

2023-2024

**Our Lady of the Prairie
Catholic Church and School
Pre-K Handbook**

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our Lady of the Prairie Catholic School is dedicated to the spiritual, intellectual, moral, physical, and academic formation of children. Our school follows the principles of the Roman Catholic faith in a nurturing, multiage environment where all students thrive in the Light of Christ.

PHILOSOPHY

“Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic School.” (The Catholic School #34)

Following His belief, Our Lady of the Prairie is committed to the education of the whole person, intellectually, emotionally, morally, aesthetically and physically, in response to the gospel of Jesus as it comes to us through scripture and tradition of the Catholic Church.

By providing sound Christian leadership competent teaching, a progressive curriculum, and creative learning programs, Our Lady of the Prairie seeks to address the individual needs of its students, encourage them to academic and moral excellence, prepare them to assume their proper roles in the Church and American society and develop in them a respect for all peoples and cultures.

GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Our Lady of the prairie school will strive:

1. To develop our Catholic Faith through common worship and prayer, and to study scripture, Catholic Doctrine and social teachings.
2. To work closely with parents/guardians in the education of their children.
3. To help students develop a love of learning, and the power to think constructively and reason independently.
4. To lead students to a mastery of skills in specific subject areas.
5. To foster a love of God, all human life, family, country and the natural world.
6. To offer students leadership and guidance in developing a responsible moral life.
7. To encourage students to recognize and enhance individual abilities.
8. To provide opportunities for students to give witness to their Christian Faith by acts of service to others.
9. To lead students to respect themselves and others, as well as understand and appreciate other cultures and people.

AVAILABILITY

Parents/guardians of enrolled children may visit Our Lady of the Prairie Preschool any time during the hours of operation per Minnesota Statutes, 245A.14, subdivision 15.

PRESCHOOL CLASSES

Pre-K classes are offered for preschool aged children who are 33 months to 5 years of age who has not yet attended the first day of kindergarten. All classes are held in Our Lady of the Prairie Catholic School. We will maintain a 1:10 ratio with a maximum group size of 20 students.

Half day program, 8:20 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Students should arrive no earlier than 8:05 am.

All day program, 8:20 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. Students should be picked up no later than 2:50pm

ILLNESS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

If a student becomes sick while at school, the student must be isolated from other students and the parent called immediately. The sick child will be supervised at all times. The student should be picked up within ½ hour of notification. If parents/guardians are unable to come for the student, they must make arrangements for a relative or other authorized person to pick up the student in the school office within the ½ hour of reporting.

Students will be excluded from school if they have a contagious illness, for vomiting, diarrhea, fever over 100 degrees, undiagnosed/contagious rash, if they are exhibiting respiratory distress or unexplained lethargy.

Parents are required to notify the school within 24 hrs. if their student is diagnosed with a contagious disease. The school will notify preschool parents within 24 hrs. of a report of a potential exposure to a contagious disease.

Students will be able to return to school 24 hours after symptoms have resolved and/or if they receive a physician's note indicating they are not contagious and are well enough to participate fully in school activities. Once they have been on antibiotics for 24hrs and/or have been fever free without fever reducing medication.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

An emergency information form on each student is sent home at the beginning of each year to be filled in and signed by the parent/guardian. If changes occur during the year, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the school in writing or by phone.

Parents will be notified when there is an emergency or injury requiring medical attention. If we are unable to reach the parents other authorized person to pick up the student listed on the emergency information will be called.

Staff will follow the policies and procedures as outlined in the OLP Emergency Action Plan for administering first aid and sources of care to be used in case of emergency.

HEALTH RECORDS

A current Immunization Record or a signed notarized statement of parental objection to the immunization, or a medical exemption must be on file for each student no later than the first day of school.

A Health Care Summary completed and signed by a physician is required for each student. The Health Care Summary must be on file within the first 30 days of preschool.

An Individual Child Care Plan will be created for students that have documented allergies or a medical condition.

Medication During a School Day

Staff must have parent permission in writing before administering medication during the school day. Prescription and over the counter medication will be administered according to the manufacturer's instructions unless there are written instructions for their use provided by a licensed physician or dentist. All medicine must be kept in its original container and have a legible label stating the child's name. The medicine must not be given after an expiration date on the label, and any unused portion must be returned to the child's parent or destroyed. Medication administered

will be recorded on a Medication Log. The Log will be available to the parent and maintained in the child's file. Medication will be stored where it is inaccessible to students.

CURRICULUM

Developmentally appropriate activities will be planned by the qualified teacher using the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards (ECIPs) and Preschool Curriculum - The Creative Curriculum.

Our Lesson Plans will be evaluated annually.

Our Lesson Plans will have goals and objectives to promote the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development of the children in our Pre-K Program; in a manner consistent with each child's cultural background.

SUPERVISION

Children in our Pre-K Program will be supervised at all times

A qualified staff person is accountable for the child's care; can intervene to protect the health and safety of the child; and will be within sight and hearing of the child at all times.

When a preschooler uses an individual, private restroom with the door closed, supervision occurs when a program staff person has knowledge of the child's activity and location, can hear the child, and checks on the child at least every five minutes.

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips are part of our educational program. These trips are designed to support the curriculum and introduce the students to community resources and have an educational purpose and outcome. Written permission will be obtained from parents before taking a student on a field trip. Permission will be required for each trip taken throughout the school year.

