



2023-2024 School Year

St. Martin's Preschool

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Welcome to St. Martin's Preschool

St. Martin's Preschool Mission Statement

St. Martin's Preschool aims, above all else, to encourage and equip both children and their families with the tools and support to navigate early childhood. We seek to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all children as well as opportunities for play, exploration, and growth.



Dear Families,

Welcome to St. Martin's Preschool! We are so glad you have chosen to be a part of our school family. We desire to partner with you to help your children grow in a safe and loving environment. Children develop at their own pace, and we understand and encourage that. Our teachers and

administrators will work every day to find the best methods for all children in our care to ensure they grow at their own rate.

We also have a strong commitment to play and exploration. We fully believe that play is the work of children. This is how they best learn about the world around them. It allows them to take control of what they learn and do so in a way that is enjoyable and rewarding for them. Play allows them to work from their own internal motivations to learn how to share, adapt, and problem solve.

Preschool is the perfect opportunity to explore new things, to be creative and inquisitive and maybe make some messes in the process. Art, gardening, sensory materials, let's do it all with the knowledge that our wonderful teachers will help us as we make messes and as we learn to clean them up. Let's explore the questions our friends have and see what answers we can discover together. Let's play every day!

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to love and teach your children this year. I look forward to all the wonderful memories that will be made.

Yours in Christ,

Helen Kline

St. Martin's Preschool Calendar
2023-2024

August 11	Back-to-School Kick-off
August 14	First Day of School
September 4	No School-Labor Day
October 19	No School-Staff Development
October 20	Fall Break
November 22-24	No School-Thanksgiving Break
December 15	Polar Express Day
December 19	Christmas Program
December 20-Jan 2	No School-Winter Break
January 15	No School-MLK Day
January 31	Priority Registration Opens for 2024-2025
February 19	Registration Opens to the Public for 2024-2025 and Summer Program
February 19	No School-Presidents Day
March 15	No School-Teacher Work Day
March 29-April 5	No School-Spring Break
May 24	Last Day of School Year program 4K Graduation
May 27	No School-Memorial Day
May 28-29	No school-Teacher Work Days
June 3	First day of summer program
July 4	No School-Fourth of July
Aug TBD	Last Day of Full-day program
Aug TBD	Teacher work days and first day of 24-25 School year

Infants

Our Infant rooms are designed for babies from six weeks to one year old. Teachers in these rooms will cuddle and love your children in a warm and safe environment. They will encourage your child to continue working toward the same developmental markers they work toward with you at home: rolling over, sitting up, crawling, walking, and talking. Of course, all children will reach these milestones at their own pace.

Our Infant rooms contain cribs for napping and refrigerators for milk, formula, and foods. The toys in these rooms are chosen to encourage discovery and growth in a safe environment, and are cleaned twice daily.

Toddlers

The goal of the Toddler class is to provide a fun environment with lots of opportunities to explore and create. Many children this age are new to school, so we aim to help them feel comfortable and cared for while gaining exposure to a preschool schedule. These classes are full of singing, stories, toys, and art. Shapes and colors will also begin to be introduced in these classes but mostly for fun.

Twos

Our Twos classes are designed to start implementing a more structured play experience, rotating through centers and participating more actively in Circle Time activities. This class focuses on shapes, colors, and the world around us. The teachers in this class are also ready and willing to support children and their families through potty training. This classroom is set up to change diapers, but the schedule will also be designed to encourage potty training children to use the restroom before transitioning to a new activity.

Threes

Our Threes program is designed to encourage healthy self-expression, independence, and social interactions. A lot of growth is happening during this time in a child's life, and our teachers are here to help them sort through it with patience and support. Three-year-olds at St. Martin's will be exposed to letters, numbers, colors, and shapes. They will also begin practicing to recognize and write their own names.

Fours

4K classes are more structured but still focused on fun. As children are preparing to enter Kindergarten, St. Martin's will focus on introducing phonics and simple math. These will be presented through a variety of manipulatives and engaging activities. Students may begin learning to read simple words. This classroom has a small library of leveled readers available to them for practice. We know that all children learn at their own pace, and our goal is to help them grow and achieve in a way that works for them. You will still find lots of fun toys, art supplies, and activities in this class to encourage creativity and play every day.

Potty Training

It is our policy that all children in the three-year-old and four-year-old classes must be potty trained. Each child should be at the point where they are able to have limited accidents and are able to use the bathroom independently. Children need to be able to pull down and pull up their clothing, wipe themselves, and properly wash their hands. If a child in the program is determined not to be fully potty trained, the child will not be allowed to attend preschool until they are fully trained. Full tuition will need to be paid in order to hold the child's spot. Policies on Pull-Ups will be up to the discretion of individual teachers.

