



Mary Queen of Heaven
PRESCHOOL and KEP

Preschool Handbook for Families

2015-2016

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



Dear Parents,

Welcome to Mary Queen of Heaven's Preschool and Kindergarten Enrichment Program. The beginning of a new school year is always exciting, as children and educators alike wonder at the mystery of what the new year will bring. There will certainly be many things that will be learned, but each year also brings new adventures, new friends, and some fun as well.

It is our goal as a parish and as a school to help your child grow and learn as they journey through this year. I know that you place a great deal of trust in us when you drop your children off at our door. I assure you that we will do everything that we can to provide your child with a safe environment that will help them to grow into their years of being students as well as young Christians. We look forward to working with you, who are the first educators of your children, as they take their first steps out of the family and into the community.

With the help of Mary, our Mother and Queen, may God bless all of us, especially our children, with His protection and guidance in this new school year.

Mary, Queen of Heaven, pray for us!

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Fr. Jason".

Fr. Jason Stone

426 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 handbook 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 prayers, prayer before eating, opportunities to “talk and listen” with God in our Prayer Center, visits to the church and attending Mass. 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, we do all we can to help your child adjust easily.
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 give your child the opportunity to get used to their environment at their own pace. He or she may be reluctant at first to get into group activities. The teachers may offer to stay with your child, introduce a playmate or suggest a toy. 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 very 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 9:00 a.m. or send an email as soon as possible 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 8:15 a.m. School doors will be opened at 8:15 a.m. by the school staff. Preschool children and family members or guardians arrive at the glass doors nearest the playground in back of the school. Please ring the bell for entrance into the building if arriving after 8:30, as the doors will be locked. Please escort your child into the building, 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. On the sign in sheet, in the information space, write anything different about your pick up and drop off.

Please establish a way of saying good-bye to your child with a hug or kiss everyday upon leaving your child. This healthy routine helps your child with separating from you.

DEPARTURE

Preschool children will be dismissed at 11:45 a.m. and KEP students leave for kindergarten at 11:55 a.m. The doors will open at 11:45 a.m. 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.

Our main door is in the back by the playground. The bell is located on the left side of the glass doors. Please ring bell, wait for acknowledgement, state your name and reason for entrance then a staff member will announce when to pull the door open or come and open the door for you.

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 preschool classroom and at special events at the school. 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, more students find success 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 curriculum 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 communication 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 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.

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: “You need to keep your hands and body to yourself.” or “We walk in the hallway and in the classrooms.”

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 activity where misbehavior occurs, 3) where age appropriate, helping children resolve their conflicts, 4) anticipate and intervene before disruptive behavior occurs, 5) 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 and off independently. If shoe boots are worn, another pair of shoes for use in the classroom should be provided. Shoes need to be provided to wear while in the classroom.

A complete change of clothing needs to be kept at school for use in case of an emergency. Items to be included are underwear, shirt, pants, extra gym shoes and socks. All items should be marked with your child’s name. Clothes need to be changed for the seasons and as your child grows.

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.
- Your child may return to school only when he/she is well. He/She has to 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.
- 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 you give the school accurate, up to date home, cell, and work phone numbers and notify the school immediately if any changes occur. You will also be able to indicate at least 3 other emergency contacts for us to utilize.
- 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.
- The staff has been trained in emergency first aid and CPR. In case of an accident or incident, we will assure that appropriate first aide is administered. We will notify you as soon as possible of any incident that may take place.

HOLIDAYS

Legal holidays and school holidays, please refer to the school calendar. A copy of the calendar will be posted on the bulletin board, included in this handbook and listed on our shutterfly account.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

The preschool and KEP teachers will offer conferences with parents twice a year regarding Progress Reports. Parents may schedule additional conferences at other times throughout the school year.

PARENT/TEACHER PARTNERSHIP

We believe a high-quality parent/teacher partnership is necessary for school success. Throughout the year we will communicate by 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 only 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 the administration or the teachers may consider helpful.

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. In case of a Dist. 205 late start due to weather conditions, we will cancel school. You may also check their website for available information.

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 and "Quick Reference" form that you will fill out at registration. 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 and may not contain nut products of any kind.
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 but can be used on special occasions such as birthdays and holidays. **All foods must be commercially prepared.** You may provide fresh food that we can prepare here.

3. Drinks: we will have water for our drink at snack time. When providing snack, please bring one gallon of store bought water.
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 BOARD

In accordance with the Joliet Diocesan Board of Education, the school board assists in providing and implementing policy and long range planning direction for the school through a consultative manner. It is made up of 7 voting members, the pastor and the program director. Members can include parishioners, current and former parents and teacher of the school. Meetings are open to all families and are noted in the school calendar. The current school board members are listed on the front page of the Preschool web page.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

For the convenience of most of our families, we follow District 205 calendar and schedule. We have a few days a year that we must take off for Joliet Diocesan events. We will begin school a few days later and we will end a few days earlier than District 205. In the event of school closings, we will not make up days at the end of the year.



