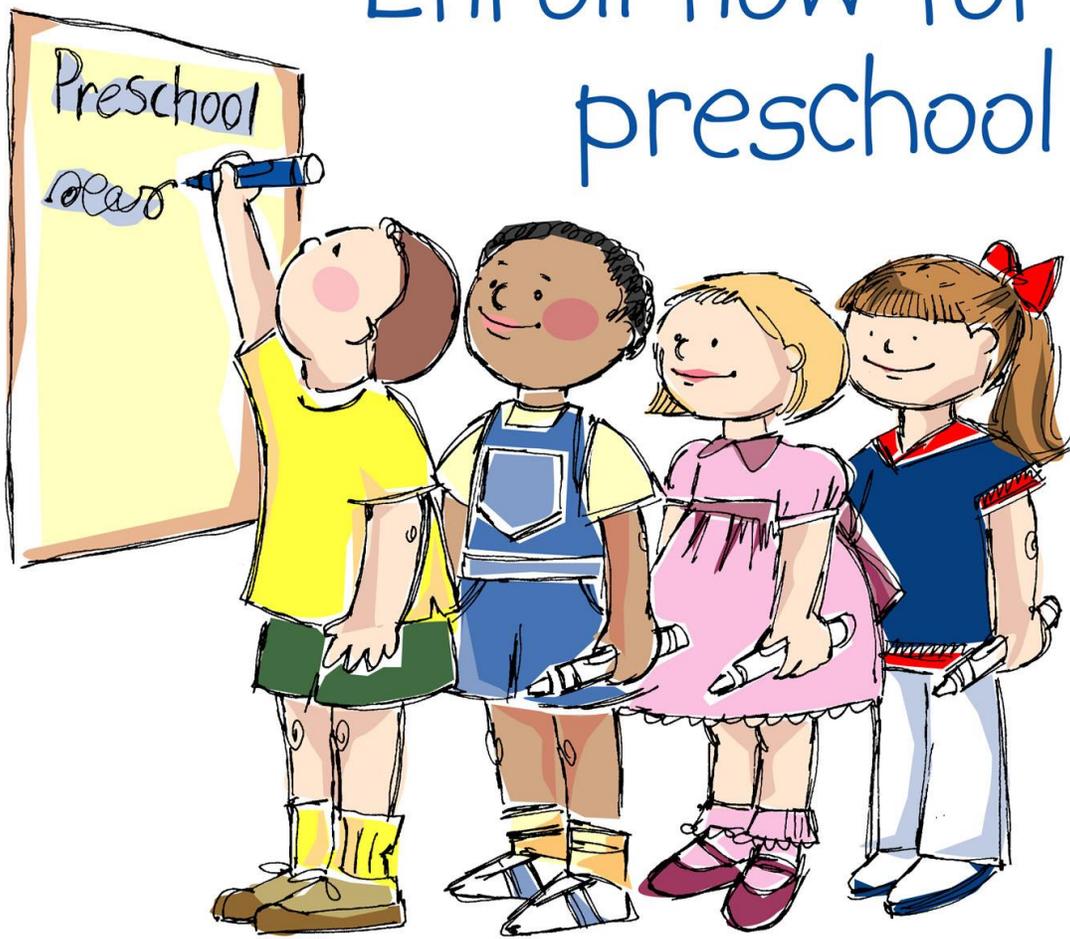


St. Benedict School 4 Year Old Program

Enroll now for
preschool



Preschool Handbook

We are delighted that you have taken the time to learn more about our preschool. This is the parent involvement we wish to encourage, in order to foster a true partnership between our families and our school community. In particular, we hope that this first year within our school community will be a happy and exciting experience for both you and your child.

Beginning preschool is, as you know, an important step in your child's life. Every child is different. Every child is special, with special needs, special interests and special characteristics. Your child is important to you, and important to us, and we need to work together to help him or her to grow, learn and develop, both as an individual and as a member of our school community.

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children and it is our task to work in union with you to help our children to be nurtured and continue to develop to their full potential during their time with us.

I hope this handbook will help you and your child to adjust readily and happily at this important time.

