



AVE MARIA
ACADEMY

6899 Smoky Row Rd.
Columbus, Ohio 43235
www.avemariaspsjoa.org

PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

Inspired by Mary's 'Yes', we nurture each child's gifts -
mind, body and soul.



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MISSION STATEMENT

Rooted in our Catholic identity and our deep belief in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, our school exists to form disciples of Christ who grow in communion with God and one another, and who with their families practice an unwavering commitment to our faith and academic excellence.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious education is central to the Catholic school. Through transmission of Catholic doctrine and Christian living within the school, Ave Maria Academy Preschool aims to assist parents in the important task of the religious development of their children. Our teachers recognize that while parents truly are a child's first teacher, our role is to support, enrich, and nourish spiritual development. The aim of the religious program at Ave Maria Academy is to help develop Christian boys and girls of strong moral character with deep religious values. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd model and Theology of the Body adopted by the Catholic Dioceses of Columbus, guides our daily curriculum. Ave Maria Academy's religious program helps students grow in the awareness of the multiple relationships to God, self, community, and the world. From time to time, programs and projects directed to the service of others are brought to the attention of the children and they are encouraged to participate actively and generously in these activities. Faith is not a separate entity in the life of a Catholic and must be a part of all aspects of his or her life. Therefore, faith is integrated with other subjects that teach appreciation of and respect for all racial and ethnic groups, the values of peace and justice, social awareness, and moral responsibility. Faith must help the child to relate to all people of our world, accepting their differences, and appreciating their values as children of God.

GOALS

Our goals are to plan and structure play experiences in a Catholic environment that will further enhance and facilitate growth and development for each child. We strive to:

- provide a sense of self-worth as one of God's children while enhancing self-confidence and self-esteem in all learners
- encourage each student to express him/herself as an individual through language development and creativity
- encourage students to successfully function in a group of peers through cooperation, sharing, friendship, and values
- offer experiences that support and encourage emergent literacy
- provide concrete experiences with learning activities and problem-solving
- establish an environment that nurtures and values the development of children as individuals in community with other learners
- create an environment that acknowledges and continues the natural learning process, curiosity, and enthusiasm inherent in all young children
- model a cooperative and supportive partnership between children, teachers, and parents, establishing a positive connection between home and school.

These curriculum goals will be met through:

- a curriculum which is aligned to the State of Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards (can be found at www.education.ohio.gov/topics/early-learning) using the framework of The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, The Theology of the Body and the Catholic Diocese of Columbus Religion Graded Course of Study
- developmentally appropriate planned activities in the areas of language, math, science, social studies, religion, art, music, and motor development
- assessment using the Developmental Milestones Continuum adapted to include the area of religion
- a daily schedule plan that provides a balance of activities on the following dimensions: a) Indoor/Outdoor b) Large muscle/Small muscle c) Individual/Group d) Quiet/Active
- a staff willing to change planned activities according to the needs of children
- developmentally appropriate play materials that are arranged so children may select, remove, and replace with minimal assistance

The daily schedule of our preschool classes will include the following: Free Play - opportunities for fine motor development, creative experiences, science activities, dramatic play experiences and inside or outside (weather permitting) large motor development Clean Up/ Quiet Time Gathering/ Storytime/ Music- daily prayer, religion activities, finger plays, calendar/weather, language experiences, aesthetic awareness activities, songs (Christian and holiday songs included), group games,

traditional children's stories, nursery rhymes, and creative music Movement- opportunities for large muscle development.

STAFF

Ave Maria Academy Preschool Lead Teachers are qualified early childhood educators with extensive practical experience working with young children. Assistant teachers are chosen for their experience working with young children. All staff members are committed to professional development and attend in-service training on a yearly basis.

Staffing ratios at Ave Maria Academy are 1:12 for mixed aged 3 and 4 year old classes. The Ohio Department of Education's staffing standards are as follows: 1:12 for 3 and 4-year-olds (mixed age) and 1:14 for young 5-year-olds. Ave Maria Academy Preschool is in compliance with the standards developed for early childhood programs by the Ohio Department of Education. The ODE Early Learning and Development Standards are available for your review online at the ODE website.

ADMISSION

A child is considered eligible for this program if he/she is at least three years of age on or before September 30th and toilet trained before the start of school.

WITHDRAWAL

We expect that your child will be enrolled for the entire school year. If you intend to withdraw your child from preschool, we ask that you give at least two weeks written notice to the director prior to leaving. This allows us to inform the next family on the waiting list. This written notice is in addition to the withdrawal conference that must take place with the preschool director, school principal or the Pastor (as required by the admissions policy.)

REGISTRATION AND TUITION POLICIES

Please see the following page on our school website for our registration and tuition policies.

[HOW TO APPLY](#)

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Morning Classes -- 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM

Full Day Classes -- 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

Arrival

Parents will remain in the car. A teacher will come and assist your child out of the car. Students will be directed to the appropriate class line-up spot with their teacher. Once all students have arrived they will enter their classroom.

Late Arrivals

If you are late to drop off your child at preschool, you will need to park and go to the front office of the school building. Parents will wait in the vestibule and sign your child in. A preschool staff member will come and get your child and take them to their classroom. Please do not come to the classroom doors. Teachers will not be answering the doors for late arrivals. You must go to the school office.

Dismissal

Children will be dismissed beginning at 11:30 am for morning preschool or 3:30 pm for full day. A child will not be permitted to leave until a parent or other designated adult has come to pick him/her up. Should you have a change in pick-up plans please notify the preschool office in writing of the change. Any child, who plans to go home after school with someone other than the parents or appointed guardian, must have a permission slip signed by the parent. For pick-up please wait in a caravan along the front sidewalk and we will walk your child to you and put them in your car. Each family will be given a "Name" sign for use in your vehicle. This sign should be visible to the teacher as you move forward in the car line. Please pull forward and stop your car before buckling your child in their safety seat/seatbelt. This will facilitate a faster pick-up for everyone.

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