

Holy Family Catholic School

2017-2018

Preschool Handbook



This handbook provides supplemental information, preschool specific, to the Holy Family Catholic School Family Handbook which is applicable to grades preschool through 8th grade.

PRESCHOOL STAFF

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Holy Family Catholic School
4407 Highcrest Road
Rockford IL 61107-1483
holyfamilyrockford.org/school

School office: 815-398-5331
Office Hours: 7:30 am-3:30 pm
(Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday)
7:30 am- 8:15 am, 9:30 am-3:30 pm
(Wednesday - closed during 8:30 am Mass)

Extended Care

Cell Phone: 815-721-6714
Extended Care Hours
Monday - Friday
6:45 am - 8:00 am
3:05 pm - 5:30 pm

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HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Leading to God the Father
Through His Son Jesus Christ
With the Guidance of the Holy Spirit
Working Together for Academic Excellence
In an Atmosphere of
Worship and Thanksgiving
The Gospel Message
Service to Others
And
Building Catholic Community

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The Holy Family Catholic School Community...

...is a partnership between parents, school and parish staff. This partnership must focus on the spiritual growth of our children in their Catholic faith. In order to enhance this experience, parents and families must actively put their own faith into practice both at home and at Church, including regular Mass attendance, reception of the sacraments, and involvement in church and community events. Demonstrations of commitment to the teachings of the Church through the volunteering of time, talent and treasure to the parish as well as the school help to nurture our children's developing faith as well as our own.

...is an important ministry among the many within our parish. Financial support for the school as well as all of the other ministries is greatly dependent upon our parish stewardship through tithing. With this in mind, we do not stress significant fund raising to support our school programs. Rather, we seek to provide spiritual and social fellowship among both school and parish families. Revenue gathered through Home and School Association functions is intended to be applied to new and continuing fellowship and faith programs for both the school and parish community. At the request of the parish finance council the Home and School Association also contributes to the school budget as a third source of revenue.

...is a cooperative effort between both parents and school staff. Both work together to implement the ever-expanding academic and spiritual curriculum. Parents should seek to create a positive learning environment in the home where they model a commitment to academic excellence. At a minimum, they would ensure the timely and accurate completion of their child's assignments either in school or at home. Optimally, parents remain in close contact with the teacher to identify individual strengths and weaknesses in addition to monitoring their child's performance on a continuous basis.

...cannot function at its best without the generosity of school parents and other parish families who unselfishly give of their time and talents. The efforts of our volunteers enhance our school programs abundantly both in and out of the classroom. The benefits that our school children receive from this example of Christian love and service are not only academic but spiritual as well.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

If your child will be absent from school, parents are asked to call the office by 9 am to report the absence and the reason for the absence. The school will call parents if an absence call is not received by 9 am.

ABUSE/NEGLECT

The staff at Holy Family Catholic School must report suspicion of any form of child abuse. This includes sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. The school does not condone, hide or tolerate any type of child abuse. Our foremost responsibility is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children.

ADMISSIONS

Preference in preschool admission is given first to parish members, then to Catholics from other parishes, and, space permitting, to all others. Refer to the school handbook for more specific admissions procedures.

ALLERGIES

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school and teacher of a child's allergies to food, insects or other substances.

Any items containing nuts should not be sent to school for distribution to other students.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

School doors open at 8:00 am. Children should arrive in sufficient time so as to be in the classroom promptly by 8:15 am. Students arriving after the 8:15 am bell will be considered tardy.

Students coming for the morning session need to be picked up at 11:00 am. Students staying the entire day need to be picked up at 2:55 pm.

Parents should park their car in an appropriate lined parking space and walk their child to the area outside the school's west door. Parents should stay with their child until the teacher (or extended care staff member) takes charge of their child and escorts the children into the building.

AUTHORIZED PERSONS TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD

Parents must provide the school with the names of persons authorized to pick up the child and the names of person(s) NOT authorized. Names **MUST BE** on the release form for students to leave with someone other than a parent. **IT IS THE PARENT (S) OR GUARDIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO INFORM THE SCHOOL OF ANY CHANGES IN THE NAMES OF PERSONS AUTHORIZED OR NOT SO AUTHORIZED.**

In parent separation cases, copies of court orders must be provided to the school before any staff person can prevent a child from being picked up by a non-custodial parent.

