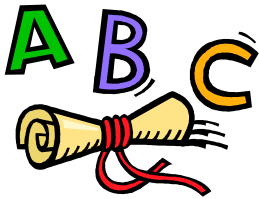




# St. Joseph Catholic School

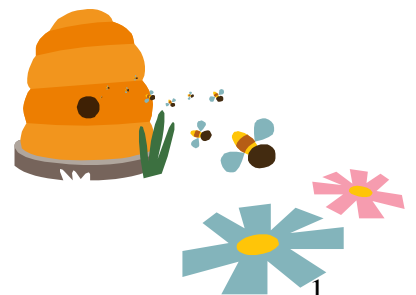
## Early Childcare Handbook

427 S. Stormont  
Princeton, In 47670  
(812) 385-2228



[www.stjosephprinceton.com](http://www.stjosephprinceton.com)

2016 Edition



## **Our Philosophy**

At St. Joseph School, we believe that by providing education for your child we become a partner with each child's parents. We create an environment that becomes an extension of the family and that provides excitement to a child's increasing abilities. This environment establishes a healthy curiosity about their world, along with the belief that they are very special people.

We are passionate about our children at St. Joseph School. You will see that exhibited in each teacher and in our desire to always go the extra mile for our children and their parents.

We enjoy our children at St. Joseph School. We are not structured with dittos, flash cards, and mandates. You will find our center to be child-based with music and programs designed for the distinction of children's maturation levels.

Art, puppetry, drama, math, computers, library, science, music, and gym are all a part of our day through play. With enthusiasm and encouragement from their teachers, the children explore centers, all the time learning valuable concepts through their joyful play.

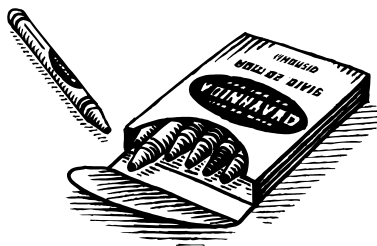
We have future authors, architects, gymnasts, builders, ballerinas, teachers, doctors, lawyers, mommies and daddies... all blooming at St. Joseph School. Finally, you will find joy at St. Joseph School. We truly believe that what we do leaves fingerprints all over society!

## **Our Mission**

St. Joseph School is an Educational Ministry of St. Joseph Catholic Church. Faith formation, building a strong sense of community, and educating students to their highest human potential is the heart of our school. With these qualities, our students become more mature Christian adults who minister to others.

## **Accreditation**

The State of Indiana Department of Education has currently accredited St. Joseph School as outlined in Public Law 221. In addition, St. Joseph School is a member of the National Catholic Education Association and the Indiana Non-Public Education Association.



## Spiritual Formation

The rationale for a Catholic School is to instill and model Catholic, Christian teachings. Catholic truths, values, and traditions are taught, practiced, and affirmed. The religion program at St. Joseph School is central to the school's curriculum.

Parents are encouraged and supported in instilling spiritual values in their children. Parents of non-Catholics attending St. Joseph School are encouraged to support their children in spiritual values appropriate for their family. It is our belief that without regular Sunday worship, the effectiveness of the religious education program is greatly diminished. Therefore, families are urged to worship together on Sundays.

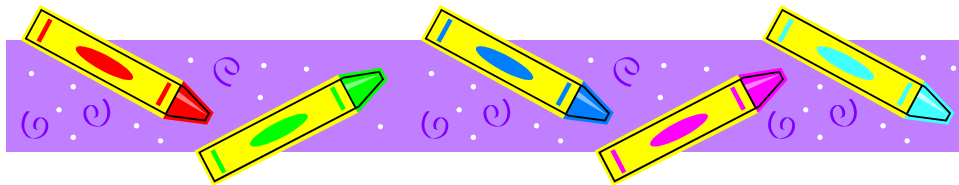
## The Curriculum

St. Joseph School believes that curriculum is a vital component of our program. The essence of early childhood education is age appropriate play. Our teachers use plan books to organize and help facilitate a Fun-Filled day that is designed to enhance your child's skills and stimulate their creativity. They will be implementing *The Creative Curriculum* to create a classroom where they can teach effectively and where children can thrive.

We believe in exposing children to a variety of music, art and culture, as well as exploring various aspects of science and math. Literacy is a prime factor in our program with stories being read, sung and acted out, with your child's participation.

