



*St. Margaret's
Episcopal
School*



*Parent
Handbook*

5310 Stahl Road
San Antonio, TX 78247
210-657-3328
hknight@stmargs.org

Welcome from the Director!

Dear Parents:

Welcome to St. Margaret's Episcopal School (SMES)! SMES was founded in 1983 as a *Mother's Day Out* program meeting only two days a week. It has since grown into the school we have today and meets the needs of our families with part time and full time options. We pride ourselves on continuing to provide a warm, secure and loving Christian environment for toddlers, preschoolers and pre-kindergarteners.

At SMES we believe children learn best by doing. Our programs are conducted using developmentally appropriate practices with a play based learning environment. Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) is research based and supported by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). These methods are carried out in a secure environment where children are accepted as individuals, with individual needs, made in God's image. St. Margaret's Episcopal School accepts all children regardless of race, color, or creed.

All children attending St. Margaret's Episcopal School will receive Christian teaching, including bible stories and christian songs. The children will attend chapel daily.

We are excited to have you as a part of our St. Margaret's School Family! If you have any questions or concerns regarding any of this information, please call or visit the St. Margaret's Episcopal School office (210)657-3328.

Joy and Blessings,

Helen Knight

School Director

hknight@stmargs.org

Our Mission

To provide early childhood education in a safe and loving environment that nurtures and develops the whole child intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally.

Educational Philosophy

SMES provides a program that combines developmentally appropriate teaching techniques set by the National Association of Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and current educational philosophy within a secure and stimulating environment. Each child has the opportunity to grow creatively, physically, spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and socially at their own pace. Classroom time and spaces are organized to encourage active exploration by each child. Freedom of choice and self-directed time are scheduled in addition to teacher-directed time and structured activities. Children experience joy in learning and build positive self-esteem as they discover and explore. Concrete experiences provide the conceptual background necessary for the later development of all abstract learning.

Children learn by doing. In the learning environment, each child's imagination, independence, curiosity, and creativity are encouraged. Our curriculum promotes children to be actively involved in the learning process, to experience many developmentally appropriate activities, and to pursue their own interests while learning about life and how they relate to the community and to the world.

General Information Minimum Standards

St. Margaret's Episcopal School is licensed by the Texas Department of Human Services. You may view our license and our most recent licensing inspection report in the school office. Our local licensing office may be reached at (210)-337-3399. We meet or exceed all of the standards set by the state. A full printed copy of the licensing regulations/standards can be found at the front desk. Parents may also find the licensing regulations on the internet at the following link <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>

These regulations/standards are included as part of this Parent Handbook as they were written herein and it is the responsibility of every parent to read, understand, and follow these regulations.

Employees and parents are required to uphold the regulations and standards issued by The Texas Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Regulations Minimum Standards at all times.

All of our employees are thoroughly screened by the state of Texas, as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, and fingerprinted for an FBI background check. Furthermore, all employees also submit to screening by the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas and receive the Diocese of West Texas "Safeguarding God's Children" sexual abuse prevention training.

The school is staffed by degreed or otherwise exceptionally well-qualified teachers. We are fortunate to have experienced teachers who have a genuine commitment to teaching young children. All SMES employees participate in a yearly inservice training as well as receiving a minimum of 24 hours of

Early Childhood Education. The director receives a minimum of 30 hours of continuing education. All employees are also required to be trained in CPR and First Aid.

Parents Rights

A parent or guardian of a child enrolled in a child care center has the right to:

- Enter and examine the child care center during its hours of operation and without advance notice.
- File a complaint against the child care center.
- Review the child care center's publicly accessible records.
- Review the child care center's written records concerning their child.
- Receive inspection reports and information about how to access the Child Care Centers's online compliance history.
- Have their center comply with a court order that prevents another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the child.
- Be given the contact information for the Child Care Center's local Child Care Regulations office.
- Inspect any video recordings of an alleged child incident of abuse or neglect involving their child provided that; video recordings of the alleged incident are available; the parent or guardian does not retain any part of the video depicting a child that is not their own; and the parent or guardian of any other child in the video receive prior notice from center.
- Obtain a copy of the child care center's policies and procedures handbook.
- Review the child care centers employee training records and any in-house training curriculum.
- Exercise these rights without receiving retaliatory action by the child care center.

Parents Right to Immediate Access

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at St.Margaret Episcopal School, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g. custody order, restraining order, or protection from Abuse Order) St. Margaret Episcopal School must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The order of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are awarded shared/joint custody by the order of the court, both parents must sign the request for a more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of the court order on file both parents shall be awarded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. SMES cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request or the other parent; regardless of the reason.

Hours of Operations

The first day of school for the 2024/2025 school year is **Monday, August 12** and the last day of the school year is **Thursday, May 22**. Please note that Parent Orientation (August 8th) and “Meet the Teacher” (August 9th) is held prior to the first day of class. A SMES calendar is published yearly in August after consulting the North East Independent School District (NEISD). Please consult our website at www.stmargs/school for the most up to date calendar.

Classes are held Monday-Friday, with the option of 3 days, 4 days or 5 days, from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM. We do admit 2-day a week students on a case by case basis. All students are expected to be on time and attend classes regularly.

The school office is normally open from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM on school days. If we are away from the phone, please leave a message on the voicemail, and your call will be returned as soon as possible. You also have the option to contact us using the Brightwheel messages.

When inclement weather or another unexpected event requires special precaution, the school may be forced to close. If NEISD closes due to these circumstances, St Margaret's Episcopal School will also be closed. Be sure you have downloaded the Brightwheel app and listen to your local TV or radio for information about school closures. Should the school need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded or reduced for closers of less than five consecutive school days.

