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# SJI-IN PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

*All policies contained in this Parent Handbook are to be interpreted and applied as necessary and appropriate for a sponsored ministry of the Roman Catholic Church, adhering to the spirit, traditions, and values of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. St. Joseph Institute is an unlicensed registered child care ministry in the state of Indiana. RM-101083-A*

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# MISSION STATEMENT

St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf delivers exceptional listening and spoken language solutions for children with hearing loss, reflecting the charism of the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet.

# OUR VISION

We strive to be the preeminent resource for children with hearing loss and their families.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf (SJI) has been educating deaf children since 1837 when three Sisters of St. Joseph came to frontier St. Louis from Lyons, France at the request of Bishop Joseph Rosati. In a log cabin in the village of Carondelet (now a neighborhood in south St. Louis), the Sisters established a school “for the education of deaf mutes.” It was the first school for the deaf west of the Mississippi and for a period of years, had a charter as Missouri’s State School for the Deaf.

St. Joseph Institute was housed in a number of locations over its first century: at St. Bridget’s Half-Orphan Asylum in the Soulard neighborhood of south St. Louis; at St. Aloysius Academy in Hannibal; at our Lady of Good Counsel on Cass Avenue near 14th Street; at Longwood Farm in Lemay, a suburb of St. Louis; and in a stately mansion at Garrison and Franklin Avenues near what is now Grand Center.

St. Joseph Institute taught sign language until 1930 when it changed to the oral method. In 1934, the school relocated to a campus in University City. It remained at that location until 1997 when it moved to the Babe Alberici Campus in suburban Chesterfield.

St. Joseph Institute has long been recognized for its leadership role in the world of listening and spoken language education, and its programs are regularly visited by distinguished deaf educators from around the world. The network of OPTION schools, a professional association of oral deaf educational administrators, was formed at a meeting called and hosted by St. Joseph Institute in 1981.

As early as 1960, early intervention work with families of infants with hearing loss was initiated at St. Joseph Institute, and in 1981 the Molloy Family Center was formally established**.** It is considered one of the country’s earliest models of therapy that focused on auditory-oral practices**.** Likewise, when cochlear implant habilitation first became an evident need in 1983, St. Joseph Institute developed the first U.S. educational program for children with implants.

St. Joseph Institute participates in ongoing research with local and national colleagues. These efforts are driven by our desire to improve intervention and programming for children with hearing loss everywhere. St. Joseph Institute is also a teacher of teachers and related professionals, serving as a practicum site for deaf educators from Fontbonne University, Vanderbilt University and Washington University, as well as audiologists and speech pathologists from several academic institutions, both local and national.

Historically St. Joseph Institute was one of only two private auditory-oral schools in the U.S. offering an education through the 8th grade. Over the years, the school attracted students from over 40 states and many foreign countries. Many families moved to St. Louis to enroll their children, attracted by the comprehensive, innovative programming and the holistic approach of St. Joseph Institute’s faculty and staff. In the summer of 2014, the school closed and the focus of the St. Louis program turned to early intervention and iHear services.

St. Joseph Institute focuses on children and families from birth through early grades. We accept students in two locations without regard to race, religion, gender, or national origin. iHear serves children with hearing loss around the world via teletherapy.

The Indianapolis campus was established in the fall of 2001. The original building was in the Nora area. Due to increased staff and enrollment the school was moved to our current location on the northwest side of Indianapolis in the spring of 2006.

**SJI Indiana**

**9192 Waldemar Road**

**Indianapolis, IN. 46268**

**Phone:** 317.471.8560

**Fax:** 317.471.8627

**Office Hours:** Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m-4:30 p.m**.**

**ST. JOSEPH INSTITUTE INDIANAPOLIS PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

It is our belief that children with hearing loss, and their families are most effectively served in an environment that offers information, support and guidance. By meeting the needs of the whole family, we encourage emotional growth, promote advocacy skills, and empower each family to continue their own development as well as their child’s.

Family centered intervention that promotes listening and talking through effective parent/child interactions is the foundation of our program. Our goal is to facilitate interaction and communication between the child and caregiver so that auditory language learning will occur within the contexts of play and the child’s daily routine. Families of children with hearing loss need time to connect and socialize with other families. Hearing loss is not only isolating for the child, but also for the family. The support and encouragement that parents receive from each other is an invaluable resource and is thus promoted during group parent

meetings. These meetings are both informative and social.

The technology exists to allow our children access to sound as never before. We can no longer assume that certain environments are off limits to our children. They can now hear their typically developing peers’ language and benefit from exposure to it in a carefully controlled environment. With careful and thoughtful facilitation, children with hearing loss can benefit from social interactions with hearing peers provided during activities in a group setting. Not only are the children taught to listen and respond to the language of the adults but also to the language of their friends. In addition, they benefit from observing the other children at play. Again, with careful facilitation the children are taught the skills necessary to engage other children and interact effectively in play. These are the building blocks that are essential to future success in other settings and provide the necessary base for the curriculum to follow in preschool.

**ST. JOSEPH-INDIANAPOLIS PROGRAMMING**

St. Joseph Institute is dedicated to teaching deaf and hard of hearing children to listen and speak, focusing on spoken language development at the earliest age, and increasing the child’s potential for successful mainstream education as the child shows readiness. In this approach, children must develop spoken language and speech first, without the use of sign language. The method is demanding for children, families, and the teachers and therapists working with them. However, the initial investment of time and effort offers the best opportunity for mainstream education and a more independent adult life.

We intend that enrollment at St. Joseph Institute will be one stop along a pathway leading to mainstreaming into neighborhood schools. For most students, placement in our programming has been done through the local school district with the assistance of the Indiana state Department of Education. At St. Joseph Institute we value your school district as a professional partner in your child’s education, and will strive to work collaboratively with them to ensure your child’s long-term academic success.

