

St. Edmund's Nursery School

Parent Handbook

2025-2026



St. Edmund's Nursery School
1175 San Gabriel Blvd.
PO Box 80038
San Marino, Ca. 91118-8038

Liz Westphal - Head of School

License: # 19150063

Tax ID: #95-1816042

Parent's Handbook

Dear Parents:

We are delighted that you have chosen St. Edmund's Nursery School for your child's first school experience and we extend a very warm welcome to you as a family and to your children as individuals. On behalf of the entire staff, it is our pleasure to welcome and serve you.

We shall strive in every possible way to make our relationship with you rewarding. We shall endeavor to guide your child's development in physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual growth by presenting a program that enriches everyday experiences.

This Handbook contains a great deal of information that will be helpful to you during the entire school year. Please read through it now and print it for reference as the school year progresses. We have tried to anticipate and answer most questions in the following pages. Feel free to come and visit with me at any time. Remember that our doors are always open and visitors are welcome but we do ask that you notify us prior to a visit.

Nursery School is not a substitute for a loving, supportive home or for an active church life, but it supplements the home and church in many ways. If you already have a church home, we encourage you to continue to attend there with your child. If not, we welcome you to our church family here at St. Edmund's Episcopal Church in San Marino.

We will give to your child affection, acceptance, academics and approval in a warm, loving, caring, nurturing, and Christian atmosphere.

Sincerely,

Liz Westphal and the Staff of St. Edmund's Nursery School

St. Edmund's Parent Handbook

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Background

St. Edmund's Nursery School was established in 1957. It is a California State licensed, non-profit school, sponsored by St. Edmund's Episcopal Church. Admission is open to pre-school aged children without regard to race, religion or national ancestry.

Mission

The Mission of St. Edmund's Nursery School is to offer young children an outstanding learning environment and an excellent foundation for future academic, social and spiritual development. Emphasizing basic skills, values, manners and an inclusive religious curriculum. St. Edmund's Nursery School strives to nurture knowledgeable, responsible, and caring children well prepared to meet the challenges of family, school and community life.

Goals

- To create a child's world in a positive atmosphere, where the individual and group needs of young children will be met.
- To increase each child's understanding and acceptance of self and others.
- To increase the children's awareness and knowledge of the world around them. To give them the freedom to discover.
- To establish and maintain a strong, mutually beneficial relationship between the school and its families. To share information and support activities helpful to parents.
- To foster an environment wherein the children can feel comfortable about God and learn about God's love for them.
- To create self esteem, self respect and self confidence.

Staff

Our staff is composed of persons with a genuine love for and interest in young children. Our teachers have professional training and education in Early Childhood Education and are selected because of their understanding and sensitivity to children in their early years.

All staff members participate regularly in growth and development programs and workshops.

Programs offered at St. Edmund's Nursery School

To enter St. Edmund's Nursery School in September, a child must be three years old on or before December 2nd of that year.

The School offers:

- Tuesday/Thursday sessions for 3-year olds
(3 years old by Dec. 2)
- Monday/Wednesday/Friday session for 3-year olds
(3 years old by August)
- Monday/Wednesday/Friday session for 4-year olds
(4 years old by Dec. 2)
- Monday/Wednesday/Friday session for 4-year olds
(4 years old by August)
- Five-day session for 4-year olds
(4 years old by July 1)
- Pre-Kindergarten session for 5-year olds
(5 years old by Dec. 2)

In addition to the regular day (8:40 to 12:00 with staggered schedule), the School offers four ***Picnic Days*** (12:00 to 2:50) on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons for all students attending St. Edmund's Nursery School, at an additional fee of \$36.00 per picnic afternoon. On occasion, there is an optional enrichment activity which would incur an additional charge.

Daily Program

A carefully supervised and balanced program is offered to assist in the learning process of the child. This includes varied activities of play, pre-reading and pre-math readiness, music appreciation, stories, creative art, science, gardening, and health, all of which provide an educational experience of lasting value in the physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual growth of your child.

