



Mary Queen of Heaven
PRESCHOOL

Preschool Handbook for Families

2012-2013

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

442 North West Avenue • Elmhurst, IL 60126-2128 • TEL (630) 833-9500 • FAX (630) 279-4667 •
www.maryqueenpreschool.org

"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, 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 strengths and goodness.

Children are encouraged to make choices, develop their talents, and understand the role God plays in the world around them. We strive to educate the whole child. Children will be free to play, explore, and imagine in the course of a child-oriented day. Our faith-centered, child-focused, family sensitive preschool seeks to develop a loving relationship with God as a basis for living out the Gospel values of love, justice, peace, and service.

Starting school is an important time in a child's life. We hope the contents of this booklet give you information that will help your child make a happy adjustment to school life. Most children are excited about starting school. Our goal is to provide your child with experiences that will foster this delight for learning.

The first few weeks of school may be a little tiring as your child adjusts to new routines, new friends, and a different environment. Please feel free to talk to your child's teacher about any concerns or worries you may have regarding this new experience. The staff will be pleased to assist you in any way.

We wish you and your child a wonderful year and look forward to a positive home-school relationship.

PROGRAM

Mary Queen of Heaven Preschool and Kindergarten Enrichment programs 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” with God in our Prayer Center, and visits to the church. Materials and toys for creative expression and role-playing are available. Manipulatives and cognitive games also enhance the children’s development. There is opportunity for vigorous activity in the outdoor and indoor play space. A nutritious well-balanced snack is offered. Stories, music, and conversations with teachers and classmates enrich the child’s experience.

PREPARATION FOR FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL

The first days of Mary Queen of Heaven Preschool Program means new experiences for the parent, the child, and the teacher. They can be happy days.

1. The child’s first experience in preschool, among strange new people and unfamiliar surroundings may be a little frightening at first. Therefore, it may be helpful if you stay with your child for a while during the first few days.
2. Please say goodbye to your child and the teacher before you leave. Your child needs to know that you are going so he/she will not be fearful that you will disappear.
3. While at school, please let your child come to you and ask for help if he or she wishes. He or she may be reluctant at first to get into group activities. The teachers may offer to be friends, introduce a playmate or suggest a toy but will not take over in anyway which may cause conflict in the child. The relationship with teachers and peers will develop gradually if the child is not hurried.
4. Although the teachers may appear to be able to talk with you, they are actually busy watching the children. Please plan to talk with teachers by special appointment. During the school session the teaching staff must give their full attention to the children.

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 9:00a.m. or send an email mqhpreschool@maryqueen.org to report the absence. If there is no answer when you phone, please leave a message on the voicemail, stating your child's name (first and last name), your relationship to the child, and the reason for the absence.

ARRIVAL

For the safety of the children, parents are expected to bring children to the school on time. The children may begin to arrive at 8:15a.m. School starts at 8:30a.m. School doors will be opened at 8:15a.m. by school staff. Preschool children and family member or guardian arrive at the glass doors nearest the playground in back of the school. Please ring bell for entrance into the building if arriving after the doors have been locked. Please escort your child into the building, take time to use the bathroom and wash hands before proceeding to the classrooms. Then come down the hallway to sign your name in our Parent Sign In Book. Write on the sheet in the information space, if there is anything different about your pick up and drop off. Please establish a way of saying good-bye with a hug or kiss everyday upon leaving your child. This healthy routine helps your child with separating from you.

Our door bell is located on the left side of the glass doors. Please ring bell, wait for acknowledgement, state name and reason for entrance. A staff member will announce when to pull the door open. On the playground side,(the back door) the left door is the one we unlock and on the West ave. side (the front door), it is the right hand door that will unlock.

DEPARTURE

Children will be dismissed at 11:45am. for preschool and 11:55am for KEP. The doors will open at 11:45 for entrance. Please wait in the hall for your child to be dismissed to you. Sign your name in the Parent Book upon picking up your child for the day.

Please notify the school, in advance, when you need to pick up your child before dismissal time. We will help your child get ready for departure if we know when you will arrive to pick him/her up. We will only release your child to people you have authorized in writing to pick your child up.

