

# PROVIDENCE CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S ACADEMY



## PARENT HANDBOOK

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## **PROVIDENCE CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S ACADEMY**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Providence Catholic Children's Academy was founded in 1992 under the direction of the Joliet diocese and leadership of the Order of St. Augustine.

Serving the spiritual and educational needs of children ages 3-6 and their families, we provide a nurturing environment that builds the bridge from home to school. Experienced, degreed teachers help develop the social, emotional, cognitive and physical skills of our students in a loving Christian atmosphere. We inspire our children to reach their full academic potential and to succeed in school.

### **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

Providence Catholic Children's Academy is founded on the basic belief in the dignity of each child as a unique person created by God. It is developmentally appropriate in meeting the needs, abilities, and interests of the young child in a loving environment designed to nurture his/her life and faith. The wide variety of learning activities at Providence Catholic Children's Academy provides for the development of the "total child" by creating feelings of competence in self and abilities.

Schools operated under the auspices of the Diocese of Joliet admit students of any race, color, sex, natural and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, progress and activities generally available to students at the school.

### **PROGRAM PLANNING**

The early childhood years provide many opportunities that prepare a child for grade school. It brings the child into guided individual and group activities. These activities teach children to share, to listen, and to experience new loving relationships.

The following list is the key areas that we will focus on throughout the school year:

1. Spiritual
2. Language Arts
3. Mathematics
4. Science
5. Social Science
6. Physical Development and Health
7. Fine Arts
8. Social and Emotional Development

These areas relate to each other and a deficiency in one can create inadequacies in the others. We plan to give each child the opportunities and experiences necessary to develop equally in all areas.

A significant amount of planning and organizing takes place before, after, and even during the school session. Plans are flexible and the goals for the children are kept in mind. Goals are thought of in terms of the age level of the children and the individual child. Learning is fun and full of discovery.

## **CURRICULUM**

Our curriculum is age and developmentally appropriate for our Preschool/3 year olds, Prekindergarten/4 year olds and our Kindergartners/5 year olds. Spirituality, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Physical Development and Health, Fine Arts, Social and Emotional Development at each level fully prepare the children for their upcoming school year and beyond.

All sessions include prayer, The Pledge of Allegiance, calendar activities and weather activities followed by circle time. Free play, art, language arts, snack time, story time, music, fine motor, gross motor or outdoor play are also done for a scheduled amount of time each day.

Our early childhood program is centered around and drawn from our religion series: "I Am Special" by Our Sunday Visitor. Concepts such as All about Me, Our Five Senses, The World Around Us, including plants, animals, special celebrations and holidays are carefully developed. The daily experiences of the young child are used as the tool by which he comes to know God's love. Prayers are taught and said daily.

At the art center a wide variety of materials are used to develop the fine motor skills that prepare the children for printing and writing. It is at this center that they have an introduction to age appropriate art activities. The main objective of art is to encourage creative expression, develop confidence and strengthen hand muscles.

During Freeplay the children choose the station where they would like to play. The areas of play include the playhouse, puzzles, the Duplo table, the science/math table, the creative play center, the water table, the magnet board, big blocks, small blocks and a wide variety of small manipulatives. There is individual attention given to the children by the teacher at this time.

Circle time is very interactive. It gives the children the opportunity to develop both their auditory and verbal skills while enjoying discussions and demonstrations. Topics are primarily from the religion text which incorporates many social studies and science lessons. Holiday and season units are covered in circle time as well as the alphabet and numbers.

Storytime also encourages the students' growth in their auditory and language skills. At least one story is read each day. Children will develop an appreciation for books and they will be taught to take care of them. Concepts taught through the use of the flannel boards, language games, and perceptual motor development for reading readiness will also be an emphasis during this time. Opportunities are given to learn about themselves through stories, pictures and other discussion.

