

Our Lady Queen of Peace
Preschool Handbook
2018-2019



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Our Lady Queen of Peace
618 North Prairie Street
Bethalto, IL 62010
(618) 377-6401

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Information for each party, field trip, and fundraising event will be provided several weeks in advance. See the section on Classroom/Parent Volunteers.

Thank You for choosing OLQP!



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Our Lady Queen of Peace Pre-Kindergarten Program Purpose and Mission

Our Lady Queen of Peace Pre-Kindergarten program's purpose and mission is to provide a wonderful, positive first school experience for children enrolled in our program. We strive to provide a safe and Christian environment following state and diocesan guidelines. We strive to provide learning opportunities and experiences that nurture and encourage children to explore, experiment, and create in a way that will allow learning and growth in all areas.

Philosophy

We believe that each child is a unique person and gift from God. We believe by working together as parents, the faith community, and school we can encourage, strengthen, and nurture the child's potential in all areas – religious, moral, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social.

OLQP Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum

Our program combines many age appropriate, hands-on learning experiences which provide children with the opportunity to explore and experiment in order to stimulate learning in all areas. We strive to create a safe, happy, and positive learning environment for the benefit of all children enrolled in our program. Many thematic units and seasonal topics help us present learning concepts for the children to explore in a fun and engaging way resulting in memorable experiences that the children will continue to put into practice and build upon as lifelong learners.

Religion is part of the OLQP Pre-K curriculum. We use the RCL Benziger Pre-K Religion curriculum entitled Stories of God's Love. We also encourage spiritual growth through a Christian attitude, songs, prayers, stories, and celebrations.

The Pre-K curriculum, at OLQP, includes all subjects, benchmarks, and standards outlined in the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards found at https://www.isbe.net/Documents/early_learning_standards.pdf

Curriculum subject areas and benchmarks include:

Language Arts:

Preschool benchmarks in language arts include listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Math:

Preschool benchmarks in math include sense of numbers, identification of relationships in objects, concepts of geometry, and analysis of data information.

Science:

Preschool benchmarks in science include the ability to demonstrate curiosity about the world and begin to use the practices of science and engineering, exploring life, physical and earth sciences, connecting and understanding science and engineering.

Social Studies:

Preschool benchmarks in social studies include concepts related to citizenship, economic systems, human interdependence, awareness of self, geography, people, and families.

Physical Development and Health:

Preschool benchmarks in physical development and health include movement skills, rules and safety during physical activity, team building skills, principles of health promotion and prevention, and human body systems.

The Arts:

Preschool benchmarks in the arts include exploring the arts and using the arts to communicate ideas and emotions.

English Language Learners and Home Language Development as outlined in the Illinois Early Learning Standards found beginning on page 91 at https://www.isbe.net/Documents/early_learning_standards.pdf.

Social and Emotional Development:

Preschool benchmarks in social and emotional development include self management skills, social awareness, and interpersonal skills, and decision making skills and responsible behaviors.

Full and Half Day Pre-k Options are available:

The OLQP Half Day Program is in session from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

The OLQP Full Day Program is in session from 8:30 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.

Full Day Pre-K Students enjoy the added benefits of participating in Computer class, Spanish, Music, Library, and PE.

Arrival and Dismissal

The doors are opened for arrival beginning at 8:15 a.m. each school day. Each day, teachers participate in a prayers service prior to student arrival so anyone needing care before 8:15 may participate in OLQP's Caring Hands Program for before and after school care (there is a separate fee for this service).

For your convenience, there is an entrance specific to the preschool located off of St. Mary Street. Parking spaces are provided and you may enter the preschool playground gate and door from there.

However, parents may use any parking lot around OLQP upon arrival. If using one of the other parking lots around OLQP, you may enter the Pre-K classrooms by walking through the Kindergarten classroom (during dismissal, please, use the Pre-K doors only so that we do not interrupt the kindergarteners schedule/routine). Parents **must** accompany their child to the preschool classroom each day.

Before entering the classroom, please, assist your child in putting their book bags and coats in their assigned cubby. Full day students will also need to make sure that lunch boxes are placed in the tub near the cubbies labeled "LUNCH BOXES".

******There are often times when other items need to be returned or brought into school** (such as book orders, permission slips, items to be used for a special project, etc.). **We ask that parents, please, give these items either directly to your child's teacher or teaching assistant, or place them in the specific box marked for their collection.** Our morning routine does not always allow extra time to check each book bag so your help regarding this is greatly appreciated.

During dismissal, please park on St. Mary Street. Half day students will be dismissed at 11:30. Full day students will be dismissed at 2:50. Doors are locked for security purposes during our school day. Doors will be unlocked for parents ten minutes before dismissal time. Preschool students with an older sibling can be picked up from the same area as their older sibling and will be escorted to their car by 7th and 8th grade students who serve as "buddies". Parents are responsible for the transportation of their preschool children. Any child not picked up at dismissal, will be sent to the Caring Hands After School Care Program. Parents will be required to pay for this program.