BRINGING THINGS FROM HOME

Your child may want to bring a book or a favorite toy to school. It is a comfort to have something that is familiar in a new situation. We understand this and try to provide time for this experience. The preschool children will have a show and tell time on their snack day. This is the perfect day to bring a special something from home.

Some toys such as large items, toy guns, swords, weapons, action figures with weapons and/or sharp edges, and mouth toys such as horns, balloons, and harmonicas are difficult to manage in school and may be dangerous. These types of toys must be left at home.

Please be sure that all toys, books, and CD's are labeled with your child's name.

CHILD ABUSE

In accordance with the circumstances, the school is legally mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate agency.

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 the 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 Children to find a locations and times.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information about your family and your child is confidential. The information we collect will only be shared with the Pastor, Director, teaching staff, and you as parents. This information is only used to design classroom curriculum that helps your child develop to his/her fullest potential.

We respect each family's privacy and will not give any information to anyone unless you have given us written permission to do so.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum, integrating a multiple intelligence approach is designed to help each child develop positive self-esteem and to establish a foundation of learning. “When viewed through a Multiple Intelligence (MI) lens, more children succeed. Put another way, when teachers offer different pathways for students to learn – rather than just filtering all information and learning through the "scholastic intelligences" – more students find success in school. MI isn't a panacea (a universal practice), and direct instruction and memorization of facts have their place in school. That said, an MI approach is "child-centered"; educators begin by looking at how the child learns and then work to develop curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on this information. (Conversely, in most schools, a "curriculum-centered" approach is used as educators bend the students to fit the curriculum.) Intuitively, of course, most of us understand that children learn in different ways. After all, as adults, we still learn differently. Thus we see MI as a tool to help us reach more kids.” Hoerr, T. (2000). *Becoming A Multiple Intelligences School*. ASCD: Alexandria, VA.

Mary Queen of Heaven Preschool and Kindergarten Enrichment Program provides an outstanding preschool program that focuses on the development of the whole child: social, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual. Instruction will provide activities to stimulate, challenge, and meet the abilities and interest of the children. Each child will have the opportunity to enjoy success by actively participating in hands-on activities and communicating in all forms.

Learning through Play

An integrated approach will provide learning centers where children actively engage in learning. These different areas will strive to foster learning experiences that expand the children’s knowledge of the world and themselves. The teachers will serve as the facilitators of this learning, setting up centers in varied curriculum areas. These centers will be designed around specific themes providing a variety of learning opportunities.

Your child will develop important skills that support kindergarten readiness, as well as later academic success through the quality play activities offered here.

As you visit your child's classroom, look to see if you can find these important learning centers:

Prayer Center

Children have the opportunity to experience private time “talking and listening with God”. Children will be able to explore God’s gifts of ourselves, creation, family, and our Church community. Prayer experiences foster and nurture the young child in prayer.

Library and Writing Center

Children are exposed to books and print. Children will use language, share thoughts, sequence events, use visual discrimination, learn to appreciate books and begin to value reading and writing as communication tools.

Math and Science Center

Children will develop an understanding of number concepts through the use of math manipulatives. Their sense of wonder and natural curiosity about the world around them is the focus for science.

Manipulative Center

Children will use a variety of manipulatives such as LEGO and DUPLO sets, sorting and building objects, pegboards, puzzles and play dough, to develop imagination and fine motor coordination. Children will also discover relationships based on color, size and shape while refining their ability to make choices.

Multi Sensory Tub

Children will develop fine motor skills and an awareness of spatial relationships within a multi sensory environment as they learn to share materials and relax tensions.

Block Area

Children will develop the ability to create designs, understand spatial relationships, and foster their imaginations while learning how to share and respect the work of each other.

Family Living Center/Housekeeping/Dramatic Play

Role-playing is an important skill that teaches children to listen to each other, observe behaviors, and resolve conflicts while promoting their language development.

Art Center

Children will explore color, shape, and texture utilizing a variety of mediums. Art projects encourage the freedom to express the beauty in their world and help to develop the child's sense of self-confidence.

