

St. Raphael Nursery School

1513 Dunster Road
Rockville, Maryland 20854

2020-2021

Handbook

General Information
301-762-2143

Fax
301-762-4991

<http://www.straphaelschoolmd.org>

Established 1969

Welcome

On behalf of Fr. Mike Salah, our parish priests and the Staff of St. Raphael Nursery School I would like to welcome the parents and children, new or returning, to the school. We hope this will be a wonderful beginning for your child and an exciting, rewarding and satisfying experience for you as a parent.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with our school. It will have most of the information you will need to know throughout the school year. We urge you to read the handbook and keep it as a reference during the year. On our emergency form there is a place for you to sign indicating that you have read the handbook and agree to be governed by our rules and policies.

The staff looks forward to working with you and your child in the year to come. Looking forward to a great year!

Fondly,

Teri Dwyer

I. PHILOSOPHY

St. Raphael Nursery School offers an early childhood program for children three and four years of age. The goal of the school is the development of the whole child - religiously, psychologically, mentally and socially - so that he or she can have a pleasant school experience and a good beginning toward a successful life within a Christian environment.

St. Raphael Nursery School is above all a Catholic preschool. Children will be expected to participate in the Catholic religion program and participate in Catholic religious services appropriate for preschool age children.

The children are exposed to a wide range of experiences such as free play, music, art, dramatic play and dancing. The teacher and children gather for group experiences which help develop thinking, perceiving, remembering and the skill of communicating. The group activities also encourage being part of a whole community and instill respect while helping one another. The school environment provides the child with a sense of self-worth and well-being and always encourages the positive “I can” attitude with emphasis on doing things for oneself.

II. MISSION

St. Raphael Nursery School, as an extension of St. Raphael Catholic Community, provides a foundation for education based on Catholic values and traditions in a safe, nurturing, and spiritual environment.

III. HISTORY

St. Raphael Nursery School began in 1969 as an incorporated organization offering a non-sectarian program for three and four year olds in space rented from St. Raphael Church. In 1989 the school became an integral part of St. Raphael Parish, operating under the guidance of the Catholic School's Office for the Archdiocese of Washington.

IV. GOVERNANCE AND LICENSING

St. Raphael Nursery School is under the authority of the Archbishop of Washington and is related to the Catholic Schools Office.

St. Raphael Nursery School is licensed by the State of Maryland's Department of Education.

V. ADMISSION POLICIES

The Archdiocese Admissions Non-Discrimination Policy can be found on the website of the Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Washington:

www.adwcatholicschools.org. We give admissions preference to Catholic students who are members of St. Raphael Parish, then space permitting to all others. We welcome all children including those with special developmental and or health care needs. We evaluate each child individually to ensure we can accommodate their needs. Children with special needs will be admitted if, with reasonable accommodations on the part of the school, they can function in the school environment. Children will be conditionally accepted and status will be reevaluated if the need arises.

Registration is in mid-January. A \$200.00 non-refundable application fee is due at the time of registration. At the time of acceptance, two months tuition deposit is due, which is applied to September and May tuitions for the upcoming school year. Tuition payment is refundable only if a class is full. Children must be potty trained by the start of school in September.

If someone wishes to withdraw a child from the school, one month's written notice must be submitted to the school director. A refund of May tuition is contingent upon the replacement of the withdrawing student within 30 days.

VI. TUITION AND CLASS OFFERINGS

Order of Acceptance for the School

1. Children returning for another year at SRNS and children of SRNS faculty.

2. Siblings of returning children and siblings of alumni children of SRNS.
3. Children of SRNS alumni who have been contributing parishioners, through the parish envelopes, of St. Raphael or other Catholic Parishes in the Archdiocese of Washington for at least one (1) year.
4. Children of SRNS alumni who have been contributing parishioners, through the parish envelopes, of St. Raphael or other Catholic Parishes in the Archdiocese of Washington for less than one (1) year.
5. Children who have never attended SRNS, whose parents have been registered parishioners of St. Raphael or other Catholic Parishes in the Archdiocese of Washington for at least one (1) year. The parents must be contributing parishioners through the parish envelopes.
6. Children who have never attended SRNS, whose parents have been registered parishioners of St. Raphael or other Catholic Parishes in the Archdiocese of Washington for less than one (1) year. The parents must be contributing parishioners through the parish envelopes.
7. Transfers of former SRNS students.
8. Non-Catholic children.