God bless,

Jessica Manning and Laura Martin

Our Philosophy for Preschool

We Believe

- ✓ children should be valued as individuals
- ✓ children need to feel safe and supported
- ✓ PLAYING and TALKING are the ways in which young children learn about themselves and the world around them
- ✓ all learning should be meaningful and fun
- ✓ children should be actively involved in learning
- ✓ children learn through hands-on experiences
- ✓ children learn through taking risks, making mistakes and celebrating successes
- ✓ what children CAN DO rather than what children cannot do are the starting points in their learning
- ✓ learning should cater to the needs and interests of individuals
- ✓ the process of learning is more important than the end product
- ✓ children develop their spiritual, social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills at differing rates
- ✓ children need to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning
- ✓ children who are encouraged to think for themselves are more likely to act independently
- ✓ children learn from everything that happens to them and do not naturally separate their learning into subjects
- ✓ parents are the first educators of children and have a vital part to play in the establishment of their child's learning environment

Our Goals for Preschool

- ☞ To foster the development of a healthy self-image which will assist the children in regarding themselves as children of God, people who are important, good friends, good learners and eager participants in preschool and whole school activities
- ☞ To ensure that each child in our care feels safe, secure and loved
- ☞ To help each child develop an active curiosity about the world and an enthusiasm for learning based on his or her own personal satisfaction and involvement
- ☞ To build fundamental skills and acquire new information and knowledge
- ☞ To enable children to be expressive and creative through the use of language, physical activity, play materials, art and music
- ☞ To develop the "whole" child—socially, emotionally, spiritually, cognitively and physically
- ☞ To ensure that parents and teachers work together in the best interests of the individual child

Parent Information

Arrival and Departure

Arrive through the back door of the school between 7:35a.m. – 8:00a.m. Every child must be accompanied by an adult into the classroom each morning to assist them as they hang up their belongings and hand in anything that is due that day.

School will begin at 8:00 am with morning announcements at 8:05. Please be on time. Children often feel uncomfortable when they come in late. If your child is not going to attend, please call to let staff know. A contact number will be given out when enrolled.

Teachers will escort half day students before lunch at 11:00 am and full day students at 2:30 pm. You can pick up your child at the back door of the building. Our staff is hired to provide care services for a specific number of hours each day. It is important for parents to pick up their children at a designated time daily. If you find that you are going to be detained, please notify the school immediately so that we can assure your child that he/she has not been forgotten. Your child will then be taken up to the after school room where you will be charged for extended care.

Emergency Release Forms

At the beginning of the year parents will be asked to fill out an Emergency Release Form. These need to be filled out and returned for dismissal purposes. Children will be released to only to those who are designated on the Emergency Release Form. Children cannot be released to individuals under the age of 18. When someone other than the parent is to pick up a child, he or she will be asked to provide identification.

Curriculum

The curriculum at St. Benedict's is grouped in themes. We incorporate language arts, science, social studies, math and religion. The purpose of the curriculum is to bring your child to a better understanding of themselves in relation to God and to the world in which we live.

Literacy: Literacy in these years starts the development of reading and writing. Through literacy, your child will learn comprehension of words and reading strategies. Your child will also learn to make predictions and retell stories. Early literacy will help the child understand the conventions and functions of print. Goals of early literacy are to aid in the development of oral language, to enhance book awareness, to promote different types of literature, and to foster an awareness of the connections between the spoken word and the written word.

Math: At the Pre-Kindergarten level, math is taught using manipulatives and through the use of art, music, and play. Math goals at this level are to encourage the use of mathematical concepts, to aid in the development of representational thought, to encourage the use of patterns, to promote measurement, and to encourage the use of reasoning skills. Other skills introduced are rational counting, one to one correspondence, sorting, classifying, sequencing, and size and shape awareness.

Play: Play carries out an extremely important role in your child's learning and development. During play your child will learn communication, listening, awareness of change, social roles, risk taking, empathy, cooperation and respect for others. St. Benedict's Pre-Kindergarten program incorporates centers which allows for play-based learning.

Science: Science at the Pre-Kindergarten level is used to encourage natural curiosity and the use of reasoning skills. Science is hands on and allows your child to try new experiments. Skills taught in science are: properties, change, textures, measurement, cause and effect, classifying, collecting, observing and problem solving. These skills will be taught and reinforced with the following subjects: senses, weather, germs, foods, safety, and parts of body, water, animals and more. Social sciences at this level are taught to help your child learn social and cognitive aspects of the world around him or her. Socially, your child will learn such concepts as cooperation, negotiation, and diversity through traditions and celebrations.

Religion: The Pre-Kindergarten religion curriculum is an introduction to Bible heroes from the Old and New Testament. Through simple crafts, games, puzzles, and activities, your child will begin to understand that the Bible heroes were real people who did real things for God. Basic religious holiday concepts are introduced. Children are also taught basic prayers.

