

**Our Lady of Mount Carmel School
PreKindergarten Program**



**PARENT HANDBOOK
2017-2018**

**225 East Ashland Street
Doylestown, PA 18901**

**215-348-5907
www.ourladymtcarmelschool.org**

MISSION

Our Lady of Mount Carmel School is a Catholic elementary school proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ. Through prayer, example and instruction, students learn about the person of Jesus, worship as members of the Church community, and offer service to the poor and needy. The faculty and staff at OLMC School seek to educate the whole child through strong academic programs and to enrich the total person through co-curricular and extracurricular activities. We strive to provide students with a quality education that will lead to a life of service in the community.

PHILOSOPHY

Our Lady of Mount Carmel PreKindergarten views children as unique individuals deeply loved by their parents and by God, who have been entrusted to our care. The children are guided to develop a sense of self-esteem and confidence in their abilities and to view themselves and every other child as capable individuals.

A developmentally appropriate curriculum fosters the child's growth in all areas: spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional and physical. Our program aims to be responsive to individual abilities and needs while also challenging the child's interest and understanding. Classroom environments are child-centered and offer active exploration with materials and interaction with other children and adults.

The family is viewed as an integral part of our school community and interaction between parents, teachers and administrators is considered an essential element.

PROGRAM

The PreK Program fosters growth and development through structured activities, group and independent work, and purposeful play. The children are instructed as a whole group, then as individuals, to meet the diverse needs of each student.

Class size is limited and is staffed with a full-time teacher and a teacher's aide. The PreK program consists of five half-day and five full-day classes. Formative religious experiences permeate all aspects of the program. These include: daily prayer, Bible stories, religious songs and celebrations of the liturgical seasons.

ADMISSION POLICY

Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origins to all of the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students.

GENERAL ADMISSION POLICIES

1. The parents/guardians and their children agree to cooperate and uphold the rules and regulations of the school.
2. The parents/guardians (parishioners and non-parishioners) will pay tuition according to the parish tuition agreement.
3. The parents/guardians of non-Catholic students will allow their children to study the Catholic faith and to participate in all services according to the school calendar.
4. The child must be 4 years of age on or before August 31 and be able to use the lavatory facilities independently. **No pull - ups are permitted.**
5. Prior to admission the following documents must be presented:
 - Original Birth Certificate (a copy will be made)
 - Immunization Record (currently dated)
 - Registration Form and Deposit
6. Parents are asked to inform school officials immediately of any testing (psychological, physical, learning disability, etc.) that has been done for the child. All information will be held in confidence.

ABSENCE

Parents are asked to call the school to report the absence of their child and to state the reason for the absence. This call can be made prior to 8:30 AM and a message can be left on the school answering machine.

ACCIDENT

Parents will be notified immediately in the event of a sudden illness or an accident of a serious nature. Please be certain that the school office and the classroom teacher have the current information for emergency contacts.

ARRIVALS

Children may arrive at school between 8:20 AM and 8:35 AM. Parents may drop off their child in the school car loop lot only, where they will be met by the PreK teacher and/or teacher's aide and escorted as a group to the classroom. The doors to the school will be locked at 8:35 AM for your child's safety throughout the school day.

LATE ARRIVALS: It is important for all children to arrive at the designated time. When a child arrives late, it disrupts the class in progress and it is unsettling to the child. Parents are asked to make every effort to arrive promptly before the beginning of class at 8:35 AM. If your child's arrival is delayed please check them in at the school office, where they will be escorted to the PreK classroom.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Children will be guided to learn that the rules of their school and individual classrooms are for the good of every child. They will learn:

1. To respect and to be considerate of others
2. To obey those in authority
3. To respect and to care for school property and the personal property of other students

CALENDAR

A tentative yearly calendar is posted on the school website (www.ourladymtcarmelschool.org) at the beginning of each year. An additional monthly calendar is posted in order to note dates and times of events for each month. The PreKindergarten calendar will follow the K-8 school calendar.

C.A.R.E.S.

(Children Are Receiving Extended Services)

The OLMC C.A.R.E.S. program is available before school and after school only to children registered at OLMC School. The morning session runs from 7:00 to 8:20 AM. The afternoon session begins at 3:15 PM. and promptly ends at 6:15 PM. C.A.R.E.S. is not available on school holidays or snow days and follows the OLMC School schedule from September through June.