The school will release children to authorized persons only. The school, prior to the child being released, may request photo identification or other identification.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks should be "**NORMAL**" size (approximately 12" x 16"). Avoid mini-packs and backpacks with wheels.

CALENDAR

The preschool follows the regular school calendar. Check the school website (<http://school.holyfamilyrockford.org>) for updated school calendars.

CLOTHING

Preschool students do not wear the school uniform. Children should be dressed comfortably in play clothes. Students will be participating in activities that might cause clothes to get dirty or stained.

Shoes must cover the entire foot—toes, sides and rear of feet; Velcro shoes are preferred. Clogs, sandals, and similar styles are inappropriate. Each child should have a change of clothes to be kept at school. The change should include a top, slacks, undergarments, and socks. Clothing items should have identifying markings on them.

Outdoor clothing should be appropriate for the weather (such as boots and snow pants, hats and gloves) and marked with identification.

COMMUNICATIONS

In addition to communication from your child's classroom teacher a number of other communication methods are utilized by the school. Refer to the school handbook for detailed descriptions.

The school website (<http://school.holyfamilyrockford.org>) includes announcements, the school calendar, Home and School Association information and other useful information. Parents are encouraged to check the site regularly.

The school will use SchoolSpeak email to contact parents in the event of emergency. It is the parents' responsibility that the school has current email addresses and phone numbers.

CURRICULUM

Our preschool curriculum is designed to prepare students for the Holy Family K-8 curriculum. The following skills lay the foundation for this preparation:

FAITH FORMATION: At a level appropriate for the age, students will learn about and practice the Catholic faith. As the school recognizes our parents to be the primary educators of their children, parents must realize their critical role as Catholic faith teachers by practicing our faith at home (regular Mass attendance on Sundays and holydays, regularly participating in the sacraments, praying at home as a family, etc.) In class students will participate in a variety of activities introducing them to the Catholic faith and providing a foundation for the future reception of the sacraments.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT utilizes cross-curriculum activities that suit the child's physical development of large and small motor (muscle) skills. This is achieved through an environment that provides freedom of expression, challenges, and the opportunity for frequent repetition. The ability to have control over one's own body provides satisfaction, pride, and positive self-awareness.

DRAMATIC PLAY is child-centered activity. Children engage in pretending, role-playing, and imaginative play. These activities enhance a child's intellectual, physical, creative, and social emotional development. By providing a variety of materials and situations, children are able to integrate what they learn and experience into reality. By practicing social and communication skills, they learn to resolve conflicts, express their individuality, and realize their creativity.

MATH AND SCIENCE activities are designed for exploration and discovery. Through hands-on experiences, children will experiment using a variety of math and science techniques. These concrete experiences allow the children to gradually comprehend math and science. By providing opportunities to explore and develop a sense of stewardship for God's earth, children will begin to gain respect and appreciation for our natural environment.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT includes reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Children are involved with quality literature in diverse settings. Children are encouraged to explore a variety of writing materials used in ways that are interesting, meaningful, and fun. Children are encouraged to express themselves and listen to others in a variety of situations. By integrating these opportunities throughout the day, the children practice effective communication skills.

MUSIC. Children will have opportunities to experience music from a variety of genres and cultures. Instruments and singing allow the children to express themselves emotionally and creatively, as well as experience musical elements. Music and movement are integrated as enjoyable parts of the curriculum, which encourage children to take risks and overcome inhibitions.

OUTDOOR PLAY is an extension of the classroom. The goal is to provide an enriched environment for physical exploration of each child's abilities, which stimulates sensory and physical play. The outdoor experience broadens a child's perspective of the world through freedom of expression and movement.

CUSTODY

Holy Family Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. Thus, non-custodial parents will be given access to the academic records and to information regarding the academic progress of their children, unless there is a court order specifically stating that the non-custodial parent be denied access to such information. A copy of the court order must be presented to the school office staff.

