

# SACRED HEART SCHOOL



## PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

Sacred Heart Elementary School  
325 Emerson Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206-4299  
412-441-1582 phone | 412-441-2798 fax  
Website: [sacredheartpgh.org](http://sacredheartpgh.org)

We would like to welcome you and your child to SACRED HEART PRESCHOOL. The following will provide you with useful information concerning our program. Please keep this booklet as a reference for the year.

#### **“TIPS” FOR BEGINNING PRESCHOOL**

1. *Relax!* Your relaxed attitude will go a long way in conveying confidence and security to your child.
2. Arrive as near to the starting time as possible. Arriving too early can cause anxiety to build. Arriving too late can interfere with socialization.
3. Develop a “good-bye” routine. Keep it short and simple. Giving into excessive “good-bye” demands makes separation more difficult for your child.
4. Expect mixed emotions from your child. One day’s love of school may turn into an “I never want to go back there again.”
5. Don’t hesitate to talk to the teacher about any problems or concerns you may have.
6. Never lie to your child about your whereabouts during school hours. Saying “I’ll be right outside the door” may seem reassuring. However, when your child realizes that you have gone, he/she may become very frightened.
7. Be prompt in picking up your child. Your late arrival can be upsetting to your child.
8. Encourage your child to eat breakfast before coming to school.
9. Be aware of “delayed separation anxiety.” That is, crying that may begin 3 to 4 weeks after school begins. Your child now realizes that school is a fairly “permanent” arrangement.
10. Some crying is normal. However, persistent excessive crying may indicate that your child may need the security of home for a few more months.

#### **SOME OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR**

1. To provide preparation for kindergarten by establishing a loving and caring Catholic environment which encourages the child to grow in an awareness of self and others through the love of God.
2. Fostering religious development and awareness of experiencing God the Father and Jesus, His Son, as caring, forgiving, and loving.
3. Cooperative social interaction through play.
4. Fine motor development through skills such as coloring, cutting, pasting, drawing, bead stringing, puzzles, painting, lacing cards, and play dough.
5. Large motor development through skills such as movement to music, exercise, ball handling, balance activities, hopping, skipping.
6. Cognitive skills such as counting, identifying colors, basic shapes, numbers, letters, days of the week, seasons, memorizing rhymes and songs.
7. Developing listening skills through listening to stories, directions, listening games and songs.
8. Self-help skills such as putting on and hanging up coats, proper hand washing, and attempting to try new tasks independently.
9. Identification with self as a cooperative member of a group, as well as learning to appreciate his/her unique God-given talents as an individual and to like himself or herself.
10. Experience the joy of learning in a nurturing atmosphere.

#### **ABOUT PLAY**

Many parents may not realize that “playing,” aside from enhancing social development and communication skills, prepares children for later conceptual understanding. Symbolic play is crucial to a child’s ability to move from direct experience with objects (toys, etc.) to representation of these experiences through the printed word (reading, writing).

Children who are better able to organize and express thoughts, ideas, and feelings through play are better able to handle other symbol systems, such as those represented by letters and numbers. The time a child spends “playing” is very important indeed.

#### **SCHOOL DAYS AND VACATIONS**

We follow the calendar for Sacred Heart Elementary School. This calendar is posted on the school website. You will receive School communication by way of emails from FACTS or on our school website. You are invited and encouraged to participate in school activities that are of interest to you and your family.

### **WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

If there is a question of school being in session because of inclement weather or emergencies, the preschool follows the decision made by the Pittsburgh Public System. The TV stations and their websites post information about Sacred Heart and the Pittsburgh Public Schools. KDKA, WPXI, and WTAE-TV will have the most current information. You will also be notified by phone and email through Sacred Heart's Parent Alert System. Please do not call the school office or the rectory.

If school is delayed the morning session will begin at **10:15** and dismissal will be extended until **11:45**.