**YOUR ROLE IN YOUR CHILD’S SUCCESS**

St. Joseph Institute regards parents as equal partners with its professionals. We recognize that children are whole persons, living in loving families, who have the right and the responsibility to make choices in their child’s future, and to be actively involved in their education in every way possible. Our loving, child- and family-centered programs are dedicated to providing children the best opportunity to have a voice in their future.

St. Joseph Institute is a not-for-profit private organization. Programs at St. Joseph Institute–Indianapolis are open to children across the state of Indiana, without regard to race, religion, gender, or a family’s financial situation. Children are admitted throughout the calendar year. All of our students currently attend under state contract.

**I. GROUPS** **ASSOCIATED** **WITH** **SCHOOL**

1. **Governing Board**

The Governing Board is charged with oversight responsibilities for all activities of the school. The Board will provide guidance and direction to our Director/President who has the necessary wisdom, skill and expertise to enact the school’s program and mission. The Board will propose policies and procedures that avoid risks to the school’s financial well-being and the health and safety of its students and staff.

1. **SJI Parent Association (PTO)**

The St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf – Indianapolis’ PTO is dedicated to supporting the teachers and students of the school. By helping with classroom and administrative activities as needed and planning and implementing the fall and spring fundraisers, the actions of the PTO will enhance the education of all students at St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf – Indianapolis.

**Organizational Structure:**

The SJI PTO is an informal group of parents (current preschool and early intervention and/or former). No dues will be collected from its members; all money collected through the fall and spring fundraisers will be processed by the school.

Recognizing that SJI is a unique school with students who live in many different counties around Central Indiana, meeting schedules will be structured each year based on the availability of its members. There are no set requirements for meetings; however, it is strongly suggested that there be a meeting at both the beginning and end of each school year. Electronic communication with members is encouraged.

1. **Volunteer Program**

St. Joseph Institute has always been blessed with people who give generously of their time. Volunteers support SJI in numerous ways, both in and outside of the classroom. Some activities involve working directly with students and other activities include providing support services and/or participating in one of SJI’s special events. Those interested in participating as a volunteer may contact the Development Office. **Volunteers must be willing to submit to a background check and complete the Safe and Sacred program through the Archdiocese of Indianapolis before beginning volunteer service at St. Joseph.**

We strongly encourage parents and other family members to volunteer their services at school. We are always in need of help. Areas you might consider volunteering for include:

* Serving on the parent group
* Being a homeroom parent
* Assisting your child’s teacher with decorating, material preparation, or special parties.
* Helping with special projects (gardening, playground improvements, etc.)
* Helping at lunch-time to free the teachers for meetings
* Assisting with driving on field trips

1. **Monthly Giving**

The Monthly Giving program is designed for people who want to support the children served by SJI by giving monthly to the school. By giving monthly, you help provide a regular source of funds so that St. Joseph Institute can continue to thrive. Your monthly gifts help support the wide variety of programming that helps to ensure a child’s success. These programs include: Early Intervention, Preschool and Kindergarten Classes, Cochlear Implant Rehabilitation, Mainstream-Outreach, and support services for the family.

**II. ATTENDANCE** **POLICIES**

**A.** **Introduction**

Students who attend school regularly learn more and are more successful than students who do not. Attending school is an important step toward reaching full potential and developing age-appropriate skills. Parents who make school attendance a priority help their child learn to accept responsibility which is an important life lesson because the child is more likely to continue this attendance pattern throughout their school careers and into adult life. Additionally, the more time a child spends around other children, whether in a classroom setting or at recess, the more chance he/she has of making friends and feeling included, boosting social skills, confidence and self-esteem.

The school calendar is based on a composite of local school calendars with some changes to coordinate transportation. Calendars will be provided to all parents and school transportation departments.

**B. Students Absenteeism and Tardiness**

1. Doctor appointments during school hours should be kept to a minimum. Throughout the academic year, students have a number of breaks and/or days off. Appointments should be scheduled around these times whenever possible.
2. If your child will be absent for an extended period of time (more than 1 day) for other than a health-related reason, parents should discuss this with the LSL Program Coordinator first. Parents are encouraged to reserve family vacations for times school is **not** in session.
3. **Absenteeism and tardiness is reported on the child's progress report. Attendance and tardiness is also reported to funding school districts on a monthly basis.** Chronic absenteeism and/or tardiness is discussed by the teacher with the parents, and if necessary with the Director.
4. Parents are asked to contact the School Office prior to the start of the school day to report if a child will be tardy or absent. This information is then reported to the classroom teacher. If a telephone call or email is not received, parents will be contacted to verify the reason for the child’s absence.
5. If a doctor’s appointment is scheduled during school hours, parents contact the school in advance noting the date, time, length, and reason the child will be absent.
6. Parents of **all** students **are required** to accompany their child inside if tardy, as an adult is needed to check in a child before they can proceed to class. **Do not** drop off a student who is tardy without stopping by the front desk.

Absences – **Please call prior to 8:00 am on the day of the absence. Twenty-four hour notice is preferable when canceling an individual appointment. When calling in the evening or early morning, please leave a message on the school’s general voice mail box.** You will need to state your name, your child’s name, the date, the time of appointment, and the reason for absence. Please note that most of your children attend school with the financial assistance of either your school district (under contract) or the community (via contributions that pay tuition assistance). Both of these sources can be jeopardized by poor attendance and tardiness.

**If you feel your child has a significant enough delay to attend St. Joseph, then their regular attendance is essential to their progress.**

Early Dismissal – Please notify the school in advance if your child will need to leave early. This will minimize your wait time and help your child’s teacher prepare your child to go home. You will need to sign your child out in the office at the time of pick-up.

**C. School Hours/Daily Operations**

The school day is from 8:15 am to 2:45 pm Monday through Friday. Individual meetings with parents will be scheduled on a regular basis before or after school hours.

Individual Services – Infants, Toddlers – Appointments are scheduled individually. The amount of time is based on the family and child’s needs. First Steps services can be provided in the family’s home or other appropriate community setting and/or at our school.

Individual Services – Mainstreamed and School-Aged Students – Appointments are scheduled individually based on need. After school appointments are available.