School Hours and Policies

The Nursery School is open Monday through Friday. Our arrival and pick-up schedule is staggered with start times of 8:40 and 8:45 and dismissal at 11:40 and 11:45. The child must be accompanied by a parent or designated person for admission by the Head of School. At the gate, the Head of School will check each child for colds or other obvious symptoms of illness.

To comply with state law, each child must be signed in and out via the Brightwheel attendance app by the parent or designated guardian. A written request must accompany your child if you wish your child to be released to anyone other than those designated on your Authorization Form or as an “approved pick-up person” in the Brightwheel app. At 11:40, the gate will be opened to allow parents to drive through and safely pick up children at the door. ***A late fee of \$15.00 will be charged after 12:00 noon.***

A child should not remain in school if lack of self-control makes the child dangerous to him/herself or others, or if it is determined by the Head of School and the Staff that the child needs a different type of program.

We may close for a maximum of two teacher in-service days. The dates will be posted well in advance.

***All children must be toilet-trained before entering Nursery School
Diapers and pull-ups are not allowed at
St. Edmund's Nursery School***

Brightwheel App for Attendance

Please read the following very carefully! It pertains to every child in our school each school day and must be followed as outlined. This is a regulation of the State Department of Social Services requiring that every child in every pre-school in California must be signed in and out, which includes the time, by the authorized adult caring for that child every time he/she attends school. **It is a State mandate that each parent or authorized pick-up person (Grandparent, Nanny, other family member) check in and check out their child each day they are in attendance. School Staff is NOT allowed to check-in or check-out your child. Without proper check-in, your child may be refused at the gate to comply with check-in regulation.**

1. Bring the child(ren) to the gate for the usual health inspection and acceptance.
2. Use your Brightwheel app to check in/out your child each day they attend SENS by scanning the QR code posted at drop off or on the boards at pick up.
3. Checking your child in will include a health clearance and authorized signature.
4. Any child(ren) who arrive late must be brought to the office and checked in using the same Brightwheel check in process.
5. Any child(ren) who leaves early must be checked out at the office using the Brightwheel app.
6. Pick up the child(ren) at their usual time and place and check out using the Brightwheel app.

On rainy days we have a drive through drop off process. The clip boards with the Brightwheel QR code will be brought to your car for you to scan and the children will be accepted into school.

Tuition

Tuition is an annual fee that may be paid in one payment at the beginning of the school year or divided into two equal installments with such payments due mid August and the end of January. If there is a financial problem, speak to the Head of School for other arrangements. Tuition should be remitted by cash or check and made payable to *St. Edmund's Nursery School*.

Unless alternative payment arrangements have been made with the Head of School, failure to pay tuition when due will be subject to late fees as outlined below or may result in withdrawal of your child from the School.

Late fees:

- 10% late fee on the outstanding balance for tuition payments received more than two weeks after the due date. In addition, the family will lose priority placement for the following school year.

If, for some reason, there is an alternative payment plan other than by semester and agreed upon by SENS, there is a \$50 administration fee due at the onset of this arrangement. Payments will be due the first of the month. Also, a 10% late fee on the outstanding balance for tuition payments received more than one week after the due date will apply.

Additionally, failure to pay tuition when due and/or comply with the terms of any alternative payment arrangements may make your child as well as your child's siblings ineligible to enroll at the School. **If tuition is to be paid using a business or company check, it must be accompanied by a letter that authorizes payment from the company, that is signed by two corporate officers (other than yourself).**

If it is necessary to withdraw a child during the year, parents should give written notice as far in advance as possible, but no later than 30 days prior to withdrawal. The School will reimburse parents for any pre-paid tuition covering the months after their child's withdrawal, provided that child's spot at the School is filled by a new student. However, if a child has attended any part of the month, tuition for that month is not refundable. In the event that a child is withdrawn at the request of the school, the School will reimburse the parent for any pre-paid tuition covering the months after the child's withdrawal, regardless of whether or not that child's spot at the school is filled by a new student.