Snacks

All food for students in our Infant rooms must be brought from home.

Water and snack will be provided for our older classes (Toddlers, Twos, Threes, and Fours) each morning and afternoon. These snacks will rotate between Goldfish, Nilla Wafers, Chex Mix, crackers, Graham Crackers, Veggie Straws, and Pirate's Booty. Each class will also set up a schedule or sign up for Special Snack. This will be a snack for the class brought in by a student's family. Teachers will notify parents of any allergies in the class. Please note that we do not serve popcorn, peanuts, or whole grapes. These items are allergy and choking hazards. If you would like to send in grapes, they must be sliced in half or quartered.

Show and Tell

Some classes have designated "Show and Tell" days when children can bring an item from home to show their classmates. We ask that children not bring toys from home unless it is a "Show and Tell" day. Toys from home can cause a disruption and take attention away from learning times. We do not allow children to bring in toy guns, knives, swords, or other toys that have the purpose of being a weapon.

Tracking Students

Staff members will track students' movement as they enter the school, move from one location to another within the school, and exit the school. Each teacher will have a clipboard with the roster and tracking form that will stay with the class at every location throughout the day and note the time and location of each student. When classes are combined at the beginning and end of each day, there will be a tracking sheet with all children listed. Those teachers will also have a binder with emergency information (contact numbers, allergies, medical conditions, allowed pickups) for all students in the program.

Children's Records

We are required to maintain records for each child. Some forms we are required to keep will need to be filled out each year. This will include current immunization forms (SC DHEC 1148), Emergency Contact Form, and a Medical Release Form. These need to be completely filled in and must include a listed doctor and hospital. All records are kept in the preschool office and are locked at all times.

Fees

Tuition is due on the 1st of each month. You will receive an invoice 3 days prior to the due date via Brightwheel, our software program. Payments will be set up on autopay. You can choose to set it up on a credit card or an automatic monthly bank draft. The cost for the bank draft/ACH is .6% (\$.25 min, \$2 max) per transaction. The cost for using a credit card for payment is 2.95%. A \$25 late fee will be charged to your bill for the following month if tuition payment is received after the 3rd of the month. Please do not give tuition checks to your child's teacher. They may be placed in the tuition box in the front office.

Unpaid Invoices: If an account goes 10 days past the due date, your child may not return to school until the balance is paid in full.

Monthly Tuition

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Infants \$900

Ones \$800

Twos \$775

Threes \$750

Fours \$750

Early Care will be available from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. for a monthly fee of \$90.

Extended Care will be available from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. for a monthly fee of \$90.

The monthly fee to use both Early Care and Extended Care will be \$135.

Early and Extended Care sign-ups will take place per semester in Aug and Jan. If you need a shorter time-frame, please see the director for consideration.

Late Pickup Fee

We know that there are unforeseen circumstances that may cause you to be late in picking up your child. If you are going to be late, please notify your child's teacher via Brightwheel. We will give a 5-minute grace period for the first three occurrences. After the 3rd occurrence, there will not be a grace period given and a late fee will be assessed in the amount of \$1 per minute for the first five minutes and \$5 per minute after the first 5 minutes. The fee will be applied to the following month's tuition. If a child is picked up late, the teacher will write the pickup time on the tracking sheet for the day and ask the parent/guardian/adult picking up to sign next to it so they are aware that the late fee will be applied. This applies only to the 4:30 pick-up time only. The late pick-up fee for extended care will be \$5 per minute beginning with the first minute of tardiness.

Of course, if an emergency arises that causes a late pickup, please contact the director and your child's teacher, and we will work it out.

Invoices

Tuition will be set up on autopay through Brightwheel and will be billed and due on the 1st of each month. You will receive the invoice 3 days ahead of time. If your tuition is more than 3 days late, there will be a \$25 late fee. If you are 2 weeks late in paying, your child may not attend school until you have paid your balance.

Lunch

Lunch will begin at noon. We are unable to heat and prepare foods before they are served, so please be mindful of that as you prepare lunches. Food must be cut into pieces small enough for your child to eat unassisted. Hot dogs, grapes, and other foods that may pose choking hazards must be cut in half or quarters to be served.

Infant rooms have refrigerators for milk and formula. Other classrooms do not have access to a refrigerator, so please consider including an ice pack if a lunch needs to stay cool.

All lunch boxes, cups, and containers must be labeled with your child's name.

