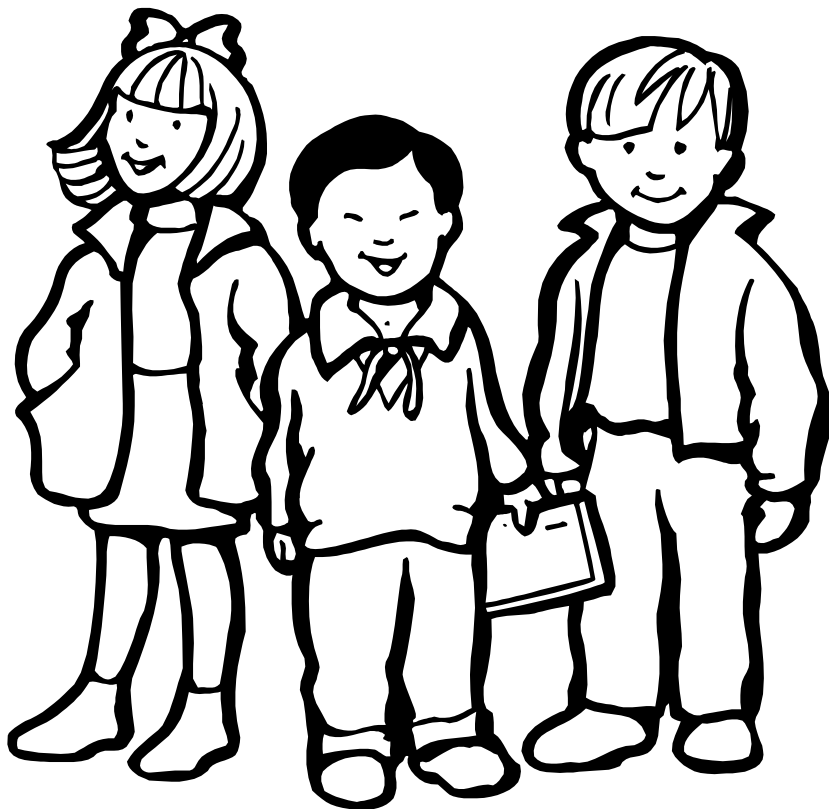


# **PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK**



**NOTRE DAME OF BETHLEHEM SCHOOL  
BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA**

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Notre Dame of Bethlehem Preschool. We believe we have a creative learning environment that will foster in each child a 'love' for learning. We provide a secure, warm, and happy environment for each child to grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.

Our program curriculum follows the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood Education. We have received accreditation status through Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. We offer developmentally appropriate and enriching play and learning activities to enhance a child's potential for growth during their early childhood years. From these experiences, each child has the capability of becoming complete, creative, independent, and loving individuals. Our Catholic-based Preschool program will lead each child to awareness that he or she is special and unique in the eyes of God and others.

We urge you to contact us at school, (610) 866-2231, if you have any questions or concerns at any time. Open doors of communication between home and school will allow your child maximum room for growth. We look forward to an exciting and enriching Preschool year.

## PRESCHOOL STAFF

Our goal is to maintain the highest quality of care and educational services for our students, parents, and the greater community. All of our preschool teachers have been trained and certified in the field of Early Childhood Education. Teachers remain current in the philosophies of their profession through yearly workshops and seminars.

### Three Year-Old Program

Teacher: Mrs. M. Jurcak  
Mrs. C. Godovin

### Four Year-Old Program

Teachers: Mrs. D. Brita  
Mrs. E. Demyan

Assistants: Mrs. D. Goodwin, Mrs. B. Rezek, Mrs. E. Neidert

Preschool Director: Mrs. D. Brita

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

The first years of life are of vital importance to a child's growth and development. Foundations are laid which influence the ability of a child to accept himself/herself, relate to others, and respond positively to their environment. Family relationships provide a young child with the best models for developing attitudes, value, and appropriate behavior. Interactions with other adults and children in an atmosphere of Christian love and concern further promote the healthy development of each child.