DISCIPLINE

We believe that discipline is a positive ongoing process that teaches children how to effectively relate to others. We encourage the use of self-control, redirection, problem solving, and cooperation. These methods are utilized to teach the children how to be responsive and accountable for their own behavior. By targeting the child's behavior as opposed to the child, we believe the end result is more positive self-esteem.

Preschool Discipline Procedure

1. When a behavior problem occurs in the classroom, "Time Out" (up to 5 minutes sitting away from the group) is given to the child, then appropriate behavior is discussed. The staff will remind the child of the rules and allow the child to rejoin the group.
2. Regular behavioral problems are reported to the parent(s) and they are asked to help correct the situation. A written warning may be given to the parent(s) with the approval of the Principal.
3. The problem is directed to the Principal.
 - A conference will be held between the parent(s) and the Principal/teacher to develop a method of treatment for the problem and/or
 - The Principal offers names of appropriate local support services to the parent(s).
 - Written warning may be given to the parent(s) at this time.
4. After the above procedure has been followed, a child may be removed from the program if:
 - a. The child poses a threat to self, staff or other children in the program.
 - b. The child behaves in a manner that is difficult to manage in a large group.
 - c. The child or parent(s) uses abusive language or threaten other children or staff.
 - d. The child or family continues to act against preschool policies as explained in the school handbook.
 - e. The Principal's professional judgment is that the child can no longer function effectively in the program and/or the program is being adversely affected by the child's presence.
5. It is the policy of the preschool to notify the parent(s) of a child with a written warning letter when infractions of policies occur and to hold a conference to discuss the problem before a child is removed from the program. However, some situations may occur that jeopardize the welfare of the children and/or staff. The Principal reserves the right to dismiss a student immediately if such an incident occurs.
6. A parent may appeal a decision made by the director by filing a written grievance with the school principal.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

The entire school participates in emergency drills including fire, lockdown, and tornado. If any parent or visitor is present during a drill, they are expected to comply with the emergency procedure protocol under the direction of the staff.

ENROLLMENT PREREQUISITES

Preschool students *must be "potty trained"* and have received all state required immunizations. Proof of immunizations must be on file in the school office before the first day of school.

FAMILY INFORMATION

Family home and work addresses and phone numbers, emergency contacts, and authorized care information must be kept current. Parents are responsible to inform the school office of changes to any of these.

FOOD ITEMS

LUNCHES: Children staying for lunch need to bring their lunch or order lunch. Milk may be purchased for the entire school year.

Label your child's lunch box, containers, and backpacks clearly with their name.

Send utensils (plastic spoons, for example) with your child's lunch.

No glass items and no metal knives (use plastic if a knife is necessary) should be sent to school.

SNACKS: A rotating snack schedule is sent home monthly. Lists will be sent home with suggested snacks and birthday treats. Based on the schedule each family provides snacks for the entire class. Snacks should be nourishing items (no heavy sugar items) in compliance with the diocesan wellness policy (posted on the school website under POLICIES & PROCEDURE. No nuts/nut products allowed.

CANDY & GUM are not allowed.

ALLERGIES: Each school year it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school and teacher of a child's allergies to food, insects or other substances.

Any items containing nuts should not be sent to school for distribution to other students.

REFRIGERATION: Refrigeration for cold or frozen snacks is not available at the school. Please plan treats accordingly.

GOALS OF THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

1. To nurture Catholic faith development in each child and in each child's family
2. To help a child develop a good self image
3. To assist a child to become aware of others in relationship to themselves
4. To develop independence skills
5. To develop social skills
6. To be able to share
7. To develop communication skills
8. To develop physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually

HOURS OF OPERATION

Extended Care: Pre3-8th grade; supervised time; children choose their activity; no structured curriculum activities

Preschool: structured time with teacher covering the preschool curriculum

Extended preschool: structured time with teacher; activities are preschool curriculum reinforcement; no new curriculum items introduced

Monday thru Friday from 8:00 am - 11:00 am or 8:00 am - 2:55 pm. Tuesday thru Thursday from 8:00 am - 11:00 am or 8:00 am - 2:55 pm. The preschool operates on the regular Holy Family Catholic School calendar.