In addition to our school year program SMES may offer a summer program, Camp Maggie. Schedule and prices for the summer program will be set in March. Parents who chose to enroll their child (ren) for Camp Maggie will be expected to follow the same policies as in this Handbook.

Extended Hours

We offer extended hours from 7:00 AM-9:00 AM and from 2:30 PM-5:30 PM. Parents need to send a snack for their child for these times of day. The school may have extra snacks on hand in the event that a student forgets to bring their own, however teachers are not responsible for providing snacks everyday. Drop-in care is an option according to a space available basis. You must request a drop-in care 24 hours in advance. If you fail to do so, you will be charged in accordance with the late pick up fee found in this handbook.

Enrollment Procedures

St. Margaret's Episcopal School accepts children from the ages of 18 months through Pre-Kindergarten during our school year. We also accept elementary age children from Stahl Elementary school into our afternoon extended care program. The acceptance of underage students is at the discretion of the director **BUT MUST** meet state guidelines.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, emergency release form, registration fee, current immunization records or notarized immunization exemption affidavit, enrollment in the brightwheel app, and signed Parent Handbook receipt. A child is considered enrolled when their name has been added to the class list and the required tuition is paid.

The enrollment application and tuition agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration. SMES reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause.

Continued enrollment is contingent upon the parents, emergency contact persons' and child's adherence to the policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Parents are required to notify the director, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Changes may be submitted via email to the School Director. Failure to maintain up-to-date information may result in the child(ren) being dis-enrolled from the program and forfeiture of any registration fee and/or tuition.

The school makes an effort to accommodate all children, but our school reserves the right not to accept a child whose needs require individual attention and/or resources that cannot be provided by our employees. The school reserves the right to refuse care for a child if the parent's account is delinquent and/or if the parents have failed to pay outstanding charges.

All parents will be notified in writing of changes made to school policy, Parent Handbook, or special events.

A yearly non-refundable registration fee of \$100 per student is required to secure the student's classroom spot at Margaret's Episcopal School. The registration fee reserves your child's class space as specified on the registration form.

Children with Severe Allergies

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Food Allergy Emergency Plan" form, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be completely filled out by the child's physician and parents or legal guardians, and must be updated as needed. This form can be obtained by request from the School Director of Office administrator.

Tuition, Payments and Fees

St. Margaret's Episcopal School is a nonprofit corporation. Our budget is set annually, and we are completely dependent on the tuition generated yearly for school operating expenses such as facilities usage, custodial fees, office expenses and salaries; therefore, tuition is based on a school year and paid in **10 equal payments**. Monthly payments do not include fees for Camp Maggie, on property field trips, or extracurricular activities that may be offered. Payments may be made using the billing option in Brightwheel APP. We also take payments in the office by cash, check or money order.

Late Fees- Monthly payment is due on or before the first day of the month. After the 5th day of the month a **\$25 late fee** will be charged. There are no credits for illness, vacation time or other events that require school closures.

ACH Returns- There is a **\$25 fee** for all ACH and Check returned due to insufficient funds..

Discounts- SMES offers a 10% multiple child discount for one or more siblings enrolled during the same school year. We also offer a 10% discount for child(ren) or grandchild(ren) of a St. Margaret

Parish Member, Military Service, First Responder Service and teachers in NEISD. Parents will be required to provide a copy of identification such as military ID or school ID to receive the discount. Discounts are only applicable when tuition payments are on time. Discounts are only applicable to tuition not to extended care fees.

Parent Referrals- We greatly appreciate you sharing your positive experience at St Margaret Episcopal School with your friends, family and neighbors. If one of those families decides to enroll their child(ren), we will give you \$50 tuition credit. after the family has been with us for 90 days. The referred family must mention the referral at the time of the initial visit to our program by writing the referring families name on the inquiry form.

Non-payment- Non-payment is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment, however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the school director immediately. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved, you will be notified by the School Director.

Annual Registration fee- A registration fee is required upon enrollment. The registration fee is an annual fee due at the time of registration for the following year.

Each January, new tuition rates and registration fees will be published for the following school year once approved by the SMES school board.

Teachers can not take payments of any form!

Withdrawal Policy

A 30 - day written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. If proper notice is given, any unused tuition will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged the 30 days of tuition.

Suspension or Expulsion

A student may be suspended or expelled for behaviors that are inappropriate for developmentally appropriate stages, that endanger themselves or others or if the school is unable to meet an individual's needs. There will always be a call and/or conference with parents/guardians to establish a plan of duration and terms. The School Director or designee will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal. A dismissed student's parents are required to call and request an appointment with the School Director if they wish to return to school property following a dismissal. Appoints are made at the discretion of the School Director and are not a right of the dismissed child or parent.

Confidentiality

Within St Margaret Episcopal School, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of the school who have a "Need to Know" in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about employees, other parents, and/or other children will not be shared with parents. SMES strives to protect everyone's right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but not limited to, names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, or other health related information of anyone associated with St. Margaret Episcopal

Church and School. Outside of St. Margaret Episcopal School, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided by law. Parents will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of St. Margaret Episcopal school, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason for the sharing information.

You may observe children at our school who are disabled or who exhibit behaviors that may appear inappropriate (ie biting, hitting, spitting). You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child's policy. Employees of St Margaret's Episcopal School are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

Parent Code of Conduct

St. Margaret Episcopal School requires the parents of enrolled children at all times to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of St. Margaret's Episcopal School is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of SMES but is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters the school. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on school property thereafter.

Swearing and cursing- No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed towards employees of St. Margaret Episcopal Church or School.

