



NOTRE DAME
PRESCHOOL + PRE-K

Handbook

2026-2027

1401 GALLIA STREET
PORTSMOUTH, OH 45662

740.353.2354

In accordance with the Department of Education Standards regarding preschool programs, the policies governing Notre Dame Preschool are separate from those of Notre Dame Elementary and should be recognized and followed as such.

Welcome to Notre Dame Preschool + PreK! Our program was established in 1992 on the belief that positive early educational experiences in a Catholic environment are the stepping stones to a happy productive life. We believe that every child has the potential to learn and grow in a nurturing faith based environment.

Philosophy

We strive to provide a safe and loving atmosphere where children can explore, discover, and create through hands on experiences. Opportunities will be provided to use and share existing skills, and to build on those skills as they learn through play and developmentally appropriate practices. It is our goal to create a Catholic atmosphere of love and learning.

Curriculum

Young children learn through creative play, actively exploring, and manipulating their environment. Concrete experiences contribute to concept development in the preschool age child. Creative play sets the stage for self-discovery and self-realization. Play is the major vehicle for the development of the whole child in the areas of: cognition, social emotional skills, physical development, social interactions, and spiritual growth. The Notre Dame Preschool+ PreK strives to create a hands on learning experience to encourage growth in all areas of development.

Curriculum Goals

- To develop a close relationship with God
- To develop a positive self image
- To maintain positive social interactions
- To follow rules and limits within the classroom and school environment
- To enhance language skills
- To attend to task
- To develop self help skills

The before mentioned curriculum goals will be met through the following:

- A daily schedule planned by an early childhood professional to meet the individual needs and interests of the individual child while following a curriculum aligned to the Ohio Early Learning and Development Content Standards. Notre Dame Preschool uses the curriculum framework of the *Early Learning Course of Study* set forth by the Diocese in conjunction with the state approved curriculum, *Creative Curriculum*.
- Age appropriate activities planned in the areas of social emotional development, literacy, math, creative arts, science, social studies, religion, and motor skills.
- Availability of age appropriate materials and equipment.
- Provisions in the daily schedule for a balance of activities such as:

- Quiet/Active
- Individual/Group
- Large Muscle/Small Muscle
- Indoor/ Outdoor
- Emphasis and opportunities for child selected activities.
- Fostering interactions between children, and between adults and children.
- Providing realistic goals and planning for children based on the individual needs of the child.
- Managing daily routines through consistency and structure.

Developmental Progress will be monitored throughout the year by the preschool staff. The following screenings and assessments will be administered:

- ASQ,
- DIAL 3
- Early Learning Assessment

Results will be communicated during family conferences scheduled in the fall and spring or as needed to discuss family or developmental concerns.

Hours of Operations

Students may attend 3 days (T/W/TH) or 5 days (M-F) a week, full or half day.

Half Day 8:00-12:00

Full Day 8:00-2:00

Sample Daily Schedule

7:45- 8:00	Arrival/ Wash Hands
8:00- 8:20	Morning Meeting/ Math Circle
8:20- 9:20	Choice Time/ Small Group
9:20- 9:30	Clean Up/ Wash Hands
9:30- 9:45	Snack
9:45- 9:50	Clean Up
9:50- 10:10	Literacy Circle
10:10-10:40	Playground/Gross Motor
10:40-10:50	Wash Hands/ Prepare for Lunch

10:50-11:20	Lunch
11:20- 12:20	Choice Time/ Small Group (Dismissal for Half Day Students @12)
12:20-1:20	Rest Time
1:20-1:30	Closing Circle/ Prepare for Dismissal
1:30-2:00	Playground/Gross Motor
2:00	Dismissal

EXTRAS: Religion, Art, and Library

Staff

The Notre Dame Preschool + PreK staff are dedicated, qualified, and experienced Early Childhood Educators with degrees and/or college course work in the areas of child development. We have a strong commitment to provide a high quality education for children. Each staff member is trained in first aid, CPR, and recognition of communicable diseases. Each staff member is required to have a criminal background check, fingerprinting, and complete the Diocese program, *Protecting God's Children*. The faculty is expected to abide by the job descriptions and policies of the preschool program and guidelines outlined by the Ohio Department of Education.

Staff and Child Ratio

Three year olds: 1:11

Four year olds: 1:13

Admission

Notre Dame Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, disability, age, religion, national origin, color, race, or ethnicity.

