

**Parent's Guide to
Holy Redeemer Catholic School's
Early Education Program
Preschool and Prekindergarten**



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Letter of Welcome

Dear Families,

Welcome to Holy Redeemer Catholic School Early Education Program. I am very excited to start another school year and meet all new students and families. My name is Keriann Hunter and I am the Director of the Early Education Program and the morning Pre-K teacher here at Holy Redeemer. I have been teaching for several years and have been with Holy Redeemer Catholic School since 2008. Coming from a large family and parents who were teachers, I have always known that my hope was to work with children. My goal is for children to feel loved and have a love for learning and school. I am here to work with parents to make sure your child has a positive and successful academic experience.

Holy Redeemer has been educating students for over 100 years and adopted the Prekindergarten Program in 2008. With the success and growth of Prekindergarten Program, the decision was made to create a Preschool Program in 2012. Our goal is to provide a safe and loving environment where the children can learn and play. Our teachers plan daily lessons to strengthen and learn new skills in language arts, math, writing and science. Children are also learning about patience, kindness, and friendship. Through conversations, prayer, and Bible lessons and stories, children are learning about God's love and His world. The children work and learn through play, teacher planned activities and whole and small group instruction.

This Parent Handbook has been prepared to help acquaint you about our policies, and to promote a mutually beneficial understanding between our school and your family. Please take the time to read it thoroughly. I sincerely hope that by working together we can give your child a solid foundation on which to build in future years.

Sincerely,
Keriann Hunter
Director
khunter@holyredeemerpx.org

MISSION STATEMENT

Holy Redeemer Catholic School is a faith-filled community committed to academic excellence, prayer and service.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

We believe that Catholic education is a mission of the Catholic Church. Our ministry as educators is a shared responsibility between the school, parish and family. At Holy Redeemer, we collaborate with, and support parents as the primary educators of their children. We are committed to assisting parents so that we can provide a Catholic education to every family who desires it for their children.

We are called by Jesus to educate the whole person. We celebrate and develop faith, academics, the arts, social skills, technology, and athletics. As a component of our focus on justice, we recognize that care of God's creation is both our privilege and our duty and continually look for ways to make our parish and school community more environmentally sound.

We embrace diversity as a hallmark of our school. Our teachers and staff are dedicated professionals who strive to build up the Kingdom of God by helping each person in our community develop to his or her full potential within a school where all are expected to be safe, responsible, and respectful.

SCHOOL-WIDE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

As a Holy Redeemer Student I am:

An Involved Christian

- I participate in the planning and celebrating of our school Mass and other prayer experiences.
- I care for and respect all of God's creation.
- I put Christian beliefs into action.

A safe, respectful and responsible community member

- I take responsibility for my own actions and resolve conflicts peacefully.
- I use my gifts and talents for the service of the community.
- I appreciate and value myself and others.

Seeking academic excellence

- I communicate clearly, creatively, and effectively.
- I use critical thinking skills and am able to solve problems.
- I am responsible for my own learning

FAMILY-SCHOOL COOPERATION

The primary goal of Holy Redeemer Catholic School is three-fold:

- ◆ Transmission of Catholic doctrine and tradition;
- ◆ Modeling and teaching of Christian values;
- ◆ Excellence in academic education.

We expect your help in the following ways:

- ◆ To be informed by reading the parent newsletter each week;
- ◆ To be involved by conferencing with your child's teacher;
- ◆ To volunteer in some aspect in Holy Redeemer's program;
- ◆ To support our discipline, our academic requirements, and our attempts to build up God's kingdom as indicated in our school handbook.

Holy Redeemer Catholic School celebrates the rich diversity in cultures, religions, and personalities. We see our broad range of ethnic backgrounds and religious persuasions as fertile ground for growth in awareness of others and appreciation of one's self. The hope for our students is that they grow in the Christian virtues of tolerance, hospitality, support, empathy, justice, and peace.

We see communication as being essential to a healthy relationship between family and school. We have a mutual responsibility to question, inform, and confer in order to provide the best possible atmosphere and environment for your child's learning.

EARLY EDUCATION STAFF

Mrs. Keriann Hunter – Director and morning Pre-K teacher

Mrs. Danielle Lee – Full Day Pre-K teacher (*Elyssa De La Cruz, long term substitute*)

Mrs. Guadalupe Torres – Preschool Teacher

Mrs. Prudence Mena – Pre-K Assistant

Mrs. Melinda Zinda – Pre-K Assistant

Mrs. Cecilia Bangura – Preschool and Pre-K Assistant and BTC staff

PROGRAM GOALS

The Preschool and Pre-K program at Holy Redeemer encourages children to create their own learning environment in which they make new friends, experiment, be independent, problem solve, be creative, use their imagination, act Christ like and most importantly to be safe and have fun. Our goal is to provide a welcoming and loving environment in which young children will thrive and grow. This is a time where your child will begin new relationships and continue to build on them throughout their Holy Redeemer school career.

