high standards of professional conduct.
- Engage in an ongoing process of self-reflection, realizing that personal characteristics, biases, and beliefs have an impact on children and families.
- Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others.
- Continue to learn, grow, and contribute as a professional.
- Honor the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

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\* This Statement of Commitment is not part of the Code but is a personal acknowledgment of the individual's willingness to embrace the distinctive values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood care and education. It is recognition of the moral obligations that lead to an individual becoming part of the profession.

## **Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center Emergency and Evacuation Plan**

It is very important that parents, guardians, faculty, staff and students be aware of major hazards the school might face, and also familiar with the procedures that will be followed if we be affected. This information is being provided not to unduly alarm you, but to inform you that we are making necessary preparation for the safety and welfare of your children.

All emergency actions that need to be taken are directed by the Director. In the event the Director is not present, the Office Coordinator and/or pastor will direct all emergency actions.

### **Procedures for School Emergency/Evacuation Plans**

#### **1. Fire**

- The signal for a fire drill or actual fire is the fire bell. Fire drills are conducted every month. Students will quickly leave their classrooms in an orderly fashion (without running and under the supervision of staff) and proceed to the church grounds.
- All staff and students will exit the building according to evacuation plans posted on campus. Staff members have been assigned to “sweep” all bathrooms, classrooms, hallways, and lanais to make sure that all students have exited the building safely. The secretary is responsible for collecting all attendance sheets for the upper division and the toddler division is responsible for their attendance sheet.
- In the event of an actual fire, our evacuation procedures and destination will be the same as the fire drill, and staff will assist. Anyone unable to walk will be assisted by staff (children unable to walk will be carried).
- If the school facility is damaged by fire to the extent that we are unable to occupy it, we will take all students to Mary, Star of the Sea School cafeteria and you will be called to pick up your child.
- Smoke and fire detectors, as well as extinguishers, are located in the kitchen, classrooms/hallways, and lanai areas of the school.



## Tsunami Warning

The Early Learning Center is not located in a tsunami inundation zone, so we do not have to evacuate. In the event of a tsunami warning, the following procedures are in effect:

- If a tsunami warning (tsunami approach confirmed) is issued while in school is in session, our staff will remain with the children until pick up can be safely accomplished. It is recommended that you not leave work or rush to the school if a warning is announced. After the "All Clear" signal is announced, parents may pick up their children at the earliest time possible.
- If a tsunami warning is issued before school begins, the school will be closed. A mailchimp will be sent to notify families that we are closed.

## 2. Tropical Storm/Hurricane

In the event of a hurricane and/or tropical storm watch or warning the following procedures are in effect:

### Watch

- An announcement that tropical storm/hurricane conditions are **possible** somewhere within the specified coastal area within **48 hours**.
- If a watch is issued, administration will monitor the storm and make a decision to close before the issuance of a warning. We will try to time the closure of the school with the end of a normal working day.

### Warning

- An announcement that tropical storm/hurricane conditions are **expected** somewhere within the specified coastal area within **36 hours**.
- If a warning is issued, the school will be closed and we will send out a mailchimp to notify families.

The hurricane or tropical storm public evacuation shelter closest to our school is Wilson School; is unlikely that movement to the shelter is necessary, unless our facility is deemed unsafe.

## 3. Flooding

Our school is not located in a flood zone. However, during extremely heavy periods of rain, or under tropical storm, or hurricane conditions, flooding is possible. In the event that we are advised to evacuate or water begins to rise around our building, we will move to the second floor of our building.

#### 4. Earthquake

If an earthquake of significant magnitude occurs on Oahu, considerable disruption to road networks can be anticipated. If school is in session, your child will be under the care and supervision of staff until he or she is picked up.

In the event of an earthquake the following procedures are in effect:

- If we are indoors, the children and staff will take cover under tables, desks, and supported doorways. If we are outdoors, the children and staff will move toward the large field area, away from electrical lines, tall trees, and buildings.
- After the earthquake if the facility is sound, we will remain in place and listen to the radio for Civil Defense instructions.
- If the facility is damaged or could sustain damage as the result of an aftershock, we will attempt to move to Wilson School or an open area in the neighborhood. We will wait for assistance can be provided by civil authorities.

#### 5. Lockdown

In the event that we have a lockdown situation at our school the following procedures are in effect:

- Once the school is notified by authorities, the classrooms and kitchen will be notified by walkie talkie that we are in a lockdown situation by the secretary or director.

The teachers and staff will lock all doors and move away from the windows, depending on the situation all staff and students will move into the bathrooms that are located in the center of the classrooms.

- When the office is notified by authorities of the all clear, the classrooms and kitchen will be notified.
- Lockdown drills are conducted quarterly.

#### Summary

Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center administration, faculty, and staff will do everything possible to ensure your children's safety in the event of natural disasters or emergency situations were to threaten or affect us.