Music and Movement

Children will participate in movement activities which will aid in developing language, imagination, listening skills, and sound discrimination. Exposure to a variety of rhythms and beats broadens your child's awareness and appreciation of many cultures.

Circle Time

Circle time allows children to be part of a larger community. They talk about their plans for the day and participate in large group activities. Children will share information, and take turns while developing language and listening skills.

Large Motor Skill

Children will participate in activities that will help strengthen their large muscles, balance, and coordination.

A Typical Day in the Life of Your Preschooler

Mary Queen of Heaven Preschool

Arrival/Table Top Activities: Children independently select quiet activities set out on tables such as puzzles, manipulatives, or art materials which emphasize fine motor skills.

Clean Up: Children will learn when it is time to stop an activity, put away toys and materials and learn to cooperate with others.

Circle Time: Everyone comes together to gather in prayer and discuss the day's activities. Each child decides which centers he or she would like to become involved with during that day.

Snack: Snack time encourages communication between children, a foundation in good nutrition, self help skills and good manners. One child provides snack for all each day. Each mealtime begins with a prayer of blessing and/or thanksgiving.

Story Times: Teachers and Aides read to children in large and small groups, enhancing listening skills and memory and stimulating thought provoking questions.

Center Time: Children choose from activities in each center which include dramatic play, table toys, blocks, art, sensory table, and library. Learning is child centered through play facilitated by the teachers and aides. Social skills and turn taking are emphasized.

Movement/Music: Large motor skills are enhanced through obstacles courses, physical games and large motor activities. (Outdoor time weather permitting) Music is enjoyed everyday in the classroom through singing, finger plays, rhymes and movement through music.

Lunch: if this option has been chosen for your child's class period

Dismissal: The children will gather together to conclude the day in prayer. Children are encouraged to collect their belongings independently. Children will meet their families in the hallway near the exit doors.

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 shall be used with children, for example: "I cannot let you hurt another child

with your body or words, (name calling).” or “You need to keep your body to yourself.”

Discipline shall be developmentally related to the child’s act and shall not be out of proportion to the particular inappropriate behavior. The child shall be made aware of the relationship between the act and consequences. Teachers who have an ongoing relationship with the child will be responsible for discipline and will use the following approaches: 1) redirection to another activity, 2) loss of privilege or activity where misbehavior occurs, where age appropriate, helping children resolve their conflicts, 3) anticipate and intervene before disruptive behavior occurs, 4) praising positive behavior.

In accordance with STATE LAW, no child shall be subjected under any circumstances to corporal punishment inflicted in any manner upon the body, or to verbal abuse. Meals or any part of meals may not be withheld as punishment, nor may any child be punished for toilet accidents.

DRESS FOR PLAY

Clothes should be roomy enough for play with simple fastenings that the child can manage by himself or herself. Jewelry 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 clothing because they may play outdoors.

Boots should be large enough for the child to put on independently. If shoe boots are worn, another pair of shoes for use in the classroom should be provided.

A complete change of clothing kept at school for use in case of an emergency would be beneficial. Items to be included are underwear, shirt, pants, extra gym shoes and socks. All items should be marked with your child’s name.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

-Parents are asked to keep the child home if he/she has a fever, persistent productive or wet cough, unexplained skin rash, eye infection, diarrhea, or if he/she has vomited during the night or in the morning before leaving for school.

-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 medications). An extra day at home can keep your child from getting worse and/or from infecting other children.

-Please notify the school immediately if the child has a communicable disease so that other families can be informed of possible symptoms. Call 630-833-9500 and leave a message or e-mail a note.

-Children will be observed daily at school. Should there be symptoms of illness, the child will be isolated from the group, the parent will be notified, and arrangements will be made to have the child returned home as soon as possible.

-In case of emergencies, the school must be able to contact parents during the 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.

-We teach the children to cough and sneeze in the inner part of the elbow. We instruct them on how to use tissue and use sanitizer or wash after use.

HOLIDAYS

Legal holidays are school holidays, refer to the school calendar.

ILLNESSES AND ACCIDENTS

The staff have been trained in emergency first aid and CPR. In case of an accident or incident, we will assure that appropriate first aid is administered. We will notify you by telephone of what happened. If your child gets sick at school, we will make sure he/she is able to lie down until you are reached. You must make arrangements to pick up your sick child as soon as possible.