Early Childhood education provides the transition from home to a school atmosphere. Educational research indicates that these early years form the basis for all future learning.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

Through developmentally appropriate play and learning experiences, we will foster joy in the learning process and encourage each child to think, ask questions, and realize his or her capabilities. Our goals as educators are:

- Support developing cognitive and self-help skills.
- Encourage each child to think and act independently to develop problem-solving skills.
- Enrich the child's use of language and expand his/her concepts.
- Provide time and opportunity for self-expression through play, art, music, and movement.
- Support developing gross and fine motor skills.
- Help the child create a positive self-image, realizing that he/she is special and unique.
- Share the love of God with each child through stories, music, and prayer.
- Enrich the child's socialization skills and help the child develop a sense of fair play and respect for others.
- Promote a cooperative home-school relationship for both child and parent.

## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### Supervised Free Play

Dramatic Play   Constructive Play   Learning Centers  
Math Activities   Science Activities   Computer Activities  
Social Studies Activities   Creative Art Activities

### Socialization Skills

Cooperative Play & Games

### Language Development

Story Time   Show & Tell  
Flannel Board Stories   Finger Plays  
Sign Language   Phonics Activities

### Music and Rhythm

Rhythm Activities  
Rhythm Instruments  
Singing   Action Songs

### Movement and Physical Development

Creative Movement  
Fundamental Movement  
Large & Small Motor Activities

### Spiritual Development

Bible Stories   Religion Activities  
Songs   Prayers

*Our curriculum of 'Learning Through Play' is developmentally appropriate for children in their early childhood years. Our educators apply their authentic knowledge of child development to plan engaging "hands-on" learning activities to promote children's growth and development.*

## ADMISSIONS

1. A child must be three years-old by October 15<sup>th</sup> to be admitted into the preschool three year-old program.
2. A child must be four-years-old by October 15<sup>th</sup> to be admitted into the pre-K four year-old program.
3. Children enrolled in the three year-old program will be able to pre- register for the pre-K four year-old program prior to open registration.
4. Children in the three year-old class will not be allowed to advance into the pre-K four year-old class during the school year.
5. All children **MUST** be toilet-trained before entering preschool.
6. Completed and signed registration forms, copies of birth certificate, baptismal certificate, and updated immunization records are required for enrollment into the program.
7. Full disclosure of information from psychological, educational, or medical evaluations will remain confidential and serve to be beneficial in meeting the academic, social and emotional needs of your child. It is important that Notre Dame Preschool is aware of all necessary information at the time of registration and reserves the right to assess the proper placement of your child. In the event that Notre Dame Preschool cannot meet your child's needs, his/her enrollment status will be reviewed.

## TUITION

A non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00 is paid upon registration of a child in our Preschool Program. This fee is not applicable to the tuition. Current tuition rates can be obtained from the Preschool director.

### OPTIONS FOR PAYMENT:

- Pre-payment of the entire year's tuition by August 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Payment of the entire tuition in two installments, August 15<sup>th</sup> and January 15<sup>th</sup>.
- 10 Monthly automatic withdraws from a checking or savings account from August through May (full tuition rate).

**All tuition payments are handled through FACTS Tuition Management Systems. Follow links on school website.**

## NOTRE DAME DOLLAR FUNDRAISER

In effort to control the necessary tuition increases, all families are required to participate in our Notre Dame Dollars fundraiser. A fundraiser fee is added to your 1<sup>st</sup> tuition payment. GOOD NEWS...Purchasing Notre Dame Dollars will ALSO earn you credit toward tuition payments. Notre Dame Dollars are sold in the school office during the school year and after Mass on the weekend.

## DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

### Preschool Three Year-Old Program

2-Day Class	Tuesday - Thursday	8:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.
3-Day Class	Monday-Wednesday-Friday	8:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.
5-Day Class	Monday through Friday	8:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

### Pre-Kindergarten Four Year-Old Program

3-Day	Monday-Wednesday-Friday (PM Class)	12:00 P.M. - 2:30 P.M
5-Day	Monday through Friday	8:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

### Little Knights Afternoon Class - For FULL DAY STUDENTS

Available for those students enrolled in a morning preschool class. Designed for those looking for a FULL DAY OPTION. Monday through Friday 11:00A.M. - 2:30 P.M. Must be 3 years old prior to September 1.

### Lunch Bunch

Monday through Friday from 11:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. after morning classes.

Reservations taken on a weekly basis - Space is limited. See Director for details.