Threatening employees, children, other parents or adults associated with SMES- Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society, SMES cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities. **PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

Smoking -For the health of SMES employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on school property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds and in the parking lot of St. Margaret Church and School. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot. Same rules apply to e-cigarettes and vapes.

Violations of the Safety Policy- Parents are required to follow all safety procedures at all times. These procedures are designed not as mere inconveniences, but to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children, and associates of SMES. Please be particularly mindful of SMES school door policies. Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the School Director.

Confrontational interactions with employees, parents or associates of SMES- While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of SMES or the parents of other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

Violations of Confidentiality Policy- St. Margaret's Episcopal School takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the school. Parents are accountable for the implications of this responsibility. Parents must understand that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child and family, but all children, families and employees associated with SMES. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressure employees, or other parents for information, which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

Cell Phone Usage- Proper parent communication is imperative when working with young children. It is difficult to communicate when cell phones are in use. Effective December 1, 2010, the Texas Department of Health and Human Services passed regulations prohibiting the personal use of cell phones in the classroom. Please end all calls prior to entering the building so that our teachers and directors can properly communicate with you.

Safety Precautions- State Law requires that children are never left in the car unattended. This includes siblings at drop off and pick up times. Also, lock your car and do not leave your purse or other valuables in sight. This is for your safety and well being, as well as for that of your children and possessions

Arrival Procedure

Sign in- Parents are required to sign children in utilizing the Brightwheel app. In order for all enrolled children to benefit from the curriculum and activities planned, **all children must arrive by 10:00 am.** Children will not be admitted after 10:00 am. Children who are late due to scheduled appointments with a healthcare professional or with prior permission from the School Director may be allowed after 10:00 am, however, a child may not be dropped off during the classroom's scheduled nap time. Late arrivals are a disruption to the classroom and other children and may break the established routine of the classroom. If you arrive after 9:15 am, you must check in with the school office, located in the church, to obtain access to your child's classroom. Please be respectful of your child's teacher and our office employees and do your best to arrive on time. Parents are prohibited from using internal/adjointing doors to drop off or pick up children.

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the teacher by 9:30 am. This will help the teacher effectively plan for the day. Please let your teacher know using the *Brightwheel* app or calling the office at 210-657-3328.

School's Right to Refuse Admission

St. Margaret Episcopal School reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time for the following reasons.

1. The director or teacher deems the child is too ill to attend.
2. Parents failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
3. Parents failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely manner.
4. Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, employees or other children enrolled at *SMES* if the child were present at the center.

Parents will not be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program.

Outside doors will be locked at all times. You may knock on the doors between the time of 9-9:15 AM and again from 2:15-2:30 AM for teachers to open. Teachers will not open doors to those that they do not know. Times between 9:15-2:15 teachers are not permitted to open the doors and parents will need to check in with the office before dropping off their child.

Pick Up Procedures

Parents are required to sign out their child using the Brightwheel app. All authorized pickups and emergency contacts will be sent an invite form Brightwheel which they must download to be able to check out a student. Please do not share your invite. Each individual must have their own sign out code.

Parents or authorized persons to pick up are required to sign any incident/accident report from the day at time of pick up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you at this time. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later time when the teacher is not responsible for other children in the classroom. A telephone conference may also be scheduled.

Authority to Pick Up

Employees can release your child only to adults who have been authorized in writing to pick up your child. Authorized persons are identified on the enrollment form, and the pick up authorization form. If anyone other than yourself will be picking up your child, please notify the teacher in the morning. A signed note or email from you will be required if the person picking up your child is not on your emergency information form or the admission form. You must include the name and cell phone number of said person in the note. When anyone other than you is picking up your child, a picture I.D. will be required. Please call the School Office if you have an emergency and someone different will be picking up your child (210)657-3328.

Late Pick Up Fee

Children should be picked up between 2:15 PM and 2:30 PM. Late pick up will be discouraged by a late charge of **\$10** per five minutes late plus \$1 for each additional minute, per child, beginning at 2:35. If your child participates in our extended care program and you are late to pick up, you will be charged the late fee at the same rate, starting at 5:35pm. Payment will be invoiced through Brightwheel and must be received no later than the following day the late pick up occurred. Time will be determined by the School Clock. Please note if you are late more than three times during the program year, the charge will be raised to **\$25** for every 5 minutes.

If an unavoidable delay or emergency occurs, we ask you to call the school office immediately as children become anxious and it is reassuring when the teacher can assure them of your whereabouts. We also have a "drop-in" extended care fee for \$15/HOUR during our extended care hours to help when the need arises. Please make a reservation for extended care by calling the school office. If reservation is not made you will be charged the late pick up fee.

Persons Appearing to be Impaired by Drugs/Alcohol at Pick Up

The employees of St.Margaret Episcopal School will contact the child's other parent or emergency contact person should a parent appear to the employee to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parents right to immediate access does not permit the school from denying a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However, we will delay the impaired parent as long as possible while contacting the other parent.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick-up a child and appears to the employees to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. Employees will contact the child's parent to notify them of the situation.

Emergency/Alternative Pick Up

At enrollment, parents will complete emergency/alternate pick-up information on the Enrollment Form. Parents are encouraged to include on the form any, and all persons who, in the course of event, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from St. Margaret Episcopal School. In an emergency situation the child's parent will be called first. If they cannot be reached employees will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached.

Should an employee contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list. Parents do not need to be listed on the emergency contact list.

The person on the emergency/alternate pick-up list will be required to provide a government issued photo ID prior to the school releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

All changes and/or additions to the emergency/alternate pick-up list must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to the form.

