

# Sacred Heart Preschool

## Handbook



We would like to welcome you and your child to SACRED HEART PRESCHOOL. The following will provide you with useful information concerning our program. Please keep this booklet as a reference for the year.

### **“TIPS” FOR BEGINNING PRESCHOOL**

1. *Relax!* Your relaxed attitude will go a long way in conveying confidence and security to your child.
2. Arrive as near to the starting time as possible. Arriving too early can cause anxiety to build. Arriving too late can interfere with socialization.
3. Develop a “good-bye” routine. Keep it short and simple. Giving into excessive “good-bye” demands makes separation more difficult for your child.
4. Expect mixed emotions from your child. One day’s love of school may turn into an “I never want to go back there again.”
5. Don’t hesitate to talk to the teacher about any problems or concerns you may have.
6. It is best to be truthful with your child about your whereabouts during school hours. Saying “I’ll be right outside the door” may seem reassuring. However, when your child realizes that you have gone, he/she may become very frightened.
7. Be prompt in picking up your child. Your late arrival can be upsetting to your child.
8. Encourage your child to eat breakfast before coming to school.
9. Be aware of “delayed separation anxiety.” That is, crying that may begin 3 to 4 weeks after school begins. Your child now realizes that school is a fairly “permanent” arrangement.
10. Some crying is normal. However, persistent excessive crying may indicate that your child may need the security of home for a few more months.

## **SOME OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR**

1. To provide preparation for kindergarten by establishing a loving and caring Catholic environment which encourages the child to grow in an awareness of self and others through the love of God.
2. Fostering religious development and awareness of experiencing God the Father and Jesus, His Son, as caring, forgiving, and loving.
3. Cooperative social interaction through play.
4. Fine motor development through skills such as coloring, cutting, pasting, drawing, bead stringing, puzzles, painting, lacing cards, and play dough.
5. Large motor development through skills such as movement to music, exercise, ball handling, balance activities, hopping, skipping.
6. Cognitive skills such as counting, identifying colors, basic shapes, numbers, letters, days of the week, seasons, memorizing rhymes and songs.
7. Developing listening skills through listening to stories, directions, listening games and songs.
8. Self-help skills such as putting on and hanging up coats, proper hand washing, and attempting to try new tasks independently.
9. Identification with self as a cooperative member of a group, as well as learning to appreciate his/her unique God-given talents as an individual and to like himself or herself.
10. Experience the joy of learning in a nurturing atmosphere.

## **ABOUT PLAY**

Many parents may not realize that “playing,” aside from enhancing social development and communication skills, prepares children for later conceptual understanding. Symbolic play is crucial to a child’s ability to move from direct experience with objects (toys, etc.) to representation of these experiences through the printed word (reading, writing).

Children who are better able to organize and express thoughts, ideas, and feelings through play are better able to handle other symbol systems, such as those represented by letters and numbers. The time a child spends “playing” is very important indeed.

## **SCHOOL DAYS AND VACATIONS**

We follow as closely as possible the calendar for Sacred Heart Elementary School. This calendar will be sent home each month and should be kept for reference. You will receive this information by way of the monthly envelope or on our school website. Please review the information, sign the envelope and return it to school. You are invited and encouraged to participate in school activities that are of interest to you and your family.

## **WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

If there is a question of school being in session because of inclement weather or emergencies, the preschool follows the decision made by the Pittsburgh Public System. The TV stations and their websites post information about Sacred Heart and the Pittsburgh Public Schools. KDKA, WPXI, and WTAE-TV will have the most current information. You will also be notified by phone and email through Sacred Heart’s Parent Alert System. Please do not call the school office or the rectory.

If school is delayed the morning session will begin at **10:00** and dismissal for morning students will be extended until **11:45**.

## **SCHEDULE**

Sacred Heart Preschool program is in session from Monday through Friday. The morning session is from 8:15 to 11:15 a.m. The full-day session is from 8:15 until 2:45.

