

St. Augustine Catholic School
67901 Howard St.
Richmond, MI
586-727-9365

Latchkey Handbook
2024-2025

St. Augustine Catholic School Latchkey

Hello and welcome to St. Augustine Catholic School's Latchkey Program.

Philosophy

St. Augustine Latchkey is a before and after school program that offers the preschool and school-age child many opportunities for physical activities, socialization with their peers, self-expression through arts and crafts, and homework assistance.

Goals

To provide a safe, secure environment designed to encourage decision-making, problem-solving, and individual expression where children can respect and enjoy each other's company.

To employ staff who are professional and caring and who understand and meet the needs of children.

To provide frequent and open communication with parents that provides support and encourages involvement.

Enrollment

St. Augustine Latchkey Program is open to any child in grades Pre K-8 currently enrolled in St. Augustine School, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or religion.

Those seeking to enroll a child in the program must complete an application for admission. Children may enroll at any time during the school year as long as there are openings. To enroll, contact the St. Augustine School Office at (586) 727-9365.

Location

St. Augustine Latchkey is located in the school library and the playground outside.

Hours

Before School 7:00 – 8:00 am.

After School 3:00 – 6:00 pm.

Schedule

St. Augustine Latchkey is in operation from Tuesday after Labor Day until the last full day of school. Therefore, there will be no Latchkey when the school is not in session, including but not limited to holidays, vacations, and snow days. When school is scheduled for a half day, morning session will be held, and the afternoon session will be canceled.

Morning Routine

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Opportunities for quiet play, study hall, or silent reading will be made available.

Afternoon Routine

(Times are approximate)

3:00 – 3:05pm:

Arrival – Students will place belongings in baskets outside the library door.

3:05 – 3:20pm:

After washing their hands, students may eat a snack at the snack table. If students choose not to eat a snack, they may begin homework.

3:20 – 4:00pm:

Time is given to complete homework and/or Quiet Free Choice Activities. Examples include: crafts, painting, play dough, board games, puzzles, silent reading, etc.

4:00 – Pick up:

If weather permits, we will go outside. Preschoolers may play in the fenced-in area or on the soccer field. If we stay indoors, students may pick free-choice activities.

Children will be allowed to attend extracurricular activities after school (i.e., Dance class, sports practices, after school clubs, etc.) with written permission from the parent designating the day, time and location of the event. Students should check in with the Latchkey staff before leaving for activities.

Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Outdoor play is planned daily, except on rainy days or when it's extremely cold. Children should remain in their school uniforms.

Snacks:

Parents are asked to provide after-school snacks for their child(ren) that do not need to be refrigerated. Students will be asked to have their snacks when they first arrive, since most have not eaten since lunch. Some suggestions for snacks include juice or water, fruits or vegetables, cheese and crackers, pretzels, granola bars, etc. Children are not allowed to share or exchange their snacks.

There are designated tables for breakfast or snacks, which are cleaned following the guidelines of the State of Michigan for child care programs. All students will be asked to wash their hands prior to consuming food.

Registration and Fees/Refunds

All registration forms must be completed and on file before any child may attend the program.

To register for the Latchkey Program, packets may be picked up either at the office or in the school library / Latchkey room. All forms must be completed before the child may begin, along with the \$50.00 family registration fee. Included in the packet are:

1. Registration Form State of Michigan Child Information Card (emergency information)
Each child will need a form filled out.
2. Good Health Statement Form
3. Written Information Packet Documentation Form
4. Program Handbook Acknowledgement
5. Policy Acknowledgement
6. Playground

Fees: P/S - 8 Grades

Registration Fee: \$50.00 per family (nonrefundable) per school year

Rates: \$8.00 per hour:

7:00 a.m. — 8:00 a.m.

3:00 p.m. — 6:00 p.m.

Please make checks payable to: St. Augustine Latchkey Program.

Families will have the option of paying for Latchkey using FACTS.

Refunds or Withdrawal from Latchkey

Due to costs to the school, the registration fee is non-refundable. Daily charges may be paid in advance or at the end of the month by cash, check or FACTS. You will receive a statement usually by the 7th of the following month with your account balance due or credit. If you pay in advance, and your child(ren) misses any scheduled days, your account will be credited for the unused days.

If you decide to withdraw your child(ren) from Latchkey, please notify the office in writing. Any/all money due will be credited to your account.

Late pick-up Policy

We understand that delays can happen, and one can run behind schedule. If this becomes a regular behavior, there will be a late fee of \$5.00 per child for every 15 minutes the parent or guardian is late. This fee is expected to be paid prior to the child(ren)'s return to the program, directly to the Latchkey director or the school office.

NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON.

Hand Washing and Restroom Use

Children will be allowed to use the first-floor restrooms as needed, and will be allowed to go alone unless they are in preschool. An adult will take all of the students to the restroom if a pre-school student needs to use the facility.

Whenever possible, Latchkey children and staff will wash their hands with soap and water instead of using hand sanitizer. The guidelines for hand washing are posted in the classroom and restrooms.

All must wash hands **with soap** prior to eating, and after using the restroom for any purpose.

Storage of Personal Belongings

We ask all students to bring ALL of the belongings they intend to take home with them, including but not limited to coats, homework, book bags, lunch bags, etc. Students are not allowed back to their classrooms or lockers.

Attendance

All Latchkey participation must be pre-scheduled; this is not a drop-in program. If you need to use the program at the last minute, please call the school office to determine availability for that day. Calendars are sent home prior to the new month with the youngest child in the program. Please complete these calendars so we may have an accurate count of participants to accommodate last-minute add-ons.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent from school, please ask that the Latchkey Program be made aware of the absence when you call the School Office. If your child will be attending school, but NOT pre-scheduled Latchkey, please let the director know either verbally, through the school office, with a written note, or a voice mail message.