The above acceptance policy is subject to change. Please consult current registration procedures prior to registration.

Admission to St. Raphael Nursery School assumes that you have agreed to our tuition policy.

St. Raphael Nursery School uses TADS Tuition Management Services for tuition collection. After your initial 2 month deposit, you will have the option of paying the remainder of your tuition up-front, or using TADS for invoice or direct debit processing. If at any time you think you might have a problem, do not hesitate to call the Director to work out a payment plan. We need your support and your prompt payment. **TUITION PAYMENTS ARE REFUNDABLE ONLY IF A CLASS IS FILLED WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER THE CHILD HAS WITHDRAWN.**

Tuition consists of the following items:

- Monthly tuition for the nursery school or annual tuition for full time programs

- Annual activity fee for each nursery school program
- One-time security fee upon enrollment

CLASS OFFERINGS

THREE-YEAR OLD PROGRAM

Must turn 3 by December 31, 2020

Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 9:15-11:45 AM

Catholic - \$472 Non-Catholic - \$496

Tuesday/Thursday, 9:15-11:45 AM

Catholic - \$320 Non-Catholic - \$335

Monday through Friday

9:15AM-2:45PM

Catholic-\$9,500 Non Catholic - \$10,500

FOUR-YEAR OLD PROGRAM

Includes Lunch Bunch

Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 9:15-11:45 AM

Catholic - \$540 Non-Catholic - \$568

Due to COVID 19, lunch bunch has been temporarily suspended for this class.

Monday/Wednesday/Friday

9:15AM -2:45PM

Catholic-\$1000 Non-Catholic-\$1,050

Monday through Friday

9:15AM-2:45PM

Catholic-\$9,500 Non-Catholic - \$10,500

FULL TIME 4+ PROGRAM

Includes Lunch Bunch

(Must turn 4 by 3/31/20)

Monday through Friday 9:15AM– 2:45PM

Catholic—\$9,500 Annually Non-Catholic \$10,500 Annually

STAY AND PLAY – on hold due to COVID 19

Mondays and Thursdays

9:30-11:30AM

\$8.00 per family pre-registered

\$10.00 per family walk-in

NOTE: Class offerings vary year to year depending on enrollment.

VII. CURRICULUM

The curriculum follows the Archdiocese of Washington standards.

CURRICULUM GUIDE THREE-YEAR OLD PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER

Family

Self: face

Red and Blue

Seasons

Name Recognition

Numbers: 0 and 1

Circle

OCTOBER

Calendar and Weather
Fall
Orange, Black, White, Gray
Body Parts: left and right
Sorting by color
Halloween
Trees
Introduction to written lines
Number 2

NOVEMBER

Senses: smell
Feelings
Brown and yellow
Shapes
Number 3
Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

Self-help skills: coats and zippers
Christmas
Green
Senses: taste
Number 4

JANUARY

Review colors
Senses: hearing
Teddy Bear Day
Dinosaurs
Winter
Number 5
Fire Safety (Fire Drill)