On days when there is a half day or noon dismissal, the older grades will be dismissed at noon. Preschoolers will be dismissed at the usual 11:30 (preschool half day) dismissal time. Full day preschoolers or those that usually are escorted by a 7th or 8th grade buddy may be picked up by a parent at the preschool door at or 11:30 or dismissed at noon in the usual manner with their buddy.

Gate and Fence – The preschool playground has a fence and gate to help keep everyone safe and away from the road. Parents and teachers may open and close the gate. Preschool children are instructed that they may not touch or open and close the gate. Please, help us in keeping everyone safe by closing and latching the gate upon entering and departing. We do not want anyone to be outside the fence unattended.

Caring Hands Before and After School Care

Our Lady Queen of Peace has a program to assist parents of full day students with child care before and after school. The Caring Hands Program hours are 7:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. – 6 p.m. Monday thru Friday during days when school is in session. The cost for this program is in addition to tuition (not included in tuition). Parents are responsible for payment to the Caring Hands Program when using this service.

Lunch

Full day students have the option of ordering hot lunch provided by the Bethalto Public School District or bringing their own lunch in a lunch box.

The hot lunch menu is posted monthly on the school website. More information on how to order is available at the beginning of the school year.

If you send your child's lunch to school, please, send it in a lunch box clearly labeled with your child's name. Lunch boxes should be placed in the lunch box tub/basket, located near the cubbies, each morning. If you pack lunch for your child, please, include any utensils that they may need. Sending peeled fruit (such as oranges with rinds, etc.) can help alleviate confusion during lunch time. We are unable to refrigerate lunches in the classroom. Good options for sending chilled items include lined lunch boxes, ice packs, and or freezing juice boxes or water to act as an ice pack. Teachers will accompany students during lunch time to offer assistance and guidance. Good manners and happy conversation are encouraged. 😊

Cubbies

Each child is assigned a cubby at the beginning of the year. Your child's daily projects and work will be placed in their cubby each day. Newsletters, book orders, permission slips, and other important items will also be placed in your child's cubby to take home. We try to pack our book bags most days, but always check your child's cubby for any items that may not have been packed.

Change of Clothing

Each child is required to keep a change of clothing at school "just in case". This change of clothing should include seasonal clothing, socks, and underwear. We ask that the extra clothing be placed in a gallon Ziploc bag and labeled with your child's name. Even though all preschool children are required to be potty trained, we realize that sometimes accidents do happen. Changes of clothing are sometimes needed in the case of a spill during snack, painting, and sometimes when a preschool child is feeling ill. Please, remember to replace the change of clothing when the season changes.

What to Wear

Preschool children should wear comfortable clothing that is easy to move and play in. We are still learning and often get messy. Each day we may be painting, gluing, cutting, and even learning to pour our own juice. Clothing that can easily be washed without worry of ruining or staining is best.

Although preschoolers do not wear uniforms, we do ask that they wear **tennis shoes** as required in all other grades.

Beginning preschoolers are often new to taking care of their bathroom needs. Please, keep in mind that some buttons, zippers, and belts are difficult for preschool children and elastic waistbands are often the best and easiest for preschoolers to do by themselves.

No hoop or dangling earrings may be worn.

Guidance

Children who attend Our Lady Queen of Peace Preschool will be welcomed into a positive environment guided by caring and compassionate professional educators. A positive environment will help children learn respect for themselves as well as others and reduces the occurrence of discipline problems.

Positive reinforcement of good behaviors is consistently used to encourage cooperation and self control. We will work with children to help them develop skills and language to settle their own disagreements. We will set guidelines and maintain a calm approach in guiding children's behaviors – redirecting a child's behavior before it becomes unacceptable.

On occasion a child who has become disruptive may be removed to the sidelines of the group. The child will be reminded of a more appropriate behavior and helped to gain control. Then the child will be invited to rejoin the group.

Classroom / Parent Volunteers

From time to time we may ask parents to help with certain activities, field trips, or events. Parents are also asked to participate in service hours (see the page about Parent Service Hours). All volunteers must attend a **Protecting God's Children Workshop**. Once you have completed this workshop you will have a certificate of completion on file in the school office and be able to join us as a volunteer. The workshop usually last 2 – 3 hours and is offered throughout the year at various parishes in the diocese. Our Lady Queen of Peace will post dates when the workshop is offered at our school in the school newsletter. Other workshop dates and locations may be found at www.dio.org.

