



**St. Margaret Mary  
After Care Program  
Handbook  
2021-2022**



**Dear Parents and Guardians,**

**This handbook is designed to give parents and guardians a helpful insight into the After-Care Program being offered by St. Margaret Mary School. It includes detailed information about the After Care activities, procedures, and policies.**

**The After-Care Program makes a great effort to provide an atmosphere where children can enjoy themselves, grow, and learn with a quality educational program.**

### **Mission Statement**

**The Mission of St. Margaret Mary School is to foster spiritual development through the Gospel teachings of Jesus Christ, to provide the highest quality academic excellence, to promote responsibility to self and to encourage service to others.**



### **Program Goals**

1. To provide quality aftercare with educational and enrichment activities.
2. To provide students structure and a safe environment that stresses responsible behavior, respect for others, and positive attitudes.
3. To provide a caring staff who will interact with the students in a group and individual activities.
4. To provide communication to parents regarding their children's general well-being.

### **Staff**

Our team consists of elementary school teachers, teacher assistants, and college students. Staff members are hired based on their background in working with children and education. Background checks are performed on all staff members, college students, and volunteers of St. Margaret Mary School.

### **Registration & Enrollment**

Parents must register their children to participate and are required to make payments to the school on a monthly basis. Registration for the program will occur during the first week of school. Enrollment in the program is subject to acceptance of the registration form and receipt of the registration fee. Please submit your application with all other materials included in your welcome packet to your child's teacher in the envelope that is provided.

### **Payments**

The registration fee is \$25 per child enrolled in the program.

The aftercare program is \$250 per month grades PreK thru 8<sup>th</sup>.

There is a daily/emergency rate of \$30 per day on regular school days, \$35 on half day dismissal at 11:30 AM.

All monthly payments will be made payable to St. Margaret Mary School. Cash or Money Order. Daily/emergency care payments must be made to the school on the day of the occurrence unless special arrangements apply. Otherwise a bill will be sent towards the end of the calendar month for any daily/emergency charges that do apply and that have not been paid. All payments should be made directly to the office and not aftercare personnel.

If aftercare program payments become a problem, please contact the main office so that a payment plan can be arranged and participation in the Program can continue.



There will be a penalty for payments not received by designated due dates. After 3 late or non-successful payments, your child's participation in the aftercare program will be rescinded. Regular end of school day pick up will then be required.

### **Withdrawal**

ALL payments and fees for the afterschool program are **NON-REFUNDABLE**.

Written notice of a payment plan change or withdrawal from the program must be submitted to the School Office. Once written notification terminating a child's participation in the Aftercare Program has been received, the family will receive an invoice detailing the charges for the child's remaining time in the Aftercare Program. **Thirty days** written notice is required for any requests for changes in payment plans or withdrawals. You will only be allowed to change your payment plan **ONCE** every school year. (**For example:** if you wish to change from a daily/emergency plan to a monthly plan you can only do it once, it must be in writing, and it must be done thirty days before your expected change.)

### **Days and Hours of Operations**

The hours of the program are Monday through Friday from afternoon dismissal until 6:00 PM. The program is not operated during weekends, school vacations, holiday periods, and teacher in-service days. When schools are **closed** due to inclement weather, the aftercare program will also be closed. There will be no credit given for days students are absent from the program. Please note the principal reserves the right to cancel the aftercare program day at any given time. Notice of closure may or may not be given ahead of time. In most instances closures will be announced via IRIS alert, written notice, and/or other forms of communication.

Please follow the school calendar for such closures and events.

### **Half Days/Early Dismissal**

The Aftercare Program is open on half-days unless stated otherwise (*please check school calendar*), until 6 pm.



### **Emergency Dismissal Procedures**

The Aftercare Program will be closed whenever schools are dismissed early due to inclement weather or whenever there is an unexpected event that impacts the safe use of our school. In such an event, please be sure to pick up your child immediately.