SMES reserves the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the emergency/alternate contact list for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolled parent(s) to inform each person on the emergency/alternate list of the policies/procedures contained herein.

Communication

Open communication with parents is very important to children's success. SMES has multiple ways of communicating with parents. The primary source of communication will be through our ***Brightwheel*** app and email. Please be in the habit of checking the app frequently so that you don't miss out on important information about school. You may also find information in your child's take home folder. A class calendar and newsletter will be sent home in your child's folder at the beginning of each month. Please read it daily to see what activities or special events are planned for the day and to promote conversation with your child about their day. Email or Brightwheel are the preferred modes of communication with teachers and administration. Please note that a teacher may not respond to your email or message on ***Brightwheel*** during the school day as their focus will be on the children. Contact the office should you need to get an important message to your child's teacher.

Daily Schedule

Each classroom has a daily schedule posted. The schedule has been designed to alternate between large and small group times and active and quiet activities as well as to allow sufficient time for centers and outdoor play. Weekly lesson plans are posted next to the daily schedule.

Nap and Rest Time

Nap and rest times are required by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Regulations. Supervised rest times are provided for all children in our school. Due to these regulations, parents cannot request that their child be exempt from nap or rest time.

Students are required to bring a foldable plastic mat (kinder mat), crib sheet and blanket to leave at school for nap time. You may also bring a small lovie if needed. Teachers will send nap items every Friday for washing.

Curriculum

St Margaret's Episcopal School believes that children learn best through actively engaging with people and things in their environment. Children are involved in hands-on experiences, real life adventures, and assisted discovery as they explore concepts through play. SMES is a place where essential readiness skills are nurtured through play, investigation, and of course, fun! Our program provides developmentally and age-appropriate activities and materials for exciting and wonder-filled environments.

Teacher to Child Ratios

SMES follows the teacher to child ratios established by the National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), which is lower than the state licensing ratios. From time to time, due to staffing shortages or other operational challenges, the school may default to state designated ratios. SMES will never run higher ratios than established by Texas Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Regulations unless a significant event or emergency arises.

Toddlers 1:6 ratio

Our Toddler classroom uses child-directed and center-based activities. Your child will learn through using their senses, exploring their environment, and interacting with their teachers. Multi-sensory learning and play opportunities will encourage your child to develop more concrete ideas about their own personal little corner of the world

2 year-olds 1:6 ratio

Our 2-year-old curriculum consists of hands-on activities that help children develop habits of observation, questioning, listening, creativity, and discovery. This fun and interactive program helps each child develop the skills necessary for success in preschool.

Preschool (3 year-olds and PreK) 1:10 ratio

The preschool curriculum is planned by each teacher based on a yearly outline of thematic topics. Social development, cognitive skills, language skills, and perceptual skills are all emphasized through play in our learning centers and in circle-time activities. We believe each child is unique and develops at their own rate. Because play is a child's work, the classroom is divided into carefully curated learning centers, which provide opportunities for children through various hands-on activities. The children are provided with daily experiences that will promote their overall level of development.

Enrichment Classes

Our programs and enrichment include but are not limited to Library and Story Time, Chapel, Indoor and Outdoor Motor Skills and In-house Enrichment Presentations.

Religion

Christian Holidays are celebrated. All students will attend daily chapel.

Discipline

Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills which help them get along in their physical and social environment. Modeling expected behaviors, redirecting children to an acceptable activity, and setting clear limits are methods of positive guidance techniques used at SMES. Children are given the opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperating, negotiating, and talking with the person involved to solve interpersonal programs. Children are taught to express their feelings in a socially acceptable manner. In cases of extreme inappropriate behavior or continuous behavior problems, parents will be notified. Cooperative plans for resolution will be developed. St. Margaret Episcopal School believes in a positive atmosphere for learning.

Discipline problems which have reached a level to warrant a visit with the Director will result in a phone call home each time the child is brought to the Director so that the parents are aware of the situation at hand. If necessary, the school may request that the parents seek out professional resources for the child. In the event that serious behavior cannot be resolved, the student will be dismissed from St. Margaret Episcopal School.

Medical Requirements and Health Precautions

Medical Forms

Each child must have a current medical form on file in the office listing proof of immunizations. This form must be signed by you and your physician and must indicate the status of your child immunizations.

Medication

Medication may be administered to your child ONLY if the parent fills out the proper form in our school office. Medication must be in its original container/packaging. The medication permission form includes the medication name, dosage and time the dosage is needed. All medications will be stored in the school office (excluding diaper ointment, sunscreen and bug spray).

Medications delivered by a device such as Epi-Pens, inhalers, and nebulizers must have written documentation from the doctor indicating when it is appropriate to administer such medications: including signs and symptoms that the medication is needed. The parent must also demonstrate to employees who will be administering medication through a device the proper use and any special care after use of the device. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that life-saving medications are replaced prior to the expiration date and an updated doctor's note is on file.

SMES will only dispense prescription medication that is prescribed 3 or more times a day. Medication prescribed once or twice a day must be given by the parent at home.

Insect Repellent and Sunscreen

St. Margaret's Episcopal School does not provide insect repellent or sunscreen. In the event a parent wants their child to have either, the parent must apply before the child is in class. In the event that the

child is in care for an amount of time that reapplication is necessary, the parent must provide the product in the original container with the directions provided on the product. Product directions will be followed. In addition, the parent must fill out a medication form prior to use.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

Texas Health and Safety code #36 requires screening or professional examination for possible vision and hearing issues. All children four years old or older must have a Vision and Hearing screening on file in the school Office This is required of all children enrolled in a licensed childcare setting. SMES does not provide a hearing and Vision screening for students.