Parent/ Teacher Conferences

Parent / Teacher conferences for the Pre-K 4's class will be held in November during the same days as the rest of the school. Times may vary slightly. A sign-up sheet will be posted on our information board near the classroom door with available times. Parents may sign-up for the time that best suits their needs. If at any time, you feel you need to schedule a conference for any reason, please, contact the teacher. Working together we can provide best for the needs of all our students/children.

Report Cards

Students in the Pre-K 4's class will receive report cards in November, early February, and May. Although the students will not receive formal grades, these report cards will help us to measure progress in many areas throughout the year.

Newsletters and Communications

(Pre-K 4's) A classroom newsletter will be sent home twice a month or every other week in your child's school bag. The newsletter will provide information of upcoming and important events, visitors, parties, topics, and general news for our classroom. Please, read these carefully and make note of important dates. Pre-K 4's will also receive information for our class dojo communications at open house. (This is for quick messages that can be accessed like a text on your phone). (Pre-K 3's) will receive a newsletter via email each weekend ("Week at a Glance") and paper copy each Monday. Emails are also sent often as needed.

Emailing is a great way to contact your teacher with any questions or concerns. Teachers usually check emails at least twice each day and will be happy to respond promptly before or after class.

The main school newsletter for all of OLQP is emailed to parents on Wednesdays. You will want to make sure to check this newsletter as well. It will contain school wide information.

School Website and Classroom Webpage

Parent letters, hot lunch menu, classroom information, service hour form, and other important information can be found on the school website www.olqpbethalto.org.

Our classroom, also, has a webpage that can be accessed from the school website by clicking on **current parents** and then clicking on **classrooms**. Select the proper classroom and information specific to that class may be accessed. As mentioned above, parents will be emailed an all school newsletter on Wednesdays. **It is VERY IMPORTANT that you are able to access and read the newsletter each Wednesday in order to stay informed from week to week on all things at OLQP.** If you are not receiving the newsletter via email, please, contact the school office at (618)377-6401 or school@olqpbethalto.org. You may also directly sign-up for the newsletter on the parents.olqpbethalto.org site by selecting the NEWSLETTER menu and the subscribe button.

Illness and Absenteeism

When your child is going to be absent from preschool, please call the school office to inform the school of the absence. You may also email your child's teacher.

Children who are not feeling well should not attend class. Parents are asked to keep children home in the event of any of the following symptoms which could indicate a contagious illness:

- Fever/pain
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Skin eruptions/rash
- Extreme fatigue
- Swelling /redness of the throat
- Reddened, or weeping eyes
- Constant sneezing/productive cough

(Illness and Absenteeism continued) Children will be admitted to class when they have been free of any or all of these symptoms and have not required fever/pain medication for a minimum of 24 hours. Should these symptoms develop while the child is at school, the parents will be called to immediately pick up the child. After all when you don't feel well, there's no place like home.

Allergies and/or Medical Concerns

Please include any medical concern or allergy information with your registration information. We want to keep everyone safe and healthy. Students with food allergies will be asked to keep a few safe snacks on-hand at school.

Birthday Treats

All children enjoy celebrating their birthday at school with classmates! We will celebrate birthdays at snack time. Children with birthdays during the school year will be added to the snack calendar on the closest school day to their actual birthday. The child celebrating his/her birthday may bring a birthday treat to share with the class that day. Anyone with a summer birthday may celebrate an "Unbirthday" at any time. Please let the teacher know your preference for these dates so that your child's name can be added to the snack calendar before it is posted. Cupcakes and cookies from the bakery section of the grocery store that are sealed and have ingredients listed are allowed.

Snacks and Snack Helpers

A snack calendar will be posted on the information board near the classroom door. This calendar will be blank, except for birthdays, in order to let you choose the date that is most convenient for you to bring a snack for your child to share with the class. Children bringing the snack on any particular day are considered the snack helper and will get to pass out their snack to the other members of the class. The class will sing the Thank You song to the classmate just before we pray.

We suggest simple snacks. Some snack suggestions are listed below. **Snacks must be sent to school in original unopened packages.** Snack helpers are also asked to provide either juice or milk for the class on their snack day. The Pre-K 4's class pours their own drinks from child sized pitchers so we ask that gallons of milk or juice be sent so they can easily be divided into our pitchers for pouring. NO juice boxes or "squeeze-its", please. If your child picks a snack that may require extra utensils or paper plates, please, send those items as well.

Snack suggestions:

Pretzels	graham crackers	carrots and dip	cheese sticks
Cheez-its	ice cream cups	peanut butter or cheese and crackers	
individual pretzels and cheese		fruit snacks	Ritz crackers
animal crackers	pudding cups	goldfish crackers	fruit cups
Jello cups	applesauce cups	packaged apple slices	packaged grapes

Potty Training Policy

If a child has an accident where they have become soiled, parents may need to be called to come and properly assist their child in cleaning up and changing before coming back to class.