ILLNESS

Students should be called into school if absent by 8:30 am. A child exhibiting any of the following symptoms should be kept home:

- **Fever of 99.6 or higher (fever should be gone for 24 hours before returning to school)**
- Nausea or vomiting (students should be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school)
- Skin rash or sores
- Inflamed or swollen eyes, such as pink eye
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Sore throat

COLDS, COUGHS, EAR INFECTIONS: We prefer that the child remain at home when suffering from these problems. They don't feel well and won't be able to concentrate or enjoy their day, and/or they could infect their classmates and teacher. Consideration for others is crucial to controlling the spread of colds and flu at school.

In the event of an accident or illness at school, parents will be contacted immediately.

Careful attention to good hygiene—hand washing before eating and after bathroom visits, after wiping runny noses, and discouraging thumb sucking and mouthing of other objects (and cleaning and disinfecting these objects) can help keep you and your child healthy.

All children, when first exposed to a large group of children, will be exposed to a greater number of bacteria and viruses. This naturally will result in more illnesses during the first three to six months. Having an alternate form of care arranged when your child is too ill to attend school is highly recommended.

INSURANCE

The school does not provide health or accident insurance coverage for students. Parents are expected to maintain health insurance for their child(ren).

KINDERGARTEN READINESS GOALS

1. To have knowledge of God and to develop prayer skills
2. To have an openness for learning
3. To be able to give first and last names on request
4. To be able to recognize his/her name in print
5. To be able to tell age
6. To be able to count and recognize numbers to 10
7. To be able to recognize upper and lower case letters of the alphabet
8. To know four basic shapes—circle, square, rectangle, triangle
9. To be able to recognize nine basic colors—red, yellow, blue, green, orange, purple, black, white, brown
10. To be able to use scissors correctly and to cut on a line
11. To be able to repeat a nursery rhyme, finger play and/or song
12. To listen to a story quietly for 5 to 7 minutes
13. To be able to share and/or take turns
14. To take care of personal needs, take off and put on clothing items (coats, jackets, etc). and tie shoes
15. To classify by color and shape
16. To be able to communicate verbally
17. To be able to listen and appreciate music
18. To be able to jump, hop, run, walk and go backwards and forwards
19. To participate in group games
20. To show respect for other people and things
21. To follow simple directions
22. To be able to print first name in D'Nealian handwriting
23. To know address and phone number

MEDICATION

Do not send aspirin, Tylenol, cough syrup, or any substance containing an active ingredient to school for your child. **We cannot administer any over-the-counter medications without a written statement from your physician.** Any antibiotics or other medicines must be given only as prescribed by your doctor, and a special medication form must be filled out in order for this to be done.

The school nurse administers medicines; all medication must be kept locked in the office medicine cabinet. The school nurse is available from 9:30 am until 2:30 pm.

If medications have been prescribed for your child, do not send him/her to school until he/she has been on the medication for a full 24 hours.

In the case of a prescription medication:

- It must be the original container.
- It must have the prescription label.
- It must have the doctor's and child's names.
- It must have a current date and expiration date.
- A calibrated spoon, if appropriate, must accompany it.
- A medication authorization form must be filled out completely.

NAP & REST TIME

Nap time runs approximately one hour. Some children are developmentally past the need for a nap. After 30 minutes of quiet rest time, children are allowed to get up and participate in quiet activities.

A **pillowed nap sack is provided** for each child and is periodically sent home for washing. A child may bring one stuffed animal or soft toy that she/he normally takes to bed. **These items should be marked with the child's name.**

PARENT INVOLVEMENT/VOLUNTEERISM

Parent involvement and volunteerism is encouraged at Holy Family. Once classes are settled into a routine for the school year, parents are welcome to volunteer in the classrooms and for all school activities. If you would like to volunteer, or if you have a special skill, talent, or interest that you are willing to share, please let your child's teacher know.

Any person entering the building must sign in at the office before going to the classrooms (no matter how short or long the time). All visitors (including parents) wear visitor nametags while in the building.

