

Saint Leo the Great Catholic School



Pre-K Parent Handbook



PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

It is the philosophy of St. Leo Pre-Kindergarten that early childhood should be a time of academics, faith, fun, play, exploration and discovery of new surroundings. The program strives to provide a loving, Christ centered environment for all children who attend.

Pre-Kindergarten was developed to prepare each student for Kindergarten in the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical areas. To fulfill this task of preparation, children are given every opportunity to work at their own developmental level in all areas.

The curriculum for Pre-Kindergarten is child centered and can be found at the Diocese of Harrisburg website: www.hbgdiocese.org. The children are exposed to whole and small group interactions, pre-reading, writing and numerical activities, gross motor play and parental involvement. Children explore the curriculum in the classroom through "hands on" social, academic and religious learning center experiences.

Classroom Learning Centers

The Prayer Wall Center- This is a special place in our classroom where we can talk to God. At the Prayer Wall, children may: Look at pictures/books of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Saint Leo and other saints, say a short prayer or the Sign of the Cross, place prayer intentions (with help from a teacher) on the wall for family, friends, or special needs, Thank God for blessings, play religious games. The Prayer Wall reminds us that God always listens and loves us very much.

The Reading Center - is designed to help children develop an appreciation and enjoyment of literature. All activities in this center will enhance vocabulary and comprehension skills and expand the knowledge base.

The Dramatic Play Center - helps children express themselves. Here they practice life skills in order to improve social interaction, increase self-awareness and to learn to resolve peer conflicts.

The Writing Center - helps children creatively express their thoughts and feelings. Projects directly correlate with the theme being studied. Hands-on activities

reinforce fine motor skills and concept development in areas such as color, shape and size relationships, as well as letter formation/recognition/sounds, religion, and poetry.

The Discovery Center- a place where children explore God's world through hands-on learning. Here, curiosity leads the way! At this center, children may: scoop, pour, and sift in the **sand table** to explore texture, weight, and movement; investigate the **sensory table** with materials that change, mix, or move; try **science-based activities** like observing plants, sorting nature items, or watching what sinks and floats; use their senses to discover patterns, colors, and God's creation all around us. This center encourages questioning, experimenting, and problem-solving while helping children see the wonder in God's world.

The Construction Zone Center - gives children experience with many different concepts, such as shape and size discrimination, spatial relationships, number skills, balance, organization, cause and effect and classification. Cooperative play skills, problem solving and creativity are also promoted in block play.

The Math Center - helps to improve small-muscle development and eye-hand coordination. Some common items found in this center include beads and laces, pegboards, unifix cubes, puzzles and sorting materials.

Student Progress

Student progress and development is constantly assessed and monitored throughout the school year. A formal conference will be held in January. Parents are welcome, however, to schedule a meeting with the teacher before or after school hours at any point during the year.

Academics

A peaceful, Christ centered, calm environment welcomes all who enter the doors to the Pre-Kindergarten classroom. Jesus is the model Teacher at Saint Leo the Great Catholic School, and because of this, the students feel safe and free to explore and learn at their own pace. Our classroom shares a similar teaching approach to the Mother of Divine Grace's curriculum. It is based upon the classical method which aims at establishing the tools of learning so that truth may be attained more easily and accurately. It experiments with different materials and activities and has selected those that have been most successful. We have been careful to select the best sources available in all subject areas. All the books we recommend fit the classical methodology. Catholic ABCs will be used in the classroom for ELA and religion. Catholic ABCs is a hand-on curriculum full of crafts, printable, worksheets, saints, learning, and more for pre-school students.

Arrival

Upon arrival, please bring your child to the back of the school. Please drop your child off at school between 8:00 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. The teacher or aide will greet your child and assist him/her from the car into the classroom. If your child is ill, leaving early or coming in late, please email both the teacher and the school office.

kdusablon@stleoschool.org

ccampbell@stleoschool.org

attendance@stleoschool.org

Dismissal

Dismissal time is 11:30 a.m. for half-day PreK-3 and PreK-4 students. Please strive to be on time to pick your child up in the front of the school. Again, the teacher or aide will assist your child safely to the front lobby doors. Please pick your child up under the awning at the first set of double doors.

