

## **Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Preschool Curriculum and Activities**

Young children develop in a predictable sequence; however, each child develops at his/ her own rate. Early childhood instruction must be both age appropriate and individual appropriate. Age appropriate instruction meets the needs of a particular age span. Individual appropriate instruction focuses on the unique abilities and characteristics of a child of group of children. Developmentally appropriate experiences, interactions, and environment are designed to support the growth and development of children.

The Diocese of Youngstown Preschool Curriculum supports the development of the whole child: spiritual, cognitive, emotional, social, and physical. The Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards establish a framework for instruction that meets the needs of all young children. In developing our preschool curriculum, we pay close attention to:

- Children's existing knowledge, skills, and interests
- Relationships and connections between areas of development and learning
- Children's unique learning profiles and patterns of development
- Application of skills to real life situations
- What we know about how children learn
- Designing experiences for children which provide opportunities for depth and understanding in their explorations
- The innate passion that children have for exploring the world.

### **Spiritual**

Catholic prayer, traditions, and values are integrated into the daily life of the preschool classroom. Stories of God's love through scripture and the Diocese of Youngstown Curriculum for Catechesis provide the foundation for religious instruction.

### **Physical**

Self-help skills, safety and nutrition are part of each day. Large muscle is developed through physical education activities. Small motor and eye-hand coordination are developed through such activities as cutting, pasting, painting, pegboard, stringing, and play dough.

### **Social and Emotional**

Social skills are developed through peer and adult interaction with the teacher serving as a constant model. Attitudes of social acceptance towards peers and those that may be different, cooperation with others, listening, accepting responsibility, and finishing a task are shown and reinforced by the staff. Children will be helped in coping with peer interaction and are not expected to act beyond their age

level capabilities. Learning to recognize and handle feelings and the feelings of others permeates the interactions in the classroom.

### **Cognitive**

The cognitive skills that are stressed in the preschool program include science and math, reading and literacy, social studies, music, and art. Sensory training is developed through hands-on experience, and memory is developed through the retelling of stories and events.

Every aspect of the preschool classroom's day is designed to meet the *Early Learning and Development Standards*:

- Daily routines
- Investigations/units of study that are designed intentionally from student interest as well as skill and concept development
- Learning centers where the children may move about freely and at their own pace to explore and experiment.
- Large and small group experiences including puzzles, games, fingerplays, songs, stories, poems, circle time and discussions.