Mercymount
Country Day School

Preschool Handbook

2017
WELCOME!

Welcome to Mercymount Country Day School Preschool Program. We hope the following information concerning our school will help answer any questions you may have about our philosophy, methods, policies and programs.

ACCREDITATION

Mercymount Country Day School is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and by the Rhode Island Department of Education, to conduct educational programs for Preschool children. Many of the school’s policies are required by the state, the Department of Education and the Diocese of Providence.

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

In Mercymount’s Preschool program, we strive to create a pleasant, safe and challenging environment for each child by providing a variety of learning experiences and activities. We endeavor to give the children an opportunity to think, create, explore and discover the world around them as well as the gift of their own uniqueness.

We also hope to instill in our children a Christian way of life based upon Christ’s invitation to always do the loving thing.

The children are encouraged to grow spiritually, mentally, socially, emotionally and academically through proper guidance, careful selection of materials, and a well-planned program.

It is our aim to provide a loving environment where self-confidence, along with a positive self-image, is realized.

Mindful of the maxim that “nothing grows unless you love it,” we seek to create an atmosphere of love and learning where the goals and objectives of our Mission Statement may be brought to fruition.

Through play-based learning, children learn the skills that support their learning in future years.

MISSION STATEMENT

Faithful to Catholic educational tradition, Mercymount Country Day School sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, ensures the development of strong academic skills, nurtures creative abilities, creates a sense of community and promotes social responsibility. In the spirit of Catherine McAuley, we affirm that each child is a unique gift of a loving God, open to God’s presence in others and in all creation.
ENROLLMENT

To be accepted for enrollment at Mercymount’s Preschool, a child must be three (3) years of age by September 1st of the given year AND completely toilet trained. “Pull-ups” or diapers are not acceptable. The child’s birth certificate and baptismal certificate must be presented at the time of registration. “Child Outreach” Screening is done through the Cumberland School Department.

The State of Rhode Island requires Preschool children to have all necessary inoculations; health and immunization forms must be filled out by your physician before entering school. Required forms and immunization requirements are posted on our web site at http://www.mercymount.org/students/school-services/healthservices/. Students are also required to present evidence of lead screening. All medical forms must be received prior to the start of school.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school year is from the end of August to mid-June. The Preschool session begins at 8:45 a.m. through 2:50 p.m., and is a five or three-day program. If a three-day program is chosen, no rearrangement of days is permissible, including holidays, sick days, vacation days, etc. After Care is available from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. and is included in the tuition.

Children should arrive at school 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the school day.

TUITION INFORMATION

Tuition for 2017 - 2018 is based upon the number of days chosen. Arrangements may be made for FACTS payments through the Finance Office.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Tuition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-day</td>
<td>$9,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-day</td>
<td>$6,300</td>
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FOOD

Your child will need to bring a lunch and drink each day which will be eaten in the Preschool classroom. Students do not take part in the cafeteria lunch program. Children should also bring one nutritious snack and juice box or water each day. (No peanut or tree nut products, please.) Those participating in the After Care program will be provided with a second snack.

CLOTHING

Preschool students are not required to wear uniforms, however, appropriate clothing should be worn for the day. Sneakers or shoes are a must. No flip-flops or sandals for safety reasons. The students will have a physical education class each week. Sneakers are required on that day.

Preschool students should leave a complete change of clothing (shirt, pants, underwear and socks) at school in case of spills or toileting accidents. The clothing will be stored in the child’s cubby for his/her personal use.
NAPS/REST

Preschool children will have a one-hour rest period every day after lunch. Children are not required to sleep but may choose to look at books quietly on their cot while their classmates rest. Please provide a small blanket for your child. These blankets will also be stored in the child’s cubby and will be sent home on Fridays for washing. Please return them on Monday. Cots are provided.

SICKNESS AND ABSENCE

If on a given day, your child is absent due to illness or will be late, please notify the school at 401-333-5919 or email the office and/or your child’s teacher as soon as possible. If your child has a cold, runny nose or sore throat, he/she should be kept home. In the event your child becomes sick during the school day (fever above 100°, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat), you will be notified by the school nurse and required to take your child home. Students must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school. Students absent for 5 or more days need a doctor’s note to return to school. Any child with an injury needs a doctor’s note with specific dates in order to be excluded from gym class and playground activities.

MEDICINES

In the event that it is necessary for the school nurse to administer prescribed medication, it must be in a properly marked container from the pharmacy, accompanied by a note from the parent and a signed doctor’s order. This includes epi-pens for food or bee allergies which must be brought to the nurse on the first day of school. Required forms are available on the school website.

OVER-THE-COUNTER COUGH SYRUP AND COLD MEDICATION ARE NOT DISPENSED DURING SCHOOL HOURS.

RELEASE

If your child is to be released at dismissal by someone other than the parent, we require that a written request be made in advance by the parent. In an emergency (car trouble, etc.), no child will be released to anyone unless confirmation is obtained by the school from the parent either by telephone or an email to the Office. A copy of the individual’s driver’s license must be given to the teacher and/or Office to be kept on file.

TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS/CONFERENCES

Once a year, at the end of the first trimester, a parent-teacher conference will be held. You will be invited to visit the school and be given the opportunity to discuss your child’s progress with his/her teacher. If at any other time you wish to speak to the classroom teacher, please call the school or email the teacher to set up an appointment.

A Preschool newsletter will be sent home with your child each Friday and will contain pertinent information with an overview for the upcoming week. The information will pertain only to the Preschool program. The Preschool teacher is also enrolled in www.plusportals.com/mercymount; important information will be posted on this site. Please register in order to receive updates as they are posted.
VACATIONS AND SNOW DAYS

The yearly calendar will be included in the September PIE Memo; is it also available on the web site. In the event of a delayed opening or school closing, Mercymount communicates the change via the school’s emergency notification system, email and/or the local media.

CURRICULUM

The Preschool play-based curriculum is based upon the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS). The RIELDS were created to guide parents and teachers in what a child should know and be able to do before entering pre-kindergarten. The standards also align with the K thru 12 Common Core State Standards. Based upon research in the early education field, the standards were created to help parents and teachers prepare appropriate learning activities for children from birth to age five (5).

The standards are broken down into 9 domains: Physical Health and Motor Development, Social and Emotional Development, Language Development, Literacy, Cognitive Development, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Creative Arts. At Mercymount, we also include Religion as a domain.

Religion
The purpose of the Religion program at Mercymount is to provide students with a knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and to deepen their relationship with God. Using the standards set forth by the Diocese of Providence and the Sisters of Mercy, students learn about the Catholic faith through Scripture stories and Mercymount’s religious education program. Students will:

- learn traditional prayers
- practice Christian values of faith, charity, honesty, love and mercy
- attend prayer services and Mass on the Holy Days
- share in the collections for the poor and those in need

Physical Health and Motor Development
The purpose of this physical health and development domain is to provide students with the opportunity to develop healthy minds and bodies. Students will:

- Learn health and safety practices
- Develop large muscle control, strength and coordination
- Develop small muscle control, strength and coordination

Social and Emotional Development
The purpose of the social and emotional development domain is to encourage the student to form positive relationships with adults and peers. Students will:

- Learn to resolve conflicts verbally
- learn acceptable group behavior (i.e. sharing, turn taking, being a good friend)
- learn to relate with peers and adults
- learn awareness of other’s feelings
- develop self confidence
- create a good self image
- learn to communicate their feelings in socially acceptable ways
- learn self-help skills to become independent of parental help
- follow classroom rules and routines
**Language Development**
The purpose of the language domain is to help students to develop both expressive and receptive language. Students will:
- learn to speak clearly and in complete sentences
- build vocabulary with correct usage of grammar
- listen when others are speaking
- learn other conversational rules

**Literacy**
The purpose of the literacy domain is to provide a foundation from which children may learn to read and write. Students will:
- learn the sounds of spoken language
- identify letters and make letter-sound connections
- demonstrate an awareness that print carries meaning and spoken words can be represented by text
- increase comprehension of a variety of literature
- demonstrate an understanding of writing as a means of communication
- begin to learn writing skills

**Cognitive Development**
The purpose of the cognitive development domain is to provide students with the opportunity to increase their memory, attention, inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility. Students will:
- learn to hold information in their mind
- use logic and reasoning to solve problems
- increase their attention span and inhibitory control
- learn to adjust to changes

**Mathematics**
The purpose of the mathematics domain is to provide students with an introduction to the most basic of mathematical concepts. Students will:
- engage in early math concepts, counting, matching, and simple addition and subtraction
- become familiar with a simple graph
- count by ones to 20 and match quantities, up to 10 with numerals
- compare sets using appropriate language
- identify, describe and reproduce patterns
- sort and classify objects
- name, describe, sort and draw two-dimensional shapes
- understand concepts related to the calendar (recognize days of the week, months of the year, and yesterday, today and tomorrow)
- rote count 1 to 20 and beyond
- write numbers 1 to 10
- identify numbers 1 to 10
Science
The purpose of the science domain is to encourage the students to understand the world through experiments and hands-on activities. Students will:

- learn to plan and carry out investigations
- observe cause and effect
- to collect and evaluate data
- to explore the characteristics of objects that are living and non-living

Social Studies
The purpose of the social studies domain is to enable students to understand that they are part of a family, the larger community around them, and to recognize and respect the similarities and differences between all peoples. Students will:

- verbalize “place names” such as their address, city, state and country
- learn about community helpers and their duties
- develop an understanding of their own “uniqueness”
- appreciate the similarities and differences of other cultures: their foods, clothing and homes, etc.

Creative Arts
The creative arts domain allows the students a way to express themselves with a variety of media. Students will:

- learn colors and experiment with mixing
- identify and describe textures
- use a variety of drawing tools
- experiment with paint, Play Doh or clay
- practice tracing, cutting, and gluing
- create 3-dimensional art, collages, and drawings