

Welcome to OMC Preschool!

Welcome to Our Mother of Consolation Preschool Program! We are so happy to have your child join us in this wonderful journey of early childhood learning. OMC has been providing children in Chestnut Hill with spiritual and academic growth for over 150 years. Sr. Marie Rein SSSJ, a nationally known author and expert on children's religious instruction, added to this wonderful history by founding and developing our preschool program. Over the last 20 years our program has grown and changed under the direction of the outstanding Emily Hankins, Vikki Mayberry and Christine Rafter, which led to a new need for expansion of the one program into two separate classes. In the 2013/2014 school year, OMC opened the Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 classes, headed presently by Mrs. Katherine Dumenigo (Pre-K3) and Mrs. Michele Snyder (Pre-K4).

Pre K begins the journey of educating the children entrusted to our care as our School Mission Statement proclaims (please see our School Handbook for the complete statement). Our school program is a

continuum of human development starting with Pre K and building with continuity and consistency as your child progresses from one grade to another through eighth grade. It is our intent, therefore, that together with you we can work to enhance your child's abilities over the next ten years. In doing so, we will have prepared your child well for success as he or she progresses on to high school, college and life.

While there is a school-wide handbook for OMC, we find that the preschool program tends to have its own special concerns that are best addressed separately. We hope all your questions about our program can be answered in these pages. However, if there is something you need please don't hesitate to ask!

Mrs. Katherine Dumenigo-PK3
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“Childhood is a journey, not a race”

We believe that every child is a unique gift from God to our world! Each child has an unknown and unlimited potential for growth coupled with an imaginative, contemplative mind ready to be stimulated, tapped and delicately directed by the Village of parents, family, teachers, Classmates and school community that surrounds them.

In an atmosphere created by adults who manifest Catholic beliefs, values and attitudes, our young children are given a secure environment to develop a positive image of themselves and others as they begin their journey in Catholic education.

Our Curriculum

Our preschool curriculum is designed to develop the whole child: spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually. The educational program of preschool follows Archdiocesan guidelines, which meet the needs of the students and the educational objectives of Early Childhood Education. They are consistent with the philosophy of Catholic education and reflect

an awareness of national and state academic standards.

We believe that learning experiences, both informal and planned should include:

- imaginative free play both indoor and outdoor
- prayer and religious activities integrated throughout our day
- circle time that includes singing, stories and learning
- whole and small group activities that integrate language arts, math, science, social science and expressive arts such as music, art and dramatic play
- gross and fine motor skill development
- sharing snack and lunch with our friends while developing positive table manners and learning how to clean up after eating
- varied social situations that teach children how to function in a class-room community

Our mornings generally include: free play, circle time, prayer, a whole or small group lesson/work time, snack and recess.

For those that stay beyond morning, afternoons include: lunch, free play, nap/rest time and possible end of day quiet activity.

Each week children will have enrichment classes with their “specials” teachers:

-PK3: Chestnut Hill Library with PK4, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and Music.

-PK4: Music, Art, Chestnut Hill Library with PK3, Spanish, Gym and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

*Individual class curriculums and schedules may be found with the PK3 and PK4 class teachers in the beginning of the school year.

Calendar

In general, OMC preschool follows OMC school calendar with the exception of our start date, conference date and end date.

Preschool Drop In Day:

*A special morning set aside to come to our class, usually the Friday after Labor Day from 9-11

*stop in any time during these hours to meet your teacher, bring in supplies and check out the classroom.

*If you have a conflict with the day/time, please contact us so we can work

Preschool Drop Off/Pick Up

-Preschool Hours:

*Half Day: *8:10-12:00

*Full Day: 8:10-2:40

-Preschool Drop off: 8:10-9:00

-8:10 drop off is outside in our play area

-if there is inclement weather you may bring your child inside in the hallway to wait for class to begin.

-after 8:10 you should bring your child to our Classroom.

-Preschool drop off is a “staggered” drop off where you can bring your child to school any time between 8:10-9:00. If you are arriving at the very beginning of our day (8:10) please bring your child to the fenced in play

area in the front of the school. Teachers will meet students here to walk children into school.

-Please make every attempt to have your child in class by 9am. Our day is planned around the 8:10-9:00 drop off time frame. It can be very disruptive to our class as well as difficult for children arriving later than 9AM to assimilate into the day.

Preschool Pick Up:

-Pick up is in the preschool classroom (or outside in our yard) at 12:00 for half day and between 2:30-2:40 for full day

-Please make every effort to be on time as teachers have after school duties to attend to.

-Please notify the teacher or office if you have any change in pick up person.

-If your child has a sibling in grades K-2, they may join that sibling in car line to meet you in the yard at the end of day. Please notify your child's teacher if this applies to you.

Supplies

-Each teacher will send a supply list with the August mailing.

-A note on backpacks:

-Backpacks should be big enough to fit a standard size folder.

-Backpacks need to be sturdy (we send all kinds of stuff home in them).

-Please, no backpacks with wheels.

Apparel

-Please dress children in clothes they can play in. Think clothes that can get messy, that are easily maneuvered for the potty, and shoes that are close-toed and rubber-soled.

-All children should have a weather appropriate change of clothes in a labeled gallon sized ziploc bag.

Toys/Items from Home

-Unless specifically requested, please keep toys and personal items at home. They can be disruptive to the classroom and teachers cannot be responsible for them

Birthdays

-Preschool children love their birthdays and we certainly want to acknowledge them on their special day!

