

# ST. PIUS X LATCHKEY PROGRAM

## *Policies and Procedures*

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### PHILOSOPHY

The St. Pius X Latchkey program is designed to provide a safe and engaging environment for Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students after school. Children are offered opportunities for physical activity, creativity through arts and crafts, play and socialization with other children, quiet time to read or work on homework and interesting classes and field trips.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the St. Pius X Latchkey program is to meet the need for after school childcare in the St. Pius X community by providing a safe environment with a variety of activities in which the children may choose to participate.

### GOALS

1. To meet the childcare needs of the families in the school.
2. To provide a safe, comfortable environment for child care.
3. To provide activities that allows children the freedom of choice and promotes safe, courteous play.
4. To employ a staff who enjoys and understands children and their needs.

### REGISTRATION

All registration forms and fees must be completed and returned prior to attendance in the Program. All St. Pius X students may attend the program regardless of age, race, gender or religion.

Children currently attending the program are eligible for early registration and after said deadline; the program will be open to all students at the school. All registrations will be dated and spaces in the program will be filled according to those dates and the timely completion of all paperwork and payable fees.

## DAYS OF OPERATION

The St. Pius X Latchkey Program begins operation on the first day of school and ends on the last day of school. The program will be held in the school, on the school grounds and in Homan Hall from dismissal at 2:30pm to 6:00pm on all days that school is in session. In case of *Early Dismissal*, the Latchkey program will start as soon as Latchkey staff can arrive at school. Until that time, the children will stay with a school staff member. The program is not be in operation on days that St. Pius X does not have school such as calamity days, conference days, school holidays or vacations.

## FEES

A non-refundable registration fee of **\$20.00/family** is due with the Registration Form at the time of the initial registration. At that time, all parents must decide on the One Day/Week/Every Week option, the Part-Time option (2 or 3 days/week) or the Full-time option (4 or 5 days/week). A Drop-In option is available for **occasional use** by parents when needed. Fees for ALL OPTIONS EXCEPT THE DROP-IN OPTION must be paid weekly **regardless of attendance**. Payments must be made for the entire week, regardless of school holidays, calamity days, illness, vacation, etc. Fees are not charged for FULL weeks when school is not in session based on the regular school calendar. Payments are due on the Monday of the week of attendance.

A request to change your attendance option must be made **TWO** weeks in advance of the change. If the two-week notice is not given, an administration fee equal to the original option choice two-week fee will be assessed.

A Late Payment Fee of **\$10.00/week** may be charged for each week that accounts are delinquent. Consistent late payment of fees or late pick-up will be discussed individually and may result in dismissal from the program. Regular and prompt payments will assure the provision of required staff, ample supplies, equipment and snacks. Advance payments are always welcome. Please contact the director with any questions.

Checks should be made payable to **St. Pius X Latchkey**. If a check is returned for insufficient funds, a **\$20.00** processing fee, in addition to the amount of the check is assessed.

## WITHDRAWALS

When a child is withdrawn from the program, **two weeks' notice** must be given. If two weeks' notice is not given, payment will be due for the "notice weeks." To re-enroll, participants must fill out a new registration form and may be required to pay a new registration fee and the student will only be accepted back into the program if space is available and previous accounts are in good standing.

## ABSENCES

In the event a child is going to be absent from the program, the parent should contact the Latchkey program at 866-6050 ext. 423, send a written note to the director through the school office, or if picking the child/ren up after school, stop by the cafeteria and let the staff know. When possible parents should let the Latchkey staff know in advance of a planned absence. **Please do not ask another child to let the staff know that your child went home with someone.** If the child is sick, please tell the office to let us know when you call in to report the absence or leave a message on our voice mail. This will allow the Latchkey staff to attend to the other children rather than looking for missing children. If the Latchkey staff is not notified by the parents that their child/ren will not attend, the parents may be charged a \$5.00 penalty. If a child does not show up at Latchkey when scheduled, the parents will be contacted. Continual disregard for this policy will result in the dismissal of your child from this program. If your child takes the bus by mistake, we will make every effort to have the bus driver return your child to school or with your permission, and if staff is available, will go to your home and pick up the child.