**D. Sick/Injured Child**

Children who arrive at school and develop a fever or become otherwise ill during the school will be sent home. SJI does not have a school nurse or a sick room. **To keep all children and staff as healthy as possible, parents are contacted and should make immediate arrangements for pick-up of their sick child.** In the event of a fever, students may not return to school until 24 hours has passed without fever or medication. (See pages 20 and 21 for information concerning communicable diseases)

**E. Teacher Absence**

We ask that teachers reserve family vacations for times when school in not in session. Should there be a need for a teacher to be off for an unforeseen event, a substitute will be assigned to the classroom or an appropriate classroom coverage plan will be in place. The Teaching Assistant will remain in the classroom working alongside the SLP to maintain consistency for your child.

If your child’s teacher needs an extended absence, SJID will make arrangements to bring in a substitute teacher. If it is within our control, we will notify the parents of the temporary change two weeks prior.

# III. ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

1. **Arriving at School**

At 8:05 a.m. the staff will begin walking students into the school following a visual amplification check. Busses will follow a single file line through the parking lot. Caregivers dropping off students can either drive through the bus line or park in the neighboring lot and walk along the sidewalk up to the front door of the building. The beginning of the school day is very important and parents who drive their children should make every effort to arrive no later than 8:15 a.m. Instruction begins promptly at 8:30.

**B. Dismissal from School**

Dismissal is at 2:45 p.m. with the same arrangements – staff will walk students to the cars or buses. If you are picking up your child, please park and walk from the side lot or go through the car/bus line. Staff will not buckle children in car seats.

Only parents and those authorized by parents may pick a child up from school. Upon school entrance, you will need to fill out a form authorizing who may pick up your child. If someone other than a parent picks up a child (even if listed on the forms), identification will be required. You may change the parental consent to pick-up as often as needed *in person* at the front office. **Consent must be in writing or through an approved electronic method.**

Parents whose child needs to be dismissed prior to 2:45 p.m. must notify the school office the morning of early dismissal. A message will be forwarded to the child’s teacher for classroom planning purposes. Any child leaving school before the 2:45 p.m. dismissal time must be signed out by a responsible adult at the front desk.

**IV. INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event of severe/inclement weather, it may be necessary to cancel, delay the start, or provide virtual services for the school day. This decision is made by the Executive Director.

Inclement weather days will be posted on the SJID-Indianapolis Facebook and SJID Instagram. In addition, you will receive a text notification.

On days when St. Joseph is closed due to inclement weather, and there are not limiting factors like widespread power outages, students may receive virtual services.  Teachers and therapists will be contacting you soon so that you have your schedule and procedures in place.

* Speech Therapy Services:
  + 30 minutes of a live one-on-one session during your child’s regularly scheduled school speech time.
* Classroom: Schedules will vary across grade levels and classrooms. You will receive specifics of the planned schedule from your teacher in advance. The schedule will include live sessions and asynchronous work for you to complete with your child at home.

In general SJI will not operate on a delayed schedule. We realize that many families must commute long distances to attend school, and that weather conditions can vary widely through the area. Parents are advised to exercise their parental rights at all times in the event of severe weather. **If in your judgment weather/driving conditions endanger your safety, you need to keep your children at home, or delay departure until you feel safe.** Please call and notify the school if you choose to be absent to eliminate unnecessary concern on the part of the staff.

If a tornado warning is issued right before or at dismissal, we follow the following policy:

**Tornado Warning in Marion County**

Dismissal will be delayed and students will remain in the building until the warning is lifted.

Bus drivers and parents who drive their children will be asked to come into the school for their safety.

**Tornado Warning in a Neighboring County**

Students whose home school is under a warning, or whose bus has to drive through an area that is under a warning, will not be dismissed until the warning is lifted.

**V. DISCIPLINE**

Discipline, as conceived by the staff at SJI, is positive and implies helping a child to develop inner control for self-development. It is believed that inner discipline is basic to the maturation of learning. Discipline of children assumes self-discipline within the adults who serve as models for the children.

Discipline and respect are manifested by children when they:

* Show kindness to one another and to adults
* Greet one another
* Assist those in need
* Comply with adult directions
* Display good manners

The basic theories of good discipline are:

* Consistency from adults
* Assumption that a child has a reason for his/her behavior
* Belief that each child is different, and will respond differently to demands. This will require on the part of the staff, knowledge of each child and his/her patterns of behavior.
* Developing an environment of mutual respect where the child is able to make choices

*Positive Reinforcement-*In guiding the child’s growth in Christian attitudes, values, and behavior, it is appropriate to emphasize the positive rather than the negative. The essence of Christian discipline is self-discipline. The child should be helped to see clearly the consequences of various behaviors and to realize that choosing certain behaviors means accepting the responsibility for the consequences of these behaviors. The child should be directed to choose one form of behavior over another and to take upon him/herself the consequences of that chosen behavior. The consequences should always be logical and appropriate to the behavior. From the beginning of the year, classroom rules and procedures as well as the consequences of violating these rules are made clear to the student.

*Unacceptable Discipline-*In keeping with our philosophy of education, the following procedures for handling unacceptable behavior are **never utilized:**

* Corporal punishment
* Personal indignities such as sarcasm, ridicule, name calling, etc.
* Memorization or academic work (unless these constitute direct, logical consequences of a specific misbehavior such as not completing class work).
* Indiscriminate punishment of all pupils in a class for the misconduct of some students.
* Transference of biases and/or comparisons with other members of the family or other children.

**VI. COMMUNICATION**

It is the philosophy of St. Joseph Institute that communication between home and school is critical for the child's progress and is meant to be two-way. Communication can be accomplished by letter, phone, email, and/or in person. An in-person visit is the preferred method of communication whenever possible.

1. **Special Circumstances**

In order to support your family and your child, school staff need to be aware of special family circumstances. If there is a unique situation, such as separation, divorce, death in the family, serious illness, or accident, the school should be informed so that we may be aware of the child's needs. Confidentiality will be respected.