Nap

As children finish lunch, they will transition into a nap or rest time. This time will last until approximately 3 p.m. for Infants, Ones, and Twos. Threes and Fours teachers will adjust this time in a way that works best for their class. Each child will need to bring a nap mat on the first day of school. This mat will stay at school and be cleaned regularly. The mats must be at least 1 inch thick per DSS regulations and be covered with a nap mat sheet or 2 king sized pillow cases. Please provide an extra sheet for accidents as well as a blanket for your child. We will send the sheets and blanket home each Friday to be laundered and returned. Cloth roll-up mats must be on top of a 1-inch nap mat per DSS. These will also be sent home for laundering each Friday. Children may also bring a lovey/stuffed animal for this portion of the day.

Arrival and Departure Procedures and Responsibilities

Drop-Off Procedure

Escort your child(ren) to class to the outside classroom door. Scan the QR code outside the classroom door to check your child in.

Pick-up Procedure

When you arrive to pick up your child, scan the QR code to check your child out. When you do so, Brightwheel will automatically email you your child's daily sheet. Please make sure the teacher has acknowledged that you are picking up your child. Your child will not be released to anyone other than those who are designated on your child's forms. If someone else will be picking up your child, his or her teacher must be notified in writing, or you must communicate directly with administration. If you pick-up later than 4:30, your child will be taken to the

extended care room for pick-up. This is so our teachers who get off at 4:30 can leave on time. If picking up late becomes a habit, you may be asked to register for extended care.

Non-Custodial Parent

Non-custodial parents can take their children home as long as there is no court-ordered paperwork on file with the preschool that prevents them from doing so. If court-ordered paperwork is on file that prevents a parent from picking up a child, and that parent tries to take a child home, St. Martin's Preschool will immediately call the police and then notify the custodial parent.

Mandated Reporters

St. Martin's Preschool and church staff members are mandated reporters. If any staff member witnesses behavior that he or she believes to be harmful or could cause unnecessary risk to a child, the rector of the church will be notified immediately. If this concern involves abuse or neglect, the required DSS reporting procedure also will be followed.

Approved Pickup List

Parents are able to list all people approved to pick up their child(ren). Even those approved for pickup will be required to show proper identification (driver's license, passport, student ID) until the staff becomes familiar with this person.

Early Drop Off

If you have paid for Early Care, you may drop your child off no earlier than 7:30am. If you have not paid for Early Care, you may drop your child off no earlier than 8:30am. It is unfair to parents who pay to use our Early Care service to allow other students to arrive earlier than this. Teacher shifts are 8:30-4:30. We ask that you are respectful of their time.

Registration and Enrollment

Enrollment

St. Martin's Preschool accepts children from the ages of 8 weeks to 4 years old. Ages of children are based on a Sept. 1 cut off.

Students can choose to register for the school year (mid-August through May) or the full calendar year (August to August).

Registration Process

Registration for the upcoming year will take place in February. Notices will be placed around the school, sent home with students, and posted on social media. Parents of currently enrolled students will also be notified via email. The order of registration will be as follows:

1. Currently enrolled students will be able to enroll on the first day of registration. We will send home registration packets on this day.
2. Siblings of currently enrolled students will be able to enroll prior to opening registration to the public.

3. The community will then be able to start enrollment after priority registration is completed.

Registration for each of the above is done on a first-come, first-served basis. While siblings will receive priority in the registration process, we cannot guarantee that a child's sibling will receive a spot at the next enrollment.

Registration Fee

A non-refundable annual registration fee is required to enroll a child in St. Martin's Preschool. Children will only be considered for a spot when all completed paperwork and a check for the registration fee are turned in to the administration.

Re-Enrollment

Enrollment for the next school year will take place in February. Current students and siblings of current students will be given priority before registration is opened to the public. An annual registration fee is required for re-enrollment.

Additional Preschool Policies

Non-Discrimination Policy

St. Martin's Preschool does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, age, nationality, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation in any of its activities or operations.

Birthdays

Children celebrating birthdays during the school year may bring in treats to share with the class. These treats should be store bought and individually wrapped. We encourage parents to make arrangements with the child's teacher in advance.

Holidays

Throughout the year, the classes will have celebrations for Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter. If you have any concerns about your child participating in these celebrations, please feel free to contact the director and an alternate plan will be created. Also, please feel free to contact the director if you are interested in sharing other holidays with classmates or the school. We would love to celebrate with you!

