

St. Peter Academy Pre-K4 Handbook



Mrs. Vitone

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Welcome to our class 2013-2014!

This year I have great expectation for your child and myself. I hope we will have a wonderful year growing and learning together. This handbook will give you a look into the classroom to see what your child will be learning and their daily schedule! I am very excited to be the Pre-K4 teacher. Ms. Janice and I will work our hardest to make sure that everyone succeeds.

Daily Schedule

- The students will follow the schedule here in the packet.
- In the morning, after arrival and unpacking, they will begin with Morning Meeting. We cover the calendar, days of the week, patterns, colors, numbers, weather with Mr. Frog, letters, sounds, shapes, rhyming, manners, sight words and much more.
- We also go over what jobs the students will do during the week to help out around the classroom. These include line leader, door holder, lights, paper passer, messenger, snack helper and much more. The students love to help out; this instills a sense of pride.
- Some of the thematic units that we will focus on this year will be Transportation, Dinosaurs, Space, Water Life, and Monarch Butterflies in the springtime.

Special Classes

- The children will have a few special classes this year to get them ready for when they have them in Kindergarten.
- On Wednesdays we have **Library**. They will go into the Library and have a book read to them with a follow up activity and then they will take a book out. They will not be able to take another one out unless the previous one they borrowed has been brought back. Please read the book they chose to them one night. Learning to read is so important!

They also have **Gym** class on Monday. If it is a nice day, they will have it outside. The children should wear sneakers!

- They will be running around and playing various games.
- **Music** is done each day in the classroom. We sing songs for all different things!

- **Art** is done everyday in the classroom; we love to be creative!

Classroom Rules

- Every classroom has different rules that need to be followed in their classroom to make sure that it is a safe and comfortable place to work. The rules are posted in the room for all to see. The rules of St. Peter Academy must also be followed and obeyed.

Emergency Numbers

- Emergency information forms must be kept updated at all times. The school must always be informed to changes in home and work phone numbers and addresses. Notification of school closing is relayed via telephone, therefore, it is very important that you comply with this policy.

Half Days

- On half days of school, please send in lunch with your child. They should eat a big breakfast for the day and send in a good snack because they will still have this like normal. They eat lunch at 11 a.m. We eat in the cafeteria.

Birthdays

- Birthday recognitions are short (15 minutes) and are celebrated as part of our snack time. We are trying to create a safe environment in which all students feel included and not singled out because of their food allergies or dietary restrictions, therefore, we are asking parents instead of sending a food treat to celebrate a student's birthday, please donate a book to the classroom library in honor of your child. You are invited as our guest to read the book to the class on your child's birthday week. If you plan to send out invitations to some of the children and not all, we kindly ask you to please mail the invitations or hand deliver them outside the school.

Liturgy

- All parents and friends are invited to attend the 11:30 liturgy Masses every first Friday of every month. The children actively participate in the liturgy by singing the parts of the Mass and proclaiming the Word as Lectors. Masses are also on Holy days of obligation. The Pre-K4 class will go to church on special occasions.

Homework

From time-to-time, I may send home "practice" papers (homework). They are not mandatory for your child to do, but it will help them progress. It will be in writing, reading or math. It will be labeled as "practice assignment" or "home work" and then if the child returns it, they will get a sticker on their paper.

Nurse

Duties of School Nurse:

- To provide First Aid only
- To notify parent/guardian when child becomes hurt or ill in school.
- To release from school a sick or injured child to parent or designated adult.
- To maintain medical records
- To provide State mandated screenings such as: height, weight, blood pressure, vision, hearing, lice, and scoliosis.
- To refer and follow up on all students who have failed the above screenings.
- To give medication ordered by M.D. when necessary.
- To provide health education when needed.
- To provide counseling when necessary.

The school nurse does not diagnose, please do not send ill children to see the nurse. If your child has had a fever or was vomiting the night before, he or she should be kept home for observation the next day.

Absences

- Call the school before 9:00 a.m. to report reason for absence.
- A note must accompany students on the first day back to school after any absences.
- Note must include: Date of absence; and reason for absence (if sick, specify)

- School office must be notified in advance for absences due to vacation, appointments, etc.

Medications

- Absolutely NO over the counter medications will be administered in school unless ordered by a physician and accompanied by proper forms.