Biting

SMES recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children up to age three. The teachers and director understand that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior and that the teacher is working to identify situations which provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The teacher will not punish or harshly discipline children for biting behavior, they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with teachers and directors to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day. The teacher and director may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed.

Emergencies

In case of an accidental injury or severe illness, we will first contact the child's parents, then the designated emergency person. If necessary, the school will arrange for emergency medical care. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the school records updated with current telephone numbers and emergency information. If your child's illness or injury is considered a life threatening emergency, EMS will be called first. We will send all children transported by EMS to Northeast Methodist Hospital located at 12412 Judson Road, Live Oak, TX (210)757-7000.

Accidents

Parents will be informed of any accidents involving their child during school hours. A written report will be made and signed by the teacher, director and a parent or guardian. Such reports will be filed in the school office.

Insurance

St. Margaret Episcopal Church and School carries liability insurance.

Illness Policy

Children cannot come to school ill. If children are at school they will be expected to participate in all class activities including going outside when weather permits.

When children are ill they must not come to school until they are symptom free, without the use of medication, for 24 hours.

- fever higher than 100
- internal symptoms such as diarrhea, nausea or vomiting
- runny nose that is not clear or opaque (yellow or green discharge indicates a probable cold or infection)
- cough, unless allergy related

- conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- mouth sore with drooling (including cold sores)
- rashes of unknown origin

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within **1 hour of notification**. If a parent is reached but cannot pick their child up within 1 hour, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone on the child's emergency contact form.

Parents will be notified that their child needs to be picked up if:

- A child is not participating comfortably with indoor or outdoor activities.
- The child has an axillary (armpit) temperature of 100 degrees accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness
- If a child shows symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting episodes, rash, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes or other signs the child may be severely ill.

Communicable illness

Report to the school any contagious diseases your child contracts. SMES, in turn, will notify you if any contagious diseases are present in your child's classroom. If your child has a contagious disease, a doctor's note stating the child is clear to return to school will be needed. Communicable illnesses would include but not be limited to:

| | | | |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Flu | COVID-19 | Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis) | Head Lice |
| Strep Throat | Fifths Disease | Chicken Pox | Rotavirus |
| Mumps | Measles | Whooping Cough (Pertussis) | Shingles |

Health checks

Our teachers are authorized to refuse admittance who has or has had, within 24 hours any of the above symptoms. We ask that you do not put our teachers in that awkward position and instead take it upon yourself to do what is best for your child, teachers and their classmates' health. If you are in doubt about bringing a child, call the school office and discuss the symptoms with the office administration. Your child's teacher will do a visual health check daily. Please make your teacher aware of any injuries your child has incurred since the last date of attendance.

Special needs

If your child is under a medical doctor's care for a documented medical condition that may require special treatment outside the normal training for our teachers, please make an appointment with the Director and teacher to make a plan of action. If after the meeting further action is required, more detailed information may be requested from the treating physician.

Let's work together to keep our school healthy!

Lunch and Snacks

SMES is committed to good nutrition as an integral part of your child's school experience. The children not only benefit physically but also learn the principles of good nutrition. We ask that you send a healthy lunch and snacks for your child. Please do not send candy, cookies or chocolate in your child's lunch or for snacks. If your child has these items in their lunch the teachers will pack up these foods and send them home. Please do not put your child teacher in a position to have to say no to your child's lunch choices.

Lunch

Please send food that is ready to serve, cut into appropriate sizes, washed and ready to eat. Avoid foods that require heating or refrigeration. If food needs to be kept cold, please include an ice pack in your child's lunch box. Lunch is required to be in one divided container, not in multiple bags or containers. One thermos type item may also be used.

Snack

Each child will be assigned to bring snacks for the entire class on a rotating snack schedule. Your child may bring a store-bought sweet treat (not homemade) for his/her birthday, but all other snacks should be healthy. We want to promote healthy eating habits. Consult www.snacksafely.com/snacklist for more information. Teacher will send home a snack idea list at the beginning of the school year.

Clothing

As you plan your child's wardrobe, consider the variety of activities that your child participates in on a typical day. We suggest comfortable and washable clothes that are free of complicated fasteners. Your child will play in grass, pea gravel and sand, so we recommend sneakers.

NO CROCS OR SANDALS

Be sure that your child has adequate clothing for outdoor play. In addition, please put a change of clothes (top, bottoms, underwear, and socks) in a labeled Ziploc bag in your child's backpack. Please label jackets with your child's name.

Items from Home

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues and loss, children are not permitted to bring in toys and/or electronics items from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of curriculum. This includes cell phones and video games. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child.

Parent Involvement

Parents are always welcome visitors at SMES. Various special events are held on the school campus and parents are encouraged to attend. Parent volunteers also plan class parties, work on school fundraisers, assist the classroom teachers, and volunteer for other activities. Opportunities will be sent to you by your child's classroom teachers/ room parents or Brightwheel

Any parent who volunteers in the classroom on a regular basis will be required to pay for and secure all criminal background checks, as required by our licensing regulations. Any persons, including parents, with felony conviction and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom.

Classroom Parties

The students may have several holiday parties/special snacks that may or may not require parent involvement. These holidays include Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter and the End of the year. The parents may provide party refreshment, games and crafts, or other activities. Party favors are optional. Due to choking hazards, we request that you do not bring

balloons. The classroom teacher will furnish a sign-up sheet and party guidelines. The classroom teacher will also plan activities for other holiday celebrations.