Class Placement

We look at many factors when determining each child's placement into a class. We discourage requesting certain teachers because we know we cannot honor every request and want to be fair to everyone. Children are placed in the classrooms based on their date of births. They must be the appropriate age by Sept. 1st.

Classroom Visitation

We encourage parents to visit our school. We do request that you call in advance or stop by the front office to let administration know that you will be visiting a classroom.

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes that will allow them to enjoy outdoor play and art. Flip flops are not allowed due to safety issues on the playground. We strongly discourage open toed shoes. Teachers will ask that each child has a spare change of seasonally-appropriate clothing kept at school.

Immunizations

In order to attend St. Martin's Preschool, students must be vaccinated in accordance with the immunization schedule approved by the CDC. St. Martin's does not accept medical or religious immunization exemptions.

Conferences

Private conferences with parents may be scheduled throughout the year as needed. There will be scheduled conferences for parents of the children in the Threes and Fours classes.

Field Trips

St. Martin's Preschool does not currently take field trips. We are unable to provide safe and legal transportation.

Confidentiality

All records concerning students are confidential and kept in a locked file cabinet in the front office. We do not share information or discuss your child with anyone other than you unless a written request is submitted to the director by a parent/guardian.

Withdrawal

Written two weeks' notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. A form can be picked up at the Front Office. If proper notice is given, unused tuition will be refunded within 30 days of the withdrawal minus the two week notice.

Therapy

If your child participates in any type of therapy at school (speech, occupational, ABA), please be aware that there may only be one therapist in the classroom at a time. Please discuss the scheduling of these therapies with your child's teacher in advance. Any therapist that comes to the school needs to give prior notice to administration and complete the required DSS paperwork with proof of the company/school district for which they work.

Discipline

At St. Martin's Preschool, discipline is used to change the behavior, not the child. It is done with love and understanding. Your child's teacher will explain the rules and consequences for his or her class. This is impacted by the age level of each class.

The methods for discipline at St Martin's Preschool are as follows:

1. Redirection
2. Correction through explanation
3. Isolation from the situation
4. Isolation within the classroom
5. Isolation outside the classroom (the Director's Office)

If these methods are not effective and a child's behavior is disruptive to the point that it is prohibiting other students from enjoying the learning process, then the disruptive student will go with the Director to the front office. Administration will notify parent(s) of the situation and schedule a conference with the parent(s) and teachers. Administration reserves the right to request the child be picked-up for the day.

Biting

As difficult as it is, biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is most common between 13 and 24 months of age, and it is usually temporary. In order to keep students as safe as possible and help guide children through this phase, the following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at the preschool.

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm, "No, we don't bite our friends." Staff will remain calm and not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted (first aid will be applied), and the biter will be removed from the situation and given another task to occupy them.
- An incident report will be filled out for both children
- Parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident separately. Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained at all times.

If a child continues to bite regularly, parents will be contacted. Parents may be asked to remove the child from the preschool until the biting behavior has passed. Teachers and administration will stay in close contact with parents/guardians about biting behavior and do everything in our power to help children and families through this stage.

Inclement Weather

We will follow Richland One School District in any decision that will delay or close St. Martin's Preschool. If Richland One is on a 1-hour delay, St. Martin's will open at 8:30am. If Richland One is on a 2-hour delay, St. Martin's will start at 9:30am. This is to allow our staff a chance to drop their children off at school before reporting to work. If Richland One closes for the day, then St. Martin's will close for the day. Announcements concerning delays and/or closings will be communicate to all parents via Brightwheel SMS message, posted on preschool social media accounts, and texted to each parent by their child's teacher. We will not make up any days that we lose because of weather.

Insurance

St. Martin's Preschool has liability insurance.

Medication

We only administer emergency medication that a physician has prescribed. The medication must be in its original container with the prescription label attached. Written, signed, and dated parental consents are required prior to the administration of any medication and must be taken to the front office. A medication log will be kept for any medication that is administered while at school. The log will contain the child's name, the name of the medication, dosage, date, time, and the person that administered the medication.

If a medication error is made, St. Martin's will immediately notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) by phone and give the parent(s)/guardian(s) a written notification of the error.

Illness

A child who is sick does not benefit from our program and can adversely affect the health of other children and staff. If you have any doubts about your child's health, please keep your child home. The following guidelines have been created out of concern for the health of your child and all other children present at the school.

- Children who become ill during the day will need to be sent home. In all cases, the administration reserves the right to send home a child with suspicious or prolonged symptoms.
- Readmittance is at the discretion of administration.
- When a child is absent due to illness, the parent is asked to notify St. Martin's Preschool as early as possible.
- If your child has experienced a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, the child may not return until they have been symptom free without medication for a full 24 hours. Please note that this means any child picked up from school for an illness will not be allowed in class the following day.