Afternoon Pick-up: First group of car riders (students whose last names begin with A-J will be dismissed at 3:20 through door C-5. Parents/caregivers will park and turn off car engines and stand by their cars. Staff will supervise the children as they depart to their cars. Second group of car riders (students whose last names begin with K-Z will be dismissed at 3:25 through door C-5. Parents/caregivers K-Z will park in 2 rows in the chapel lot between 3:15-3:20 and will drive over to back recess parking lot when first group is dismissed.

Transportation

If someone other than a parent picks up your child, we must have that person's name on file or have a written note from the parent giving permission for your child to be released to that person. No child will be released to anyone other than a parent without prior notification by his/her parent.

School Closing

In times of bad weather, we follow the Hempfield School District's decision. Please watch WGAL Channel 8 for information.



If the Hempfield School District is closed, Saint Leo the Great School will be closed.

If the Hempfield School District has a 2-hour delay, we will observe a modified schedule:

Half day students ONLY- 10:15 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.



Your potty-trained child ...

- Will tell the teacher he/she needs to go the bathroom.
- Is able to go to the bathroom (either urinating or a bowel movement) on his/her own. This includes being able to remove clothing, sitting on the toilet, wiping himself/herself (without using an enormous amount of toilet paper), putting clothing back on, flushing the toilet, and washing and drying his/her hands.
- Is aware of the need to use the toilet without reminders from the teachers (although, teachers do make requests of children at various times of the day, for example, before or after meals, and before going out to the playground, etc.).
- Will not be in diapers or pull-ups at all. He/she must be in regular underwear.

Our staff is aware that accidents happen. That is why we ask you to keep a change of clothing at school. However, if your child has accidents every day they are in school, we do not consider your child to be potty trained.

If your child is ill and has diarrhea, they should be kept home until they have been episode-free for 24 hours.

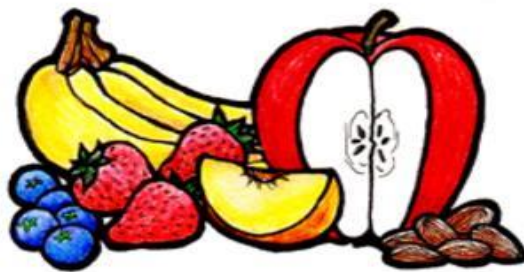
Clothing

- All students are required to wear the **school uniform** each day.
- **Sneakers** may be worn year-round.
- On **gym days**, students must wear the **gym uniform**.
- **Boys** must keep hair trimmed above the eyebrows.
- **Girls** must have **natural hair coloring** (no dyes, beads or highlights).
- Students are permitted to wear the **summer uniform** during the allotted dates and the **winter uniform** during the allotted dates.

It is also a good idea to label outer clothing with your child's name. An extra set of clothing will be needed (in case of an accident). Please help your child to learn to dress himself/herself to go outside and to remove and hang up outer clothing.

Snacks

Every child brings his / her own snack. All snacks must be nut free. No snacks that require a utensil.



Birthdays

If your child would like to celebrate his/her birthday you may send in a birthday treat snack (nut free), individually wrapper or provide a special non-edible treat for the class. All treats must be approved by our school nurse.



Health Policies

If your child exhibits any signs or symptoms of an oncoming illness, please keep him/her at home. Please notify the school if your child has contracted a communicable disease or any highly contagious illness.

Make sure your child is well before returning to school.

Please be considerate of other families.



Healthy Guidelines

- *A child must be fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- *A child taking antibiotics should not return to school until the medication has been taken for at least 24 hours.
- *A child who has vomiting or diarrhea should return to school only after he/she is symptom free for at least 48 hours.
- *Contact your doctor if there are any signs of eye infection such as a discharge or inflammation of the white of the eye.

Safety

All entrances are locked during school hours. If you need to enter the building, please ring the bell located on the school's main doors. It is school policy that all parents and visitors report to the office before entering any other area of the building.



Parent / Teacher Communications

We value your questions, ideas and concerns. You may email Mrs. Dusablon kdusablon@stleoschool.org or Mrs. Campbell - ccampbell@stleoschool.org.

Emails are checked frequently throughout the day. Please expect a timely response. Also, please contact through Parent Square