For information on Scholarship availability, contact the Head of School.

Tuesday/Thursday - \$1732.00/semester - \$3897.00/year

Mon/Wed/Fri - \$2208.00/semester - \$4968.00/year

5-Day / Pre-K - \$3544.00/semester - \$7974.00/year

Health and Safety

All children entering the Nursery School are required to have a pre-entrance physical examination with required immunizations (Title 22:101220.1). The *Health Form* and the *Medical Release Form* must be returned before school starts in September.

For the safety, health, and welfare of the children and faculty, do not send your child to school if any of the following conditions is present:

1. If he/she has a temperature, diarrhea, or vomiting within the previous 24 hours.
2. A cold less than three days old or a runny nose.
3. Red throat/persistent cough.
4. Swollen neck glands/earache.
5. Reddened eyes.
6. Unexplained skin rash or skin eruptions.
7. If he/she acts listless, drowsy, has a headache, flushed face, lack of appetite, or shows behavior that is noticeably out of the ordinary.

St. Edmund's Nursery School reserves the right to refuse to admit any child who appears to be ill.

Allergies of any kind should be brought to the attention of both the Head of School and the child's teacher in addition to being noted on the child's *Health Form*.

Any special needs or problems should be brought to the attention of the Head of School and also written on the child's *Health Form* and *Social History Form*.

Any student who provides the school with an epi pen or specifies food allergies must bring his/her own snack each day to school. We will not provide any food items to the student with known allergies. Should you desire, a copy of the snack menu will be sent home so that you can bring in foods similar to what is being offered.

Medication will be administered *ONLY* in special cases, and *ONLY* with the written permission of the parent, giving dosage and directions. Medications must be in the original container with an unaltered label prescribed specifically for your child. (Title 22:101226(e). **Contagious or infectious diseases must be reported immediately to the Head of School.**

Emergency Procedures

Fire and earthquake drills are practiced regularly so that everyone knows exactly how to do "what", "where", and "why". If a fire or earthquake should occur, the faculty will follow the Emergency Procedure and lead the children to an assembly area on the school's playground. All *Emergency Authorization Forms* must be on file in the school office for each child. Parents are responsible for keeping the school informed of any changes in emergency information during the school year. Your child will not be released to anyone that is not on your *Emergency Authorization Form*.

Insurance

Each student at St. Edmund's Nursery School is insured against school time accidents, with benefits up to \$10,000.

Additional Emergency Procedures

SENS has added an out of state contact to our disaster procedures.

We will obtain a new contact before the start of the school year.

This out of state contact will be your “go to number” in the event of a major disaster/emergency should our phone system become impaired. The reason for having an out of state contact is to free up the local communication system in the disaster area. In the event of an emergency, you will call our out of state contact to receive information about our status. Our contact will be notified by a SENS staff member regarding injuries or the well being of all students and staff here at St. Edmund’s. Please be advised that it may take up to an hour before the out of state contact has any information. We will update Christ Church Episcopal Pre-School every hour or so with updates and our families can be assured information is properly managed.

Call Blast

St. Edmund’s Nursery School has put in place a call blast system to communicate emergency status, information, etc to all of our families. Each family is asked for an emergency contact number to be used for this purpose only. School wide emergency information will be communicated via a phone blast by the Head of School or designated Staff members should the need arise.

Transportation

Transportation to and from St. Edmund's Nursery School is the responsibility of each family. The purple *Authorization Form* with your "Car Pool" listed and other authorized people that can pick up your child(ren), must be on file at school by the first day of school. In addition, you must add them to your Brightwheel attendance app as "approved pick up persons" in order for our staff to release the child to that designated person.