Prescription Drugs

- Short term medications which must be administered in school:
 - o Must be accompanied by a note from the parent/guardian
 - o Must be in Original labeled container
 - o Must be ordered by a doctor for that child
- (Note: It may be helpful to have the pharmacy prepare separate labeled containers for medications which must be given in school to avoid having your child carry meds to and from school each day.)
- Long-term medications, such as, inhalers, allergy medication, etc.
 - o Must have forms filled out by physicians and on file in nurse's office. Forms are available from nurse.
 - o Must have forms updated each school year.
 - o Must have all medications in pharmacy labeled container stating child's name, dosage, and reason for giving medication.
 - o Note: Even inhalers which child keeps on his or her person must have written order from physician on file and updated yearly.

Health Forms

- Emergency Cards must be updated and submitted each year. Any changes in Emergency card information during the school year should be made in writing and submitted promptly to avoid any problems if an emergency should arise.

- Medical records must be kept up to date. Please notify the school nurse of any changes in your child's medical status, ex: broken bones, allergies, physical or emotional problems. etc.
- Updated immunizations like MMR, Tetanus booster, or Hepatitis B immunization must be reported and accompanied by a certificate from the physician including dated of immunization.

Tardiness

- It is very important that your child not be late to school! The children are allowed in the school starting at 7:55 till 8:00. Once the doors are closed you will need to walk around to be let in by the office. Our morning meeting begin at 8:15 every day and class begins right afterwards. Keeping on schedule is imperative at this age, so please try to be on time. I do not want your son or daughter to miss any work in the morning. Please try your best to be here on time. There is no before care only aftercare. This means I cannot be responsible for your child any earlier than 7:55 a.m. and someone should be there with them while they wait. They should not be left alone outside the building.

Morning Routine

- Children are to line up outside the building by the blue doors on Fifth Ave. At 7:55, the doors will open and be greeted by either Ms. Janice or myself. Then they will be escorted to their lockers where they will take out their folders and put their personal belongings into their lockers. Once all of the children have unpacked then we will head into the classroom to our carpet area to start our morning meeting.

Please Leave at Home

- Please leave any toys that are not appropriate at home. Children may bring in 1 small stuff animal for naptime. If your child really likes a toy, I suggest that they leave it at home where it cannot get lost. When it comes to school all the other children want to look at it and play with it because it is new. It is hard to tell them no when we are trying to stress sharing at this age.

Naptime Procedure

- After lunch the children will get to play in the gym. Then they will come back upstairs and go to the bathroom. Their own mat will be placed on the floor around the classroom. Please purchase a small sleeping bag for your child to use that may be easily rolled up and packed up by your child. Please put your child's sleeping bag in a toto/canvas bag. Naptime is about 1 hour long Monday through Thursday. The children listen to soft music while they sleep. If they stay quiet on their mat they get one sticker on their chart for the day. When they reach 10 stickers total they get to pick something from the treasure box. They love this reward system!
- On Fun Friday, it's movie day. I pick a movie according to whatever letter we are learning about or thematic unit. This is one of their favorite times.

Dress Code

- Please make sure your child dress appropriately for school. I know they do not wear uniforms, but they still need to be presentable. Make sure they are in comfortable clothes that they can play in and occasionally get dirty in. We do a lot of painting in our class. We like to have lots of fun with crafts! Hands-on-learning is one of the best kinds of learning!

Please make sure your child is able to manage their own clothing in the bathroom. No belts.

- Girls:

1. Length of shorts must be mid-thigh
2. Sandals, but NO FLIP FLOPS OR CROCS.
3. Tee Shirts only (no inappropriate logos)
4. No tank tops

- Boys

1. No hip huggers pants or shorts
2. Tee Shirts only (no inappropriate logos)
3. No muscles shirts (tee shirts with no sleeves)

Snack

- **WE ARE A NUT FREE SCHOOL ZONE!** Please do not send peanut butter, nuts, or anything containing nuts to school. Please advise us in writing if your child has any allergies. Please make sure the snack you send is a healthy one that will keep their energy up! Some healthy snack suggestions are crackers, yogurt and fruit. Occasionally, we will have a special snack day that is related to the letter of the week. I will try to let you know ahead of time.