FEBRUARY

Valentine's Day

President's Day

Purple and Pink

Senses: touch

Sorting by size

Introduction to money: coins and Number 6

MARCH/APRIL

Magnets

St. Patrick's Day

Senses: vision

Community Helpers

Number 7

Spring

Easter

Secondary colors

Number 8

MAY

Mother's Day

Father's Day

Plant Life

Numbers 9 and 10

***CURRICULUM GUIDE
FOUR-YEAR OLD PROGRAM***

SEPTEMBER

Self

Family

St. Raphael

Calendar

Letters A, B, and C

Number 1

OCTOBER

Fall

Columbus Day

Halloween

Days of the Week

Letters D, E, and F

Numbers 2 and 3

NOVEMBER

Counting

Shapes

Thanksgiving

Letters G, H, and I

DECEMBER

Weather

Letter J

Christmas

Pageant Preparation

JANUARY

Winter

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Patterns

Story Sequencing

Letters K, L, M and N

Numbers 4 and 5

FEBRUARY

Valentine's Day

Washington

Lincoln

Mail

Letters O, P, and Q
Number 6

MARCH

St. Patrick's Day
Graphing
Spring
Seasons
Letters R, S, and T
Numbers 7 and 8

APRIL

Plants and Flowers
Earth Day
Easter
Sailing
Months
Letters U, V, and W
Number 9

MAY

Mother's Day
Family Day
Summer Fun
Letters X, Y, and Z
Number 10

CURRICULUM PROGRAM
FOUR PLUS PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER

Self/Friends
Family
Colors/Numbers 1, 2, & 3
Baking

Letters A, B & C
Alphabet Journals
Good Manners

OCTOBER

Seasons - Fall Harvest
Oktoberfest/Germany
Dinosaurs
Columbus Day
Halloween
Letters D, E, F & G
Numbers 4, 5, & 6

NOVEMBER

Thanksgiving
Measurements/Inches
Indians/Pilgrims
England
Thanksgiving
Letters H, I, J, and K
Numbers 7, 8, 9 & 10

DECEMBER

Advent/Christmas
Nativity
Christmas Pageant
Letters L, M & N

JANUARY

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Winter
Months/Days
Letters O, P, Q, and R
Matching Numbers

FEBRUARY

Transportation
Washington
Lincoln
Valentine's Day
Letters S, T, U, and V

MARCH

Spring
Ireland
St. Patrick's Day
Sea/ Water
Letters W, X, Y, and Z

APRIL

Planting
Rain
Review alphabet and numbers
Time concepts
Easter

MAY

Caterpillar to Butterfly
Summer
Nursery Rhymes
Mother's Day
Father's Day

***RELIGION OBJECTIVES
THREE AND FOUR-YEAR OLD PROGRAM***

SEPTEMBER

To Introduce God's family as an extension of our own family.
To celebrate community.

OCTOBER

To celebrate the gift of creation.

To celebrate the gift of being human.

To understand that these gifts come from God.

NOVEMBER

All Saints

Thanksgiving

To celebrate all that God has given to us.

To understand that God gives to us so that we can give to others.

DECEMBER

Advent

Christmas

To introduce the person of Jesus as friend and brother.

To develop that art of wonder.

To celebrate self and family.

JANUARY

To introduce the art of being quiet and listening.

FEBRUARY

Valentine's Day

Ash Wednesday

To introduce prayer as talking to God, who is like a loving parent.

MARCH

Lent

Easter

To celebrate the church's springtime.

To restate the wonder of God.

APRIL

To celebrate initiation in the Christian Community.

MAY

**To celebrate Mary as mother
To celebrate Mary as our Mother.**

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Volunteer Requirements

Due to COVID 19, volunteers will not be allowed in the building until further notice.

Fulfill Archdiocese of Washington requirements including fingerprints, Virtus training and archdiocese questionnaire. For those wishing to help with lunch or in the classroom, a physical, TB test (if required by physician), and additional forms as required by the MSDE Office of Childcare are needed.

Field Trips

Due to COVID 19, all field trips have been temporarily suspended.

Field trips are an important aspect of our 4+ curriculum. Parents are expected to drive directly to and from field trips during the year. The children eagerly anticipate their parents' turn to accompany the class on field trips; therefore, we ask that only parents (not a relative or a babysitter) fulfill this responsibility. Parents must fulfill Archdiocese of Washington requirements including fingerprints, Virtus training, archdiocese questionnaire and MSDE Office of Childcare forms. We will try to provide field trip dates as far in advance as possible so that working parents can also accompany us. (Because we need a parent's full attention on field trips, we cannot allow other siblings to come along). A copy of a valid driver's license, insurance documentation and cell phone number will be required and we do ask that cell phone use be restricted to emergency only during a field trip.