Socialization is another primary component of early childhood education. Our teachers model and facilitate good character and emphasize this in their classrooms.

St. Joseph **PreSchool** students will be working on many different skills through play. They will work on their fine and gross motor skills throughout the school year. They will learn through exploration and challenge themselves in a way that is safe and conducive to everyone. They will be encouraged to share, to wait when necessary, to help when asked, and to be considerate of others' body and "space". The words please, thank you, and excuse me should be used appropriately. Play provides the foundation for academic or "school" learning. It is the preparation children need before they learn highly abstract symbols such as letters. Play enables us to achieve the key goals of our early childhood curriculum.



In St. Joseph **PreKindergarten** your child will learn some American Sign Language. Your child will be introduced to Tucker Signing, a Strategy for Reading and they will use Math Their Way to learn math concepts. They will also meet many new friends called The Letter People. They will be learning a lot of these concepts through play and free exploration. Pre-K is a class that will introduce a lot of concepts in Kindergarten.

### *American Sign Language*

The **PreKindergarten** teacher uses American Sign Language to help guide the children into new activities. Your child will improve their nonverbal communication skills and will broaden their language acquisition. It is the beginning of learning a second language. It broadens their horizon and provides them with an alternate way of expressing themselves. Learning sign language will spur their intellectual growth and improve their self-confidence. And last but not least, it is FUN!

### *Tucker Signing - A Strategy for Reading*

The **PreKindergarten** teacher also introduces Tucker Signing for those children that may be ready to make that step into learning to put sound to their letters. Tucker Signing uses hand signs that prompt them for the sounds of the letter. If your child continues his/her path into St. Joseph Kindergarten, this will continue with him/her. Your child will be empowered with a tool to help him/her learn to read.

### *Mathematics Their Way*

Your child will be using a special kind of mathematics program in **PreKindergarten**. It is designed to help your child learn a wide range of mathematical concepts as well as insuring knowledge of basic arithmetic skills. This program is based on current research evaluating the most effective ways to teach young children mathematics. The method stresses real life mathematical experiences rather than pages and pages of abstract drill. The children become actively involved with concrete materials and make discoveries using pattern blocks, unifix cubes, bottle caps, geoboards, etc. They will use free exploration with some teacher directed activities to prompt them on different skills.

### *The Letter People*

The Letter People in **PreKindergarten** focus on promoting phonological awareness and building alphabetic skills--letter identification. The program starts with language as an oral experience. The sequence in which the Letter People are introduced follows the sequence in which speech sounds are typically acquired.

At St. Joseph School, we want to teach your children about the world as they find their very special place in it.



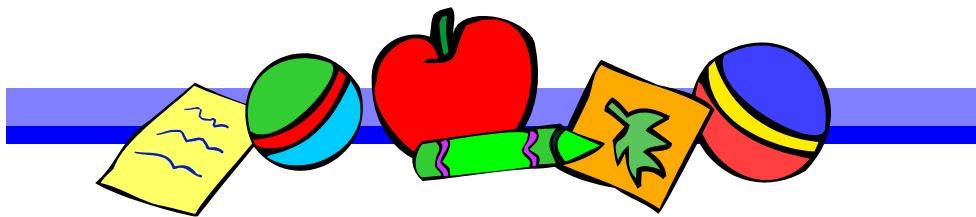
## **SCHEDULES VARY ACCORDING TO THE DAYS ACTIVITIES**

### **PreKindergarten AM Class Schedule**

7:45 – 8:15	Arrival / Table Time
8:15 – 8:45	Circle Time
8:45 – 9:15	Centers
9:15 – 9:45	Snack
9:45 – 10:15	Teacher directed activity / Centers
10:15 – 11:00	Free play, gym, (games)
11:00	Pick up or lunch

### **PreKindergarten PM Class Schedule**

11:45 – 12:15	Arrival / Table Time
12:15 – 12:45	Circle Time
12:45 – 1:15	Centers
1:15 – 1:45	Snack
1:45 – 2:15	Teacher directed activity / Centers
2:15 – 3:00	Free play outside, gym, (games)
3:00	Pick up or extended care



