

Preschool Program Philosophy

Early childhood should be a time of warmth, security, exploration, and discovery. The faith development of a person begins in the early years of life; thus, preschool education is an important part of total Catholic education. Catholic preschools, in cooperation with parents, are an effective means of teaching the Gospel message to young children. Preschool programs support the family in the growth and development of their preschool children. Diocese of Youngstown preschools are communities of learners in an environment of respect for children, families, teachers, and staff.

Young children are active, social individuals who benefit from exploring the world around them. Each is a unique person with individual growth and development patterns, individual preferences for activities, and different family and cultural backgrounds. Children learn best when they are active participants in their own learning, when their curiosity to know influence classroom planning, and when their investigations are hands-on.

A Diocese of Youngstown Preschool program will provide an atmosphere in which young children can work and play together in a child-centered environment utilizing a developmentally appropriate curriculum. Learning experiences will be provided to stimulate curiosity, to develop self-confidence and independence, and to provide literacy and other readiness skills needed in preparation for kindergarten. Since children are natural scientists and are motivated to solve problems, our programs support science and math instruction through meaningful and connected experiences with integration of the arts.

Meaningful “play” is children’s work. Emphasis will be on learning which permanently affects the child’s total development and personality. This includes spiritual, emotional, physical, cognitive, and social development as well as the development of self-esteem within each child. The unique learning styles of children are considered, and children are encouraged to make choices, accept the consequences, and participate actively in learning. Intentional learning experiences and a child-centered environment will help build a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

Preschool Program Goals and Objectives.

1. To develop an awareness of God’s love for each individual person and that each person is a unique child of God.
2. To introduce Scripture through storytelling experiences.

3. To nurture the concept of the loving goodness of God through adult example and an awareness of nature.
4. To develop trust within the child toward adults outside the home setting.
5. To communicate closely with parents to better understand the individual child and his or her special gifts and needs.
6. To provide a warm, loving, supportive atmosphere in which children feel a sense of excitement about learning and discovery and their natural curiosity is allowed to flourish.
7. To foster within the framework of the Catholic School community the child's ability to get along with others, to respect property, and to understand the importance of rules for work and play.
8. To encourage cooperation in learning and problem-solving and finding peaceful solutions to problems, while respecting the rights of each person.
9. To develop a sense of self-worth and self-esteem through the realization that people are the most important of all God's creations.
10. To increase independence and self-confidence in the child's ability to make sense of the surrounding world.
11. To provide meaningful play experiences to develop positive social, emotional, and language skills.
12. To provide materials and experiences that are interesting, meaningful and developmental in reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, and science, and that are geared to the age of the child.
13. To encourage creativity and self-expression through various media and materials.
14. To foster a positive attitude toward school and develop a love of learning as a foundation for a successful school career.