Please remember these parties are planned for students in the classroom. It is not encouraged to bring siblings to class parties. There may be items that are not age appropriate for that child in the classroom. We appreciate your support and understanding.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special occasions at SMES. You may bring a birthday treat for snack time. Please discuss the details with your child's teacher. Suggested treats are store bought small muffins, cookies, or lightly iced mini- cupcakes. All birthdays will be recognized during chapel with a birthday blessing and song. If birthday invitations are distributed at school, ALL children in the class must receive one. A special book *may* be donated to the class library in honor of your child's birthday. After the gift is shared with the child class, a book plate is put in the book stating who donated the item. The book is then placed in the class library for all students to enjoy.

Fundraisers

St. Margaret's Episcopal School plans multiple fundraisers each school year. We ask that all families take part by volunteering, attending, and/or donating to them. School sponsored fundraising efforts help provide for school improvements and scholarships for our students. School Fundraisers include but are not limited to our annual pumpkin patch, fall festival, spring festival, and Spirit Nights.

Visitations

Parents are welcome to schedule a conference with the teacher and/or Director at any time. Please make an appointment with your child's teacher or the director by calling the school office (210)657-3328.

Parents are welcome to observe their children in class at any time. We do ask that your visit be conducted so as to not disrupt the classroom schedule. Please schedule with your teacher if you would like to visit in the classroom.

Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) as a central place to report:

- Child abuse and neglect
- Abuse, neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation of the elderly or adults with disabilities living at home.
- Abuse of children in child-care facilities or treatment centers.
- Abuse of adults and children who live in state facilities or are being helped by programs for people with mental illness or intellectual disabilities. These are run by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) or Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS).

If you suspect neglect or abuse of a child, call the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at 1-800-252-5400 or go to the Texas Abuse Hotline www.txabusehotline.org.

St. Margaret's Episcopal School employees and teachers are trained annually in recognizing, responding and reporting child neglect and abuse. **Child abuse, neglect, and failure to report it is against the law in Texas.**

THE CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE: (800)252-5400

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES: (210)333-2004

CHILD LICENSING SERVICES: (210)337-3399

Gang Free Zone

REQUIREMENTS REGARDING GANG-FREE ZONES

For Child Care Centers

As a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code includes section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009. This new statute requires that information about gang-free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed childcare centers. The following is a tip sheet to assist in complying with the new law. This information may be posted at your childcare operation or copies may be provided to parents.

What is a gang-free zone?

A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your childcare center. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

How do parents know where the gang-free zone ends?

The area that falls within a gang-free zone can vary depending on the type of location. The local municipal or county engineer may produce and update maps for the purposes of prosecution. Parents may contact their local municipality or courthouse for information about obtaining a copy of a map if they choose to do so.

What is the purpose of gang-free zones?

Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

What does this mean for my daycare center?

A childcare center must inform parents or guardians of children attending the center about the new gang-free zone designation. This means parents or guardians need to be informed that certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of your center is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalties under state law.

When do I have to comply with the new requirements?

The law is already in effect, so providers should begin sharing information regarding gang-free zones immediately. Licensing staff will offer technical assistance to facilitate compliance until rules are proposed and adopted, which is estimated to occur in March 2010. In the meantime, providers should update their operational policies and procedures to include providing the information mandated by this law to the parents or guardians of the children in care.

For further information please contact your licensing representative or your local licensing office.

Child Care Licensing/jr

DFPS

8/31/2009

Emergency Preparedness Plan

An emergency preparedness plan is designed to ensure the safety of children during an emergency by addressing employee responsibility and facility readiness with respect to emergency evacuation and relocation. The plan addresses the types of emergencies most likely to occur in our area including but not limited to natural events such as tornadoes, floods or hurricanes, health events such as medical emergencies, communicable disease outbreak, and human caused events such as intruder with weapon, explosion, or chemical spill.

We teach the children evacuation procedures using developmentally appropriate language. Practice of these procedures gives everyone the confidence to know what to do in an emergency.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Director of St. Margaret's School at (210)657-3328 or hknight@tmargs.org

Decisions to close St. Margaret's School or delay its opening will be based on the following factors:

- The amount of natural light in the facility

- The temperature of the facility

- The risk to the health and well being of children and employees

This plan will be reviewed annually for effectiveness. If changes are made, parents will be notified in writing of the new changes.

Preparations

SMES employees are trained during orientation to familiarize them with our emergency procedures. Employees have emergency contact numbers and emergency provisions. Records are kept of drill dates and times in the school office and school building.

St. Margaret's School conducts monthly fire drills to familiarize employees and children with emergency procedures. Every 3 months we conduct a severe weather drill to familiarize employees and children with emergency procedures.

Lockdown (Locks, lights and Out of Sight)

Lockdown is a classroom-based protocol that requires locking the classroom door, turning off the lights and placing students out of sight of any corridor windows. Student action during Lockdown is to remain quiet.

Teachers will keep the children in the St. Margaret Episcopal School building and secure the facility for the immediate emergency. St. Margaret's lock down will include but not be limited to: shooting, hostage incident, intruder, trespassing, and disturbance or at the discretion of the Director or Public Safety Personnel. In a Lockdown all students will be kept in classrooms or other designated areas away from danger. Teachers will turn off the lights and move children to the corner of the room away from windows and doors. Children and employees will remain in lockdown until an all clear is given by the Director of Public Safety Personnel.

Secure! (Get Inside and Lock outside doors)

A Secure action recovers all students from outside the building, secures the building perimeter and locks all outside doors.

If classes are outside, the teacher will move all children into the school building through rooms 5 and 6. Teachers will check to make sure all doors are locked and window shades are closed. Business as usual inside the school building.