## ARRIVALS

The children are met in the cafeteria by the Latchkey staff upon school dismissal. Any child not coming immediately to Latchkey from their class, **do need permission from the Latchkey staff to be late to Latchkey.**

1. If attending tutoring, sports practice, music or piano lessons, rehearsals, scouts, other school related organizations, or other school functions, the parents **must** fill out an **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITY FORM** releasing the Latchkey program of responsibility during that time. **If the staff is not notified, prior to the event, the child will be unable to attend and must come to Latchkey.**
2. If helping a teacher, the child must bring a signed note from that teacher to the Latchkey staff immediately after school informing the staff of location and time of arrival to the Latchkey program. A parent must sign an AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITY FORM if this is to be a consistent practice.

## RESTROOMS

Restrooms may be used at any time. If away from the Latchkey building, children must notify a staff member before using the restroom. If in Holman Hall, children need not ask staff permission. Staff does monitor restrooms on a regular basis.

## DEPARTURES

All children must be picked up **no later than 6:00 p.m.** In the event of a late pick up a \$1.00/minute Late Pick-Up Fee is assessed. If Late Pick-Up occurs more than five times, the Late Pick-Up Fee increases to \$5.00/minute. This fee is due at the time of pick up. Failure to pay the Late Pick-Up Fee within a week and/or consistent Late Pick-Ups may result in dismissal from the Latchkey Program. If unavoidably delayed, a phone call to the Latchkey building (614-866-1209) should be made, however this does not preclude payment of the late fee.

No child will be released to an unauthorized person. If someone not listed on the registration form is to pick up your child a call or note from the parent is required and said person must present a picture ID to the staff.

If the child is going to practice on the parish property, an **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITY FORM** must be on file for staff to release a child.

If there are special custody arrangements for the child, the appropriate documentation must be on file in the program office. **PARENTS MUST NOTIFY THE LATCHKEY STAFF WHEN PICKING UP THEIR CHILD/REN.**

## SUPERVISION

The St. Pius Latchkey program meets all Ohio Department of Education guidelines for child/staff ratios. Current State ratios are 18:1. While outdoors, the children will be supervised by at least one staff member. A student fourth grade or older, may leave the group to summon another adult. While indoors, children are supervised by at least one staff member. Students fourth grade or older, in groups of two or more, may be without direct adult supervision if children are within sight or hearing of staff, a staff member knows whereabouts of children at all times and a staff member checks on children every fifteen minutes.

Children grades 4 and up may run errands without staff supervision. The buddy system does apply. Children may not return to the school building after going to Holman Hall without permission. Students grades 4 and up may walk to sports practice in the gym or on an SPX playing field without direct staff supervision.

If your child stays after school for tutoring, piano lessons, to help a teacher, scouts, sports, detention, etc., **it is the responsibility of the person in charge of that function to supervise your child's return to our program.** Please be sure that person in charge is aware of this policy.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION**

It is important for the parents and the Latchkey staff to work together to ensure that the needs of the child are met. As the Latchkey program has an "Open Door" policy, parents are always welcome and encouraged to visit. Comments and suggestions are welcomed as well.

According to Diocesan policy, all parish volunteers working with children are required to:

- Attend Protecting God's Children. To schedule this class go to [VIRTUSONLINE.COM](http://VIRTUSONLINE.COM) and click on REGISTRATION. Provide the school office with your copy of attendance.
- Be fingerprinted by the Diocese or a local police department and send results to the school.

Although conferences are not routinely scheduled, parents or staff may request a conference at any time. Mutual convenience of the parties and the nature of the concern shall dictate scheduling. The specific topic to be discussed should be made known in advance.

Parental concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the Latchkey staff as soon as possible. Staff concerns or complaints will be brought to the attention of the parents immediately. A three-step complaint procedure shall be followed.

1. Parents bring the concern to the attention of the involved staff member in an informal meeting.
2. Unresolved concerns are addressed in a formal meeting with the Latchkey director.
3. A meeting may be requested to discuss still unresolved issues with the Parish Administrator.