*Class schedules and/or meeting times are subject to change and revision each calendar year, based on enrollment demands.*

## DAILY SCHEDULE

Morning Sessions	Afternoon Sessions	Little Knights PM
8:30- 8:45 am Arrival/Greet	12:00-12:15 pm Arrival/Greet	11:00-11:15am Arrival/Greet
8:45- 9:00 am Group Time	12:15-12:30 pm Group Time	11:15-11:40am Group Activities
9:00-10:00 am Play/Work Time	12:30-1:30 pm Play/Work Time	11:40-11:50am Prep.lunch
10:00-10:15 am Clean-Up/Recall	1:30-1:45 pm Clean-Up/Recall	11:50-12:20 pm Lunch
10:15-10:30 am Snack Time	1:45-2:00 pm Snack Time	12:30-1:00pm Phys. activities
10:30-10:45 am Outdoor/Phys.	2:00-2:15 pm Outdoor/Phys.	1:00-1:30pm Quiet/ Rest
10:45-11:00 am Story/Dismissal	2:15-2:30 pm Story/Dismissal	1:30-2:00pm Centers/Play
		2:00-2:20 pm Story/Circle
		2:20 -2:30pm Dismissal

## PRESCHOOL CALENDAR

Preschool will begin after Labor Day and will end the week before Memorial Day. A preschool calendar will be distributed prior to the beginning of the school year with exact dates. This calendar will inform you of School Holidays and other dates when the school is closed. Changes in the calendar will be communicated in monthly newsletters.

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

A monthly newsletter will be available on our web/class page. This newsletter will inform you of class activities, unit topics, and will provide information and clarification of special events outlined in the preschool calendar.

## EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

School closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals due to inclement weather will be announced on radio station 790 WAEB and TV station channel 69 WFMZ. We follow the decision of the Bethlehem Area School District (BASD). If BASD is closed, Notre Dame is closed. In the event of delayed openings, please be aware of the following modified schedule. **ENROLL IN SCHOOL REACH to receive IMPORTANT school messages.**

2 Hour Delay - AM Preschool classes - 10:30AM - 12:00PM  
PM Preschool classes - 1:00PM - 2:30PM

## EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

Before and after school care is available, if you need it, for your preschool child. Extended Care staff will pick-up and/or drop-off your child directly from/to your child's preschool classroom. Extended care is not available during school hours.

The Extended Care classroom is located in our new parish center. Extended Care is open at 7:15AM-until class begins and after class hours from 2:30PM - 5:45PM. Reservations are necessary with a 24-hour notice for attendance. Extended Care rates and reservations can be obtained by contacting the Extended Care director at 610-861-9178.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

ALL PRE-K CLASSES: FRONT MAIN OFFICE ENTRANCE

ALL THREE YEAR OLD CLASSES: NEW STUDENT ENTRANCE - PARISH CENTER

Preschool children should be brought directly to the classroom. Teachers will monitor arrivals from 5 minutes prior to scheduled arrival time until 5 minutes after scheduled arrival time. If you arrive later than 5 minutes after arrival time, please report to the MAIN OFFICE ring the office bell and advise the office you are dropping off your child to their preschool classroom.

ALL CLASSES: UPPER SCHOOL PARKING LOT DISMISSAL - Teachers will be dismissing preschool children 'one at a time' from the stairway located at the new student center. Please park and meet your child. Children will NOT be permitted to walk through the parking lot unattended. Dismissal will begin promptly at scheduled dismissal time until 5 minutes after scheduled dismissal time.

AFTERNOON CLASS DISMISSAL PROCEDURE: Dismissal begins at 2:25pm - Only Preschool parents are permitted in the upper school parking lot during this time. At 2:40pm K-8<sup>th</sup> grade 'car rider' traffic will enter the lot. We appreciate your prompt arrival.

If you arrive more than 5 minutes after scheduled dismissal time, please use the FRONT MAIN OFFICE entrance to the school. You MUST ring the office bell, check-in with the office staff to advise them you are picking up your child from their preschool classroom. Teachers will remain with children until ALL parents / guardians arrive for dismissal. If parents or guardians are more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour late at dismissal, an additional monetary charge may apply.

IMPORTANT - For the protection of you child. Children will only be allowed to leave school with an adult listed on the RELEASE AUTHORIZATION list given at registration.

### CLOTHING

Comfortable clothing and rubber soled-shoes are suggested for preschool. We explore many art materials and even though a smock is used, materials can be messy. Indoor and outdoor movement activities and games will engage children in active play - **please refrain from clogs and flip-flop sandals.** NOTE FOR THREE YEAR-OLDS: Teachers request you send an extra change of clothes to school for your child, in case of accidents. The clothing you send will be kept in your child's classroom.