When entering the north parking lot in the morning, please use the north driveway to enter and the south driveway to exit which are properly marked as entrance and exit. When entering the north parking lot in the afternoon, please use the north driveway to enter, drive through to pick up your child and exit the most southern driveway. Teachers and staff will place children into the car using the door closest to them. **For safety reasons, no teacher or staff will circle the vehicle risking passing in front or behind the car in order to place the child in the car.** Parents will buckle them in. No child will be released into a car without a car seat. **ALWAYS ENTER THE NORTH DRIVEWAY AND EXIT THE SOUTH DRIVEWAY!**

**REMEMBER TO BUCKLE UP, NO CELLULAR PHONES IN CARPOOL
LINE AND NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN IN CARS UNATTENDED!
SMOKING IS PROHIBITED ON THE PREMISES OF A CHILD CARE
CENTER (Title 22:101231)**

Clothing

When dressing your children, please remember that they are in school to have fun, not to stay clean! Choose clothes that allow the child freedom to enjoy both the play equipment and the materials available for art and science projects. Help your child toward independence by selecting clothing that is MANAGEABLE - for instance, elastic-waist trousers. Buttons, snaps, zippers or buckles may pose a problem. In addition, please, no open toe shoes, crocs, or slip on shoes. For playground safety, tennis shoes are best. Coats and sweaters should be clearly and permanently marked with the child's first and last name.

Marvelous Munchies

“Marvelous Munchies” is St. Edmund’s term for nutritious and delicious snacks. Good nutrition is important to us! There is a mid-morning snack time each day. To help instill the value and importance of good nutrition, each child is asked to provide a wholesome snack for half the school three or four times per year. A Marvelous Munchies calendar with assignments will go home each month for those families responsible for the snack for that month. Due to State requirements and the increase in allergies, you will be assigned a specific snack to bring for 30-35 children. A beverage of water will be served at snack time. For holidays, birthdays and some special events children are offered sweet treat options. **Because of the importance of food allergies, we will not serve anything with nuts, peanuts or peanut butter.** Children with food allergies are not served any items which have not been supplied by their parents. The snack menu will be posted in the Head of School’s office along with the school website for review.

Birthdays

A birthday will be celebrated at snack time. We have a special “pretend” cake so that the children can blow out their candles. We also have a special birthday crown. *Please bring cookies or other treats just for your child’s class – **no large cupcakes please!** Please do not send birthday invitations or gifts to school.* If your child has a summer birthday, arrange a “Special Half-Birthday Celebration” with his/her teacher. Each child will receive a special “Birthday Blessing” in Chapel during the month of his or her birthday.

Picnic Days

Picnic Days are held on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 12:00 until 2:50 p.m., the third week of September through the first week of June. **A late fee of \$15.00 will be charged after 2:55 p.m.** Please be sure to pick up no later than 2:50 p.m. Each child should bring their own picnic lunch in a bag or lunch box with their first and last names. However, due to a “no nut” policy no nuts of any kind or peanut butter is allowed for lunches or as a snack. The school will provide a beverage. Sign- Up will be available at the beginning of each picnic block. Payment will be collected at sign up. You must sign-up for a Picnic by the designated timeframe set by the school. If space becomes available on a weekly basis there will be a sign up at the gate during drop off. *If fewer than 8 children are signed up, Picnic Day may be canceled for the day and parents notified accordingly.* **Payment is due at sign up.** Make checks payable to St. Edmund’s Nursery School and indicate your child’s name on the check. Children may attend any Picnic Day, even if they do not attend school that day.

Special Events and Activities

Every parent at St. Edmund's Nursery School has a chance to be more involved in the activities of the school and the education of their children. Each parent will have an opportunity to meet with other parents in order to develop friendships and to be able to share and communicate common concerns. They will be able to support the staff, help with fundraising events, and help plan very special events and activities to benefit all children. EACH FAMILY IS EXPECTED TO SIGN UP FOR A MINIMUM OF TWO VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES PER YEAR INCLUDING WORKING A 1 HOUR SHIFT AT OUR ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL.