Large motor skill growth is practiced daily through music, movement or outdoor play. Through songs or exercises usually accompanied by music, the children hop, stretch, jump, etc. and when weather permits, our students play outdoors.

Fun musical experiences that contribute to the children's sense of rhyme and rhythm, language, memory and listening skills, and music appreciation are also part of every school day.

Colors, shapes, patterns, numbers, directions, positions, graphing, estimating and other math concepts are taught throughout the schoolyear.

Daily finger-plays and poems also add to the student's growth and development.

Each class has its own snack-time. The nutritional snack and water are provided. The only exceptions are the seven party days each year and birthdays. Parents provide the special treats on those days.

### **KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM**

The Kindergarten program meets for a full day session Monday through Friday. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate and meets the unique needs, abilities, and interests of young children. The learning environment is designed to nurture their life, faith and academic needs. The children are exposed to learning experiences in motor skills, art and music. The subject areas include Religion, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Themes from the "I Am Special" religion series will be integrated throughout the curriculum. The Scott- Foresman Reading Street Series is used for language arts instruction. Math Their Way activities will be provided to develop an understanding of mathematical patterns through the use of concrete materials, along with Sadlier - Oxford Progress in Mathematics. Common Core standards are followed in the following subject areas: Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies.

### **CLOTHING**

Play clothes should be worn. Clothing should be simple, comfortable, and washable, enabling children to participate in all activities. Please label coats, mittens, and hats.

Gym shoes or shoes with non-skid soles are required. **Flip-flop sandals, heel-less, and high-heeled shoes are not allowed.** If your child wears flip-flop sandals, heel-less or high-heeled shoes to school, a reminder letter will be sent home on the first offense. If these types of shoes are worn after the first warning, you will be asked to take your child home and return with appropriate shoes.

**Snow Boots should not be worn to school. Umbrellas are not allowed.**

### **FUNDRAISING**

PCCA does fundraising. All fundraising is optional.

### **REST MATS**

All full day students are required to purchase a rest mat from PCCA.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are exciting occasions for young children. We celebrate birthdays on the day that you select or as close as possible to your child's real birthday. In the case of a summer birthday, we will celebrate your child's half birthday or very close to that date.

For your child's birthday celebration at school you may send a special treat for snack time, a take-home treat bag or both.

**You may bring in one of the following treats on your child's birthday celebration day:**

- Store bought Rice Krispie Treats
- Sherbet Ice Cream Cups
- Vanilla Ice Cream Cups
- Teddy Grahams – Cinnamon or Honey only
- Pirate Booty

**Snacks sent to school other than those listed above will be returned.**

**Birthday invitations are passed out in the classroom if they are for all of the boys, all of the girls or the entire class.**

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Educational entertainment will be brought to our school.

## **ITEMS FROM HOME**

Please do not let your child bring toys, money, gum, candy, etc to school. Items from home become a distraction for the child who brings them and the children who want to share them. Earrings and necklaces should be such that your child cannot take them off.

**No play jewelry will be allowed in school.** Exception: items that would be of interest to the children to be displayed on the science table are always welcome. Some of these examples are bird nests, seashells, rock collection, leaf collection, etc.

## **SHOW 'N TELL**

Beginning in October, Preschoolers and Prekindergartners are welcome to bring an item from home that they would like to show and talk about. Dates and themes will be announced. A theme will be selected each month for the show and tell items that are brought to school. The Kindergarten class will be notified of their special theme days.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Individual school pictures and class composites are usually taken in the fall. Parents are under no obligation to purchase these pictures.

## **PUPIL ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Accident insurance is provided for each student through Providence Catholic High School and is included in the cost of your tuition. This insurance acts as a secondary policy for medical coverage for any accident that may occur while the child is at school. Insurance is provided as a service to students and their parents. Further information is available upon request.