Volunteers coming into contact with children must meet the diocesan requirements for volunteers including completion of the Protecting God's Children program (online), signing the Mandated Reporter form, Sexual Misconduct form, and Pastoral Conduct form. These requirements must be met before volunteerism can begin.

PARTIES, BIRTHDAY

Celebration is important. Classroom parties should be planned in accordance to classroom guidelines. **To accommodate those with allergies, treats with nuts/nut products should be avoided.** Treat bags would be appropriate. (Refer to the diocesan wellness policy, posted on the school website, which lists suggested treats appropriate to bring to school.)

Invitations for home parties should not be distributed at school.

RIGHT TO AMEND

The Principal retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be notified in writing if changes are made.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

6:45 am-8:00 am: extended care

8:15 am-11:00 am: class time: circle time, inside/outside learning centers and snack

11:00 am-11:30 am: lunch and play

11:30-2:55 pm: extended day including nap or rest time, choice time, outside activity and snack time

3:05 pm-5:30 pm: extended care

SEPARATION ANXIETY

Changes, such as beginning school, camp, swimming lessons, etc., can trigger separation anxiety. Although infrequent, if your child demonstrates anxiety by crying, clinging onto a parent, etc., our staff will assist you through the anxiety.

If you anticipate that your child might experience anxiety on the first day of school you might consider coming to school before the first day and walk your child around the building, the classroom, the playground and church campus. Familiarity with surroundings helps minimize anxiety.

Once you drop your child off in the charge of the teacher, you need to leave without looking back (including hiding and peeking) or coming back to your child (unless a school staff member calls for your assistance). Experience has taught us that if a parent stays around, and the child is aware of the parent's presence, the child continues to get "worked up." In such cases the parent will be called and be given an update on their child's disposition.

TEACHER-PARENT CONFERENCES

Following the school calendar formal conferences are scheduled usually in **November**. Parents may request a teacher conference anytime during the school year.

TUITION FOR PRESCHOOL

The regular extended care fee applies for extended care use. Extended care begins at 7am until the beginning of school. After school extended care runs from after school until 5:30 pm. Tuition and fees apply whether or not students are in attendance. Contact the school office for current tuition, application and consumable fees information.

TOY WEAPONS

At Holy Family we realize that children play games like police, war or space age warfare. However, the school's policy is that such games not be part of the school experience. At Holy Family toy weapons of any sort are not allowed at school. The preschool director reserves the right to determine appropriateness of toys.

WHAT SHOULD REMAIN AT HOME

No toys from home should be brought to school unless for a birthday, treat day, or theme related to class activities. The school does not assume responsibility for toys or other items brought from home. When in doubt ask your child's teacher.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

A one-month notification is required in the event of withdrawing a child from the preschool program.

Student Withdrawal on Grounds of Parental Behavior

Under normal circumstances a child is not deprived of a Catholic education or otherwise penalized for actions of parents. However, parents may so significantly reduce the school's ability to effectively serve our students that the parents may be requested to remove their child/ren from the school for any of the following reasons:

- Refusal to cooperate with school personnel
- Refusal to adhere to the diocesan and school policies and regulations
- Interference in matters of school administration or discipline

In such cases, reasonable effort to elicit minimum parental cooperation shall be made and documented. In the event the parent has caused a serious disruption, the parent shall be restricted from being present on the school premises or attending school activities.

If such effort does not correct the situation, then, after consultation with the pastor, the principal may recommend to the parents that they withdraw their child/ren.

Documentation signed by the principal and parents, as well as any other information or evidence of consultation with the parents on the matter, must be retained on file.

If the parents refuse to accept the recommended withdrawal, the procedures for expulsion shall be followed.

Holy Family Catholic School

PARENT(S)' SIGNED HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

We have read and agree to be governed by the preschool handbook and by the school handbook as posted on the school website at <http://school.holyfamilyrockford.org> (Forms & Documents)

Mother's Signature: _____

Mother's Printed Name: _____

Father's Signature: _____

Father's Printed Name: _____

Student's Name (printed): _____

Date: _____