## PreSchool AM Class Schedule

7:45 – 8:00	Arrival
8:00 – 8:20	Table play / clean up
8:20	Circle time
8:45 – 9:20	Centers / clean up (wash hands)
9:30	Snack time / restrooms
10:15	Teacher directed activities/ Centers
10:45	Free play
11:00	Pick up or lunch

## PreSchool PM Class Schedule

11:45 – 12:00	Arrival
12:00 – 12:20	Table play / clean up
12:30	Circle time
12:45 – 1:20	Centers / clean up (wash hands)
1:30	Snack time / restrooms
2:15	Teacher directed activities/ Centers
2:45	Free play
3:00	Pick up or extended care



## Extended Care Schedule

### AM Schedule

6:00 – 7:30	Breakfast and Arrival
7:45 – 9:00	Organized Activity
9:00 – 11:00	Snack and Outdoor play
11:15 – 11:45	Lunch

### PM Schedule

11:45 – 2:00	Outdoor or organized play
2:00 – 2:45	Rest time and story
2:45 – 3:00	Snack
3:00 – 6:00	Outside play or centers



## **Our Partnership with Parents – Parent/Teacher Communication**

St. Joseph School believes that we partner with our parents in caring for children. Therefore we provide many areas for parent/teacher communication. Your child will receive newsletters from his/her teacher providing information on what is going on in the classrooms and the school. This communication is designed not only to give information, but for you to use as dialogue with your child. We encourage you to discuss various points with your child, which will show your child how interested you are in his/her day. This is another way to make our program an extension of your home.

For more in depth conversation, please feel free to call your child's teacher at the school, and we will arrange a convenient time for both of you to speak. We ask that any in depth conversations not take place at drop-off or pick-up time. Your child's teacher is designated to be in her classroom at that time. We are happy to arrange a time that is better suited for both of you.

Please feel free to contact the school at any time just to see how your child's day is going. We will be glad to check in with the teacher and share the day's information.



### **Library**

The children may borrow books for a period of one week. If books are overdue, the student will not be allowed to check out more books. If the book is not returned after four weeks, the parent is responsible for the replacement cost. The librarian will determine replacement cost.

## Parent Involvement

At St. Joseph School, we encourage parent involvement in our program. Each school year we will have a room mother who will help get you involved in classroom activities and coordinate volunteers for field trips. At any time of the year, we welcome parents to come into the child's class and read stories, do art projects, share information about their job, cook with the children, or many other activities.

We also ask parents to be involved with the school by sharing resources with us. We have had parents donate paper that was being discarded by their employer. We have also received donations of books, pencils, old toys, etc. We appreciate your donation and your child will feel proud to give to his/her school.

We also ask parents to be involved in fundraisers. Each fundraiser is designated for something specific such as playground equipment or any other upgrades to the school. The school has a PTO Committee, who help with a variety of improvements to our school and they help keep our parent/teacher involvement continuing. You are automatically a member of the school PTO and welcome to all meetings. Meetings will be posted on the website or listed in newsletters.

## Substitute and Volunteers

All substitutes and volunteers are subject to the same clearance procedures as permanent staff. Usually our substitutes are permanent staff people who fill-in as needed. This provides a wonderful consistency for your children. All volunteers must go through a Youth Protection Class and have a criminal background check before volunteering at the school.

## What to Wear

Please provide us with a complete change of clothing for your child to be kept on site. We request that the clothing be seasonally appropriate and labeled with your child's name. Bring the clothes in a zip lock bag with your child's name on it for easy identification.

Please have your child dress in comfortable clothing that is easy for them to manage. This will help him/her with their self-confidence. We are a hands-on school. Your children will come home with stains on their clothes. We use washable paints but you will have to pre-treat it before you wash it. **(WE GET REALLY MESSY!)** Please save your child's dress up clothes for special occasions. Your child should feel free to participate with daily activities without any worry!



**It is our school policy that your child should wear tennis shoes every day.** This is to ensure the safety of your child and the classmates. Flip flops, sandals, shoes or boots with a high heel, slide shoes with no backs, and cowboy boots are prohibited! These are not safe shoes for school.



*Because some children suffer from a variety of allergies, we are asking for your child to refrain from wearing perfumes and strong scented lotions. We must be considerate of others.*

### **Items from Home**

For the protection and safety of all children, it is the policy that personal toys are **not** to be brought to school. Not only are these toys a distraction during class time, but children have brought toys that are later traded to another child at school without the knowledge or permission of the parents.