## **SENDING YOUR CHILD OFF TO SCHOOL**

Explain to your child what the day will be like and when you will pick him/her up again. Do not be late when picking your child up, they may feel abandoned. Talk about feelings with your child. Let your child know how proud you feel. Your child may still cry a little for a day or so more, but your support is all they need. Comments such as "I know you'll have fun today" are better than bribes. Don't be surprised if your child turns out to be a delayed reaction youngster. This child comes to school the first day enchanted with all the interesting sights and activities and usually doesn't realize you are missing until the second day or even later. Please don't feel guilty if your child does not cry.

Increasingly today, we find children strong enough emotionally to face a new situation and parent separation with ease. The sentiment accompanied with your child to school may bring tears to your eyes, but please try to hide this from them. At this young age they often become confused and may think something bad is going to happen if they go to school. Simply be excited for your child to have this new experience.

## **CONFERENCES**

1. Kindergarten: Children will receive trimester report cards.
2. Preschool and Prekindergarten: The children will receive a checklist in November and Progress reports in January and May.
3. Parent-Teacher conferences will take place in November for Kindergarten, Prekindergarten and Preschool.

\*As always teachers are available all year if you have questions or concerns.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Our discipline policy is called "1, 2, 3, No Stamper." It begins with helping the children to understand what is "unacceptable behavior." Then after many warnings when a child is uncooperative or mischievous the child is given a "one." If the negative actions continue a "two" is given with more warnings. A "three" is the final step, which means the child will not receive a washable stamper on back of the hand that day at the end of the day. The Kindergarten student will not get a sticker on his/her Friday folder for that particular day. Other students' rewards of stampers or stickers are on a daily basis. No offense from a previous day is counted. Each day is a fresh start.

If there is not a stamper on the back of the hand, you may ask the teacher what happened and discuss the reason for "No Stamper" with your child.

An automatic “No Stamper” will be given for the following reasons:

1. hitting
2. throwing toys
3. showing disrespect to the teacher

If your Little Learner, Preschool or Prekindergarten child leaves with a stamper that indicates to you that your child had a good day.

**Kindergarten students: Friday folders will indicate the day of that week that no sticker was given because of inappropriate behavior.**

We do not wish for you to further punish your child at home; just discuss the events and help your child to understand the incident. Not receiving a stamper or sticker for that day is already punishment enough for most students.

## **HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

To enable your child to have a meaningful experience, it is essential that we share ideas, observations, and questions. Each month the Monthly Post and monthly calendar will be posted on the internet. A weekly newsletter is also sent home through email, from your child’s teacher to help keep you informed.

Parents should keep the teacher informed of any events at home that may affect the child’s feelings and/or behavior at school. Likewise, the teacher will inform the parents of happenings at school that may affect the child at home. A brief note or phone call can assist this kind of communications. The phone number is 815-485-7129.

## **ATTENDANCE**

A written excuse from the parent or guardian should be sent to school with the child after any absence. Please call the school at 815-485-7129 to report your child’s absence.

## **DISMISSAL**

The children will be released to the parent individually at the end of each class. Therefore, if someone other than the parent will be picking up your child, please give the teacher a note indicating to whom she will be releasing your child. If something happens during the day and you are unable to pick up your child, please call the school and inform us who will come. If we are unfamiliar with that person we will ask to see identification. The person(s) that you have chosen to be your **Emergency Contact Person** is **not** also authorized to pick your child up from school. Only those that are listed as pick up. Please notify us by a note or phone call when you cannot pick up your child. Please advise the person(s) that will be picking up your child that we will need to see a form of identification before releasing your child.

Please do not use the pick-up time to socialize in the parking lot. You need to exit with your child as soon as safely possible.

Please do not bring pets when picking up your child at dismissal. We have children who are frightened of animals.