Parent Participation

Due to COVID 19, general meetings and events will be re-imagined or temporarily suspended.

There are two general meetings (for new parents in May and for all parents in September) plus a year-end picnic which parents are asked to attend throughout the year. Fathers and/or mothers are asked to serve on a committee and help with

occasional special projects or trips when more adults are needed.

Parents with special skills, talents, hobbies or places of work suitable for field trips are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the Director or Participation Chairman.

Substitute Teaching

It is always interesting to see a classroom in action and to see your own child interacting in a setting with other children away from home. The school uses a list of paid substitutes to assist in the classroom when the teachers or assistants are absent. If you choose to substitute, we must remind you that each child comes to school with his or her own unique personality and we ask that you do not discuss individual children outside the classroom. We owe the children and their parents this courtesy. Substitute teachers must fulfill Archdiocese of Washington requirements including fingerprints, Virtus training, archdiocese questionnaire, and additional MSDE Office of Childcare forms. A physical is required.

IX. GENERAL INFORMATION

Phone Numbers

General Information	301.762.2143
Fax	301.762.4991
Website	www.straphaelschoolmd.org

School Hours

All the three-year old morning classes begin at 9:15 a.m. and are dismissed promptly at 11:45 a.m. All four-year old morning classes begin at 9:15 a.m. and are dismissed promptly at 12:15 p.m. (Due to COVID 19, four-year old morning classes will end at 11:45 a.m. until further notice.) Full Day and Full-time programs begin at 9:15 a.m. and end at 2:45 p.m. If your child is not attending school on a regular class day, please call the school office by 10:00 a.m.

Punctual drop off and pickup of students is important to the students as well as being

fair to our staff. Habitual late pickups will require the parents to have a conference with the Director and fines may be assessed.

Before and After Care

We offer a Before Care Program for NS students scheduled to attend classes at 9:15 a.m. (Early Drop-Off is suspended due to COVID 19.) Before Care starts at 7:30 a.m. Due to COVID 19, students will be met curbside by a staff member to have their temperature taken. Before care will be housed in Room 7 in the nursery school wing. Your child will be escorted to their NS class at 9:15 a.m. The cost for Before Care is \$5.00 per day.

Our After Care Program is available for NS students who end their day at 2:45 p.m. Students are picked up from their classroom at 2:45 p.m. by our After Care staff. After Care students have free play, a snack (pre-packaged and brought from home) and outdoor activities. Due to COVID 19, after care hours have been reduced and are now 2:45-5 p.m. Pickup is no later than 5:00 p.m. After care cost is \$10.00 per day.

Weather Policy

During inclement weather, please adhere to Archdiocese of Washington announcements for school closings, early dismissals or delays.

On delayed open days, Before Care will be available for a limited # of students (due to COVID 19) beginning at 8:00 a.m. The cost is \$10.00 per child. Students are to be dropped off curbside outside of Room 7 and their temperature will be taken. They will be escorted into the classroom by a staff member.

Should there be an early closing the Nursery School will have an 11:45 a.m. dismissal for students not attending Lunch Bunch, and a 12:45 p.m. dismissal for students attending Lunch Bunch. Afternoon classes and After Care will be canceled.

Crisis Plan

There is a crisis plan on file in the school office. Children participate in various emergency drills including fire drills. In the event that children need to be relocated from our campus, we have a reciprocal relationship with Ritchie Park Elementary

School and Georgetown Hill Early School, Falls Road location.

Security Policy

The outside doors to the lobby are locked. All other doors, including the door to the Trumpet Room, will remain locked. A receptionist in the lobby will allow only authorized persons to enter the building during school hours.

