

Mary Queen of Heaven  
PRESCHOOL

# Preschool Handbook for Families

2011-2012

426 N. West Avenue  
Elmhurst, Illinois 60126  
630-833-9500



Dear Parents of Preschoolers,

What a job it is to welcome you and your precious little one to Mary Queen of Heaven Preschool. Under the mantle of Mary, Our Mother, we promise to do all in our power to help your child grow in the ways of Our Lord, Jesus, and the world in which he/she will live. Most important for us all is to create a safe and secure environment where your child can be free to learn and grow.

As parents you are your child's true preschool teachers not only of the human skill he/she will need to succeed in society, but more importantly the conduits of God's grace in his/her life. We pledge and promise to do our part to help you in this sacred work.

Early childhood is the most important and special time in one's life. In it we get set for life. To do it well is a gift that will last a lifetime and for eternity. We are honored to be part of this holy enterprise with you.

In Jesus, the teacher,

*Fr. Tony*

Rev. Anthony R. Taschetta, Pastor

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[www.maryqueenpreschool.org](http://www.maryqueenpreschool.org)

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*"Free to play, explore and imagine"*

# ***WELCOME***

TO

Mary Queen of Heaven Preschool  
A Catholic School of the Diocese of Joliet



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Mary Queen of Heaven Preschool/KEP, in partnership with parents and with the loving support of our parish community, offers a Christ-centered early learning environment. Since no two children learn in exactly the same way, we offer multiple pathways for social, academic, and spiritual development. We provide an educational experience that honors differences and focuses on the Gospel values of love, justice, peace, and service. We strive to educate the whole child.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Mary Queen of Heaven Preschool and Kindergarten Enrichment Program are ministries of Mary Queen of Heaven Parish in Elmhurst, Illinois. Our goal is to build Christian families by infusing Catholic values and teachings into our curriculum, by embracing the individual uniqueness of each child, and by calling our parents and faith community to participate in the education of our children.

## **PROGRAM**

Mary Queen of Heaven Preschool and Kindergarten Enrichment Program are designed to meet the special needs of young children. These programs are informally structured with different activities being offered simultaneously. Prayer is integrated throughout our daily activities: i.e. opening and closing prayers for the school day, prayer before eating, opportunities to “talk and listen” to God in our Prayer Centers and visits to church. Materials and toys for creative expression and role-playing are available. Manipulative and cognitive games also enhance the children’s development. Activity in the outdoor and indoor play spaces, stories, music, snack, and conversations with teachers and classmates completes the program while offering the child a well-rounded experience.

## **PREPARATION FOR FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL**

Most children are excited about starting school. Our goal is to provide your child with a positive experience that will foster a delight for learning. The first days and weeks of school mean new adventures for the children, the parents, and the teachers. These days can be exciting as well as frightening for a child. Prior to the start of the school year, we encourage you to begin a conversation with our child regarding the school routine. To aid your child with this transition of starting school, we suggest that you develop a routine of always saying goodbye to your child and the teacher. This will assure your child that you will not just disappear, but will return, and also lets the teacher know you have left. The staff of Mary Queen of Heaven is more than willing to work with you in any way we can.

## **ABSENTEEISM**

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness or personal reasons, please phone the school office at 630-833-9500 before 9 a.m. to report the absence. Please state your name, your child's name, and the reason for the absence.

## **ARRIVAL**

School doors open at 8:30 a.m. Instruction will begin at 8:45 a.m. Please enter the school through the doors nearest the playground. As part of your routine, please have your child wash his/her hands before entering the classroom. Escort your child to his/her classroom, sign the parent sign-in book and say good-bye. If there are special instructions for pick-up, please include those on the sign-in sheets.

Please ring the bell if you arrive after the doors are locked. Our doorbell is located on the left side of the glass doors. Ring the bell and wait for acknowledgment. The left door will be unlocked, but **you will not hear it unlock.**

## **DEPARTURE**

The doors will be unlocked at 12:00 noon for you to pick up your child. After signing your child out, please wait in the hall for your child to be dismissed. We will release your child only to those adults whom you have authorized to pick-up your child.

Our end of the day routine is just as important as the beginning of the day; so that the children can remain focused, please refrain from coming to the classroom door until the children are dismissed.

## **BRINGING THINGS FROM HOME**

Your child may bring books and music to share with the class if it relates to our current subject matter. Please label each item so that we can ensure their safe return. Favorite toys and stuffed animals can be a great comfort in new situations: if this is necessary, please explain to your child that it will stay in their backpack and be there if they need it. Preschoolers will have the opportunity to bring items for show and tell. This item must fit in their backpack. **No weapons allowed.**

## **CHILD ABUSE**

In accordance with Illinois state law, the school is legally mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate agencies.