Some children do not understand that all toys must be shared with everyone in the class and accidents can easily happen. Personal toys can become broken or lost and cause hurt feelings and broken hearts at this young age.

The teachers and staff will instruct all the children on the reasons why we have this policy. We need your cooperation to keep this from becoming a problem. Please talk to your child about the importance of leaving toys safe at home. Check backpacks to make sure toys are not leaving home without your knowledge.

Please note that if your child uses the Extended Care services and will be here for naptime/quiet time, he/she is still welcome to bring a soft cuddly quiet toy to snuggle, making him/her feel more secure and comfortable at that time. This toy should be kept in the cubby in extended care for personal use only.

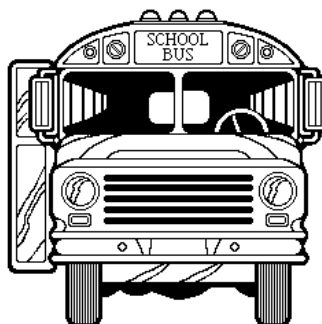


### **Outdoor Play**

St. Joseph School believes outdoor play is an important part of our program. Your child is scheduled to go outside daily, weather permitting. All of our teachers are well versed on playground safety and an accident procedure is in place in case of emergency. If the temperature is above freezing, we will be going outside. Please have the proper outerwear for your child everyday with his/her name on them.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips enhance our program at St. Joseph School. We will provide you with a description of the trip and permission slip prior to the date of the trip. Types of trips we have taken over the past years are orchards, the zoo, and the Children's Museum.



## **Extended Care**

Extended Care is an extension to our school. Your child must be registered in advance to attend Extended Care. Extended Care is open from 6:00 to 6:00. Closing time is 6:00 p.m. and your fees pay for service until that time. Parents whose children remain past 6:00 p.m. must pay overtime by the following day. This fee is \$5.00 per every ten minutes late. If your child is signed up for morning class, the Extended Care staff will bring your child over at 7:45 to class. If your child is signed up for afternoon class they will be brought over at 11:45.

## **Naps**

Naptime is scheduled for the afternoon extended care. If your child attends a.m. class, he/she will take an afternoon nap. Your child will have a cot and cot sheet provided. You will need to provide a **small** blanket and a **small** pillow. Your child may bring a small **soft** toy to sleep with. Please have your child's name on **all** the items to help with confusion. Please take nap items home every Friday to be washed and return them the following Monday. If your child does not require a nap, he/she is asked to be quiet for approx. 20 minutes until the sleepers fall asleep. The Extended Care staff will provide quiet cot toys. They also provide music and stories on CD. They also read fun stories to make this time be pleasant and stress free.

## **Snacks and Meals**

St. Joseph School provides breakfast from 6:00 to 7:30 a.m. We also provide snacks during the day. We believe good nutrition is important.

We also provide a healthy lunch for those children that need all day care. We send out a monthly menu. If your child does not like what is planned for lunch that day, you may have your child bring lunch or you may order a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Please make sure you let the teachers know when you do this and mark it on the sign-in sheet. If your child brings lunch, please do not use any frozen lunches or lunches that need to be reheated. We have to make sure we have our staff available to the children sitting at the lunch tables.

## **Birthday and Holiday Celebrations**

Students will not be allowed to bring in birthday treats. **Any birthday treats sent to school will be returned.** Teachers will acknowledge birthdays during their respective class times.

## **Discipline**

The purpose of discipline is to change or modify a behavior. At St. Joseph School, we put many systems in place in order to avoid conflict between children. Our teachers are well versed in redirection, which is engaging a child in order to avoid conflict.

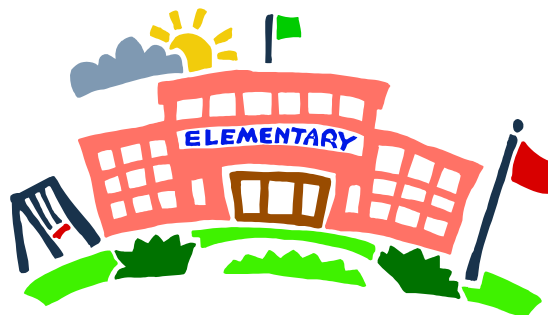
We also believe that when children don't feel right, they don't act right. At St. Joseph School, we try to validate a child's emotions and direct him/her to appropriate outlets for his/her feelings. For example, if a child is angry at a friend, he/she may say "I'm angry!" or "You were not kind to me". Conflict can be a wonderful teaching opportunity for pre-school age children. Teachers can facilitate conversation leading to resolution, and therefore give your child valuable independent skills.