There is a \$25.00 non-refundable registration fee for anyone interested in using this service on a regular or as-needed basis. Children will not be admitted without prior registration.

Tuition for the C.A.R.E.S. program varies for full-time or part-time enrollment and can be found via the C.A.R.E.S. link on the school website. A late pickup fee will be assessed at the rate of \$2.00/child/minute after 6:15 PM. and paid directly to the C.A.R.E.S. staff member on duty. A \$10.00 fee will be charged for returned checks.

CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER

Change of names of parent(s), student(s), marital status, custody, address, home phone numbers, cell phone numbers and work phone numbers should be reported to both the office and the

classroom teacher so that records are kept current. These numbers are used in the event that we need to contact you during the day regarding your child.

CHANGE OF PROGRAM/WITHDRAWAL FROM A PROGRAM

Changes in a child's program need to be communicated to the principal. It is strongly suggested that before a decision is made, dialogue take place with the teacher. The principal is also available to assist in the decision making process. When a decision is made, parents are asked to inform the classroom teacher and to submit their request in writing to the principal. Requests for changes in programs during the last months of the school year will not be honored.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ARTICLES

PreKindergarten students wear the OLMC School physical education uniform (navy shorts/sweatpants with emblem, light blue t-shirt/navy blue sweatshirt with emblem, and white crew socks) as it is comfortable, practical and appropriate for painting, tumbling, and playing. Comfortable and safe footwear is important. Open-toed shoes or clogs are inappropriate. Uniforms can be purchased through our vendor Flynn and O'Hara. Contact flynnohara.com or 1-800-411-4122 for the nearest location. The school also has a uniform exchange which can be accessed on a first come, first served basis through the school office.

Children should have a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing at school, including underwear and a uniform (shorts/sweatpants, t-shirt/sweatshirt and socks). These items should be placed in a plastic bag and labeled with your child's name. If it is necessary to use any of this clothing for your child, please launder it and return it the next day. Please clearly label all personal articles with your child's first and last name. Toys of a violent nature and electronics are prohibited.

USE OF CHANGE OF CLOTHING

Should a child's clothing become soiled as a result of becoming wet or muddy from play, an adult will assist your child in changing his or her clothing in the presence of another adult. Should a child's clothing become soiled from urine, an adult will assist your child in changing his or her clothing in the presence of another adult. Should a child's clothing become soiled from a bowel movement, a member of the staff will telephone you or someone on your emergency list to come in to change his or her clothing. The child will remain in the office until someone arrives.

All children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves as much as possible. If a spare set of clothing is not available for your child, you will be called and asked to provide a set as soon as possible. Once the child's clothes are changed, he or she will be able return to class.

COMMUNICATION

Prior to the beginning of the school year, information is prepared for each family. Packets will be mailed during the month of August and pertinent information will be posted on our website, which is updated frequently on the HOME page, at www.ourladymtcarmelschool.org.

Back-to-School Night is held in early September. This evening presents the opportunity for parents to come to school, meet their child's teacher(s) and become acquainted with the curriculum of the grade in which their child is enrolled. Due to time constraints on this evening, individual conferences cannot be held.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

School children shall be excluded from school for the indicated period of time for the following diseases:

- Chicken Pox - 6 days from onset of last crop of vesicles
- German Measles - 4 days from onset of rash
- Measles - 6 days from onset of rash
- Mumps - 9 days from onset or until swelling subsides
- Whooping Cough - 4 weeks from onset of illness
- Scarlet Fever including Respiratory Streptococcal Infection (strep throat) - 7 days from onset
- Acute Contagious Conjunctivitis (pink eye) Trachoma - 24 hours from institution of appropriate therapy
- Impetigo - until judged non-infective by child's physician
- Ringworm, Scabies - until judged non-infective by child's physician
- Lice - until judged non-infective by child's physician

Children should not return to PreK until they are fever-free for 24 hours.

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN

Parents need to inform the school when legal custody of their child(ren) resides with one parent. The parent should furnish the school with a copy of the custody decree that will assist the principal and teachers in making effective decisions as the need to do so arises. Custodial parents likewise need to inform the school and provide documentation when restraining orders are in effect.