## **PROGRESS REPORTS / ASSESSMENTS**

Progress reports will be sent home during the months of January and May. Progress reports reflect observable developmental progress and assessment results. Assessments include observing, recording and documenting the work of children.

Children in the Pre-K four year-old class who register for Notre Dame Kindergarten will be taking a KINDERGARTEN Assessment in April.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled in November. If you have a question or a concern about your child's progress at any other time, please feel free to contact your child's teacher after class dismissal to arrange a meeting. We value open communication between home and school.

## **DISCIPLINE CODE**

Teachers model appropriate behavior and language. Teachers nurture emotional security, positive self-concept and respect for others. They support children's attempts to positively resolve conflicts and assist them to find problem-solving strategies by using positive guidance techniques.

To promote positive behavior teachers use logical consequences and guidance practices that support self-control. To reinforce positive behavior, teachers praise children's positive actions. Open parent teacher communication is valued. Teachers will work with parents to deal with issues that may arise.

Expulsion from the program may become necessary if the child poses a threat to self, staff or other children in the program.

## SNACK TIME

You will receive a snack calendar once a month. Approximately every 4-6 weeks (depending on class size) your child will be scheduled to provide the snack and drink for his/her class.

**IMPORTANT:** Some classes may have food restrictions due to allergies. Snack suggestions for classes with food restrictions will be sent home.

Healthy snacks are ideal for growing preschoolers. Please try to avoid foods that have high sugar content. Fruits, crackers, pretzels (to name a few) are healthier alternatives than cookies or cupcakes. Snacks that we try to avoid in preschool are popcorn, potato chips, nuts, and whole grapes or fruits with skins. These foods can cause choking.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

If your child's birthday is during the school year, we will try to schedule 'snack day' on or near this special day. Summer birthdays will be celebrated during the month of May. Parents are welcomed to send to school a special snack, story or game to share with the class. Please communicate your plans in advance with your child's teacher.

**Notre Dame of Bethlehem's policy on parent visitors and volunteers requires all to have necessary Protecting God's Child certification, Child Abuse and Criminal checks. Please see our website for more information on how to obtain these clearances.**

Classroom distribution of invitations to outside birthday parties and/ or celebrations will be permitted only if all children are invited. **EXAMPLE:** invitations for ALL girls, ALL boys, or the WHOLE class. If your plans differ, please mail invitations.

## SHOW AND TELL

Show and Tell will be scheduled at various times throughout the school year. You will be notified through monthly class newsletters when Show and Tell is scheduled. We kindly ask that *toys from home remain at home* unless they are brought to school for Little Knights pm class rest time, or for a scheduled Show and Tell day.

## FIELD TRIPS/ GATHERINGS OUTSIDE of SCHOOL

Field trips / gatherings outside of school are scheduled for Pre-Kindergarten classes ONLY. Parents will be notified prior to each class field trip by a letter detailing the event. A permission slip will be sent home and must be returned to school prior to the event.

Our preschool field trips are gatherings during the day at a designated facility. Regular scheduled classes will not be held on the day of the field trip. Each child must be transported by and escorted by a parent who remains for the full duration of the event. Notre Dame Preschool is not responsible for providing chaperones or transportation of students.

- Booster seats must be used. **PA. STATE LAW** requires car seats/booster seats for all children until 8 years of age or 80lbs.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

In the event of an emergency requiring medical assistance, teachers will follow the parent directives noted on the Notre Dame School Emergency Form. This form must be signed and dated by parent or guardian.

Please refrain from sending your child to school when they are sick. If your child has a temperature or is ill during class, you will receive a phone call to pick-up your child from school. If your child contracts a communicable disease (ex. Flu, Chicken pox, measles, lice, etc.) the school MUST be notified.

Bethlehem Area School District has a strict medication policy. ONLY if medically necessary will teachers distribute medication during school hours. All over-the-counter and prescription medicine require a doctor and parent to complete an authorization-to-dispense form. These forms are available in the school office.

*We thank you for giving us the opportunity to care for and educate your child. We are confident our program will provide a loving and enriching experience for your special boy or girl. Please address any questions regarding the preschool program to the program director, Mrs. Deborah Brita. For more information regarding Notre Dame of Bethlehem Preschool or Elementary school visit our web-site - [www.ndbeth.org](http://www.ndbeth.org).*

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