1. **Custodial/Non-Custodial Parent/Guardian**

The school requires that a copy of legal documents outlining custodial rights be kept in the child's file. For divorced/separated families and foster families, SJI will ordinarily correspond with the person who has legal custody of the child.

In the event parents are separated, divorced with joint legal custody of the student, or a divorced parent has visitation rights, both parents are entitled access to their child’s record and information regarding their child’s education. This information includes, but is not limited to report cards, progress reports, notices of disciplinary action and similar information.

In the event the child’s mother and father were never married, the non-custodial natural parent may have access to the school information and records to the extent that it is granted in writing by a court of the child’s custodial parent.

In the event that a child is living with grandparents, these individuals may have access to the school information and records to the extent that it is granted in writing by a court of the child’s custodial parent.

A non-custodial parent who has been denied visitation rights is not entitled access to his or her child’s records/information. A non-custodial parent who has restricted or supervised visitation rights resulting from a finding of domestic violence or abuse may receive records and reports that do not include the address of the custodial parent or the child.

1. **Responsibilities of Parents and Teachers**

The following information concerning communication is important for the well-being of each child.

Families will receive regular information about themes, goals, and progress from their teacher and therapist.

Community Professional communication is also critical with your public school and other professionals outside of SJI who work with your child. Every effort will be made to keep lines of communication open with these professionals and to foster collaboration. At the time of enrollment, you will be asked to identify significant professionals with whom you work, and to sign release forms allowing us to share information, including regular progress updates.

1. **Record Transfers**

Before a student’s records are sent to another party, parents are required to sign a release form. This form is available in the office. Parents should provide the name(s) and address(es) of those needing to receive the information in order to expedite the process.

# VII. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to visit as frequently as possible. Parent participation is vital to the child’s growth and development. Please be sure to notify someone in the building that you are here to observe, so that we may address any questions you may have.

1. **Parent Education**

**Parents are required to attend individualized educational sessions at least three times a year with their child’s teacher or speech therapist. More frequent sessions are available upon request.** These sessions will entail progress updates and parent coaching. Child-care is not available. If siblings attend with parents, they must stay in the parent coaching session.

Through its Parent Education Program (PEP), SJI offers classes in issues regarding child development, hearing loss, parenting, etc. Parents are encouraged to attend classes regularly. In addition, your teacher/therapist will provide you with information more specific to your child’s needs. Please be sure to ask for more information whenever you need it. The resource room of our school includes a lending library. Parents may check out books, pamphlets, videos, and other materials for a period of two weeks.

1. **Maintenance of Amplification**

By enrolling your child in St Joseph Institute, you have made the commitment to pursue a listening and spoken language education. The primary foundation of this philosophy is the optimal use of residual hearing, which requires full-time amplification. Your child needs to develop a “listening attitude,” as part of his/her personality, for success. Occasionally there are medical reasons to limit the use of amplification. **Otherwise, parents are responsible for being certain that amplification is working properly and is worn during all waking hours (not just during school).**

It is essential that your child’s amplification is in good working order at all times. If your child’s amplification is broken, malfunctioning, or lost, it is critical that this situation be remedied as soon as possible. To monitor the functioning of amplification, you must do regular listening checks/testing. In addition, it is important to complete the Ling six-sound test when first putting on the equipment. Troubleshooting information regarding hearing aids, FM systems, and cochlear implants may be addressed in parent education sessions, through written material, and in individual parent training. For children in mainstreamed classes, training is also available for essential school personnel.

In Listening and Spoken Language programs, like SJI, time without amplification is crucial time lost in terms of learning to listen and in developing speech and spoken language. **If your child arrives at school without working amplification, you will be contacted immediately.** We rely on your cooperation in making sure your child is able to participate and take advantage of every moment of teaching time. Please also make sure that you child has sufficient back up batteries at all times.

**VIII. SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

St. Joseph Institute takes the safety of all students, parents, guests and staff seriously. At the time of hiring, SJI conducts a background check on each employee including arrest records and related charges, criminal records including outstanding warrants and child abuse/neglect charges.

Employees are responsible for reporting any evidence or suspicion of child abuse to the Director/President or her designate. Staff and volunteers participate in the national sexual abuse prevention program, “Safe and Sacred.”

The front door is monitored by administrative staff who unlock the door granting permission to those who need to enter the building. No doors are allowed to be propped open at any time including recess or any outdoor classroom activity. These procedures ensure no unauthorized person gains entry to move freely about the premise.

All visitors are asked to sign-in at the front desk and wear a Visitor’s identification badge. Unauthorized individuals are reported to the administrative staff immediately. When a parent notifies the school office that another adult will be picking up his/her child, a valid driver’s license or another picture ID is required before the child is allowed to depart.

Disasters can happen anytime, anywhere and without warning. It is important that as many preparations as possible are made ahead of time. Please be assured that our school has established safety procedures and will put emergency plans in place whenever necessary. The purpose of these preparations is to enable all persons connected with the school to react quickly and calmly ensuring the safety and well-being of all students, staff, and visitors. As a parent, you are asked to:

1. Be certain that your child’s Emergency Information (including Emergency Release Authorization), medical information, telephone numbers, addresses, etc. are kept current throughout the school year. Any changes should be reported to School Administrative Support Manager.
2. In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, the Director will decide if school will be dismissed early or closed. You will receive notification as outlined in the Inclement Weather section of this document.
3. In the event of an emergency, students will be released **only** to parents **or** an individual(s) listed on the Medical and Emergency Authorization and Insurance Information form as authorized to pick the child up from SJI. If an individual is not listed as having authority to take a child from campus, a letter from the parent (with parental signature) must accompany the individual.
4. Signs will be posted and school personnel will direct parents to the student

pick-up/release area.

1. Remain in your car. Do not enter the building. Follow directions to the pick-up/release area. Your child will be escorted to your car for pick-up and/or release. You will be asked to sign a release form for your child.

SJI has a detailed Emergency Preparedness Plan that is discussed yearly with the staff.