Lunch Rules

- Lunch will be served in the cafeteria for Pre-K4 children at 11:00 each day including all half-day sessions. Children will have 30 minutes to eat each day, so please pack a lunch accordingly. We are unable to heat-up any food for your child, so if your child prefers a "hot lunch" please send it in a thermos. We are unable to feed each individual child. We will help them open anything, and get set up, but we will not feed them.

- Please make sure your child's lunch is a healthy one. Please do not include candy, gum, soda, or any type of junk food because your child will be told to take it home.
- Please do not pack more than your child can consume. To comply with environmental regulations, do not use paper bags and send lunches in lunch boxes or insulated bags. Please label these bags in case they get lost. Liquids must be in a plastic container; no glass bottles please.
- We cannot heat their lunches (which is hard with 22 children and only a half an hour to do it). Please place their lunch in a thermos which would keep it at the perfect temperature all day until lunch!
- If your child does not eat all his lunch food, we will pack it up and have it sent home so you can see how much she/he has consumed.
- Please if your child's lunch needs to be cut up into pieces, please be so kind and do it at home before sending it in. If you know your child does not like the crust on their sandwich, please cut it off at home.

Weekly Newsletter

- Each week I will send out a weekly newsletter on the events happening in the classroom. This will give you an overview of what your child is learning in class. It will also include upcoming events and weekly reminders. It is short, but full of information.

Progress Sheets

- I will assess your child at the beginning of the year and at the end of the year to see their progress.
- At times, I will either email you or send you a note in their folder letting you know how your child is doing.

- If you ever need to speak to me, I am available for a conference after school at 2:30 during the week. Please just write me a note or send me an email to schedule a parent/teacher conference.

Elementary Drop-off and Pickup

- Safety is a prime importance for our children. Please, cooperate in accordance with safety regulations to ensure a safe environment for our children at assembly and dismissal times. The following procedures have been developed in conjunction with the River Edge Police Department who have monitored out traffic activities.
- Drivers are prohibited from using the driveway in front of the Senior Residence (Kindergarten area) at all times. This driveway is reserved for the School Buses only.
- It is strongly recommended that ALL PARENTS enter the parking lot by either the driveway entrance between the church and rectory or Kensington Avenue.
- If you are accompanying your child to the building, proceed to the parking area behind the school, park and walk into the school by way of the area behind the senior residence and the trailer and around to the Pre-k3 door on Fifth Ave. Your child will enter and exist each day through these doors.
- If you are dropping off from your car, circle around the parked cars in a counter-clockwise direction and discharge in front of the trailer. Proceed out of the parking lot via Kensington Avenue.
- If you drive south on Fifth Avenue, you may pull in front of the school to discharge your child. The main blue doors (by the Blessed Mother Statue) will be open for entry. Do Not Leave your car unattended.
- All students may be dropped off at the side blue doors at 8:00 a.m. Please make sure they are on time!

- Pickup will start at 2:25 p.m. The children will be walked down to the same blue doors that they were dropped off at. I will only dismiss students to a person I know unless a note is given to me.
- Make sure you notify the teacher/main office if your child is going home with someone other than you via a written note to the teacher or phone call to main office.
- If you are late picking up your child, notify the main office! Your child will be placed in aftercare until you pick them up.
- **DO NOT** part your car along Fifth Avenue in the NO PARKING ZONES—you will be ticketed! If you park along Fifth Avenue, use caution when opening doors.
- All parents and children must cross at the crossing guard location at Manchester Road.

Field Trips

- Field trips will be planned at least two weeks in advance. I will need parents to accompany children on every trip. We will hopefully go on two trips throughout the year.
- Please make sure that you sign and return a permission slip for each trip allowing your child to attend.

Aftercare Program

- This program is available everyday from 2:30 to 6:00 p.m. If you need to put your child in the aftercare program, please send me a note so that I know. You will also need to let the office know. This is for parents who work and for emergency situations. Contact main office for cost of aftercare.
- Please send in an extra snack for your child if they are staying because they will be hungry and one will not be provided for them. Sometimes ice cream can be bought.