It is the goal of the Latchkey staff to seek solutions to all concerns or complaints at the lowest step of the procedure. Cooperation between all parties will ensure the most beneficial environment for the children.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline is constructive and educational in nature, and may include such measures as praise for appropriate behavior, diversion, talking with the child or separation from problem situations. Discipline will be developmentally appropriate.

The program's method of discipline applies to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

- There shall be no cruel, harsh or corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, box or similar cubicle.
- No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, and derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family or other verbal abuse.
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
- Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate shame or frighten a child.
- Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability. The child shall be within sight and hearing of a staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.

The following behaviors will not be tolerated: biting, physically harming another child or staff member, stealing, habitual late arrival, destruction of school, parish, and/or program property, disrespect for staff members and the inappropriate handling of food.

Discipline may include a time out, helping to clean up after snack or picking up trash on parish grounds, suspension or expulsion. Continual discipline problems may require a conference, an individual behavior plan or dismissal from the program.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

All student records will remain confidential following the policy of the Department of Education, Catholic Diocese of Columbus, and St. Pius X School.

All staff members who deal directly with student population shall have equal access to: In service opportunities, conferencing information, permanent record data, procedures, and regulations.

### **SNACK**

A nutritious snack will be provided as part of the daily program. If the child does not like the snack that is provided an alternative snack of crackers is offered. Children should be present at snack time to receive their snack. Children may bring an additional nutritious snack from home but that snack must be eaten during snack time for K through 3<sup>rd</sup> students, not eaten in the Latchkey building. The 4-8 Club enjoys the privilege of eating while in their room in Hohman Hall, but this opportunity is dependent upon the staff's discretion. Please help us by informing your children of their responsibilities for cleaning up after themselves.

**NO GUM CHEWING IS PERMITTED BY STUDENTS AT ANY TIME DURING LATCHKEY PROGRAM HOURS.**

Any known food allergies of the child **MUST BE NOTED ON THE REGISTRATION FORM.**

### **ILLNESS**

Sick children should be at home for their safety and for the well-being of others in the program. We are unable to comply with requests that a child remain in-doors because of a recent illness or injury.

Children should not attend the program if they have a fever, a contagious skin rash, and diarrhea and/or vomiting two or more times in the same day, evidence of lice or any other symptoms of contagious illness.

If a child becomes ill, the staff will:

1. Observe the child
2. Make the child as comfortable as possible.
3. Isolate the child with any of the following signs or symptoms within sight or hearing of a staff member, in a warm safe place:
  - a. Diarrhea (more than one loose stool in a 24 hour period)
  - b. Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound.
  - c. Difficult or rapid breathing
  - d. Yellowish skin or eyes
  - e. Conjunctivitis
  - f. Temperature of 100°F taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other symptoms
  - g. Untreated infected skin patch(es)
  - h. Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool
  - i. Stiff neck
4. Contact parent to pick up the child. If the parents are unavailable, the emergency contacts are called.
5. Notify the health department when appropriate.
6. Protect the other children in the program.

The parental responsibilities are to:

1. Provide accurate emergency phone numbers and contacts
2. Provide accurate up-to-date health history.

3. Make plans to pick up the child as soon as possible after being notified by the program.
4. Notify the program if the child is exposed to any communicable diseases.
5. Keep ill children at home.

If emergency treatment is needed, the child will be treated and/or transported by paramedics. If it is not a severe emergency, the parent(s) are requested to pick up the child. If the parents are not available, the emergency contacts are called.

### **MEDICATION**

We prefer not to administer medication, but on a limited basis, arrangements may be made. We will administer only personal prescriptions filled by a pharmacist with a label bearing the physician's and the child's name, and directions for administration. The parent or the school nurse, not the child, must give the medicine to the director. The parents must complete the proper authorization forms available in the program office.

### **HOMEWORK**

Children have the opportunity and are encouraged to work on homework at Latchkey. A staff member will be nearby to provide help. Students are responsible for doing their homework. Staff will NOT make any child do their homework. Students must bring all books, folders, etc. with them to Latchkey and MAY NOT return to the school building after we move to Holman Hall.