Designated meeting areas for fire, tornado, etc. are assigned at the annual meeting. Practice drills are conducted throughout the school year to assure students and staff are well-prepared in advance.

A weather radio is programmed 24/7 to monitor severe weather alerts.

Emergency supplies (including food and first aid) are available in the event an emergency extends beyond a reasonable period of time.

**iX. MEDICAL policies and procedures**

It is the responsibility of parents to see that their child has regular medical, optical, and

dental check-ups. Appointments should be scheduled during school breaks or after the

school day has ended.

Parents must present documentation of the month, day, and year for each required immunization before students are permitted to attend class. Recommended dosages of the following are needed:

* Polio
* MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
* Hepatitis B
* Varicella (chickenpox)
* DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)

If a student becomes ill or is injured during the school day, parents will be notified and are requested to pick their child up *as soon as possible*, or make appropriate arrangements with another adult to assist in this matter.

If an adult *other* *than the parents* will be picking the child up, the school office **must** be notified and the designated adult may be asked for identification before the child is released. The adult must be listed on the child’s emergency forms.

If it is necessary to take a child to the emergency room for treatment at a local hospital, parents will be notified by a staff member.

The school office is responsible for keeping all children’s medical records updated. Annually, the required records include:

* 1. the annual physical form
  2. updates to immunization records
  3. medical insurance number
  4. medical & emergency authorization form which provides emergency release information and permission for emergency medical treatment

**x. Medication Policy and Procedure**

The following guidelines identify SJI’S medication policy/procedure.

Most medications that children require do not need to be given at school. Any medication that is given three times a day should be given at home (morning, after school and bedtime). **SJI will not administer the first dose of any medication.** If a medication (prescription or over-the-counter) must be given at school, parents must follow these procedures:

1. A Medical and Emergency Authorization form must be on file in the school office listing the name of the child’s physician and phone numbers.
2. There must be a written physician’s order for the medication with the
   1. name of the student,
   2. name of the medication,
   3. dosage,
   4. time interval to be given (if ordered, “as needed” a plan must be provided), and
   5. duration of the treatment.

A current prescription label on the container may serve as the physician’s order.

1. Written permission must be provided by the parent/guardian requesting that the school comply with the physician’s order.
2. Prescription medication should be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. An adult must bring the medication into school. Non-prescription medication should be in the original container. Ideally, parents should have two containers; one for home and one for school. For medications that will be given for the entire school year, the child needs a new prescription container each school year.
3. If there is ANY change in the dose or timing of the medication, the physician must submit the change in writing. This may be faxed or mailed to the school. A parent may not give permission to administer medication differently than the physician’s order.
4. SJI has the right to call the physician to clarify a medication order.
5. Medication cannot be transported in a child’s backpack and should be given directly to the teacher by the bus driver or parent. All medications will be administered by staff with a witness.
6. If medicine must be given with food, like applesauce or yogurt, parents need to send the food in the original package clearly labeled with the child’s name. Once opened, staff must date the package and store it in the student refrigerator. Parents must send new food at the beginning of each week.
7. All medications will be kept in a secured area and supervised by an adult.
8. If your child has a serious medical condition (ie, diabetes, asthma, food allergies, etc.), please notify the school office and complete an *Emergency Action Plan* form.

**XI. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

To ensure proper management of communicable diseases, SJI follows the guidelines set forth by the Indiana Department of Health. Guidelines for common illnesses are listed below. Please look through these guidelines and refer to them when your child is sick. It will help you decide when your child is able to return to school. Be certain to follow your doctor’s directions.

* *Chicken Pox* - Exclusion from school until the lesions have dried or crusted.
* *Common Cold* - Exclusion from school if fever of 100˚F or greater, if excessive coughing is present, or if child is unable to participate in school activities.
* *Conjunctivitis (pink eye)* - Exclusion from school during the acute phase (mucopurulent drainage from eyes). Child must be treated with prescription medication.
* *Diarrhea (frequent loose stools)* - with or without cramping and/or fever. **Exclusion from school until child has gone 24 hours without a loose stool.**
* *Erythema Infectiosum (Fifth Disease)* - Child may attend school unless fever is present.
* *Fever* - Defined as temperature readings of 100˚F or higher; less if a child acts ill or is unusually irritable. **Keep child home 24 hours after fever breaks (no fever and no use of any over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol or Advil)**
* *Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease* - Children are most likely to spread the disease during the first week of the illness. Child should be kept home for 7 days after the first appearance of symptoms.
* *Head Lice* - Exclusion from school until proof appropriate action has been taken.
* *Herpes Simplex, Oral (fever blisters)* - Child may attend school.
* *Impetigo* - Children should not attend school until 24 hours after prescription-prescribed antibiotic therapy has begun. Must be fever- free.
* *Measles* - Exclusion from school during “cold” symptoms and until five days after the appearance of the rash.
* *Mononucleosis* - Exclusion from school until doctor sends note to school stating child can return.
* *Ringworm on body* - Children may attend school if under adequate medical supervision. If possible, clothing or a band-aid should cover lesion.
* *Ringworm of the scalp* - Exclusion from school until 24 hours after initial treatment.
* *Scabies* - Exclusion from school until three days after therapy is completed.
* *Strep Throat* - Children should not attend school until 24 hours after prescription-prescribed antibiotic therapy has begun. Must be fever- free.
* *Vomiting* - more than once within a few hours - with or without fever - acting ill or with stomachache. **May return to school 24 hours after last vomiting episode.** If your child vomits before school or on the way to school, please take your child home that day.

Children should remain home if they are too ill to participate in school activities and have or exhibit the following:

* a fever of 100˚F or more,
* lethargy or irritability,
* persistent crying,
* difficulty breathing,
* vomiting,
* or diarrhea.

# XII. DRESS CODE, RECESS, FIELD TRIPS

SJI does not have a dress code for children. However, please be aware that the children will be doing lots of fun and very messy activities. Clothing should be functional for those activities. Appropriate clothing for sitting cross legged and gross motor play means having young ladies wear shorts under dresses and shorts of an appropriate length. Flip-flop sandals are not allowed as they are uncomfortable and unsafe on the mulch.