## **CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS**

Parents and other relatives are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom. The teaching staff will be happy to acquaint parents with classroom volunteer procedures. It is necessary that volunteers be at least 16 years of age and have on file a copy of his/her certificate of training in Protecting God's Children (Virtus Training). Information on training workshops may be found on the Diocese of Joliet website, <http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org> . Click on the link for Protecting God's Children.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information about your family and your child is confidential. The information we collect will only be shared, when necessary, with the Pastor, the Director, and the teaching staff. We respect each family's privacy and will not give any information to anyone else unless you give us written permission to do so.

# **CURRICULUM**

Our curriculum integrates a multiple intelligence (MI) approach that is designed to help each child develop self-esteem and establish a foundation for learning. We will offer different pathways for students to learn and succeed. The MI approach is child centered; teachers look at how the child learns and then work to develop curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on this information. MI is a method that allows the teachers to differentiate and therefore reach each child.

Our Preschool and KEP provide outstanding lessons that focus on the development of the whole child: spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual, and physical. Instruction will provide activities to stimulate, challenge, and meet the abilities and interests of all the children. Through play and learning centers each child will have the opportunity to enjoy success by actively participating in hands on activities in many forms. KEP will expand and enhance the learning that goes on in a typical kindergarten class.

# **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

We believe that limit setting is an ongoing process to help children develop self-control, competence, and appropriate behavior. Children need to assume responsibility for their actions and develop an awareness of the rights of others.

Simple, understandable rules will be used with children, for example: “Keep your hands to yourself”.

Discipline shall be developmentally related to the child’s age and shall not be out of proportion to the particular inappropriate behavior. The child shall be made aware of the relationship between their behavior and the resulting consequence. Teachers and staff will be responsible for discipline and will use the following approaches: 1) praising good behavior, 2) redirection to another activity, 3) loss of privilege or activity where misbehavior occurs, and 4) resolution of conflicts.

In accordance with State Law, no child will be subjected to corporal punishment or to verbal abuse. Meals or any part of meals will not be withheld as punishment, nor will any child be punished for toilet accidents.

## **DRESS FOR SCHOOL**

Clothes should be roomy enough for play with simple fastenings that the child can manage by himself or herself. Typical, washable, play clothing that can get dirty is recommended. Jewelry is discouraged, because it is unsafe as it can get caught on objects and may harm your child. During wet, cold weather, children should wear boots, mittens, hats, and warm outer wear because they may play outdoors. Boots should be large enough for the child to put on independently. Another pair of shoes for use in the classroom should be provided.

**A complete change of clothing kept at school is required. Items to be included are: underwear, shirt, pants, extra gym shoes, and socks. These may be used for any kind of spill or accident that may occur. Please exchange the extra clothing as the weather changes and as your child grows.**

## **HEALTH GUIDELINES**

1. Parents are asked to keep their child home if he/she has a fever, persistent cough, skin rash, eye infection, or if he/she has vomited during the night or in the morning before leaving for school.
2. Allow the child who has been ill to return to school only when he/she is completely well. He/she should be free of fever for at least 24 hours (without the aid of fever-reducing medication).
3. Please notify the school immediately if your child has a communicable disease, including, but not limited to streptococcus or conjunctivitis, so that other families can be informed of possible symptoms. Call 630-833-9500 and leave a message.
4. Children will be observed daily at school. Should there be symptoms of illness, the child will be isolated from the group, a parent will be notified, and arrangements will be made to have the child picked up.

5. In case of an emergency, the school must be able to contact parents during school hours. Therefore, it is important that parents give the school accurate, up to date home, cell, and work phone numbers and notify the school immediately if any changes occur.
6. Our staff has been trained in emergency first aid, CPR, and AED use. In case of an accident or incident, appropriate first aid will be administered, and you will be notified.
7. Food allergies should be listed on the child's emergency sheet.

## **HOLIDAYS**

Please refer to the school calendar.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES PROGRESS REPORT**

The teachers will schedule conferences with parents in the fall regarding the progress of their child. Parents may schedule a conference at other times throughout the school year.

Progress Reports will be sent home twice a year: in January and at the end of the school year.

## **PERMANENT RECORDS**

Health and academic records are kept on file in the school office for each child who attends the school. These records are confidential and are submitted when lawfully requested.

## **REGISTRATION**

Registration takes place in the school office. Folders with all necessary forms are given at this time. Some forms may be accessed on line.