### **MOVIES**

Occasionally we will show movies at Latchkey and the Latchkey staff will decide on appropriateness of the movies. Only G and PG rated movies will be shown. If the children want to watch a PG-13 movie and the staff feels the movie is appropriate for school age children, a permission slip will be sent home. Each family will decide if their children may view the film. Anyone without a permission slip cannot watch the movie. Another G or PG movie will be shown at the same time.

### **CLOTHING AND TOYS FROM HOME**

All children are encouraged to bring a change of play clothes, including shoes, to change from uniforms.

Children are permitted to bring toys and personal belongings from home with the understanding that **the child will be responsible for those items**. The Latchkey staff assumes no responsibility for lost or broken belongings. These personal belongings must be removed from Latchkey daily. All items from home should be clearly labeled with the child's name. The staff reserves the right to prohibit the use of items deemed inappropriate and to confiscate items being used inappropriately. These items will be released to the parent upon dismissal. During the school day, these items must be kept in their school bags and not taken out in class. Any personal items left at the close of Latchkey will be removed to the school Lost and Found.

### **SAFETY**

Parents are responsible for keeping all emergency records updated at all times. This includes leaving a phone number with the staff on days when you are not at your usual location. Additionally, parents are responsible for informing the staff if anyone other than the parent will be picking up the child/ren. There will be access at all times to a working telephone for all Latchkey staff or for parents upon request. We cannot allow children to use the phone unless it is an emergency. Also, we ask that parents do not call for their children unless it is an emergency.

All fire, emergency, and weather alert plans showing evacuation routes are posted. Weather related evacuation procedures and fire drills are practiced at various times. First Aid kits are located in the school building, Hohman Hall and on the playground when students are present.

All staff members are trained and certified in First Aid, CPR, Communicable Diseases and Child Abuse.

## **CLASSES**

The director and staff work very hard to provide exciting and interesting classes. We hope your child will take advantage of these programs and enjoy them.

Forms will be distributed announcing each class, the dates and times, the location and the cost of the class. Fees are payable by the family of the child attending.

Classes will be filled on a first come/first served basis. We suggest returning the completed forms as soon as possible, with the fee included. If we have a large number of participants, we will add another class if possible.

Although we strive to finish the classes on time that **does not** always happen. Please be patient and allow the child to finish the class if possible. Usually the facilitator could use an extra hand so feel free to pitch in and help. Most times, it is impossible to finish the project until the next day.

When a child signs up to be in a class, we expect that child to attend the entire session. We offer these classes as enrichment but we also have them to break up the size of the whole Latchkey group. We usually have minimum numbers for each class because we cannot justify a low staff to student ratio.

So please explain to your child that this class is a commitment on their part as well as ours.

Any suggestions for classes are welcomed. If you or someone you know could share a talent with the children, we would love to have you. Of course the Protecting God's Children and fingerprinting criteria apply.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be scheduled by the Latchkey staff throughout the year. All field trips are optional. All fees for the field trips are payable by the family of the child attending. A Permission Form will be sent home with the child and must be returned signed and with required fees before the child is allowed to go. Transportation will be in the St. Pius Parish van, staff vehicles, or responsible adults who have met the Diocesan criteria for volunteering. Return times from field trips are always approximate. Please do not send more money than is suggested as the child will not be allowed to spend it. No matter where the field trip is, no one is allowed to play video games or buy additional food or drink. Opportunities to go on field trips are based on a first come, first served basis or chosen by the director. Those closed out of field trips will have first priority the next time a field trip is taken. Field trips may be canceled if a minimum number is not met, weather conditions make travel dangerous or the child/staff ratio of those not attending does not meet the state standards.

For one-time field trips (movies, Magic Mountain, etc.), money is refunded if a child does not attend due to school absence. If the field trip is set up in sessions (cooking, dance, scrapbooking, etc.) no money is refunded.

Any disruptive or inappropriate behavior is not tolerated. In the event of this behavior, the child loses their right to go on other field trips. If a child's behavior is contrary to our expectations, that child is dealt with in the following manner:

1. The behavior is discussed with the child.
2. The child is removed from the group to a supervised time-out area until he/she is able to return.
3. If the unacceptable behavior continues, it will be discussed with the parents.