In reasonable weather, the children will play outside daily. In general, we will not go outside if it is raining, excessively muddy, or if there is a dangerous heat or chill index. However, students do go outside to play in the snow if the temperature allows it. It is essential for your child to have an appropriate coat, mittens, hat and boots during the winter months. The classroom teacher or assistant will supervise recess.

The classes will occasionally go on field trips. A permission slip for trips that can be completed on foot is included in the enrollment packet. For trips requiring transportation, permission slips will be sent home in advance. Please note that some field trips cost a small fee, which should be returned with the slip. Children must have a signed “Permission for Emergency Treatment” form in order to participate.

# XIII. LUNCH

Students need to bring their lunch to school. Due to the large number of students, refrigeration is available only if needed for medical reasons (i.e. special foods). We encourage parents to send foods in thermal containers to keep them hot/cold.

Nutritious snacks will be provided in the morning. Many snacks will be related to the theme and will require children to assist with the preparation.

**XIV. AUDIOLOGICAL SERVICES**

Auditory development is critical for each child to meet his/her greatest potential. Children are to use amplification (personal aids, Cochlear Implant processors and/or FM systems) at all times. Parents are responsible to ensure their child has back up batteries available. It is the responsibility of staff to make certain children are receiving appropriate amplification continually throughout the day. SJI will carry a small amount of supplies for the emergency maintenance of amplification equipment. We have a part-time audiologist on staff who is available to support and coordinate services from your personal audiologist.

The auditory signal received by your child is vital to his/her success. It is important that your child has working and well-fitted devices. Datalogging of student equipment may be completed on an ongoing basis. Datalogging provides valuable information about hourly device use and can be a tool to monitor and help parents reach the goal of using amplification all waking hours. We are here in partnership with you to assure your child’s auditory needs are met. Please let the Audiology staff know if you have any questions or concerns.

# XV. EVALUATIONS

In order to determine progress and performance, formal and informal evaluation is necessary. Evaluation also is very beneficial in allowing us to plan appropriate goals for your child. Children are evaluated in an informal and ongoing manner throughout the year, as well as formally via standardized testing annually.

1. **Audiological Evaluations**

It is imperative that audiological evaluations be timely with tests that provide the most information regarding what your child is able to hear and how his/her amplification is functioning. Parents must provide an annual audiological evaluation to SJI, usually at the renewal of the IEP/IFSP.

1. **Cognitive Evaluation**

Cognitive Skills Testing - As your child matures, it is helpful in the academic setting to have better knowledge of what kind of learner your child is. Proper testing can assist the individuals working with your child in knowing how to present information in a manner that is most conducive to learning. This testing can be provided through your cooperating school district, or through St. Joseph Institute – under contract.

Academic Assessment – Our faculty will keep appraised of your child’s academic skills. Our long-term goal is to prepare children to enter the mainstream. In order to do this, we will be providing academic evaluation that will better help in eventually meeting this goal. Academic testing will always be developmentally appropriate to your child’s age and maturity.

1. **Auditory Evaluation**

These evaluations provide information about how your child perceives sound. For a child with a profound hearing loss, given proper amplification, the ability to listen starts with awareness of very loud sounds. Sometimes this takes a great deal of training. Sometimes the child is able to respond to speech fairly quickly. Children with proper amplification and training can often learn to discriminate the sounds that they hear without visual (lip-reading) information. In order to determine your child’s capabilities and how he/she is progressing it will be common for your teacher/therapist to evaluate your child’s level of auditory skill.

1. **Language Evaluation**

There are many areas of language that are important to evaluate. These would include semantics (vocabulary, word choice), syntax (grammar), morphology (word endings), and pragmatics (social use of language including body language and eye contact). It is also important to separate what your child understands, which is called receptive language, and what your child says, expressive language. Depending on your child’s age and level of achievement there are many tests that allow a good understanding of your child’s current language. There are also assessment tools designed for infants.

1. **Speech Evaluation**

The evaluation of speech is ongoing. When looking at speech, your teacher/therapist will listen to the quality of your child’s voice, specifically general pitch, pitch range, intonation, nasality, and ability to be loud or soft. It will also be important for the teacher/therapist to look at what vowels and consonants your child can produce, and in what context he/she can produce those sounds. Sometimes a child can pretend a boat says “b-b-b” but cannot yet produce the “b” sound in words. Learning speech is hierarchical – you must base what you need to learn on what you already can do.

**XVI. SCHOOL PROGRESS REPORTS**

The following reports are completed throughout the academic school year at SJI.

* Quarterly Student Progress Reports
* Quarterly Report Cards
* Annual IEP Present levels and Progress Reports

# XVII. ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Interview/Evaluation - Prior to acceptance at SJI families will be interviewed and children will receive an evaluation when appropriate.

Past Records - In order to assist the intake team in making the best possible placement decisions, it is critical for parents to provide all previous audiological, speech/language, and academic information. Prior testing, IFSP’s and IEP’s are all important pieces that contribute to your child’s appropriate programming. If necessary, parents may need to sign a “Consent to Release Information” form in order to get past records from other facilities.

Physical Examination - Upon admission, documentation of a pre-entrance health assessment conducted within three months prior to enrollment must be provided. The assessment must be conducted by a licensed physician or an approved physician’s assistant.

Immunizations - Current immunizations must be documented at time of enrollment and kept current to comply with Indiana state law.

Forms and Information - As with any school program, there are a number of forms that the family must complete. A packet will be given to you on enrollment, and must be completed prior to the first day of attendance. We have taken pains to eliminate unnecessary duplication of information where possible. Necessary forms will vary somewhat according to programming. They will include demographic and emergency information, a case history, and various parent permission forms. **Preschool children must have copies of their birth certificates on file, as well as documentation of legal custody where applicable.**

# XVIII. PLACEMENT AND TRANSITIONING

1. **Program Placement**

Children placed in preschool classes will be assigned to classes based on a combination of their chronological age, developmental readiness and functional language performance. The team of teachers makes every effort to place your child with a teacher whose skills meet their needs and with peers who provide a supportive language-learning environment. Part-time placement is available to meet medical or developmental need, or to facilitate mainstreaming. Final placement decisions rest with the School Leadership Team.