## **REQUIRED MEDICAL REPORTS**

A complete physical examination is required for all children entering school. It should be reported on forms prescribed by the Illinois Department of Public Health and dated no earlier than six months prior to enrollment. The physical report must include all required up to date immunizations.

## **SCHOOL CANCELLATION**

We follow the District 205 (Elmhurst Schools) decision in regard to emergency closings. If any of your children attend District 205 Schools, you will receive an automated phone call through the **AlertNow** notification service.

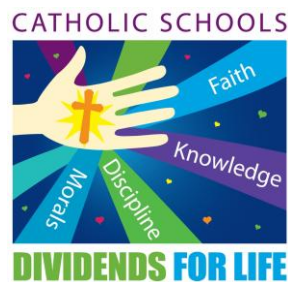
Should weather cause cancellation of classes, this information will also be broadcast on WGN and WBBM radio, local TV and at [www.EmergencyClosings.com](http://www.EmergencyClosings.com).

# SNACKS

Our program asks families to provide food and drinks for snack. A monthly snack calendar will be sent home indicating your child's day to bring in snack for their class.

Families should follow these guidelines:

1. **WE ARE A NUT FREE ENVIRONMENT. This means that we do not allow any food products that contain peanuts or any other nut products in whole or part.** All food allergies should be listed on your child's emergency sheet at time of registration.
2. All foods must be commercially prepared or packaged.
3. All food and drinks provided must be nutritionally sound. Drinks must be 100% juice, water, or milk. Snack items may include but not limited to: fresh fruits (apples, oranges, peaches, and pears), raw vegetables (carrots, green beans, celery, and pea pods), crackers, cheese, yogurt, breads, unsweetened cereals, raisins, etc. Items such as cookies, candy, chips, etc. are only acceptable on special days like birthdays.
4. Remember that this is a snack not a meal. A small portion of one type of food is all that is needed. A good rule of thumb is to provide ½ cup serving per individual of snack or drink.





## 2011-2012 School Calendar (Tentative)

### August 2011

- 11            Creating Connections Workshop (teachers only)
- 16            Early Childhood Institute (teachers only)
- 18            Region I Workshop Differentiating Instruction at Drury Lane (teachers only)
- 18            Parent Orientation Meeting (parents only) 6:30p.m.-7:30p.m. (Social Hall)
- 20            Protecting God's Children Barrett Hall 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
- 22-23        First Days of Classes 8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- 27            Protecting God's Children Barrett Hall 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

### September 2011

- 5             Labor Day-No School
- 14            District 205 p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:45

### October 2011

- 7             Catechetical Teacher Institute-No School
- 10            Columbus Day observed-No School
- 12            District 205 p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:45
- 31            Halloween Celebration - all classes attend

### November 2011

- 9             District 205 p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:45
- 23            No School as per District 205
- 24            Thanksgiving-No School
- 25            No School as per District 205
- 29-30        Parent Teacher Conferences

### December 2011

- 14            District 205 p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:45
- 16            Christmas Celebration - all classes attend
- 21-22        Last classes for 2011, Christmas Break Begins

### January 2012

- 9-10        Classes resume 8:45a.m.-12:00p.m.
- 11            District 205 p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:45
- 16            Martin Luther King's Birthday-No School

17 Faculty In-service - No School  
29-Feb. 4 Catholic Schools Week  
Registration begins for 2012-2013 School Year

February 2012

8 District 205 p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:45  
17 Diocesan Teacher Institute - No School  
20 President's Day-No School

March 2012

14 District 205 p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:45  
26 Spring Break Begins-No School

April 2012

2-3 Classes resume 8:45a.m.-12:00p.m..  
6 Good Friday - No School  
10-11 Optional Parent Teacher Conferences  
11 District 205 p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:45

May 2012

20 End of the Year Celebration, Mass and Picnic  
23 District 205 p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:45  
24 - 25 Last Days of attendance

**Diocesan, District 205, weather dates and other decisions may affect this calendar. Please refer to updates throughout the year. You may also check with the Preschool Office at:630-833-9500 if you have any questions. Thank you for your understanding.**

All Preschool and KEP classes meet from 8:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Arrival and Dismissal are through the west doors by the MQH Playground. Door is opened at 8:30 a.m. If you arrive at another time, please ring the bell for admittance.

Please sign in (parent/guardian signature) upon arrival and dismissal of your child.

**"Our task, regarding creativity, is to help children climb their own mountains, as high as possible. No one can do more."**

Loris Malaguzzi (20th century), Italian early education specialist.  
Quoted in The Hundred Languages of Children, by Carolyn Edwards (1993)