Severe weather emergencies

SMES is equipped with a severe weather radio to monitor any incoming storm. With enough advanced notice, parents will be notified to pick up their children. Should a parent not be able to be contacted, a teacher will stay with the child in a safe and secure location on campus. If it is safe to do, all students and employees will be relocated into the sanctuary. All outdoor activities will be immediately terminated due to severe weather. No child will be left alone.

St. Margaret's follows all school closures that the North East Independent School District (NEISD) deems necessary.

Evacuation of Property

The cause for evacuation could include but are not limited to: fire, bomb threat, explosion, severe weather (flood, hurricane, tornado, severe thunderstorm), toxic fumes, electrical, heat, water and structural failures.

In an emergency, the first responsibility of employees is to move the children to a designated safe area or alternate shelter. The Director or designated employee will call 911 and indicate the need for assistance.

Children will be relocated to the open field in front of the church. We will all gather near the iron cross. Parents will be informed of where we have relocated. All children will be accounted for using class rosters.

Notification of Emergency

Parents will be notified of the emergency as soon as the children and employees are safe. Employees are to accompany their assigned children to the relocation area and remain with them while family, guardian, emergency contacts are notified and arrangements are made for them to pick up their child. No child will be left alone. The phone number(s) that are on the emergency contact form for your child will be used to contact said persons. Please update your child's teacher **and** the School Office if any of your information changes.

St. Margaret's Director and designated employees will use personal cell phones to keep in contact with local authorities (such as fire, police, EMS, health department) and parents during an emergency.

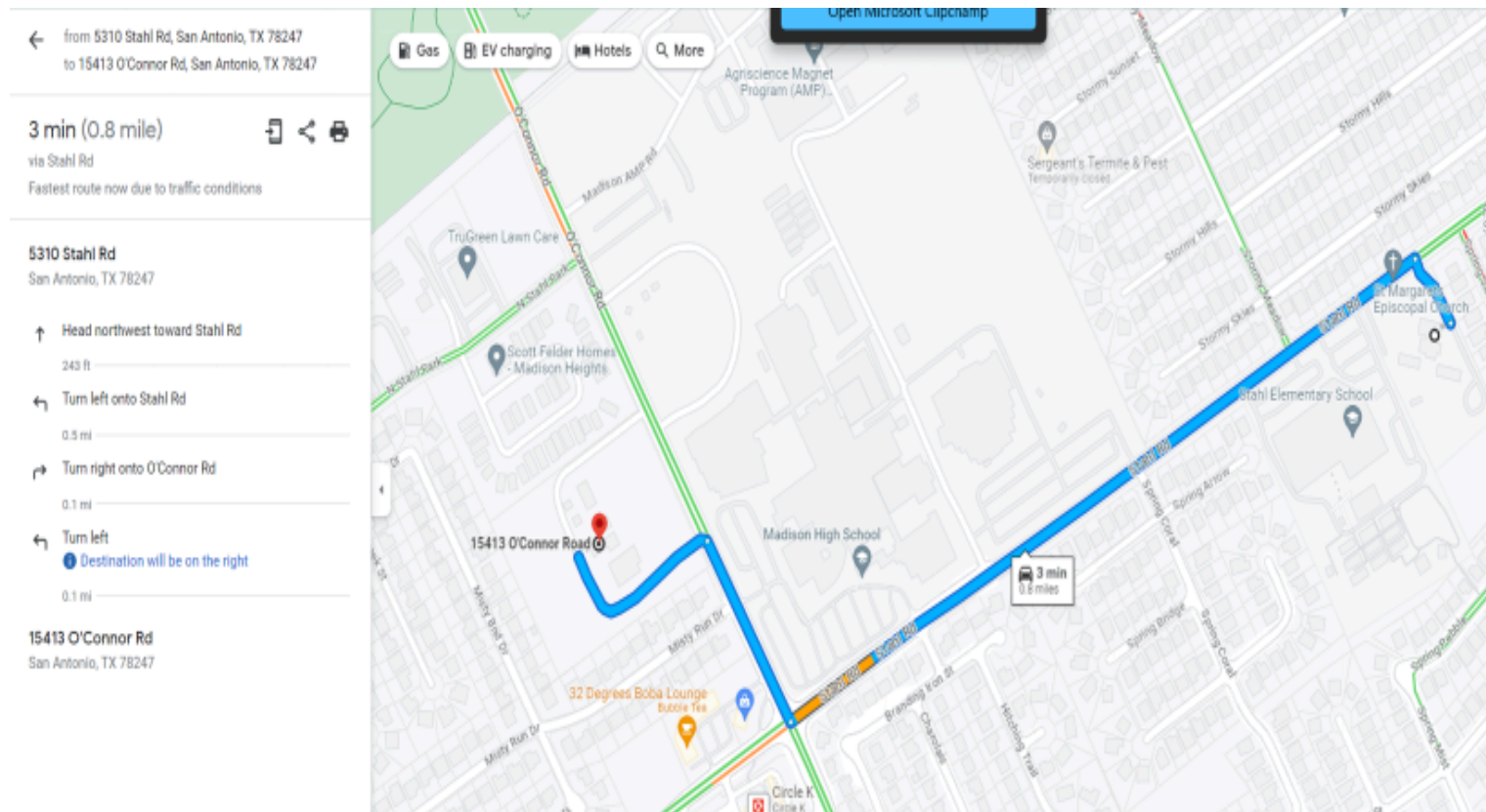
Parents, family, alternate pick up persons must supply proper identification before a child will be released.

Evacuation diagrams for on-site and off-site relocations are included in the back of this handbook and in all rooms of the school building.