-Preschool birthday guidelines:

-For many reasons, we don't do cakes or cupcakes.

-We would love to have special birthday cookies at snack if you would like.

-You may send in a small treat bag for the class if you would like.

-In the past, some families have chosen a book for the class inscribed from the birthday child and family. We then read that book on the celebration day.

-All of the above suggestions are optional.

Health

-Children get sick. It happens. It's also very important to know when to keep your child home from school to prevent spreading of illness in the classroom.

-Guidelines for keeping ill children home from school:

-fever over 100°F.

*your child should be fever free (without the aid of fever reducers) for 24 hours before returning to school.

-nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea

*your child should not return to school until 24 hours after the last time they vomited or had diarrhea.

-rash

*Please have any rash looked at by your pediatrician before sending your child to school.

-eye drainage may indicate conjunctivitis (pink-eye), please see your pediatrician before sending your child to school.

-strep

*please keep child home until under treatment for 24 hours.

-If a child becomes ill at school we will notify you to come and pick up your child.

-Please remember that during the school day children are in close contact with each other. If children are kept home when the first signs of an illness appear, it helps prevent spread of illness to other children.

-You know your child best! If they are looking “off” to you, trust your instinct and keep them home!

Allergies

-So many children have allergies and it is important that we, as teachers, know the ins and outs of your child’s specific needs.

-Please speak with your child’s teacher regarding any allergies your child has so we can do our best to keep your child safe and happy at school.

Bathroom

-All preschool children must be potty trained.

-Children are given many opportunities to go to the bathroom with the class or individually. Please encourage them to ask when they have to go.

-We do a lot of reminding about hand washing, but reminders from home are good as well!

-Please dress your child in clothes that are easily maneuvered by him/her.

-Please practice proper wiping with your child. We can verbally talk them through this if needed but we are unable to wipe your child.

-Many children in this age group have a potty accident from time to time. This is why we ask for a change of clothes to have on hand. However, we are not equipped to deal with an on-going potty issue (i.e., child wets/soils pants on daily basis).

-In the occurrence of an on-going potty issue, the child will need to spend time at home to retrain.

Snacks

-Preschool provides daily snack in a community based way by a weekly snack rotation by each preschool family.

-Most likely, you will end up having two snack weeks for the whole year.

-In the August mailing you will receive a snack assignment list, which will let you know which weeks you are responsible for.

-In the August mailing you will also receive a list of snack ideas for healthy snacks.

-Before school begins your child's teacher will notify the class of any food allergies.

-OMC is peanut/nut free.

-Children will have the opportunity to be snack helpers in setting up and cleaning up from snack.

-We will pray a blessing before snack.

Lunch

-For those staying for lunch this is a fun time to eat and socialize with Classmates.

-Your child's teacher will let you know of any food allergies in the class.

*OMC is peanut/nut free

-Please pack a lunch that is easy for your child to navigate.

-Please do not send soda, sports drinks (like Gatorade) or candy in lunches.

-We will pray a blessing before lunch.

-We will practice using inside voices with the Classmates at our table.

-We will practice sitting in our seat while we eat.

-We will practice lunch clean up when we are done with your child cleaning up his/her space, throwing out trash and bringing lunch box back to the closet.

-A good idea for lunches is to involve your child. The week before school begins you could make some practice lunches in your child's lunch box and see what works and what doesn't. Come up with some different ideas that your child likes.

-Examples:

-Lunch #1: rolled turkey, crackers, hummus, veggies, grapes, cookie

-Lunch #2: grilled cheese (wrap in foil or put in thermos), chips, applesauce,

-Lunch #3: soup or left overs in thermos, veggies, crackers, strawberries

-Lunch #4: Greek yogurt, salsa, tortilla chips, blueberries

-Lunch helpers are always welcome to spend lunchtime with the class. Our lunch is from 12:00-1:00. If you are interested in being a lunch helper with our school, you need to complete Safe Environment training as well as obtain your clearances. Once you have this in order, please let your child's teacher know when your available day would be for your child's class.

Parent Communication

-Each preschool teacher will communicate with parents through emails and newsletters to let you know what is going on in your child's class.

-If there is a specific concern or question you have, please contact your child's teacher in whatever manner suits you best: phone, email, written or in person.

Discipline

-Preschool is a very distinct time in a child's school career that involves learning of how to be in school, how to be when it's learning time or how to be when playing with friends.

-Many types of social situations normally occur in a preschool child's day that open up the opportunity to teach "how to be" when this occurs or "what to say" when this happens, etc.

-Our preschool focuses on taking each child and situation individually whether it is an issue like paying attention during learning time or

having a problem with a friend during play time. One of the main goals of preschool is to learn how to function in a classroom. This is what we do every day.

-When a problem occurs, we talk to the child or children involved, separate if necessary and try to find a solution to what happened.

There are situations that require a thinking time on the part of the child/children involved. When a time out is employed it is done for a minute per your child's age (if 3, 3 minutes...etc.). When a time out is completed, we discuss with the child what happened and have them tell what would be a better way to handle that situation should it occur again.

-If there is an on-going situation in class that is not resolving through regular teacher interactions, teachers will communicate with parents what is going on in hopes to find solutions.

-If necessary, Ms. Ponte will be brought in if a situation is not resolving with parent help or involves harm to another child.

Thank you again, for entrusting your child to OMC Preschool! Working together for the good of your child will make this a fantastic year.