A late fee will be given to parents whose students are continually picked up late.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

You may register for school closing notification at [www.emergencyclosings.com](http://www.emergencyclosings.com). Once you sign up for the Emergency Closing Center's free email notification service, the ECC will send you an email immediately upon any change with the school closing status. School closings are announced on WGN and local Joliet radio stations. It does not necessarily follow that we are opened or closed when the high school is, so please listen for **Providence Catholic Children's Academy**. Also, we will send you an email and post on our homepage of the website [www.wearepc.org](http://www.wearepc.org) as well as the Providence Catholic Children's Academy Facebook page.

### **PREREQUISITES FOR ENROLLMENT**

Children enrolled in our Preschool must be three years old on or before September 1. Children enrolled in our Prekindergarten program must be four on or before September 1. Children entering Kindergarten must be five years old on or before September 1. All children must be toilet trained before the onset of school. Enrollment will be limited in all sessions.

### **GOALS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Your child needs to grow in independence. Children begin to think of themselves as independent and capable individuals. This goal is always kept in mind in the planning of the program, equipment, materials, and guidance for the children. Our objective is to help your child learn to make decisions and choices. We aim for each child to reach a level of independence appropriate for his/her age.

Your child will grow in the ability to give and share with others his/her age and with adults other than family members. Our teachers help your child to feel secure and loved in his/her new environment.

## **PARKING LOT PROCEDURES**

*Following these procedures are not requested, but mandatory for the safety of all!*

### **DROP OFF:**

Enter Providence grounds east of the high school.  
Create 2 lines. Line up next to the garages and proceed to the drop off.  
Continue through the student parking lot and out to Route 30.

**NO PARKING DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF OUR BUILDING.**

**Note: Your child may be dropped off no sooner than 10 minutes before the start of school.**

### **PICK UP:**

**PARENTS OF HALF DAY AM Children pick up at 11:00**

Enter Providence grounds east of the high school.  
Parents will park along the front of the school and garages.  
PCCA staff will be on hand to assist in the lot.

All parents wait at the main door #19 for the children to be dismissed.  
Quickly and carefully exit the parking lot as you did when dropping off.

**PARENTS OF FULL DAY STUDENTS. Please be prompt in picking your child up at 2:20. The dismissal bell at the high school rings at 2:35.**

Enter Providence grounds east of the high school.  
Fill the yellow lined no parking spots first then pull around in front of the school and fill those spots and those along the garages.  
Additional cars will be asked to park along the parking spots closest to the high school.  
PCCA staff will be on hand to assist in the lot.

### **REMINDERS:**

All children need to be seat-belted.  
Please hold your child's hand in the parking lot.  
Exit as quickly as possible so that the next class has space.

**If someone else will be picking up, please inform them of our procedures.** Occasionally, the high school students have a late start, so please be careful and watchful when entering and leaving.

## PCCA CLASSES

PRESCHOOL (3 yr. old)	Half Day	8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
	Full Day	8:30 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.
PREKINDERGARTEN (4 yr. old)	A.M.	8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
	Full Day	8:30 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.
KINDERGARTEN (5 yr. old)	Full Day Session	8:30 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

PCCA phone number: (815) 485-7129

Fax Numbers: (815) 485-2709

PCCA website: [www.wearepc.org](http://www.wearepc.org)

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE (EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM)**

Before and After School Care is available from 7:00 am - 8:15 am and 2:20 pm - 5:30 pm

### **GOALS**

1. To support parents who are working
2. To supplement the child's school
3. To meet the child's developmental needs: physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually.
4. To be a place to experience accomplishment, to flourish, to build a sense of self-worth and to mature.
5. To be in a place with a caring adult
6. To have time for relaxing, having fun, enjoying friends.
7. To be a family service with equal concern for the needs and well-being of both the child and parent(s)

Providence Catholic Children's Academy provides professional care, supervision, and recreation and enrichment activities. This professionally operated program allows children to experience a rich diversity of growth activities within a Catholic environment with activities planned to complement the philosophy and value systems of the school and family. Arts and crafts, games, recreation, and snack time are some of the activities planned.

