

# Holy Trinity Catholic School

# Preschool

Teaching with love, learning with spirit!



Welcome to Holy Trinity Catholic Preschool where children are encouraged to explore, create, experiment, and pursue individual interests. Our learning environment supports the Diocesan and Illinois Early Learning Standards and also offers a framework for developmentally appropriate activities. The center-based classroom environment reflect changing themes, encourages purposeful play, and provides opportunities for differentiated instruction.

Within our large, bright space you will discover a classroom environment that is safe, nurturing, stimulating, and fun. Our daily schedule includes Circle Time for oral language development, early literacy instruction, story time, religion, and music/movement. Center time not only allows students to explore their individual interests but also allows for small teacher directed activities which provide differentiated instruction. Students may choose from a variety of different activities in our interest centers: blocks, puzzles/games, dramatic play, sand/sensory table, art, reading, and writing. During center time, teachers encourage purposeful play and strive to meet the various individual developmental needs of students.

Our multi-age program is designed to address the developmental needs of 3 and 4 year old children. Research indicates that participation in multi-age classrooms positively impacts the academic and social development of children. For example, multi-age preschools provide the groundwork for social responsibility and sensitivity for older students. Our 4 year olds embrace opportunities for greater responsibility. They enjoy having jobs, assisting the teacher and younger students, and being leaders. All of these contribute to greater independence, self-esteem, and confidence. The younger students observe and imitate older students; allowing them to match, 'complement, and supplement their interests in many different ways (Katz). Younger students are also capable of participating in far more complex activities that older students initiate than they would be able to initiate for themselves (Katz).

The Preschool curriculum reflects current best practice and incorporates components of the *Houghton Mifflin Reading Program* for Pre-K and *The Creative Curriculum* for preschool. These materials seamlessly mesh with Diocesan and Illinois State Early Learning Standards and offer a framework for developmentally appropriate activities.

Katz, Lilian G. *The Benefits of Mixed-Age Grouping*. Rep. Early Childhood and Parenting (ECAP) Collaborative, May 1995. Web. Jan. 2014.

# Learning Centers

Our Learning Centers reflect best practice in Early Childhood Education. Through purposeful play, students pursue their interests, make new discoveries, and develop social, emotional, and literacy skills.

In the art center, children use their creativity to create unique pieces of artwork. Children also practice and perfect their fine motor skills in activities such as cutting, tracing, tearing, gluing, and coloring.

The block center offers many opportunities for learning. When children construct, create and represent their experiences with blocks, they develop an awareness of number concepts, patterns and relationships, geometry and spatial sense, and measurement.

In the writing center, children explore the world of print. Here they will apply their knowledge of the Houghton-Mifflin *Alphafriends* and make sound-letter connections. They write messages, make books, and dictate stories. The products that emerge from the writing centers are sources of great pride!

The dramatic play area houses educational toys, clothing, and accessories that reflect thematic units. Through role-playing, students explore various vocations, develop oral language skills, engage in cooperative play, and build self-esteem.

The collection of books in our Library rotates to correspond to thematic units. During book browsing, students "read" with a purpose. They follow print from left to right, search for familiar words, letters, and objects, tell the story with the pictures, identify colors, count objects, and develop personal preferences for books.

In the Puzzles and Games area, students use various manipulatives to compare and contrast, sort, explore patterns and spatial relationships, develop number sense, and problem solve.

**The Sensory Table allows students to explore the properties of sand, water, and other natural materials. Here they are encouraged to make predictions, explore casual relationships, experiment, and prove their hypotheses.**

# Schedule

**7:50-8:10- Arrival Time**

**8:10-8:30- Literacy**

**8:30-8:45- Music- Large Movement Activities**

**9:00-9:15- Snack**

**9:15-9:25- Book Browsing**

**9:25-9:45- Story Time**

**9:45-10:35- Centers**

**10:35-10:50- Religion/Social Studies**

**10:50-11:00- Dismissal (1/2 day)**

**11:00-11:30- Recess**

**11:30-12:00- Literacy**

**12:00-12:30-Lunch**

**12:30-1:00- Creative Art**

**1:00-2:00- Naptime**

**2:00-2:45- Teacher Guided Enrichment Activities /Free Choice**

**2:45- Prepare for dismissal**