In the event of an early dismissal, the school will send an alert using the IRIS alert system, or by other forms of communication, which sends an electronic message to your phone or voicemail. The school will post an announcement on our website <http://www.stmargaretmaryschool.org/> and we will send an email to the addresses on our main contact lists via IRIS or other form of communication service. Please be sure to keep your contact information up-to-date at all times.

### **Pick-up Time / Late Pickup Policy for the 6:00 p.m. Dismissal Program**

Children will be released only to persons who are authorized to pick them up as indicated on the enrollment contract. If someone other than the authorized persons will pick up a child, prior written permission is required stating the name and telephone number of the person who will pick up the child. Photo ID may be requested by the staff. Children will not be allowed to leave the Aftercare Program unattended and unaccompanied by an adult. Parents must walk into the school building and check out with their child's teacher. The designated pick up person **MUST** be 18 years or older and have prior written approval on file.

The children can help with this responsibility by getting into the habit of saying goodbye to their teacher. The children may not go into the hallways or classrooms unless they are accompanied by a parent/guardian or teacher.

Children will not be released to anyone other than a parent, guardian, or person listed on the child's permission form unless the child's parent notifies the Aftercare Program before pickup time. Students will not be permitted to sign themselves out nor will they be allowed to walk home unaccompanied by an adult. If a staff member is unfamiliar with any person picking up a child, the staff member will ask to see picture identification before the child is released.

### **Late Fee**

Students are dismissed from the program at 6:00 P.M. If a 6:00 P.M. arrival is unlikely, please take a moment to call us at (718) 548-0255 so a staff member can speak to the child about the delay.

Any child picked up **AFTER** 6:00pm will be charged a \$25 late pick-up fee.



If late pick up from the aftercare program occurs more than ***5 times*** the student will be released from the program effective immediately. Arrangements will then need to be made for pick up during regular school day dismissal times.

**Please be advised: Staff of the St. Margaret Mary AfterCare Program and its administrators reserve the right to notify the local police department if you are more than ONE HOUR late after 6:00 pm in picking up your child without proper prior notification. For this reason, it is imperative that you call the school if you are going to be late. Child safety and supervision are our number one priority.**

### **Class Divisions**

Students may be divided according to appropriate grade levels and multi-grade levels with regard to the number of participants at that school.

### **Daily Activities**

The following schedule is a typical day for the After School.

1. Attendance, restroom, snack
2. Study time, special programs, tutoring opportunities, and homework help
3. Physical activities and recreation

The Aftercare Program strives to meet each child's need for physical and intellectual activities through a carefully designed schedule of educational enrichment and recreational programs. Throughout the school year, the children are offered a variety of activities with additional cost to parents (*SMM Clubs*). Children who do not participate in a scheduled activity may use the time to complete homework.

### **Homework Policy**

The Aftercare Program stresses the importance of homework and sets time aside every day for the children to complete their homework assignments. AfterCare instructors are responsible for:

1. Supervising the homework time period.
2. Assisting the children with their work.
3. Guiding the class to complete homework
4. Encouraging and assisting students to study for the next day or for future exams.

### **Personal Belongings**



Since we cannot guarantee the safe return of personal belongings, the Aftercare Program asks that any personal possessions be left in backpacks during a child's time in the Aftercare Program. The program will not be responsible for lost, stolen or traded items. Cellphone and tablet use by students is strictly prohibited during instructional/educational activities while students are in the school building at any time. Cellphones must remain in bookbags and /or collected by the aftercare staff at the beginning of the aftercare program each day. Cellphones may be confiscated at the discretion of the principal and program director at any time for inappropriate use and/or non-adherence to the rule. Parents who need to speak with their children during aftercare hours must call the school office and/or the program director.

### Discipline Policies

The children and staff of the Aftercare Program are asked to treat each other with respect, tolerance, kindness, and consideration. The rules and behavior expectations utilized by the Aftercare Program will be explained to the children clearly and reinforced in a consistent manner.

Children will be given reminders and redirection to encourage positive behavior. A child who is unkind verbally will be asked to apologize. A child who uses supplies or equipment inappropriately will be restricted from using the supplies or equipment for a short period. Any activities where participants purposely exclude another child will not be allowed.