Parents must give permission for anyone picking up their child by listing them on the pick-up form that is completed during the TADS enrollment process. Changes can be made anytime during the school year in the Nursery School office. Written notification must be provided for any change in your child's routine.

Doors

Please remember to close the main doors from which we enter and leave the building. The parish employees, along with the electric bill, will benefit greatly. **Thanks!**

Tote Bags

Anyone familiar with nursery school knows that art is an exciting part of the child's day. Children usually have several items to transport home each time they come to class, and their small hands often have trouble holding their many treasures. We ask that you either purchase or make a tote bag for your child to carry back and forth to school. The open shopping bag type is preferable to a backpack, as often the treasures are an odd size. The St. Raphael tote bags on sale at the school are ideal for this. Be sure to label the bag with your child's name.

Clothing

Part of our nursery school program includes a trip outside each day, weather permitting. Since St. Raphael sits on a hill, we usually are cooler and always windier. Therefore, we ask that you dress your child appropriately for class. If your daughter insists on wearing a dress, which girls often do, have her wear slacks or tights underneath on cool days. We also have found that party shoes (Mary Janes) and flip-

flops are difficult to run in and almost impossible on the climbing tower. Clothing should be washable and allow freedom of movement.

Archdiocese of Washington: Child Protection Policy

St. Raphael Nursery School complies with the requirements of the ADW's Child Protection Policy. A full explanation of this policy can be found at www.adw.org.

School Records

St. Raphael Nursery School assumes that the child is in the custody of both parents unless otherwise notified.

St. Raphael Nursery School abides by the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, St. Raphael Nursery School will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and other school related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the order.

Technology Policy

As a play-based nursery school, St. Raphael Nursery School incorporates technology into the classroom on an extremely limited basis.

Interactive technology may be used in specific situations when tied to the curriculum. Examples include: 3 year old Teddy Bear Day, 4+ end of Alphabet celebration, and holiday celebrations; may also be used in after care on Friday afternoons. Technology may also be used to facilitate active and creative use of technology; to encourage social engagement with other children and adults; to support curriculum concepts which may include science videos; or with videos that include songs and activities that encourage physical movement. Interactive Technology is described as educational and age-appropriate technology including non-commercial television, videos, and streaming media. Interactive Technology supports, but does not replace creative play, social interactions, and other developmentally appropriate learning activities.

Passive technology occurs rarely at St. Raphael Nursery School. If and when it occurs, it is infrequent and does not exceed 30 minutes per week. Passive technology means non-interactive television, videos and streaming technology.

As a play based nursery school, we feel students learn through creative play, physical activity, hands-on exploration, outdoor experiences, social interactions, playing, singing and other developmentally appropriate learning activities.

X. HEALTH AND WELLNESS

If your child is sick (frequent coughing, profuse nasal discharge, etc.), do not send him or her to school. If your child is not well enough to play outside, a staff member will not be able to stay inside with your child.

Your child must be fever free as well as not having vomited for 24 hours before returning to school.

St. Raphael Nursery School Nut Free Policy

As with the general population, St. Raphael School and Nursery School are conscious of children with severe nut allergies, including potentially life-threatening anaphylactic reactions. With this in mind, we have implemented a heightened awareness policy for the prevention of our students having an allergic reaction to the best of our ability. While both St. Raphael School and Nursery School strive to keep our students with nut allergies safe, we cannot guarantee that our facility is nut-free. This is in part due to the way foods are processed at off-site facilities and church and other group events that are held here.

We ask that our families adhere to our Nut-Aware policy by doing the following:

- Food containing peanuts or tree nuts will not be sent to school
- Students may not share food at lunch or snack time

- A “safe snack” is provided by the parent of the student with a nut allergy, in case a treat or snack has been sent in which may have been processed in a facility that is not nut-free
- Food sent in for birthdays and/or class parties may not contain peanuts or tree nuts

In the spirit of being more inclusive, the following website (updated monthly) is suggested www.snacksafely.com for a listing of safe alternatives that everyone can enjoy. We appreciate all efforts to make our facility as safe as possible for all who use it.