### **SCHEDULE**

Sacred Heart Preschool program is in session from Monday through Friday. The morning session is from 8:15 to 11:15 a.m. The full-day session is from 8:15 until 2:15pm. An adult should bring each child to the door for drop off. At dismissal time please meet your child at the end of the ramp near the convent door on Walnut near the corner of Emerson Street.

Parking is not permitted on Emerson Street during school hours. You may park in the permit parking areas for a period less than two hours.

### **DAILY ROUTINE**

Below is an example of your child's typical daily morning routine. There are occasionally variations in the routine to accommodate special visitors, for example, the librarian, art lessons, or a field trip.

Free time  
Clean up, circle time: calendar, weather, salute to the Flag, prayer, attendance  
Bathroom and hand washing  
Snack  
Special (Art, Gym, Music or Library)  
Informal instruction using hands-on materials, i.e., colors, shapes, etc.  
(Large or Small group)  
Large/Fine Motor Activity  
Playtime  
Lunch  
Recess/Playground time  
Rest time  
Preparations for dismissal, i.e., getting and putting on coats, gathering mail

### **WHEN TO NOTIFY THE TEACHER**

Please speak with the teacher either in person or via email ([agarfinkel@sacredheartpgh.org](mailto:agarfinkel@sacredheartpgh.org)) or the Class Dojo website or through the office by phone message

(412-441-1582) in the following instances:

1. If an adult other than yourself who is unknown to the teacher will be picking up your child.
2. If your child is ill and will be unable to attend school.
3. If you would like us to have your child ready early for dismissal, i.e., in the instance of a doctor's appointment.
4. Anytime you have any questions or concerns about your child or our program.
5. If you decide to remove your child from the program.

### **ILLNESS**

The spread of illness can be lessened if you would please keep your child home if you suspect or know that your child is ill. Your cooperation will result in a healthier year for everyone. For fevers and vomiting, the school has a policy that students should not return to school until they have been fever-free or have stopped vomiting for 24 hours.

Children should be isolated and excluded from preschool with symptoms, such as:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| *fever                   | *severe coughing or difficulty breathing |
| *diarrhea                | *vomiting                                |
| *unusual spots or rashes | *pink eye                                |
| *yellowish skin or eyes  | *sore throat or trouble swallowing       |

### **SNACKS**

Please notify the teacher of any food allergies. Parents are asked to provide a daily snack for their child.

## **CLOTHING**

The children should wear comfortable play clothing.

## **NEED FROM HOME**

Please bring the following items to preschool for your child:

1. A complete set of clothing "in case of an accident." These items should be individually labeled with your child's name and put in a labeled bag. The clothing will be returned at the end of the year.
2. Items listed on the supply list that is provided at the beginning of each year.
3. A "nap buddy" if your child is full day and will be napping here.

## **NO PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Children are not permitted to bring toys or other personal belongings from home to school except for rest. Items should be appropriate for rest time. Items that make noise, shoot or have small pieces should be kept at home. Please be sure to review these choices with your child.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

We celebrate birthdays in preschool. On your child's birthday, you can bring in a special treat. We ask that snacks are healthy even for birthdays. The class will sing "Happy Birthday" to the birthday child. We will also celebrate  $\frac{1}{2}$  birthdays for those children with summer birthdays. The teacher will be in touch about scheduling a good time to bring in the birthday treat.

## **GUM**

Children are not permitted to chew gum at school.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

The teacher may plan a field trip, provided that the parents help with supervision. Advance notice of field trips is always given and parents will be asked to sign a permission slip and to send a fee to cover costs.

You will receive a written evaluation of your child's progress in our program during every quarter of the year.

The first written evaluation will be given during a scheduled parent conference at the end of the first quarter. The second evaluation will be given at the end of the third quarter. During the second and fourth quarters, an official report card will be sent home. Aside from these evaluations, you have the opportunity to speak with the teacher on a daily basis and schedule a meeting or by notifying the office by phone. We encourage questions and are always happy to discuss your concerns.