Scrip Program

St. Edmund's Nursery School has a SCRIP program to raise ongoing funds to support the excellence of our school. SCRIP is a terrific no-cost way to support the St. Edmund's Nursery School. Scrip is a WIN, WIN endeavor and helps St. Edmund's community earn substantial fundraising income. We are also encouraging every family to sign up for E-Scrip as an easy way to support this program. Information will be sent home to explain how easy it is for you to participate in our E-Scrip program. We greatly appreciate your participation in this program.

T-shirts and Sweatshirts

In the fall our St. Edmund's T-shirts and sweatshirts are available for purchase. Teachers and students enjoy wearing these on SENS Spirit Days which are listed on the school calendar.

School Photos

In October, the children will have an opportunity to have their pictures taken by Julie Lilly. She is an excellent photographer that offers several pre-paid packages. Children bring home envelopes, then the parents take their choice of packages and return the envelope to school. You will be notified when your child's picture will be taken. This is available to all children. In May, Julie Lilly will come to school and take individual Graduation pictures and after the Graduation Ceremony, a group Graduation picture will be taken. All graduation photos will be mailed to your home.

Field Trips

Field trips will be scheduled for the Pre K and the Shining Star classes when the trip enhances the particular study or theme of the class. The trips will be supervised by the Nursery School faculty with the assistance of parent volunteers. Permission slips and details as to location, transportation and time will be given to parents prior to each trip.

Chapel

Being an Episcopal Nursery School, we incorporate into our class curriculum, Christian values regarding family and friend relationships, sharing, and expressing one's feelings. Books are read, songs are sung and stories are told.

All children attend Chapel Services each month. These Services are led by the clergy of St. Edmund's Episcopal Church and include songs, prayers and most likely, a story or two. We encourage parents to come and join their child in Chapel. Chapel dates are published in the monthly newsletter. The children especially like it when it is their birthday, during Chapel they receive a special "Birthday Blessing" and we sing "Happy Birthday, Jesus Loves You."

Discipline

We keep the rules at school as simple as possible. Basically, these rules fall in two areas. (1) We will not permit actions that will harm anyone, and (2) we will not permit inappropriate use of equipment. That is, blocks and sand are *not* for throwing; tricycles are not for crashing.

We will try to discipline the children in three ways: *reasoning, re-direction and removal*. We reason and talk with the children about the results of their actions and try to explain feelings. We *re-direct* them (or the whole group) to different activities in different locations. If these fail, we *remove* the child to a quiet space until he/she feels like playing in a socially acceptable way. We try to make the child responsible for their own actions. We teach them to use their words.

However, ensuring the safety of all children and staff is our most important job. Should a situation arise that compromises the safety of children and/or staff, the Head of School has the authority to "dis-enroll" a student for cause.

Child Abuse Reporting

St. Edmund's Nursery School has written guidelines that list procedures for prevention, detection and reporting child abuse. The faculty is knowledgeable in reporting suspected child abuse and is aware that this is mandated by law.

This is the "Mission Statement on Child Abuse" by the Episcopal Churches and Schools: "*God embraces children with love placing their nurture and care in our hands. We believe that children should be safe from all forms of abuse and neglect. We the church will be advocates for children and establish clearly defined safeguards, policies and procedures for their protection*".

Home-School Communications

At the beginning of each month, a newsletter will be emailed to each family from the Head of School. Basically, it will inform you of everything of importance happening at school that month: the theme, the number, color, shape and concept to be learned; visits scheduled from the police officer, fire fighters, or similar professional; chapel and puppet show dates; dates when the children will have their speech and eyes screened, etc.

We encourage parents to be involved in our school program and we seek to support the family in their child rearing. Parents are welcome to observe their children at school at any time. When observing, please remember that the teachers' time and attention belong to the children, so this is not an appropriate time for discussion/conference.