Mary Queen of Heaven
PRESCHOOL and KEP

2015-2016 School Calendar **

August

- 7 Early Childhood Conference (No School)
- 8 Protecting God's Children 9:00-12:00 Barrett Hall
- 13 Play date and picnic on the school playground 10am-12pm
- 13 School Board Mtg. 6-7pm in the Social Hall
- 13 Parent Orientation Meeting (parents only) 7:00pm-8:00pm(Social Hall)
- 15 Protecting God's Children 9:00-12:00 Barrett Hall
- 21 Joliet Diocesan Teacher Institute Day at Dury Lane 8:00am-2:00pm
- 24/25 First Days of Classes for preschool 8:15 am-10:00
- 24 First Day of Class for KEP 8:15 am - 12:00 pm
- 26 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30

September

- 7 Labor Day-No School
- 2 District 205 Late Start pm Kindergarten starts at 12:40
- 10/11 Picture day
- 17/18 Attend morning mass 8:30-9:00am
- 21 School Board Meeting- rm.10, 6:30-7:30pm
- 22/23 Johnny Appleseed Days
- 24 Pizza and Game night 6-8pm
- 30 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30

October

- 12 Columbus Day observed-(No School)
- 14 District 205 Late Start pm Kindergarten starts at 12:40
- 15/16 Attend morning mass 8:30-9:00am and Scarecrow Days
- 26 School Board Meeting- rm.10, 6:30-7:30pm
- 28 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30
- 30 Halloween Celebration - all students attend

November

- 4 District 205 Late Start pm Kindergarten starts at 12:40
- 19/20 Attend morning mass 8:30-9:00am
- 23/24 Thanksgiving Feast Days
- 18 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30
- 25-27 Thanksgiving Break-No School
- 30 School Board Meeting- rm.10, 6:30-7:30pm

December

- 2 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30
- 2 District 205 Late Start pm Kindergarten starts at 12:40
- 16 Road to Bethlehem Christmas Story Celebration-all students attend
- 21 Christmas Break -Jan 4th (No School)

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



DIVIDENDS FOR LIFE

January 2016 - Registration begins for 2016-2017 School Year

4 Joliet Diocesan Teacher Institute (No school)
4 School Board Meeting- rm.10, 6:30-7:30pm
6 District 205 Late Start pm Kindergarten starts at 12:40
14/15 Attend morning mass 8:30-9:00am
18 Martin Luther King's Birthday-(No School)
20 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30
27 & 28 Parent Teacher Conferences
30 Dist. 205 Institute Day (No School)

31-6 Catholic Schools Week

February

8 School Board Meeting- rm.10, 6:30-7:30pm
3 District 205 Late Start pm Kindergarten starts at 12:40
10 Ash Wednesday
11/12 St. Valentine's Day Ice Cream Party
15 President's Day-No School
18/19 Attend morning mass 8:30-9:00am
24 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30

March

3 Dad's night in with kids 6:30-7:30pm
2 District 205 Late Start pm Kindergarten starts at 12:40
10/11 Strega Nona Lunch
14 School Board Meeting- rm.10, 6:30-7:30pm
15 Mom's night in with kids 6:30-7:30pm
17/18 Attend morning mass 8:30-9:00am
23 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30
25 Good Friday (no school)
27 Easter
25-3 Spring Break Begins-(No School)

April

4 Classes resume
6 District 205 Late Start pm Kindergarten starts at 12:40
14/15 Attend morning mass 8:30-9:00am
18 School Board Meeting- rm.7, 6:30-7:30pm
21/22 Earth Day Celebrations
27 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30
Optional Parent Teacher Conferences by request

May

4 District 205 Late Start pm Kindergarten starts at 12:40
12/13 Attend morning mass 8:30-9:00am
18 Staff meeting 12:30-1:30
25 End of the Year Mass and Celebration
26/27 Last Day of attendance

****Diocesan, District 205, weather dates and other decisions may affect this calendar. Please refer to updates that will be posted on the bulletin board or via e-mail. For the convenience of most of our families, we follow District 205 calendar and schedule closely. We have a few days a year that we must take off for Joliet Diocesan events. We will begin school a few days later and we will end a few days earlier. In the event of school closings, we will not make up days at the end of the year.**

- ◆ School Hours: KEP class hours 8:15a.m.-12:00p.m. : Preschool class hour 8:15 -11:45.
- ◆ Arrival and Dismissal are through the west doors by the MQH Playground only. The door will be opened at 8:15 and reopened at 11:45 for preschool pickup.
- ◆ 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.

Childhood Is A Journey Not A Race!
Make time to play and enjoy your child today!