Relocation Information

In the case of an emergency requiring relocation, you will be notified through *Brightwheel* and/or an email. St. Margaret Episcopal School will relocate to Madison Hills Baptist Church. Madison Hills Baptist Church (MHBC) is located at 15413 O'Connor Road, San Antonio, TX, 78247; (210)656-3946. Permission for this relocation plan has been given by Senior Pastor, Robert Bennett. The children will be transported by SMES employees and parents using large vehicles. The vehicles will continuously transport children till the relocation is complete. All children will be accounted for using class rosters. SMES employees will supervise the children at MHBC in the sanctuary. Teachers will offer snacks and activities to the children. Teachers will carry backpacks with markers, crayon, paper, small manipulatives. Backpacks will also have copies of child emergency cards along with small first aid kits. The Director or appointed supervisor will remain at SMES until all children and employees have been relocated. Students will remain under the supervision of their teacher until they are picked up by their parents or designated adult.

It will be the Director's responsibility to decide if an off site relocation is warranted. Employees and parents will adhere to predetermined evacuation routes as much as possible.

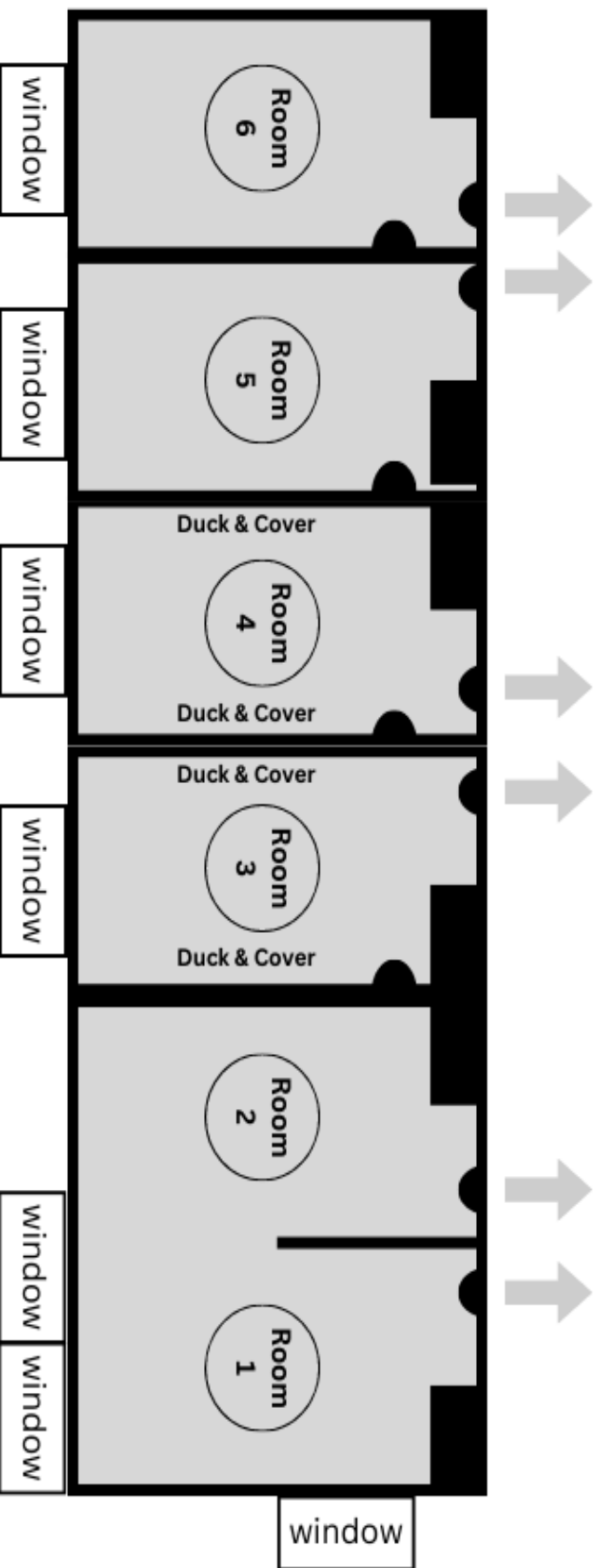




ST. MARGARET'S SCHOOL EVACUATION PLAN

RELOCATION AREA: MADISON HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH
15413 O'CONNOR ROAD

FIRE DRILL: FIELD BY STAHL ELEMENTARY



American Academy of Pediatrics(AAP)

Family Readiness Kit www.aap.org/family/frk/frk/htm

American Red Cross

See phone book or www.redcross.org/where/where.html to find contact information for your local chapter. Preparedness information including helping children prepare for/cope with disaster. www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/

Children's National Medical Center

The Handbook of Frequently Asked Questions Following Traumatic Events: Violence, Disaster, or Terrorism www.dcchildrens.com

Department of Homeland Security

30 Tips for Emergency Preparedness for the Family.
www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?theme=36&content=4846&print=true

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

www.fema.gov

How to prepare for specific types of emergencies <http://www.fema.gov/help/index.shtm>

FEMA for Kids www.fema.gov/kids

Are you ready www.fema.gov/areyouready

Institute for Business and Home Safety

For information on insurance and recovery www.ibhs.org

National Child Care Information Center, US Department of Health and Human Services, and Administration for Children and Families

Emergency Preparedness for Child Care Programs. Information about child care issues and planning guides for Child Care Centers. <http://nccic.org>

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

For weather receiver radios. Contact Pioneer HiBred International Inc. through their web site at the Company's Country Store on the Growing-Point website www.pioneer.com/growingpoint

UCLA Center for Public Health and Disasters

Head Start Disaster Preparedness Workbook. Detailed workbook on how to prepare Day Care Centers for disasters. www.cphd.uclau/headstart.aspx