Age

Notre Dame Preschool serves children ages 3-5. Children must turn 3 prior to the first day of school and be completely toilet trained. A copy of each child's official birth certificate is required to establish the child's age. We offer three classes:

- 1 Preschool classroom serving 3 year olds
- 2 PreK classrooms serving 4 and 5 year olds

Cumulative Record

Information on all children attending Notre Dame Preschool includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Child's name, date of birth, and address
- Parent/ Guardian's name, address, and telephone number
- Emergency contact information
- Pick up permission
- Parent emergency authorization
- Custody papers (where applicable)

Parents and Guardians have unlimited access to their child's educational records. Parents may contact Director, Kendra Rutman to obtain requested information.

Tuition Rates

	PAYMENT IN FULL	MONTHLY
3 day (half day)	2,800.00	233.33
3 day (full day)	3,500.00	291.67
5 day (half day)	3,800.00	316.67
5 day (full day)	4,500.00	375.00

Tuition payments are made through the FACTS management system. Tuition will be automatically deducted from your chosen account each month.

In lieu of sending in supplies, a one-time \$175 student fee will be added to each child's account to provide classroom materials and supports throughout the school year.

A one-time snack fee will be added to cover the cost of snack for the school year.

Withdrawals

In the event the student is involuntarily withdrawn due to transfer of parents, tuition paid ahead will be refunded or prorated.

Tuition will be charged for all months regardless of days missed for vacation, weather, or appointments.

In case of an extended illness (2 weeks or more), a tuition waiver will be considered upon recommendation of a physician.

Any tuition changes will be reflected per quarter, not day by day.

If you intend to withdraw your child from preschool, you **MUST** give 2 weeks written notification to the Preschool Director prior to leaving.

Arrival and Dismissal

You are required to drop your child off at the elementary entrance no earlier than 7:45. You may not drop your child off in the parking lot. Caregivers must walk your child to a Preschool + PreK staff member.

Preschool + PreK dismissal is at 2:00. If your child has a Notre Dame Elementary sibling, they must be picked up no later than 2:15. A \$10 latchkey fee will be applied to any student not picked up on time.

Preschool + PreK staff will only release children to adults designated on the pick-up list. Please notify staff of any changes in pickup. A photo ID must be provided for anyone new picking up.

Please call the main office at 740.353.2354 if you are late or your child will be absent.

Immunizations

In accordance with The Diocese of Columbus Immunization Policy No. 5116.00, Notre Dame Preschool + PreK's immunization policy is as follows:

Notre Dame Preschool + PreK requires immunization for admission, with the exception of those instances in which immunization would put a child with medical contraindications at risk, because Catholic moral teachings urge parents/guardians to immunize their children against serious infectious diseases given the grave risk of non-vaccination to other children, pregnant women, and the population as a whole.

Ohio state law requires all children entering preschool must complete the following immunizations and vaccinations prescribed for their age group. These include the following:

- DPT
- Polio
- MMR
- HIB
- Hepatitis B

Health Form

A health form completed by the child's pediatrician /physician must be signed and returned to school prior to the first day.

Administration of Medicine

Preschool staff does not administer medication of any kind. Should special circumstances arise, we will follow guidelines set out by the Ohio Department of Education. A school nurse will be present in our building daily to assist with the administration of medicine.

Medical Emergency and Accident Management Policy

Notre Dame Preschool will take action in the event of an emergency or accident.

1. Parents/Caregivers must fill out the emergency authorization form prior to the first day of school.
2. The child shall be transported by the administrator to emergency department or dental office as designated by the parent in the emergency authorization form.
3. The parent or guardian shall be notified immediately in the event of an accident, injury, or illness.
4. If your child is injured while in our care, an incident report will be completed and you will receive a copy.

Safety Policy

- No child shall be left alone or unsupervised.
- In case of emergency, parent/caregiver will be notified.
- Fire drills, tornado drills, and lock down drill will be completed monthly or as specified.
- All classrooms must post emergency routes and staff responsibilities in emergency.

Field Trip Policy

- Each child must have a signed permission form.
- A first aid box meeting the standards of the Department of Education shall be available on the trip.
- A staff member trained in first aid must be available on the trip.
- Staff must carry emergency forms, necessary health records, and emergency authorization forms on the field trip.

Update of contact information

If at any time the parent or caregiver changes addresses, numbers, or employers, please notify us promptly so that we may update your child's emergency information.

Communicable Diseases

It is important that parents and caregivers exercise extreme caution when a child presents signs of illness and not send their child to school. The following shall be recognized as signs of illness:

- COVID symptoms
- Temperature over 100 degrees
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Nasal drainage
- Difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Strep throat
- Yellowish color of skin or eyes
- Untreated ringworm or pinworms

- Undiagnosed or untreated skin rashes
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasite
- Stiff neck
- Conjunctivitis
- Unusual color of urine or stool

If a child presents any of these symptoms while at school, they will need to be picked up **immediately**. A doctor's note is required for return to school in some instances. Families, caregivers, and staff must notify the school if their child has been diagnosed or exposed to COVID-19. We will work with the local health department and follow recommendations to ensure proper procedures are followed.

