

Holy Family Children's Ministry: Program Policies & Guidelines

The following policies will be followed by the Parish School of Religion and all its participants, volunteers, and families to maintain the safety of everyone. If you have questions or concerns regarding these policies and procedure, please contact the Children's Ministry Program Director at 253-833-5130 ext. 219. If at any time these policies change you will receive an updated copy.

1. **Wednesday Drop off/Pick up Policy:** Parents/guardians must escort children between the parish buildings and parking lot for drop off and pick up. Children may not walk in by themselves. Students must be checked in by an adult with the Program Director or Administrative Assistant in the breezeway. Each week attendance will be taken and students will then be directed to their assigned area of the church to wait for opening prayer with their catechist and classmates. Students will be picked up at their designated classrooms at the end of class to be dismissed to their authorized pick-up person. **No children may be checked in prior to 6:15pm Wednesdays as there is no adequate supervision before this time.**
 - a. Pick up authorization: If an alternate person other than the child's parents will pick up at the end of class the name must be noted with the Program Director or Administrative Assistant at check in. Students will not be released to unapproved people. A list of authorized pick-up people will be kept at the check in table with the Program Director or Administrative Assistant. Concerns about which family members are authorized to pick up children must be addressed to the Program Director as soon as possible if these concerns arise mid-year.
 - b. Early pick up: Should any parent need to pick up a child for any reason prior to the end of class, please notify the Program Director or Administrative Assistant in advance, check in at the breezeway before 6:45pm or in the parish center after 6:45pm and your child will be escorted to you.
 - c. Late pick up: If you will be late picking up your child due to an emergency, please contact the Program Director at 253-833-5130 ext. 219 so that we can plan for the safe oversight of your child.
 - d. Family Events/Parties: Any events outside of the regularly scheduled classes in the Parish Center require parents to attend with their children. Children may not be left at events without parent/guardian supervision.
2. **Visitor check in:** Any visitors to the campus should check in with the Administrative Assistant in the breezeway between the church and school entrances or in the parish center. Parents are welcome to spend time praying in the church while classes are being held, but may not volunteer in classrooms unless a Call to Protect class and background check are completed with the Archdiocese of Seattle. The exception to this is that each family will be asked to attend one class throughout the year to observe, but will not be serving as volunteers. Throughout the year parent faith formation options may be offered in the church while children are attending classes. Parents are asked to supervise any children that are not attending classes at all times.
3. **Weather Closure:** In the event of inclement weather, the Parish School of Religion will comply with Auburn School District closures when possible. This information is available at <http://www.auburn.wednet.edu/auburnsd>, www.kirotv.com, the parish website, or the Parish office number 253-833-5130 ext. 219. Individual phone calls will not be made to families. Please use caution and if it is not safe for your family to travel in the inclement weather, please stay home. Should there be significant changes in the weather during the afternoon, last minute adjustments may be made to the schedule. If weather should change abruptly during class sessions, every effort will be made to contact parents while children are supervised until parents can arrive. In the event of a power outage

parish phones and websites will not be in operation. Program classes will be cancelled in the event of a power outage.

4. Volunteer Responsibilities:

- a. **Catechist/Assistant Responsibility:** Children will be supervised at all times while attending classes by a catechist and/or assistant. In the event of online programming two Safe Environment certified adults must be present in the Zoom classroom. A minimum of two adult volunteers, must accompany class on trips where the group leaves the classroom as in a tour of the church, moving between the church, parish hall, parish center or other field trip. Children who must leave the classroom for any other reason while class is in session, will be escorted by a volunteer, such as walking to and from the restroom. Catechists will remain in the church before class and in the classroom after class to supervise children. Catechists will not leave classroom until all assigned students have been picked up by an authorized adult.
- b. **Background Checks:** All volunteers who come into contact with children are cleared at regular intervals by means of Archdiocese background checks. They also have attended the Safe Environment classes provided by the Archdiocese.
- c. **Safety Training:** Volunteers are trained to ensure student safety during emergency situations include fire, earthquake, and lock down procedures. Emergency evacuation maps are provided in each classroom.

5. Code of Conduct for Child Participants (Online Programming when necessary)

In order to assure the safe and successful participation of children and adults participating in parish online programming in the Archdiocese of Seattle, the following code of conduct is to be followed. Violation of these norms may result in dismissal/denied access for future online sessions. All participants are expected to:

- a) Follow Program Director or Adult Leader instructions at all times;
 - b) Dress appropriately;
 - c) All participants must login under their real name. Anybody logging in under an assumed name will be dismissed and denied further access.
 - d) Refrain from behavior or using language that is inappropriate. This includes but is not limited to:
 1. bad language;
 2. presentation of inappropriate images or music;
 3. visible use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or weapons;
 4. disruptive actions that are tantamount to bullying, harassment, or verbal abuse.
- 6. Document confidentiality:** Registration/Emergency forms are maintained by the Children's Ministry Coordinator. This information is kept confidential. Teachers are only given contact number and pertinent medical information for their students.
- 7. Classroom Snacks:** Snacks may be provided in the classroom based on teacher discretion. Teachers may provide a sign-up sheet for snacks for the class if they would like. **No foods containing peanuts or peanut butter may be brought, as these can cause life-threatening reactions in some children.** Please make sure your children eat before they arrive for the program so that they are able to focus on the catechist and the lesson even if a snack is not available.
- 8. Attendance:** All children missing more than two sacrament preparation classes in year one or two will be required to makeup the class during a mutually agreed upon time between the Program Director and parent. This applies to all children in the pre-sacrament, sacrament prep 2/3 and sacrament 4/5 classes during the 2023-2024 school year.
- 9. Parent Observation Night:** Each family is asked to sign up for one to attend class with their child. This is to allow the families to better understand what is being taught in faith formation/sacrament preparation classes and to participate more fully in the faith formation of their child with the catechist team. Catechists will maintain the sign-up list of families that plan to attend each week.