If you have questions regarding our nut-aware policy, contact the school nurse, [Sue Kuykendall](#), at 301-762-2143.

Snacks

Due to COVID 19, parents are asked to provide an individually snack pre-packaged by the manufacturer for their child. On birthdays and superstar days, students may bring in a treat/snack for the class which must be individually pre-packaged by the manufacturer. Please be sensitive to allergies in the class and refer to suggested snack list provided to you at the beginning of the school year. Some suggestions are graham crackers, cheese and crackers, applesauce and oatmeal cookies, cinnamon toast, fresh fruit or vegetables, finger Jell-O, banana bread.

XI. LUNCH PROGRAM

Please furnish a lunch and drink which do not require adult assistance or refrigeration. Due to licensing requirements, milk will be offered. Please note all food allergies on the sign-up sheet you will find in the newsletter. The fee for the lunch program is \$6.00 per session, which is due at sign-up.

XII. DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Classroom Problems

On occasion, there may be a classroom problem you would like to discuss. The following is the procedure we would like to have you follow:

1. Discuss your particular problem with the teacher.
2. If you feel there is still a problem, you may discuss your problem with the Director and a teacher-parent-director meeting can be arranged.

Behavioral Concerns

*If the teacher determines that a child's behavior is inappropriate, the teacher will first attempt to resolve the situation with the child by actions including, but not limited to, talking to the child about what is appropriate and acceptable behavior in the class, and/or giving time outs.

*If the behavior continues, the teacher will discuss the situation with one or both parents.

*If the behavior does not improve and/or one or both parents do not agree with the teacher, the teacher will speak with the Director and a conference will be arranged with one or both parents, the teacher and the Director.

*If the situation does not improve by the established deadline, the Director may expel the student.

*If, in the Director's discretion, the safety and/or health of others in the school will be impaired by the child's continued attendance, the Director may require the child's immediate withdrawal.

XIII. PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Conferences will be held twice a year in November and April. A written evaluation will be given in the spring. If you have any questions about your child and his or her progress, please remember you may call the teacher at home.

Classroom Visits

Due to COVID 19, parent visits are suspended with the exception of super star days and only one parent is allowed to attend.

Parents are welcome to visit the class and see their child in action. The most ideal

situation for observing is through a one-way mirror like those used in most college nursery school laboratories. Since we do not have a mirror at St. Raphael Nursery School, here are some helpful hints for successfully observing your child.

Be sure to make arrangements with the teacher in advance. In the past we have discovered that one hour is a good length of time to observe, although you may stay for a shorter period if you wish.

One good way to inconspicuously watch your child in the classroom setting is to sign up as an assistant to substitute when the teacher or assistant is away from the classroom. Your child then sees you in a working situation and not just as “a parent who is here to watch me”. Children who are being observed by parents often display behavior atypical from their usual classroom behavior. Do not be alarmed! It is just part of being 3 or 4 years old and knowing you are being watched. After observing, if you have any questions about your child and his or her progress, it is best to wait until the end of the class or call the teacher at home. The teacher cannot do justice to conversation while a class is in session.

Student Roster

A roster of all students currently enrolled is printed each summer. If personal information should change during the school year, please inform the office of the Director. **This roster is for internal use only and may not be used to solicit student families.**

XIV. NURSERY SCHOOL BOARD

The purpose of St. Raphael Nursery School Board is to provide assistance to the Pastor and Director in the operation of the school. They offer input regarding budget, personnel and policy. In addition, they oversee the lunch program and parent participation program. St. Raphael Nursery School consists of a President and eleven permanent Board members with the Director as a non-voting member. The Board members are assigned the following specific areas of responsibilities: Registration Assistant, Secretary, Participation Chairman, Fundraising Chairman, Health Chairman, Social Activities Chairman and Lunch Program Chairman.

The term for Board members is from April through the following May. Staff and Board members who have served for at least eight consecutive months are eligible for priority registration.

(All policies are subject to change.)