Each family will have scheduled conferences between parents and teachers. Additional conferences are available at the request of the parent, teacher or Head of School.

All families experience times of joy and sorrow that may have special impact upon your child. Please tell your teacher or the Head of School when family changes may cause adjustment problems for your child. This will allow the staff to support you during these times and give extra care to your child. *The Clergy of St. Edmund's Parish is always available for conferences and for support.*

Evening Orientations

Once school begins, usually the within the first week of our start date, parents are invited to meet with the Head of School and learn more about the events and activities. You will then meet with your child's teachers to learn about their program and goals for the year. Your teachers will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Parent Conferences

During the year the teachers will confer with the parents to give them the overall progress of each child. Before the next year's enrollment, the teachers will help the parents make decisions on what is best for their child. Individual Parent Conferences are scheduled for parents and teachers to meet and discuss the child's progress and development in school. However, at any time parents or teachers may request a conference during the school year.

Visitors

All visitors are welcome to our campus. However, you must make an appointment with the school for all visits. Visitors will sign in at the front office with the date and time of your visit and wear a visitor tag. Visitor sign in sheets and name tags are available at the front office. No visitor can be on campus without pre-arranging their visit. Upon your departure, please sign out by posting your end of visit time and returning your badge.

St. Edmund's Nursery School Staff

2025-2026

Pre K -

Mrs. Leslie Long and Mrs. Lani Di Bona

Shining Star Class-

Mrs. Sylvia Grimes and Mrs. Carol Schraer

4 Year Olds - MWF

Friendly 4's/Old 4's: Mrs. Kelley Terrazas and Mrs. Michelle Alexander

Lucky Ducks/Young 4's: Mrs. Suzanne Holder and Mrs. Jeannie Huang

3 Year Olds - MWF

Zookeepers: Mrs. Rebekah Macleod, Mrs. Angela Alo and

Mrs. Kristin Mitchell, Assistant

3 Year Olds – T/Th

Busy Bees/Old 3's: Mrs. Angela Hopf and Mrs. Alyssa Kilpatrick and

Mrs. Sarah Schoettler, Assistant

Bear Cubs/Young 3's: Mrs. Cheryl Elffers, Mrs. Erica Pegram and

Mrs. Erin Ferraro

Music Director: Mrs. Susan Norman

Assistant to Head of School: Mrs. Angela Hopf

Administrative Assistant: Mrs. Lani Di Bona

Administrative Assistant to All Staff: Mrs. Kelsey Sotomayor

Assistant to Admin: Mrs. Gloria Morales

Head of School: Mrs. Liz Westphal

St. Edmund's Nursery School

Board of Directors

2025-2026

Chair – Ashley Paulus

Secretary – Morgan Clougherty

Treasurer – Kathy Perez

Assistant Treasurer – Christine Le

Publicity/Personnel – Danielle Herring

Community Development/Minor Fundraising – Samantha Fritch

Major Fundraising (Parent Party) – Alex Bottala

Special Events and Room Parent Coordinator – Anne McGilvray

Enrichment – Amy Lechler

Building and Grounds – Kylie Bottala

Hospitality – Simone Haralambos

Long Range Planning and Annual Fund – Michael Noser

Fall Festival – Carolina Kokoris

Head of School – Liz Westphal

Rector- Reverend Jenifer Chatfield

Vestry Representative – Linan Ukropina

Chaplain to the Nursery School – Reverend Susanne Wright-Nava

If I Had My Child to Raise Over Again

If I had my child to raise all over again,

I'd finger paint more, and point the finger less.

I'd do less correcting, and more connecting.

I'd take my eyes off my watch, and watch with my eyes.

I'd take more hikes and fly more kites.

I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.

I'd run through more fields, and gaze at more stars.

I'd do more hugging, and less tugging.

I would be firm less often, and affirm much more.

I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.

I'd teach less about the love of power,

And more about the power of love.