In all cases of illness, children must be symptom free **WITHOUT medication** for 24 hours before returning to school. In the case of conjunctivitis/ pink eye, Preschool + PreK children may not return until their eyes free of drainage/discharge.

Other Health Information

Notre Dame Preschool + PreK is a smoke free environment. Parents and caregivers are not permitted to smoke on the property.

Preschool + PreK staff are mandated reporters and will report any suspected abuse to the Children's Service Agency.

Staff and Parent Interaction Goals and Policies

Notre Dame Preschool + PreK staff will work in partnership with parents and communicate regularly in order to build a positive working relationship. This relationship is based on the concept that parents are, and should be the principle influence in their children's lives. Information about the program will be given to new and prospective families. This includes written descriptions of philosophies and policies.

Provisions are made to orient children to the preschool program. These are to include, but not limited to a general parent meeting and open house.

- Parents shall be informed on school events through FACTS Mgmt, weekly newsletter, notes home, Class DoJo, and/or phone calls.
- Children's developmental progress is formally reviewed and reported to parents 3 times per year via progress report on 11/15, 2/15, & 5/15.
- Conferences are held twice a year or as needed to discuss children's progress or any difficulties at home or school. Parent/Teachers conferences will be held in the fall and spring.
- We welcome any suggestions, questions, and comments concerning the preschool program.

Referral Policy and Special Education

Notre Dame Preschool will conduct developmental screenings on each child within 60 days of enrollment. The screenings will consist of ASQ and Dial-4 parent questionnaires, as well as the Dial 4 preschool screener. In the event the program staff feel that an assessment for additional services would benefit the child, the teacher and director will gather documentation from developmental screenings and classroom observations. A conference will be scheduled with the child's parents/caregivers, teacher, and director to discuss the documentation and possibility of referral.

If the family is in agreement of the referral, the screening results would then be communicated to the Early Childhood Contact Person (ECCP) at the district of residence for the student. The ECCP would contact the parents/guardians to discuss the possibility of pursuing a multi-faceted evaluation to determine if the child would qualify for special education services. If warranted, an ETR (evaluation team report) and an IEP (individualized education plan) would be completed by the child's home district in accordance with IDEA requirements.

Jon Peterson Program

According to the Ohio Department of Education:

The Jon Peterson scholarship program gives the parents of children with a disability the choice to send their child to a special education program other than the one operated by the school district of residence to receive their special education services outlined in the child's individualized education program (IEP).

Notre Dame Preschool will provide early intervention services as recommended by the IEP. Such services include, but are not limited to, developmental intervention by licensed Intervention Specialist, speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, and preschool aide services.

Progress reports will be sent home quarterly. An annual review of progress will take place prior to the expiration of the IEP to discuss progress and create new goals for the child's IEP. The IEP may be amended at any time, with approval of the caregivers and educational committee, to reflect any necessary progress, changes, or additions to services provided.

Please contact Director, Kendra Rutman, if you feel your child may qualify for the above mentioned services.

Behavior Management Policy

Our goal for discipline focuses on the development and maintenance of self control. Limits and structures are developed to promote a safe and functioning environment.

The following positive guidance techniques will be used to maintain limits and promote self regulation.

- Encourage children to use problem solving and reflective listening
- Use positive suggestions so children know what is expected
- Give child opportunity to make choices when appropriate
- Provide techniques where children can effectively communicate wants and needs
- Redirection
- Calm down space available in each classroom to promote self regulation

Discipline will be fair, immediate, and consistent. Staff will work with parents and caregivers on a behavior plan that fits the child's individual needs. **In the event a student becomes too disruptive and safety concerns arise, the child's program days/ hours may be modified.** If all the available resources and strategies have been exhausted, the child may be dismissed from the program. We will work with parents through conferences and incorporating positive behavior techniques to ensure the outcome is in the best interest of the child and the other children in the program.

Parental Concerns

A parent or caregiver with concerns regarding policies, inspection reports, and/or practices should access the lead teacher or administrator, Kendra Rutman. Parents with problems unresolved through these channels have the option of contacting an ombudsman, Maria Phillips, at the Diocesan Office at 614.221.5829, or the State Department of Education- early Childhood Division at 614.466.3641.

General Information

The first day of school may be difficult for your child. It is usually better if goodbyes are kept short. A few tears are normal the first few weeks. If separation anxiety continues for a longer period of time, the teacher will work closely with the parents to find a solution. If there are any changes in the home environment, please let us know so we can best assist your child. All information will be kept confidential.