Volunteering to Help

- Class parents are selected at the beginning of the school year. Responsibilities vary, but often include communicating classroom news from teachers to parents, organizing events, and getting other parents involved. Occasionally, parents will be asked throughout the year to come in on Fun Fridays to do a 30-minute activity related to the letter of the week. A sign up sheet will be available.

Centers

- I have divided the room into "Centers". These are stations around the classroom where the child can play and learn. I can fit about 4-5 students at a center at one time. Some of the centers that I have are:

Home Living/Community Center

- This is where students can play in the kitchen, dress up as a community helper, play house, be a builder or anything else in their imagination!

Art Center

- In this center, children can create projects! Sometimes they can make up their own with the materials available and sometimes there will be a project for them to complete. They can glue, paint, draw, color, and much more. In addition, we also have a paint easel for our little painters.

Computer Center

- Students may play educational games and learn to type in the comfort of our own classroom!

Writing Center/ABC Center

- This is at the horseshoe table where I can sit in the middle and guide the students along. Here there will be paper to write with, letters to play with, white boards to write with and much more manipulatives. Small group sessions will also be held at this center.

Puzzle Center

- This center is exactly what the name says it is: A variety puzzles to challenge the student's minds. Some puzzles with pictures and others with laces.

Listening Center

- The students sit around the CD player with their own headset to listen to books while they follow along. Sometimes the students will receive their own book to follow along with and other times they will share one big book. This center is wonderful because students get to hear the letter people's stories over and over again.

Math Center

- Students will have a variety of manipulatives to work with at this center. Here they will work with numbers, count objects, sort things create patterns and much more.

Science Center

- Students will be able to explore their surroundings here. There will be a microscope for them to look at, magnets for them to play with and other sensory items.

Sand (Rice) and Water Table Center

- Students will get to play with colored rice indoors which is always fun! I will be placing a variety of objects in these centers throughout the year such as letters to fish out and items to dig out to observe.

Game Center

- Different games for the students to play with together and learn about sharing and working with one another.

Classroom Web Pages

- As parents, you can access you child's classroom page to check information on projects, field trips, special events, see bullet board the children have created and to see what is going on in our classroom, etc. This will have updated information as needed.
- Or mvitone@spare.org
- I will try to check this daily, usually in the evening. The best way to relay a message to me will be via the folder that goes back and forth with your child each day.

Directions to access Classroom Page:

<http://stpeteracademypre-k4.weebly.com>

Let's Begin With the Letter People

The education of young children requires patience, curriculum planning, and the right resources to use in your preschool classroom, while incorporating math, science, and literacy skills appropriate for young Learners. You accept an enormous responsibility when you agree to meet the emotional, social, and physical needs of the children in your group. In addition, you know it's important to use developmental materials that will stimulate their intellectual growth at individual levels.

By bringing the Letter People into their lives these special friends get children talking, moving, interacting, experimenting, drawing, counting and ultimately, ready to read and write. Each Letter Person has a unique and engaging personality, a special identifying characteristic, and a memorable personable song. Each Letter Person will help each child learn something new. The Letter People stimulate the child's imaginative and creative powers. The Letter People are good at getting children to respond because they are friends and language partners.

This is a core program, a comprehensive curriculum, organized around themes that integrate knowledge across subject areas. Each child engages in explorative play and begins to make his or her own unique sense of what is being experienced. The engaging nature of the Letter People draws the child into the learning process and makes it fun. The Letter People are learners too, which mean each child can also be a teacher.

The earlier children are exposed to books, the more comfortable they become with age-appropriate literacy components. The Letter People puppets encourage children to have fun while developing oral language and phonological awareness. Read-to-Me is a set of 26 hardcover Letter People storybooks designed to increase vocabulary while promoting attentive listening skills.

Big Book Math Set 1 explores counting, one-to-one correspondence, 2-D and 3-D shapes, patterns, and simple introductions to measurement, time of day, graphing, addition, and subtraction. Big Book Science Set 1 investigates the world of young children and includes topics such as the five senses, growing plants, safety, eating healthful food, and living things.

Let's Begin focuses on oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, and preparation for literacy. The content of the program reaches across all subject areas, including science, health and safety area, mathematics, spatial concepts, and music, as well as

development of large and small motor skills. The program places major emphasis on personal growth, interpersonal relations, conflict resolution, all aspects of social development.