On field trips, staff will follow the 1:10 ratio. Staff will follow our supervision policy, take emergency information forms and a first aid kit on field trips.

PERMISSION and RELEASE

Parents/guardians sign a permission form at the beginning of the year for Information/Publication Release to be in a school directory, school publications, OLP website and OLP social media pages.

Written parental permission is required before participating in research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity involving the student.

Written parental permission is required before students are able to be in the presence of pets.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is essential to creating a partnership between staff and parents. Please email, call or send a note if you have any questions or concerns.

Questions or concerns regarding our Child Care Licensing should be directed to Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Licensing 651-431-6500.

Each student will receive a Communication Pouch that will be attached to their school bag. Check the pouch for daily notes from the teacher or permission slips. A Classroom calendar and newsletter will be sent home monthly. If you prefer electronic calendars or newsletters, please let the teacher know. Parents can send notes in the pouch to

staff; pouches will be checked at arrival each day. To ensure that all correspondence is received; students will be taught that only adults remove items from the pouch.

CONFERENCES and STUDENT FILES

Conferences are offered three times each year. Conversations about developmental progress or an additional conference may be requested by staff, parents or the principal as needed throughout the year.

Staff will keep an updated 3-ring binder; a portfolio of your child's work in the classroom. This is a fun way of showing your child's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional developmental progress. Binders will be shared during conferences or upon request.

A Conference Form will be kept in your student's file.

FOOD AND WATER

A Healthy Snack will be provided every day at 9:30am. Snack will contain two healthy components.

Drinking water will be available to students and offered at frequent intervals throughout the day using single serve cups.

Lunch will be a part of our daily schedule. Additional information regarding Lunch will be sent out to families before the first day of preschool.

Information regarding your student's dietary needs and/or food allergies must be included in your students file. Information will be posted in the area that food is served to ensure that all staff are aware of your student's needs.

BEHAVIOR POLICIES and PROCEDURES

Pre-K students will be introduced to Classroom Expectations through manners and consistency.

Classroom Expectations will be developmentally appropriate for the children we serve.

Staff will model acceptable behavior.

Staff will redirect children and groups away from problems toward a constructive activity in order to reduce conflict.

Staff will teach children how to use acceptable alternatives to problem behavior in order to reduce conflict.

Staff will protect the safety of children and staff persons.

Staff will provide immediate and directly related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior.

Separation occurs when a child is removed from the group and is temporarily unable to participate in the activity.

All separations from the group will be noted in a Separation Log.

If a child is separated from the group three times or more in one day, the child's parent will be notified via phone call.

Staff will consult with the Principal if persistent unacceptable behavior is observed.

A plan to address persistent unacceptable behavior will be created with the teacher, parents and Principal as needed. MN Rules, Parts 9503.0055, subpart 5

NAP/REST POLICY

Children will have a quiet time for 30 minutes. After children have rested quietly for 30 minutes they will be excused from their cots and offered quiet activities.

Children that choose to sleep longer will be given the opportunity.

Cots and a sheet will be provided.

Families can provide a small blanket, pillow and one stuffed comfort item for rest time. Pillow Cases, blankets and comfort items will go home each Friday to be washed and returned on Monday. They will be sent home sooner if soiled or wet.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:05- 9:00 am Arrival Activities - Handwashing and Student selected activities

- 8:20am - Announcements and the beginning of the school day.

9:00-9:20 am Morning Meeting (Large Group)

Including attendance, calendar, weather, classroom helpers and theme concepts.

9:30 am Healthy Snack - Wellness & Nutrition Lesson

9:45 am - 10:45 am

Art Demonstration and introduction to Pre-K Learning Stations - Teacher directed.

Student directed Learning Center exploration:

- Construction - Blocks
- Language & Literacy in our Classroom Library
- Creativity & Arts - Fine Motor skills, Instruments and Movement
- Dramatic Play - Social /Emotional "Life" skills
- STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering & Math
- Large Motor

10:45 am Bible Story Time

- 11:00 am Bathroom Break - Rhymes & Rhythms

11:10 am - 11:40 am Outdoor Play/Large Motor (weather permitting)

- Music & Movement (indoors)
- *Bathroom Break & Handwashing

11:45 am -12:45 pm Lunch

- 12:30 pm ½ Day Dismissal
- *Bathroom Break & Handwashing

12:45 pm -1:15 pm Quiet Rest Time

- Fine Motor /Manipulatives
- Sensory
- Puzzles

1:15-1:30pm Cot and activity clean up

1:30 -1:40 pm Bathroom Break & Handwashing

1:40 pm -2:10 pm STEM Table Activities - Teacher directed

Learning Center exploration - Student directed

2:15 pm - 2:30 pm Afternoon Meeting (Large Group)

Review of the daily activities and The highlights of your day! sharing.

*Bathroom Break & Handwashing

2:30 pm -2:45 pm Full Day Dismissal Activities

*Our Daily Schedule is subject to change based on the needs and interests of the students. Every day a variety of developmentally appropriate activities will be offered for “Hands on Learning”.

A **Program Plan** is available to parents for review upon request. A paper copy of the of the Program Plan will be available in the classroom or an electronic version can be sent via email.