Parents and/or guardians who have legal custody of the student may attend school meetings, participate in educational decisions and review educational records regarding that student. Persons who do not have legal custody (including those with visitation rights but not legal custody) have no such educational rights and may not participate in these matters.

DEPARTURES

The half-day sessions will be dismissed at 12:00 Noon and the full-day session will be dismissed at 3:15 PM. PreK students will be escorted as a group by the teacher and/or teacher's aide to the school auditorium for dismissal. Parents can pick up their child at the auditorium via the car loop lot. No child will be dismissed until the parent is seen by the teacher or the teacher's aide. No child will be released to any other adult without a signed, written note given to the PreK teacher by the parent.

EARLY DEPARTURES: If a child must leave school early, a note from the parent must be given to the PreK teacher in the morning upon arrival. Parents, or an authorized person, must come to the classroom to pick up the child. We discourage early departures due to the disruption caused to the class.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Who Makes the Decision?

The individual public school district superintendents are responsible for the closing of the schools before the day begins or the early closing of schools once the children are already in session. The decision is based on the information received from the radio, the local police and the transportation companies. Since the decision is based on safety, PreK will comply with whatever is done in the elementary school.

When is the Decision Made?

The decision to close Central Bucks schools is made as early as possible so that the radio stations can be notified. If the Central Bucks School District is closed, then Our Lady of Mount Carmel School and PreK are closed. If any other district is closed, but Central Bucks Schools are open, then Our Lady of Mount Carmel School and PreKindergarten are open.

INCLEMENT WEATHER: Our inclement weather number is 743.

School Cancellation – On a day when school is cancelled entirely in the early morning, an announcement will be made on radio station KYW (1060) beginning around 6:00 AM. This information can also be accessed on the internet at www.kyw.1060.com or through our website. We will also attempt to activate our automated phone notification system.

Delayed Opening – On a day when a delayed opening is in effect, an announcement will be made

on radio station KYW (1060) beginning around 6:00 AM. This information can also be accessed on the internet at www.kyw.1060.com or through our website. We will also attempt to activate our automated phone notification system.

Early Closing - On a day when inclement weather causes the closing of school during the day, an announcement will be made on radio station KYW (1060) beginning as soon as the decision has been made. This information can also be accessed on the internet at www.kyw.1060.com or through our website. We will also attempt to activate our automated phone notification system.

FIRE DRILLS

Regularly scheduled fire drills are conducted throughout the year to familiarize the students with emergency exit procedures. Instructions are posted in each classroom. Students are to maintain silence and to proceed quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner to ensure the safety of the entire school community. In the event of an emergency, the fire drill route will be followed to evacuate the building. For a weather emergency, students will remain in the building, but far away from the windows.

FOOD ALLERGIES

To ensure his/her safety, a student with a food allergy that is documented in his/her health record and requires a standing order for medication in the event of a reaction will be allowed to eat only food that is supplied by his/her parents. To provide for treats that are offered for parties or special events, he/she can maintain a snack box in the classroom that is stocked with acceptable foods by his/her parents. Teachers or the school nurse cannot accept letters of exception from parents for their child's consumption of treats for specific individual occasions.

HEALTH SERVICES

If a child has a specific medical issues, it should be made known to the principal and the PreK teacher. The student emergency form also provides this opportunity under the title "Significant Health Problems." The emergency form is the best way of contacting parents in case of a child's emergency or illness. It is essential that the form contain two alternate names, preferably local people, to be called in case of an emergency or illness. The school should be notified whenever any information on the emergency form changes (e.g. work information, address changes, etc). This is to ensure the physical safety of the child. Whenever possible, parents are responsible for transporting the ill or injured student to his/her home, doctor or hospital.

Children should not be sent to school when they have symptoms of illness: temperature elevation, vomiting, a questionable injury occurring at home, or when they are not fully recovered from an illness.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

During school hours, only medication which is absolutely necessary will be given. Whenever possible, parents are requested to administer medications to their children at home. Prescription and OTC medication will be administered to a student during the school day ONLY after the proper completion of the Medication Dispensing Form. These forms are available on the OLMC School website under the “Parents” tab, within the Health Room section.