PARENT CONFERENCES

The preschool and KEP teachers will schedule conferences with parents in the fall and spring regarding Progress Reports. Parents may schedule a conference at other times throughout the school year.

PARENT/TEACHER PARTNERSHIP

We believe a good parent/teacher partnership is necessary for school success. Throughout the year we will communicate through newsletters, notes, phone calls, and conferences.

PERMANENT RECORDS

Health and academic records are kept on file in the school offices 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. Parents or guardians must present the following documents: Birth certificate, required health records, baptismal certificate, student information sheets and other forms that the teacher considers helpful in understanding your child may be requested.

REQUIRED MEDICAL REPORTS

A complete physical examination by a physician is required for all children entering KEP. 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. For entrance into a preschool, an immunization record from the physician is required.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION

Should weather cause the cancellation of classes, the information will be broadcast on WGN and WBBM radio, local television stations and at www.EmergencyClosings.com. We follow the District 205 (Elmhurst Schools) decision in regards to closing. You may also check their website for available information. Please do not call the school or rectory.

SNACKS

Our program asks families to provide food and drinks for snacks. We are a **nut-free environment**. This means that we do not allow any foods or snacks that contain peanuts or other nuts in whole or part. A monthly snack calendar will be sent home indicating your child's day to provide snack. Food allergies should be listed by the parent on their child's emergency sheet. Children are encouraged to try all snacks that are served.

Families should follow these guidelines:

1. All food and drinks provided must be nutritionally sound. They may not contain nut products.
2. Some examples of good nutritious snack foods are fresh fruits (i.e. whole apples, oranges, peaches, pears, or cut up food in ready to eat packages prepared in stores, etc.), raw vegetables (i.e. carrots, green beans, celery, pea pods, or "pre-packaged" items, etc.) crackers, cheese, yogurt, breads, unsweetened cereals, raisins, etc. Junk foods such as cookies, cakes, candy, chips, etc. are not nutritious foods and should not be provided as snacks. **All foods must be commercially prepared.** You may provide fresh food that we can prepare here.
3. Drinks should be 100% juice drinks, water, or milk. Sweetened drinks such as HiC, sodas, and aides are not healthy choices.
4. Remember that a snack is not meant to be a full meal. A small portion of one type of food is all that is needed. The rule of thumb is to provide ½ cup serving per individual of a snack and ½ cup serving of a beverage.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

May be found on the following pages.



2012-2013 School Calendar

(dates and times are subject to change)

August

- 10 Early Childhood Conference (teachers only)
- 14 Parent Orientation Meeting (parents only) 7:00p.m.-8:00p.m. (Social Hall)
- 16 Diocesan Teacher Institute Day- No School
- 16 Play date and picnic on the school playground 10am-12pm
- 20/21 First Days of Classes for preschool 8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m.
- 21 First Day of Class for KEP 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

September

- 3 Labor Day-No School
- 12 District 205 Late Start p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:40
- 18 School Board Meeting- rm.7, 6:30-7:30pm
- 27 Pizza and Game night 6-8pm

October

- 4&5 Diocesan Teacher Institute Days- No School
- 8 Columbus Day observed-No School
- 10 District 205 Late Start p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:40
- 31 Halloween Celebration - all students attend

November

- 14 District 205 Late Start p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:40
- 19 Thanksgiving Feast Day- all students attend
- 20 No School as per District 205(teachers attend for workshop)
- 22 Thanksgiving-No School
- 23 No School as per District 205
- 27 & 29 Parent Teacher Conferences

December

- 11 School Board Meeting- rm.7, 6:30-7:30pm
- 12 District 205 Late Start p.m. Kindergarten starts at 12:40
- 18 & 19 Road to Bethlehem Christmas Story Celebration
- 24 - 31 Christmas Break

January 2013-- Registration begins for 2013-2014 School Year

"Our task, regarding creativity, is to help children climb their own mountains, as high as possible.

No one can do more."

The Hundred Languages of Children, by Carolyn Edwards (1993)