### **ADMISSION POLICY**

Registration is mandatory at Providence Catholic Children's Academy. The fee schedule is as follows: \$30.00 for one child, \$40.00 for two children, or \$45.00 for three or more children.

The hourly rate is \$5.00/per hour, per child.

The Before/After School Program is available to all enrolled students at Providence Catholic Children's Academy. It is supervised by the principal and adult aides.

An emergency release will need to be filled out by a parent or guardian and received by the child's first day of attendance.

The principal, in her sole discretion, may refuse admission or continued enrollment in the program due to filled quotas, past history of behavior problems, late payments, parents repeatedly late in picking up children, or other reasons determined by the principal to be in the best interest of the program.

## **DISCIPLINE and RULES**

Most discipline problems are handled by the principal or staff when the problem occurs. Repeated problems will be brought to the parents' attention and if it is a serious problem, possible dismissal from the program may occur.

Children who consistently disregard the rules of Before/After School Care, will be dismissed permanently. Parental support is required.

Unacceptable behavior would include the following:

1. Disrespect toward Before/After School Care Staff
2. Rowdiness and Roughhousing
3. Destruction of property, games and equipment
4. Taking things from other children

## **EXTENDED DAY HOURS - 7:00 – 8:15 a.m.**

Children will be released at 8:10 a.m. to their homeroom teacher.

## **DISMISSAL FROM CLASSROOM - 2:20 – 5:30 p.m.**

All Full Day students are dismissed at 2:30 p.m. Children staying for after care are escorted to the Before/After School Care room by their teacher.

## **AM DROP OFF**

The AM parents/guardians are allowed to drop off their child/children at door #19. The parent should sign his/her child in before leaving.

## **PICK UP**

The Before/After School Care will open for pick up after all the children have been signed in (approximately 2:30). If you need your child/children any earlier than this time you must go to the office. No parent/guardian will be allowed in the Before/After School Care room until dismissal. All children must be signed out by an authorized adult each day. Your child is not allowed to be picked up by any unauthorized person. We must have permission from you either in writing or phone authorization. If we do not receive either, we will call you to get permission. Once that permission is authorized, we will verify their identification (driver's license or state id) and then allow your child to leave with them.

## **FEES AND PICKUPS**

This program is entirely funded by weekly fees. Regular and prompt payment will assure the continuation of personnel. The fee is \$5.00 per hour for each child in the program. A payment slip with the total number of hours the program was used during the previous week will be emailed to the parent biweekly. The whole fee is due within two days after the billing date. If your Before/After School Care bill is past due or over \$50.00 the bill must be PAID IN FULL by the next payment date or the student will not be allowed back into the program. Return payment envelopes should have your child/children name on the envelope.

Staff members are only employed until 5:30. After 5:30 there is a \$1.00 a minute charge added to the weekly bill.

If a parent/guardian fails to meet the weekly payment on the date due, a late charge of \$10.00 will be added to the weekly bill. Also, there will be a \$15.00 charge assessed for all returned checks.

## **FOOD**

In Before School Care, please send a nutritious breakfast with your child if he or she has not eaten breakfast before arriving at school. If your child is arriving after 7:45 please make sure your child has eaten breakfast.

A morning and after school snack with drink will be provided.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

If your child has any type of food allergies that could affect his/her health while attending the Before/After School Care, please contact the office.

## **MEDICAL ATTENTION**

If your child is in need of medical attention while attending the Before/After School Care please contact the office.

## **ILLNESS OR ACCIDENT**

In cases which appear to be of a minor nature, first-aid will be administered on the premises. In cases that appear to be more serious, the principal will make an effort to carry out the instructions on the emergency card. In serious emergency situations, professional emergency care will be contacted as well as the parents/guardians. If you do not wish your child to be treated in any way, that should be indicated on the emergency sheet and should give instructions to be followed in the spaced provided. Please make provisions for taking sick children home.

## **TOYS FROM HOME**

Toys from home are not allowed.