Any student who is required to take medication during school hours must comply with the following regulations:

1. Both prescription and OTC medications should be brought to the nurse’s office by the parent or a responsible adult at the start of the day. The parent must also bring the signed physician order (obtained in the health room).
2. The medication should be in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or the physician.
3. All controlled medications must be counted by the parent with the nurse, recorded on the student’s medication log, and signed for by both parties.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The OLMC Home and School Association plans activities for the children and their families. In addition, the Home and School Association organizes and operates fundraisers for the various needs within the school. All children benefit from these activities. Meetings of the association are held throughout the school year and frequent communications are issued regarding upcoming events or needs. Election of officers is held in the spring.

The Home and School Association is not a school board or an administrative or supervisory committee established to operate the school. The Home and School Association supports the school by raising funds for updated and necessary equipment, books and special programs used by our children. It also provides educational programs and social activities for our children, parents and families.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Any child entering into the PreK program shall have completed the series of age-appropriate immunizations before entering the classroom. An updated immunization record must be provided at registration.

LOST AND FOUND

All articles belonging to a student should be properly identified. Lost and found items are rarely claimed. Parents are asked to look for any lost items in the bin in the cafeteria. If they have not been claimed within a reasonable amount of time, they are donated to the Uniform Exchange or given to charity.

LUNCH PERIOD

Every student is expected to learn and to practice the general rules of good etiquette. Some simple rules of courteous behavior, which make the lunch period pleasant, are:

1. Observe good table manners, such as remaining seated while eating
2. Give respect and show cooperation to the lunch aides
3. Help leave the surrounding area clean and orderly

PACKED-LUNCH:

Parents are asked to provide their child with two napkins in their lunch; one for underneath their food and one for their lap. Parents are asked to provide their child with healthy food. Do not send in food that they will not eat. Do not send an abundance of food, particularly sweets. Parents are also asked to provide utensils that the child may need for lunch, e.g. spoons for yogurt.

PURCHASED LUNCH THROUGH CAFETERIA:

Parents who choose to purchase a lunch for their child through the school cafeteria can access the Cafeteria link on the school website to set up an account through ARAMARK for direct or on-line prepayment.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Specific times are set up during the school year for parent/teacher conferences. It is vital that parents attend these meetings to keep communications open between the home and the school. If the need arises, a parent/guardian may make an appointment to meet with a teacher. Teachers will not be called to the telephone during school hours; however, a message may be left.

Teachers should not be called at home. Parents wishing to confer with the principal about a child are welcome to do so after having first spoken with the child's teacher.

RECORDS

A permanent file will be maintained for your child. This file is the property of the school and is covered by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Your access to the information in your child's file is guaranteed by law, and we will be happy to review it with you at any

scheduled conference. Personal records will not be divulged to any individual or organization without your written permission.

SNACK

Each day PreK students enjoy an afternoon snack provided by parents. Please be sure to personally speak with your child's teacher if he/she has any known food allergies.

SCRIP

Scrip, a gift certificate program, allows you to buy certificates to be used to make purchases in many major and local stores, and at the same time, assists you with your tuition payments. Purchases of certificates can be made by check or cash, not by credit cards. The participating stores and the denominations are listed on the order form.

The number of tuition vouchers varies according to the items being purchased. The Scrip order form lists the vendors and the voucher amounts. Tuition vouchers are applied directly to your tuition balance.

Tuition vouchers can be applied to OLMC PreK, School, Religious Education Program, any parochial high school, any private Catholic elementary or high school, and any Catholic college or university. Once you receive Scrip, OLMC School and/or parish are not responsible for lost or stolen certificates. More information can be obtained at the school office, on the school website or at the OLMC Rectory.

TUITION

A yearly tuition is used to pay expenses and can be found on the school website. Monthly, semi-annual, and annual payments are available; arrangements can be made with the tuition secretary at 215-348-4190.

VOLUNTEERS

Parents are welcome to enter our school community through full participation in all events. Volunteers for school events and routine school needs are most welcome. All volunteers are required to have an up-to-date criminal history check, child abuse clearance and safe environment attendance certificate on file in the school office.

No visitor may go directly to any area of the school without first signing in at the office. For the safety of the children, visitors and volunteers are not permitted to go to a classroom to visit, to confer with a teacher without an appointment, or to visit any child in class or at lunch.