1. **Mainstreaming**

It is the goal of SJI to prepare the children for mainstreaming into classes with children with normal hearing. Children may be mainstreamed part-time into area schools with or without mainstream support services from SJI. The decision about mainstreaming is often a complex one that involves weighing the child’s strengths and weaknesses, the type of mainstreaming situations available, and the resources and support available. While the decision about whether or not to mainstream a child always rests with the parents, SJI assists by providing the parent and the school district with information that will help to make appropriate choices for each child. It is hoped that the final decision will represent a team effort that will offer the child the best possible chance of educational success.

Objective criteria for mainstreaming are used to determine the child’s readiness for mainstreaming. These criteria include language skills, auditory skills, speech intelligibility, pragmatic skills, vocabulary, student motivation, student self-advocacy, social skills, and parental involvement. The child’s progress in all the above areas will be assessed and a recommendation regarding the appropriateness of mainstreaming will be made.

Parents and members of the educational team will collaborate discuss future educational placements. SJI provides a mainstream support through two progress monitoring visits to serve children in the mainstream setting. Parents and/or school districts may contract with SJID for on-going mainstream level services.

# XIX. SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Parent volunteers are a vital link to any school. A number of events conducted at St. Joseph Institute require many hands in the planning and hosting stages. The school’s Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), the development office and school office would not be able to conduct the many family-friendly events without the hard work and effort of parents. People are needed to plan, organize, set-up, run and clean-up after events. *Your* help is needed. Take every opportunity to get involved and volunteer. By doing so, your child will come to see and understand how important the events and activities are to you. Your presence, donated time and talent speak wonders to children.

Parents may provide special treats for their child’s birthday celebration. Please do not bring gifts to school. Any other plans should be cleared with the child’s teacher beforehand. Parties to celebrate holidays are planned in collaboration with school personnel. Parents are encouraged to participate.

# XX. photo and video permissions

Parents are asked to grant permission for use of photographs and/or videotapes of the children attending St. Joseph Institute. This authorization allows SJI to use photographs and/or video footage taken of a child/ward as well as his/her name in connection with publicity or for development purposes of SJI provided that SJI is not authorized to sell or otherwise distribute such photographic images or video footage to any other person or entity without parental consent. Further, the video recording of a minor child may be used for the purpose of professional presentation and teacher preparation. This may include, but is not limited to, the use of the video in university courses, parent groups, and professional conferences.

Children’s photos are taken by a professional photographer each year. Parents are given the opportunity to purchase a photo packet. Candid photos are taken throughout the school year for publication in the school’s weekly newsletter.

# XXI. PRIVACY PRACTICES

This notice describes how medical information about your child may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully. If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the HIPAA officer.

Who will follow this notice:

* Any health care professional authorized to enter information into your child’s school health file
* All employees, staff and other school personnel

Our Pledge Regarding Medical Information:

We understand that medical information about your child and your child’s health is personal. We are committed to protecting medical information about your child. We create a record of the care and services your child receives at the school. We need this record to provide your child with quality care and to comply with certain legal requirements. This notice applies to all of the health records of your child’s care generated by the school. Your child’s personal doctor may have different policies or notices regarding his/her use and disclosure of your child’s medical information created in his office or clinic.

This notice will tell you about the ways in which we may use and disclose medical information about your child. We also describe your rights and certain obligations we have regarding the use and disclosure of medical information. We are required by law to:

* make sure that medical information that identifies your child is kept private
* give you this notice of our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to medical information about your child
* follow the terms of the notice that are currently in effect

How we may use and disclose medical information about your child:

The following categories describe different ways that we use and disclose medical information. For each category of uses or disclosures we will explain what we mean and try to give some examples. Not every use or disclosure in a category will be listed. However, all of the ways we are permitted to use and disclose information will fall within one of the categories.

* for treatment: We may use medical information about your child to provide your child with medical treatment or services. We may disclose medical information about your child to health professionals, teachers, or others who are involved in your child’s care.
* for payment: We may use and disclose medical information about your child so that the treatment and services your child receives at the school may be billed to and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company or a third party. For example, we may need to give your child’s health plan information about speech therapy your child received at school so your child’s health plan will pay us or reimburse you for speech therapy. We may also tell your child’s health plan about a treatment your child is going to receive to obtain prior approval or to determine whether your child’s plan will cover the treatment.

for health care operations: We may use and disclose medical information about your child for school operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to run the school and make sure that all of our students receive quality care. For example, we may use medical information to review our treatment and services and to evaluate the performance of our staff in caring for your child*.* We may combine medical information about many students to decide what additional services the school should offer, what services are not needed, and whether certain new services are effective. We may also combine the medical information we have with medical information from other schools to compare how we are doing and see where we can make improvements in the care and services we offer. We may remove information that identifies your child from this set of medical information so others may use it to study health care and health care delivery without learning the identities of the specific student.

fundraising activities: We may use information about your child to contact you in an effort to raise money for the school and its operations. We may disclose information to a foundation related to the school so that the foundation may contact you in raising money for the school. If we disclose information about your child, we will only disclose the minimum amount of information that is necessary. If you do not want the school to contact you for fundraising efforts, please notify the HIPAA Officer in writing.

individuals involved in your care or payment for your care: We may release medical information about your child to a care giver who may be a friend or family member that you authorize in writing.

research: Under certain circumstances, we may use and disclose medical information about your child for research purposes. All research projects, however, are subject to a special approval process. We will ask for your specific permission if the researcher will have access to your child’s name, address or other information that reveals who your child is, or will be involved in your child’s care at the school.

as required by law: We will disclose medical information about your child when required to do so by federal, state or local law.