## **Confidentiality**

We at St. Joseph School believe high quality childcare is when a program becomes an extension of the family. Because of this, we believe in confidentiality for all of our families. Personal circumstances, along with children receiving resources, are kept private between all parties. We request that all of our families respect this when they are outside of our program. It is of the utmost importance to us that all families feel respected and valued at St. Joseph School.

## **Security Provisions**

St. Joseph School has strong provisions for the safety of your child. Our doors are locked at all times and anyone wishing to enter must ring the bell and be admitted by the school secretary or principal. No one may enter our building without prior notice other than a parent. If you wish anyone other than yourself to pick up your child, you must have them on the pick-up list or notify the PreSchool and Extended Care staff. The person must show his/her driver's license when picking up your child.



## Child Abuse and Maltreatment Reporting

The teachers at St. Joseph School are all mandated reporters for child abuse. We are mandated to report any suspicions of child abuse and the appropriate authorities are responsible for validating the report.

## Emergency Information Forms

On the first day of school you must have all of the proper forms and emergency information turned in. These include:

Student Emergency Information Form – *this form will be provided by school at the first parent meeting, please verify that information is current and correct*

Copy of Birth Certificate - *must be on file in office*

Current Immunization Form – *latest copy on file in office*

## Fire Drill/Evacuation

St. Joseph School does monthly fire drills in order to keep our teachers and children well versed in emergency evacuation procedures. We have a posted drill record in the office. Please note that in an evacuation, we do not stop for coats or any other personal belongings. Expediency in evacuating the children is of primary importance.



## Weather Emergency

We follow the North Gibson School Corporation. If we have any school closing, please listen to WRAY. *You will also receive a call from the School Reach system; please make sure the office has a current phone number at all times.* If there is a delay announced for the day, there will still be class but the length of class will be shortened. Extended Care will still open at 6:00 a.m. If classes are cancelled after children arrive, a call will be made to pick up children from school as soon as possible.

## Accidents and Injuries

We take all of the proper precautions to avoid accidents and injuries. We comply with all regulating agencies pertaining to fire prevention and maintenance of our site. Teachers and staff are required to be CPR certified and to have taken the first aid course.

Children are taught safety precautions as part of our curriculum.

In the case that an accident does occur, we have written policies and procedures for our staff to follow, including contacting the parent and calling emergency back up, if necessary. Any injury will be documented by an accident or incident report.

### **Sickness Policies**

St. Joseph School does everything possible to limit the spread of contagious disease. Hand washing is a must for all children and teachers after using the restroom, before meals, after coming in from outside, and after sneezing or wiping a nose. Weather permitting we open windows for proper ventilation. With all preventative measures in place, children will still get sick. Please keep your child home if they show these signs:

Chills	Fever
Communicable Disease	Headache, severe
Coughing, severe	Joints, red or swollen
Diarrhea	Listlessness
Earache, severe	Nausea or vomiting
Eyes, inflamed or swollen	Skin rash or sores
Face, flushed or unusual pallor	Sore Throat
Head lice	

If your child is sick and you keep him/her home, he/she cannot return to school for 24 hours after the symptoms have stopped or after he/she has taken an antibiotic for at least 24 hours. If your child has been running a fever he/she has to be fever free for 24 hours without giving a fever reducing medication.

It is our policy to call parents to come to school for their child if they exhibit any of the following symptoms: Diarrhea, Vomiting, Fever, Head Lice, Eyes inflamed or swollen, or Skin rash or sores. When a child is free of those symptoms for 24 hours, he/she may return to school. *(Example: If we call you to come pick up your child at 12:00, he/she may not return to school for **24 hours after the symptoms stop**. Please do not bring your child back the next morning before the 24 hours has expired.)* If a child doesn't feel well at school, but does not exhibit any of the proceeding symptoms, the parent will be called and the matter will be discussed.