An adult should bring each child into the school building. Before bringing the child to the classroom, please help him/her to hang coats and backpacks in the assigned cubby outside the classroom. A trip to the bathroom at this time is also a good idea. Take the child to the classroom but allow the child to enter the class alone. This helps develop independence.

At dismissal time please meet your child at the door (4) near the ramp on Walnut Street near the corner of Emerson Street.

Parking is not permitted on Emerson Street during school hours. You may park in the permit parking areas for a period less than two hours.

## DAILY ROUTINE

Below is an example of your child's typical daily morning routine. There are occasionally variations in the routine to accommodate special visitors, for example, the librarian, art lessons, or a special class.

Free time  
Clean up, circle time: calendar, weather, salute to the Flag, prayer, attendance  
Bathroom and hand washing  
Snack  
Lesson or activity for the day  
Large Motor Activity/Music  
Fine Motor Activity--play dough, bead stringing, puzzles,  
lacing cards, scissors, pasting, painting, etc.  
Story time  
Preparations for 11:15 dismissal  
free time

## WHEN TO NOTIFY THE TEACHER

Please speak with the teacher either in person or through the office by phone message (412-441-1582) in the following instances:

1. If an adult other than yourself who is unknown to the teacher will be picking up your child.
2. If your child is ill and will be unable to attend school.
3. If you would like us to have your child ready early for dismissal, i.e., in the instance of a doctor's appointment.
4. Anytime you have any questions or concerns about your child or our program.
5. If you decide to remove your child from the program.

## ILLNESS

The spread of illness can be lessened if you would please keep your child home if you suspect or know that your child is ill. Your cooperation will result in a healthier year for everyone.

Children should be isolated and excluded from preschool with symptoms, such as:

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| *fever                   | *severe coughing or difficulty breathing |
| *diarrhea                | *vomiting                                |
| *unusual spots or rashes | *pink eye                                |
| *yellowish skin or eyes  | *sore throat or trouble swallowing       |

## **SNACKS**

Please notify the teacher of any food allergies.

Parents are asked to provide snacks on a rotating basis. A monthly snack calendar will inform you in advance when it is your turn. Some snack suggestions are:

Food: graham crackers, pretzels, veggies, fruit, oatmeal cookies, raisins, cheese

When you provide snack, your child is assigned the responsibility of helping to set the tables in the classroom. This gives a sense of pride and accomplishment and enhances self-esteem.

## **CLOTHING**

The children should wear comfortable play clothing. Shoes with rubber soles are recommended for gym. For the safety of the children during play and outside activities, we ask that they do not wear "flip-flops".

## **NEED FROM HOME**

Please bring the following items to preschool for your child:

1. A complete set of clothing "in case of an accident." These items should be individually labeled with your child's name and put in a labeled bag. The clothing will be returned at the end of the year.
2. Items listed on the supply list. This list is given to all families at the beginning of the school year.

## **NO PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Children are not permitted to bring toys or other personal belongings from home to school except for rest. Items should be appropriate for rest time. Examples would be stuffed animals, dolls and books. Items that make noise, shoot or have small pieces should be kept at home. Please be sure to review these choices with with your child daily.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

We celebrate birthdays in preschool. On your child's birthday, you will be scheduled as snack provider on the snack calendar. We ask that snacks are healthy even for birthdays. Please no cupcakes or birthday cake. The class will sing "Happy Birthday" to the birthday child. We will also celebrate UNbirthdays for those children with summer birthdays at the request of parents. If you would like to schedule an UNbirthday, just let the teacher know in advance.

## **GUM**

Children are not permitted to chew gum at school.

## EVALUATION

Twice a year you will receive a written evaluation of your child's progress in our program. The first written evaluation will be given during a scheduled parent conference at mid-year. The second evaluation will be given at year's end. Aside from these evaluations and conferences, you may request a meeting with the teacher by email, [dcaligiuri@sacredheartpgh.org](mailto:dcaligiuri@sacredheartpgh.org) or by phone through the office, **412-441-1582**.