Activities

A regular, daily schedule will be observed in Latchkey. (See schedule). In this way, children know exactly what to expect and what is expected of them. Every effort will be made to complete homework during the allotted time; however, we are required to have opportunities for both fine and gross motor development. Children will be encouraged to participate in planned activities that promote teamwork and sharing as well as cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, social, emotional, or spiritual development.

Pick-ups/Dismissals

Children will only be released to designated parent / guardian, or any person listed on the Child Information Record. Adults picking up child(ren) in grades K-8 at any time, or those in Pre-K after 4:00 pm., will enter through the main doors of the school. There is a designated door bell for Latchkey. Persons picking up the child(ren) need to sign the child(ren) out, indicating the time of pick-up. If the program director and children are playing outside, a sign will be posted in the main entrance window indicating our location. Please proceed directly to the playground to pick up your child(ren). We reserve the right to ask for photo identification in order to ensure children's safety.

Discipline

The Latchkey Program will follow the Code of Conduct/Discipline Policy spelled out in the School's Student/Parent Handbook. We will use positive methods of discipline, which encourages self control and cooperation. At no time is physical or verbal punishment used. If a problem occurs, first gentle reminders are given. If the behavior continues, we redirect the child to a different area of activity. If needed, the principal will be made aware of specific issues. Whenever possible, the Latchkey director will talk with parents / guardians when picking up children to let them know of any special circumstances that occurred that day.

Student Expectations:

1. Treat all others with respect and care.
2. Respond to authority in a positive, obedient, and respectful manner.
3. Act responsibly and to conduct themselves with dignity.
4. Conduct themselves in a manner that respects all students.
5. Resolve problems using peaceful and just procedures. When problems cannot be settled, students are to seek the intervention of Latchkey staff.
6. Accept corrections with respect. Report serious violations of school rules in an honest and direct manner.

If violations to these rules occur, the following procedures will be followed:

No corporal punishment is allowed. No discipline shall be delegated to another child.

A child who is having problems playing within the guidelines of the program may be given a "TIME OUT." Parents will be informed of their child's behavior in the program and may be called upon to participate in a disciplinary partnership to resolve special situations. No child shall be subjected to verbal abuse, threats, profane language, or derogatory remarks. Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.

Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.

In case of serious or recurrent disruptions, parents may be called to pick up the child. Following an opportunity for the child to explain their actions, a suspension or expulsion may be imposed. If it is determined at any time by staff that the child is unable to benefit from the program or poses a danger to the other children, staff, or program, parents will be requested to withdraw the child. A child who has been expelled from the program may not seek entrance in future years.

Any disciplinary methods that occur, in compliance with the school's philosophy, will be documented on an incident report and given to the parent.

Safety of Children

The safety of the children is of the greatest concern at St. Augustine Latchkey program. The following guidelines will help to ensure safety.

A phone is available on site for emergencies.

Staff greets children when they arrive.

Children will be released only to those designated on the permission forms. The person who picks up the child must sign the child(ren) out on the daily sign-out sheet. Staff retains the right to request ID from those not immediately recognizable to staff.

The St. Augustine Latchkey staff is required by law to report any suspicion or threat of child abuse or neglect.

Health

Your child's health is of major importance to all of us. Upon enrollment, you are required to fill out the Child Information form, please note all allergies and/or medical conditions on this form. You will need to sign a Statement of Good Health for your child. This is a requirement of the State of Michigan

Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Outdoor play is planned daily, except on days of rain and extremely cold temperature.

Children in attendance are expected to be healthy enough to fully participate in the program day, including active indoor and outdoor play. Sick children should be at home for their safety and for the well being of others in the program.

Mildly ill children (runny nose, no fever, etc.) will be observed to determine if the condition worsens at which time parent/guardian will be notified.

Any child exhibiting any of the following symptoms will be isolated and made comfortable until they can be taken home:

Vomiting

Diarrhea

Severe coughing

Fever

Evidence of Lice

Contagious skin rash

Conjunctivitis

Any other symptoms of illness

Parents or guardians are required to make immediate arrangements to pick up sick children when requested to do so by one of the staff. Children may return for re-admittance after medical treatment has occurred (if appropriate) and a normal temperature has been registered for 24 hours.

In case of emergency, the instructions given on the emergency card will be followed. Every attempt will be made to contact a parent/guardian. In case of serious injury, the emergency rescue squad will be called.

A first aid kit is located in the Latchkey area. We will not administer medication of any kind to students unless proper authorization has been given. An authorization for medication form must be completed by a parent and/or physician and sent to the school. Medication must be in the original container with the official label, including the student's name, dosage, times/intervals, and duration.

Forms must be updated each school year as authorization expires at the end of the school year. Latchkey reserves the right to refuse a request to administer medication if it is deemed unfeasible to comply.

Medication must be taken immediately to the school office upon arrival. With the exception of inhalers, no prescription or non-prescription medication is to be in the possession of students.

Fire, Tornado, and Lock Down Drills

The Latchkey Program is required by Michigan law to have fire and tornado drills that are held after school hours. If you arrive when we are in the middle of a drill, please wait patiently for us to finish before picking up your child. If you are in the school, at the time of the drill, you will need to follow the procedures followed in the classroom for that specific drill.

Electronic Devices

In accordance with St. Augustine Catholic School Policy, electronic devices are not allowed in Latchkey.

Additional Information

Although staff members will make every effort to help keep track of your child(ren)'s belongings, the final responsibility is the child's. Toys from home may not be brought to St. Augustine Latchkey. If the toys are lost or broken, Latchkey will not be responsible for replacement or repair.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the office or our Latchkey Caregiver, Ms. Jessica Abke during Latchkey hours.