### **Medications**

If a child must receive medication during school hours and the parent cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the principal or a designee will administer the medication. An "Authorization for Student Medication" form **MUST** be completed and signed by a parent/guardian. The medication **MUST** be in the original container. Parents must assume responsibility for informing the school of any changes in the student's health or changes in medication. Any medication brought to school is to be given to the teacher or staff member caring for your child. Students may not keep their own medication at school. Medication may not be sent home with a child. It must be given to an adult. When medication is to be given, whether prescription or over the counter, the principal or persons designated by the principal will

be in charge of administering the medication, not the student. The school retains the discretion to reject a request for administration of medicine. If you send in Chap Stick for your child, you **MUST** give it to a teacher. The children want to share this and we need to prevent this from happening.

### **Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures**

In order to insure a safe drop-off and pick-up, it is imperative that we follow these procedures:

- \* Enter the parking area slowly! Children will be crossing.
- \* Pull into a **parking lot space**.
- \* Please use the **MAIN ENTRANCE** of the building for security reasons.
- \* All children must be holding your hand when walking in the parking lot.
- \* An adult must escort all children into the building.
- \* Children must never be left alone in the car.
- \* Seat belts are mandatory. Please buckle your children in yourself to assure this.
- \* All children must be signed in and out each day.
- \* Please do not let your child run freely out the door of the preschool.

Please pick-up and drop-off promptly. This assures a smooth process in our parking lot.

### **Financial Policies**

Monthly payments will be due on the first operating day of the month; August 1<sup>st</sup> – May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Closing time is 6:00 p.m. and your fees pay for service until that time. Parents whose children remain past 6:00 p.m. must pay overtime by the following day. This fee is \$5.00 per every ten minutes late. A \$20.00 fee will be charged to those who use Extended Care on an emergency basis.

Registration and activity fees are listed on registration forms.

### **Attendance-Absences-Tardiness**

If your child is going to be absent on his/her scheduled day, you must contact the school by 8:00. This is for your child's protection. If not notified, a staff member will be calling to check up on your child.

**Please have your child to school on time.** When a child is tardy it is very distracting to the teacher and the children.



### **Right To Amend Handbook**

St. Joseph administration reserves the right to amend the St. Joseph Early Childhood Handbook if the need should so arise. Parents will be notified of amendments as soon as is feasible. Any situation not covered in this handbook is left to the discretion of the administration.

### **Our Commitment To You**

At St. Joseph School we will provide a safe, nurturing, educationally stimulating environment for your child. We will get to know each child and encourage his/her strengths. We will have individual developmental goals for each child, expanding his/her abilities.

We will have open lines of communication with you. It is vital that you can share any of the needs, concerns, or expectations that you have for your child. It is in this way that we partner with you in caring for your child.

We thank you for the opportunity to spend time with your child, and for entrusting us with your most precious gift.

## **St. Joseph School**

427 S. Stormont  
Princeton, Indiana 47670  
(812) 385-2228

[www.stjosephprinceton.com](http://www.stjosephprinceton.com)

# St. Joseph School

## Family Commitment – Enrollment Form

St. Joseph Preschool is a Christ-centered early childhood education program reflecting the love of Jesus in a non-threatening, success-oriented learning environment. As parents, we affirm the goal of St. Joseph Preschool is to provide a balanced environment of social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and spiritual awareness. We as parents willingly and faithfully make the following commitments for the next school year:

- ✓ Abide by the rules, policies, and procedures as set forth in the Early Childcare Handbook.
- ✓ Support the work of the school and volunteer where possible.
- ✓ Pay all fees either in full on Registration Day or on the monthly plan.

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Parent or Guardian Signature

## Handbook Verification Form

For the protection of all students, parents, and staff members of St. Joseph School, all parents are asked to please read, sign and return this form verifying that you have read and agree to abide to all rules, regulations, and expectations described in this handbook.

The school shares successes of students with the media. In addition, the media uses pictures of activities to encourage the community to be actively involved at St. Joseph. Advertisements also utilize photographs, children's class projects and/or voices. With your permission, we would like to include your child and his/her successes and/or photo in our media releases.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby **give** permission for my child's photo, name, and/or class projects to be released to the media **and our school home page** - [www.stjosephprinceton.com](http://www.stjosephprinceton.com)

\_\_\_\_\_ I **do not give** permission for my child's photo, name, and/or class projects to be released to the media.

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Student Name

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Parent or Guardian Signature