Please note that a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up your child immediately if any of the symptoms below are observed during the day:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- Vomiting
- Three loose bowel movements
- Nausea
- Undetermined rashes
- Pink eye
- A cough with heavy congestion

Remember, children must be symptom free without medication for a full 24 hours before they can return to school. This 24-hours is not measured from the time the child was picked up from school but 24 hours from when the symptoms went away. St. Martin's Preschool does not care for mildly ill children.

If a child who is sent home has a highly contagious illness such as COVID, noravirus/stomach viruses, hand foot mouth, or RSV, we ask that the sibling also remain home as the risk to the sibling is high for getting the same virus thus high to the sibling's classmates.

Head Lice

A notice will be sent home to all students in a classroom in which head lice are reported. Students are not permitted to stay in school when head lice or nits are discovered. A head check will be done by school administration before the student's readmission to class after treatment. All nits are to be removed prior to a student's return to school. For information about how to treat head lice, please go to www.pediatricchairsolutions.com.

Emergency Medical Plan

In case of a possible life-threatening or severe medical emergency involving your child, we will contact 911 immediately and provide CPR or First Aid. All staff members are required to be certified and are trained to recognize signs and symptoms of conditions that require medical attention. While one staff member is on the phone with 911 and another is administering aid, a 3rd staff member will be calling the parent or your emergency contact persons if the parent cannot be reached. We will provide your child's emergency medical information provided on the DSS 2900 form to the EMTs. We will not transport your child to the hospital. If this is needed, they will go by ambulance to the hospital you have provided on the DSS 2900 form. A staff member will accompany your child in the ambulance and be responsible for these records. This staff member will stay with the child until the parents arrive. You will be notified of which staff member is available to accompany your child.

Below is a list of medical conditions under which emergency care is warranted. This is not all inclusive.

- Loss of Consciousness
- Semi consciousness
- Breathing difficulties
- Severe bleeding
- Unequal pupils
- Seizure
- Neck or back injury
- Continuous clear drainage from nose/ears after a blow to the head
- Severe Headache
- Stiff neck and neck pain when head is moved
- Hives that appear quickly
- Very sick child who seems to be getting worse quickly
- Repeated forceful vomiting
- Vomiting blood
- Severe abdominal pain that cause the child to double over
- Abdominal pain after a blow to the abdomen
- Shock
- Possible broken bones

Evacuation Plan

An evacuation plan in case of fire, natural disaster, or a threatening situation that may pose a health or safety hazard and the evacuation route are posted in each classroom. A copy of each is available upon request. If the situation is such that we cannot safely remain on school grounds, our alternate location is Crayton Middle School's parking lot.

Teachers are trained on evacuation practices and practice at each staff development day. Monthly fire drills are conducted with the children.

Provisional Employment

Provisional employment is an option that child care facilities may use to employ a staff member when an unexpected staff vacancy occurs. The new hire can start working while waiting on fingerprint results to come in AFTER a clear SLED check and a clear central registry check are obtained and submitted to DSS along with the fingerprint appointment verification for approval. When a person is provisionally hired, parents will be notified of the provisional hire and that we are complying with SC laws and regulations.

Free and Full Access/Open-Door Policy/Breast feeding

St. Martin's Preschool has an open-door policy. Parents of enrolled children may visit their child's classroom unless a court order stipulates otherwise. The visit must not disrupt instructional activities or classroom routines. If you are a breast-feeding mother, you are welcome to use our facilities to do so. Please notify the teachers when you will be coming so they can know the child's schedule. Please provide a back-up bottle in case you are not able to come as planned.

Termination of Service

St. Martin's Preschool may terminate child care services without notice or obligation if the parent or guardian:

- Does not keep the child's record up to date
- Fails to pay tuition or fees in a timely manner
- Fails to abide by the rules of the preschool as listed in this handbook
- Treats personnel of the school or St. Martin's Church in an abusive or unreasonable manner
- Engages in conduct that is likely to endanger the welfare or safety of St. Martin's Preschool
- Child care services may also be terminated for other reasons deemed necessary and at the discretion of the preschool director and church rector.

Parent Signature Page

2023-2024 Parent Handbook

I have read the Parent Handbook for the 23-23 School Year and agree to abide by the DSS and School policies set forth in the handbook.

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Child's Name _____

**(A signature page is needed for each child you have enrolled at St. Martin's
Preschool)**