Snacks, Milk, and Lunch

Notre Dame Preschool will be providing morning snacks daily to children in attendance. We provide weekly menus and follow the nutrition guidelines set out by the state. Students may either purchase hot lunch for \$3.00 or pack their lunch. Milk is available during snack and lunch times. Children will be permitted to bring in a filled water bottle and may refill as needed at our refill stations. *Only send water in your child's water bottle.*

One time snack fee: \$100 - 3 day students
 \$150 - 5 day students

Clothing

Clothing that is comfortable, weather appropriate, and free of complicated fasteners is best. A child's learning and play can be messy, so please dress your child accordingly. Tennis shoes are the safest footwear for activities.

Weather Emergencies

Notre Dame Preschool+ PreK will follow the Notre Dame Elementary School's plan in the event of snow or weather delays or cancelations. Cancelations and delays will be announced on WSAZ. Caregivers will also receive a phone call to their home and/or cell providing important information via the One Call system.

2 hour delay drop off begins at 9:45 for Preschool + PreK. Half day students may still attend if we are on a 2 hour delay.

Visitation/ Volunteer Policy

Visitors must be scheduled by appointment only.

In order to volunteer, you must complete the Protecting God's Children course and a background check. Volunteers will be scheduled ahead of time.

Governing Board

The governing board of Notre Dame Preschool is the Notre Dame Schools Board of Trustees which functions in an advisory capacity to the principal and pastor of the Vicariate.

School's Right to Amend

Notre Dame Administration and/or Preschool retain the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be notified of any changes in writing.

COVID-19 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RISK

We, the parent(s) and student, acknowledge and agree that, as a student at Notre Dame Preschool and as parent(s) of that student, entering in the school or being on the premises, having personal contact with teachers, classmates, and other Notre Dame staff, involves a certain degree of risk, namely of parent(s) and/or student acquiring a communicable disease, including COVID-19, and then potentially passing it on to others, including family members. Due to the highly contagious nature of COVID-19, the characteristics of the virus, and the close proximity of students, teachers, and staff at Notre Dame, there is an elevated risk of the student contracting the disease simply by being in the building, on the premises, or at any school function. The same is true for the parent(s) of a student at Notre Dame.

By signing the Handbook Agreement, we acknowledge and agree that after carefully considering the risks involved, and having the opportunity to discuss these risks with any healthcare professional(s) of our choosing, we voluntarily and willingly accept those risks and acknowledge that returning to in-person classes and other in-person Notre Dame Preschool functions is the choice of each family, including ours. If student or parent(s) who visit Notre Dame have underlying health concerns which may place them at greater risk of contracting any communicable disease, including COVID-19, we acknowledge and agree that we will consult with a health care professional before student or parent(s) return to Notre Dame, attend any Notre Dame function, or visit Notre Dame. Moreover, we acknowledge that while adherence to safety and precautionary measures (e.g., social distancing guidelines, facemasks, handwashing, etc.) may reduce possible exposure to the risk of contracting a communicable disease, the possibility of serious illness and death remains. We do hereby accept and assume sole responsibility for any illness acquired by a student or parent(s) while at Notre Dame or any Notre Dame function, including possible infection with COVID-19.

We further acknowledge, understand, and agree that we have obligations to the school and parish, its employees/staff members, students, and others to take certain precautions and make certain disclosures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as outlined by the State of Ohio and the applicable local public health department. Additionally, we agree that neither student nor parent(s) will come to Notre Dame Preschool if in the last 14 days, student or parent(s) has had prolonged (more than 10 minutes) close contact (within 6 feet) with anyone, including a family member, diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19.

NOTRE DAME PRESCHOOL + PREK POLICY PERMISSION FORM

Please read the Notre Dame Preschool + PreK handbook online at <http://www.notredameschools.com/preschool-handbook/>



I _____,
(parent name)

Please **Initial** the following:

_____ I have reviewed the Parent Handbook and policies related to my child's enrollment in Notre Dame Preschool, and agree to comply with these terms in the handbook.

_____ I have reviewed the COVID acknowledgement of risk statement and agree to these terms.

_____ I have reviewed the Discipline Policy laid out in the Parent Handbook and agree to comply with these terms.

_____ I give my child permission to be screened by educational professionals. Screenings include, but may not be limited to: developmental, speech and language, hearing, and vision.

_____ I agree to have my child photographed and videotaped for educational purposes.

_____ I agree to allow my child's photograph to be posted on Notre Dame School's website or Facebook page.

_____ I understand if my child is not picked up by the designated time, I will be charged a \$10 late fee.

Signature

Date