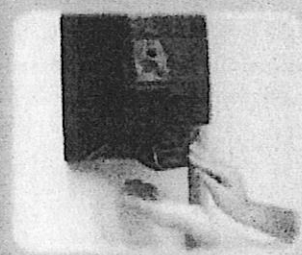
- In an emergency, the school will be closed if the public schools are closed and you do not receive any notifications from our school.
- In an emergency, staff will call parents to pick up their children at the earliest time possible after an "All Clear" notification.
- The school has enough supplies for up to 72 hours without outside assistance.
- If a child with disabilities, special needs or a chronic medical condition is enrolled we will work with our physician consultant and the family of that child to have a "go bag" in case of emergencies.

# HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS

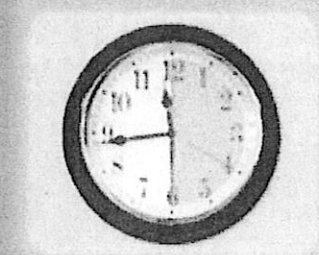
**1** Wet your hands with warm, running water.



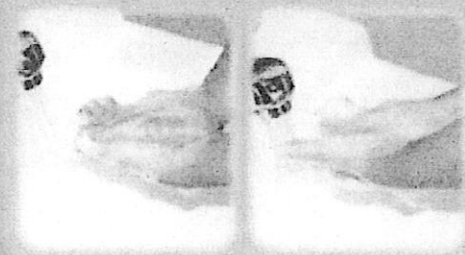
**2** Use soap to wash away the germs.



**3** Wash your hands for 20-30 seconds.



**4** Wash the fronts and backs of your hands.



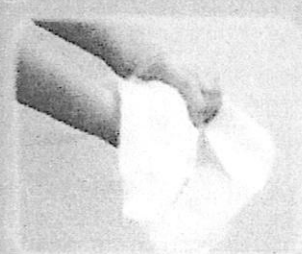
**5** Scrub under your fingernails and between your fingers.



**6** Rinse well with warm, running water.



**7** Dry your hands with a fresh paper towel.



**8** Use the paper towel to turn off the faucet.



## Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center Suspension and Termination Policy:

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedure before suspension/termination of a child enrolled at Mary, Star of the Sea Early Learning Center. As stated in our parent handbook on termination:

Families are expected to cooperate and be involved in their child's development with the school. If families do not cooperate with the school and/or the needs of a child are not able to be met the school may terminate your child. (Explanation of the suspension/termination prevention policy is in the appendix).

### **Parents/guardian as also expected to follow the Hawaii Catholic Schools code of conduct as stated in our parent handbook:**

The students' interest in receiving quality, morally based education can be served if students, parents, and school official work together. Normally, differences between these individuals can be resolved. In some instances, however, the school may find it necessary, in its discretion, to require parents and/or guardians to withdraw their child.

It shall be an express condition of enrollment that the student behaves in a manner, both on and off the campus that is consistent with the Christian principles of the school as determined by the school in its discretions. These principals include, but are not limited to any policies, principles, or procedures set forth in any student/parent handbook of the school.

These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Parents/guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of the school.
2. Students and parents/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school operation and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive.
3. These expectations for students and parents/guardians include but are not limited to; all school sponsored program and events (e.g. extended care, athletics, field trips, etc.)

The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, which actions fall short of meeting the Christian principles of the school, and to determine which conduct is of such severe nature as to warrant immediate action without warning and/or without any intermediate step. Failure to follow these principals will result in disciplinary action short of a requirement to withdraw from the school (e.g. suspension of student, or suspension of parent/guardian's privilege to come on campus grounds and/or participate in parish/school activities, volunteer work, etc.)

**Procedure:**

Teachers communicate weekly (daily in the toddler division) with parents/guardians via the see saw app for the upper division or transparent classroom for the toddler division.

Parents are welcomed to walk their child to their classroom between 7am-7:45am every day except Friday due to teacher meetings in the morning. You may speak to your child's teacher at that time if you have any issues/concerns or at pick up time if your child is not enrolled in the extended daycare. Parents may also set up a conference with their child's teacher at anytime.

If a teacher has a concern (Behavioral or cognitive) about a student they will talk to the parents/guardians first; then do a referral with our school counselor/psychologist (Dr. Tamura). After the parents consent for the evaluation, Dr. Tamura will observe the child in the classroom then do a conference with the parents/guardians. After Dr. Tamura's observation and conference with the parents they will come up with a plan to follow and recommendations by Dr. Tamura will be shared with the child's teacher. Dr. Tamura will do a re-observation of the child after about 1-3 months depending on the recommendation. If the school and Dr. Tamura feel that the child may need outside services or a DOE referral, it is up to the parents to contact the resources for outside services given by Dr. Tamura or their district school and start the process for the DOE.

For behavioral concerns/observation, teachers will keep a log of documentation of the behavior and circumstances of when the behavior happens.

The school will work with the family to decide what is best for their child.