When a child is disruptive or needs time to regain self-control, he or she will be removed from the group. Timeout periods will last approximately three to five minutes and will not exceed fifteen minutes based on age-appropriate practice and pedagogy. After a timeout, the teacher and child will discuss behavior options before the child returns to the group.

Under no circumstances will a child be subjected to neglect, physical punishment, verbal abuse, or denial of restroom facilities. Parents will be notified if a child exhibits unusual emotional or physical behavior that threatens the wellbeing of the child or others in the Aftercare Program.

### **Examples of Serious/Extreme Offenses**

**Which May Result in Dismissal from the Program:**

- **Causing physical harm or threat to others or themselves**
- **Physical or Verbal Assault**
- **Stealing**
- **Destruction of Property**
- **Refusal to Cooperate**
- **Leaving Designated Area without consent**
- **Excessive Temper Tantrums**

Depending on the severity of the offense, immediate dismissal from the program is a possibility and up to the discretion of the Director and School Administration.



### **Communication**

The Aftercare Program maintains an open communication policy as underlined by the schools policy of Parents as Partners in the Parent/ Student Handbook. Please feel free to direct questions or concerns related to any facet of the AfterCare Program to the Program Director and the Principal. The priority of the staff is to focus as much attention as possible on the children. To meet the needs of the children and the staff during Program hours, we ask that parents limit their conversation with AfterCare staff members to subjects involving their child. The Program Director and Principal are available to answer all other questions that may arise. Please feel free to call us at any time.

### **Health Policy**

All children enrolled in the AfterCare Program must satisfy the minimum immunization and routine physical examination requirements in accordance with the New York Health Department requirements. Documentation of the above must be on file at school.

If a child becomes ill while attending the Program, a parent or emergency contact person will be notified. A child who is not feeling well must be picked up within one hour of notification. The Program will provide a rest mat and a quiet area while the child waits. In most cases the child will be referred to the school nurse granted if the nurse is on duty. School nurses are employed by the Department of Health and Aftercare Nurses are subject to approval by the DOH. In the event there is not a nurse on call your child will remain with an aftercare staff member until the parent arrives.

Children who attend the AfterCare Program should be well enough to follow the normal routine of the Program. Children who have a contagious condition, eye ailment, head lice, rash, fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, may not attend the AfterCare Program and must be fully recovered before returning to school. A doctors note must be on file with the school office giving clearance in such a case.

Please report any changes of emergency contact information, employment, telephone numbers, or addresses to the Program Director and the main office as soon as they become available. Although this information will be kept confidential, it will be shared with appropriate staff members to facilitate communication with parents or guardians in emergency situations. Again, we require you to keep up-to-date contact information at all times.





### **Accidents or Acute Illness**

In the event of an accident or acute illness, every effort will be made to notify the child's parents and physician prior to treatment. If a situation requires immediate attention, the aftercare program reserves the right to contact emergency services such as 911 for support and treatment.

### **Medication Policy**

Only Epi-pen and Asthma pumps prescribed by a child's doctor will be permitted in the Aftercare Program. Please note that the child will not be allowed to administer their own medication to themselves unless written permission allowing them to do so is in their general student file. This is why it is important to have these items into the school right away in the beginning of the school year or as soon as it has been determined.

### **Income Tax Information**

Tax statements indicating payments made to the AfterCare Program will be prepared upon request. They may be requested to the main office. Please allow one week for processing, especially during tax season. Please note that it is the responsibility of each parent/guardian to retain their receipts. Understand that it is a responsibility as the Parent/Guardian to read the Parent/Student Handbook and hereby agree to the terms of this contract and to the policies of the AfterCare Program.

If you have any questions about the contents of this handbook, please feel free to call at (718)548-0255. We look forward to working with all of you.

Best regards,

Mrs. Melissa Moore

Principal



**Parent Acknowledgement Signing Page**

Please sign and return by **SEPTEMBER 17<sup>th</sup>**

I have read the AfterCare Program Handbook and hereby agree to the terms of this contract and to the policies of the AfterCare Program.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_