Discipline Policy

Preventive Measures to Produce Acceptable Behavior: In order to maintain a happy, healthy, disciplined environment, the children are taught the importance of safety, care of property, good habits, rules of conduct and consideration and respect for others. Constructive methods of discipline are used to maintain group control and handle individual behavior. Our main focus on discipline (defined as *teaching* or *training*) is preventative in nature, as we aim to build self-discipline in the child.

Constructive Measures to Extinguish Unacceptable Behavior: When a child exhibits unacceptable behavior or attitudes, he/she is instructed as to what is wrong and then directed to a positive alternative approach/behavior. Along with these new attitudes and behaviors, the child is guided in the direction of self-discipline by encouraging him/her to make as many decisions as possible within limits.

Outdoor Play Activities

Outdoor play is important to young children. Your children will spend time outside most days (weather and temperature permitting!) Please make sure that your child wears adequate clothing for all types of weather.

Specials

Art – Once a week

Music – Twice a week

Gym – Twice a week

Library – Once a week

Technology – Once a week

Rest-Time

Students will rest for 30 minutes each day. This is required for all full-day students in pre-school. Children will be asked to lie quietly so that others may sleep if they wish. (We all need a little downtime!) Children may bring a towel and a small stuffed animal if they wish. Please refrain from bringing in action figures, Barbie dolls or other toys that may distract the children during this time. All nap items should be labeled and sent in on the first day of school.

Parents in Preschool

We love to have parents at our preschool as parents play an important role in our program. Each parent has a unique set of talents and interests, so don't be shy about offering your assistance. (Be the kind of person you want your child to be!)

There are a number of ways you can assist us in providing your child with the best possible education at preschool:

- ✓ Supporting and encouraging your child to develop a positive sense of self-worth
- ✓ Discussing any problems or worries directly with the teacher
- ✓ Visiting the preschool and joining in the program
- ✓ Support the Home School Association
- ✓ Reading the newsletters and notice boards
- ✓ Collecting materials for use in collage and carpentry
- ✓ Offering to share any hobbies, interests or expertise you may have with the children (eg. playing an instrument, pottery, cooking etc)
- ✓ Assisting with maintenance and beautification of the school grounds

Our preschool aims to provide a program and environment that will assist the children begin to make a smooth transition from the naturalistic learning environment of the home to the more formal learning environment of the later years of primary school.

Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's learning at preschool. To do this effectively, it is important that the parents understand the educational objectives being pursued for their children.

DON'T BE LEFT IN THE DARK!

- READ "THE COMPASS"
- ASK QUESTIONS
- READ THE PARENT INFORMATION BOARD

What makes our preschool program at St. Benedict's different from other preschool programs?

St. Benedict's Preschool Program is one of those programs that provide an affordable preschool curriculum. That's because it's a program that really does have the best interests of your child in mind. We want to make sure that there's still money left over after preschool to give your child a good elementary, high school and college education. And despite being affordable, the preschool curriculum is one which also prepares the child educationally for those future years of schooling.

It is our hope that we can develop in each child a positive self-image and a love of learning and going to school. In our 3 year old program as well as our 4 year old program we provide many activities to do just that. Each activity that is presented to the children is a result of much planning. Children like to be actively involved. When more than one sense is used in teaching a task, learning is greatly improved.

Here at Saint Benedict's it is our commitment to children and their families that has earned us an outstanding reputation as leaders in education.

Our 4 year old program

The 4-year-old program emphasizes kindergarten readiness and exploration. This program is designed to expand on the skills established in our 3-year-old program including socialization, independence, and group participation, and to prepare students for future elementary school experiences. Our engaging educational atmosphere is rich with discovery and possibility. Our goal is to encourage and challenge our students to become independent, enthusiastic learners.

We use a variety of instructional methods and developmentally appropriate activities to meet the varying cognitive, social and emotional needs of each individual child. To help prepare our students for upcoming kindergarten experiences, language and literacy activities further emphasize letter/sound relationships and are designed to promote reading readiness and encourage self-expression. As fine motor skills develop, art activities can be more complex. Quantitative, comparative, and more detailed concepts are introduced as students demonstrate increased memory and attention skills in the 4-year-old program.

Our program is Monday through Friday from 7:55am - 2:30pm, with the option of a half day program that ends at 11:00am.