Special Situations:

public health risks (health and safety to your child and/or others): We may disclose medical information about your child for public health activities. We may use and disclose medical information about your child to agencies when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. These activities generally include the following:

* to prevent or control disease, injury or disability;
* to report reactions to medications or problems with products;
* to notify people of recalls of products they may be using;
* to notify a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition;
* to notify the appropriate government authority if we believe a student has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence. We will only make this disclosure when required or authorized by law.

health oversight activities: We may disclose medical information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include for example, audits, investigations, inspections, and licensure.

lawsuits and disputes: If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose medical information about your child in response to a court or administrative order. We may also disclose medical information about your child in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute.

law enforcement: We may release medical information if asked to do so by a law enforcement official:

* in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process;
* to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person;
* about the victim of a crime if, under certain limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the person's agreement;
* about a death we believe may be the result of criminal conduct;
* about criminal conduct at the school; and
* in emergency circumstances to report a crime; the location of the crime or victims; or the identity, description or location of the person who committed the crime.

your rights regarding medical information about your child:

You have the following rights regarding medical information we maintain about your child:

1. to inspect and copy medical information that may be used to make decisions about your child’s care. Usually, this includes medical and billing records, but does not include mental health information.
2. to inspect and copy medical information you must submit your request in writing to the Academic Department. If you request a copy of the information, we will charge a fee for the costs of copying, mailing or other supplies associated with your request.

We may deny your request to inspect and copy in certain very limited circumstances. If you are denied access to medical information, you may request that the denial be reviewed. We will comply with the outcome of the review.

right to amend: If you feel that medical information we have about your child is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for the school. To request an amendment, your request must be made in writing and submitted to the HIPAA Officer. In addition, you must provide a reason that supports your request. We may deny your request for an amendment if it is not in writing or does not include a reason to support the request. In addition, we may deny your request if you ask us to amend information that:

* was not created by us, unless the person or entity that created the information is no longer available to make the amendment;
* is not part of the medical information kept by or for the school;
* is not part of the information which you would be permitted to inspect and copy;
* is accurate and complete.

right to an accounting of disclosures: You have the right to request an "accounting of disclosures." This is a list of the disclosures we made of medical information about your child to others except for purposes of treatment, payment and operations identified above. To request this list or accounting of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to the HIPAA Officer. Your request must state a time period which may not be longer than six years and may not include dates before April 14, 2003. Your request should indicate in what form you want the list (for example, on paper, or electronically). The first list you request within a 12-month period will be free. For additional lists, we may charge you for the costs of providing the list. We will notify you of the cost involved and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request at that time before any costs are incurred.

right to request restrictions: You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the medical information we use or disclose about your child for treatment, payment or health care operations. You also have the right to request a limit on the medical information we disclose about your child to someone who is involved in your child’s care or the payment for your child’s care, like a family member or friend.

We are not required to agree to your request. If we do agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide your child emergency treatment. To request restrictions, you must make your request in writing to the HIPAA Officer. In your request, you must tell us (1) what information you want to limit; (2) whether you want to limit our use, disclosure or both; and (3) to whom you want the limits to apply.

right to request confidential communications. You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your child’s medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you can ask that we only contact you at work or by mail. To request confidential communications, you must make your request in writing to the HIPAA Officer. We will not ask you the reason for your request. We will accommodate all reasonable requests. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted.

changes to this notice: We reserve the right to change this notice. We reserve the right to make the revised or changed notice effective for medical information we already have about your child as well as any information we receive in the future.

Complaints: If you believe your child’s privacy rights have been violated, you may contact or submit your complaint in writing to the HIPAA Officer. If we cannot resolve your concern, you also have the right to file a written complaint with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

the quality of your child’s care will not be jeopardized nor will you be penalized for filing a complaint.

# XXII. FINANCE POLICIES

**A. Return Check Fee**

Parents will be assessed a $36.00 fee for returned checks due to the charge from our bank to process non-sufficient funds activity.

**B. Tuition**

Parents of typical peers sign an annual tuition billing agreement with the school.

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# XXIV. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/COMPLAINT

# PROCEDURE/POLICY DEVELOPMENT

policy statement

It is the policy of St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf to provide services to all persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age or disability. No person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of any service, or be subject to discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age or disability.

compliant procedure

If you believe you have been denied a benefit or service because of your race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age or disability, you may file a Complaint of Discrimination with the president of St. Joseph Institute of the Deaf either verbally or in writing. Written complaints should be mailed to?

President

St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf

9192 Waldemar Road

Indianapolis, IN 46268

If you choose to file your complaint in writing, please include your name, address, telephone number and a brief description of what occurred which led you to believe you were discriminated against. In this way, an appropriate response can be made to your concern.

You will not be intimidated, harassed, threatened or suffer any penalty because you file a complaint. Any penalty or reprisal against you or any other involved person(s) is prohibited by law.

You may also file a Complaint of Discrimination by contacting the Indiana Civil Rights Commission.

100 North Senate Ave

Indiana Government Center North, Room N103

Indianapolis, IN 46204

317-232-2600

800-628-2909

development of policies

Policies will be reviewed, added to, deleted or changed with ongoing input from the staff of St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf. The Administration has the authority of final decision-making.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PARENT HANDBOOK**

**St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf**

This parent handbook outlines the policies and procedures of the St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf. An understanding of and adherence to the policies and procedures will ensure positive parent-school relations and that the children's needs are being adequately met. Therefore, St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf, Indianapolis, requires that all parents and/or guardians of children enrolled at SJI read, sign, and return this page to the Director.  
  
1.  I have read, studied, and understand the St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf, Indianapolis Parent Handbook.  
  
2.  I will read and study any additions to, or revisions of, the current policies.  
  
3.  I will adhere to the policies explained in this handbook.  
  
4.  I realize that lack of adherence to these policies may result in termination of the childcare arrangement.  
  
I understand that the policies in this handbook and communication to me in any fashion are subject to interpretation, review and change by the St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf.

Parent/Guardian Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_          Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Name (please print):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_