ACTIVITIES

We offer both teacher-directed and child-directed activities with a balance of inside and outside play, active and quiet times, and hands-on learning. The program includes art, music, and movement, science, nutrition, dramatic play, cultural awareness, pre-math, pre-reading, pre-language skills, physical development, social interaction and spiritual growth. Activities plan will be inline with the School Wide Learning Expectations, the Archdiocesan Curriculum Guidelines and preparation for Pre-K and Kindergarten.

CLASS SIZE/ STAFF

The Preschool and Pre-K class are a 1:10 ratio with 1 or 2 teachers and teacher assistants.

ENROLLMENT

Preschool students will need to be 3 years-old and Pre-K students will need to be 4 years-old by September 1st to be enrolled. Pre-K students are not guaranteed a space in our Kindergarten class.

SCHOOL YEAR

Preschool and Pre-K classes are in session from September through middle of June.

TIMES/DAYS

Morning Pre-K		
M-F		8:10-11:15
Full Day Pre-K		
M, T, TH, F		8:10-3:10
Wednesday		8:10-2:10
Preschool 3 mornings		
M, W, F		8:10:-11:15
Preschool 5 mornings		
M-F		8:10-11:15

PARENT COMMITMENTS

Preschool and Pre-K parents are encouraged to become involved. Volunteering your time for field trips and/or in the classroom or donating items for parties or to the classroom are great ways to be involved.
Gift Wrap and Plant Sale - participation is encouraged, not required
Jog-a-thon is required. Each student must raise \$75 or parents pay the school \$75 out of pocket.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Preschool does not participate in conferences. However, Mrs. Torres will be available to meet and discuss your child if there are any questions and concerns.
Pre-K participates in parent/teacher conference time in February. This will allow Mrs. Hunter and Mrs. Lee time to really know your child and to be better aware of any

concerns as your child is getting ready for kindergarten. Other meetings can be scheduled any time during the year. Full Day Pre-K will attend all day when the rest of the school is participating in afternoon conferences.

October 22nd and 23rd from 8:10-3:10

NO School October 26th

GRADING

Assessments will be performed throughout the year to determine needs of the children. Pre-K Report Cards will be sent home in December, March and June. Preschool will not be sending home report cards.

SCHOOL BAG/BACKPACK

Each child is asked to bring his/her own (**large**) school bag/backpack well marked with his/her name. The bag should be brought each day in order that all items belonging to your child get home to you. This helps them to be responsible for their own things.

SCHOOL PICTURES

School picture day is **Friday, September 25th**. Before picture day, envelopes will be sent home with your choice of picture packages. The picture envelope with the money must be returned to school on picture day.

CLASS PARTIES

We celebrate holidays and other events through out the year. Notices will be sent home of the upcoming event and ways you can help. Class parents are encouraged to help organize and help during that day. Sign up sheets to help and to bring certain items will be outside the classroom.

BIRTHDAYS

We celebrate each child's birthday and make their day special. If you would like to send a birthday treat, please let us know. For children with summer birthdays, we celebrate at the end of our school year. If you plan a party outside of class time and want to invite your child's classmates we do not hand out invitations in school unless you invite all of the children in the class. We want to prevent any child's hurt feelings.

FIELD TRIPS

Because of the law requiring booster seats for children weighing up to 60 lbs., we will no longer organize the transportation of preschoolers for field trips. Our field trips will consist of walking to certain destinations, with chaperons or having special guests visit.

SNACKS

Parents are responsible for supplying their child with snack each day if they think it is necessary. Healthy, non-complicated and small snacks are recommended. Snack time is outside during their recess time. **Please send NUT-FREE snacks.**

LUNCH (Full day students only)

Students in the full day Pre-K program have the option of bringing a lunch from home or buying school lunch. Parents are responsible for paying for lunches in advance. All students have a lunch account that will be drawn from. Paying in advanced is highly recommended to avoid negative balances. Please send payments in an envelope with child's first and last name and what the payment is for. We encourage our students to eat their food and not be wasteful. Please make sure your child will eat what is for lunch. Your help is appreciated during the morning to indicate what type of lunch your child will be having. The lunch calendar is sent by email in the school's newsletter the first of the month. Please inform teacher if your child has nut related products for lunch.

NAPS (Full day students only)

Your child will be required to have a period of quiet time. It is very important that young children get time to rest their bodies and minds. Nap mats will be provided by the school. Nap mats might be taken away if a child is repeatedly tearing, coloring or misusing their mats after the teacher has asked them to stop. Parents are responsible for sending a small blanket and pillow or stuff animal to stay at school. Your child's belongings will be sent home every other week to be washed and return the next school day. If your child is disrupted during this period they may be asked to leave the room.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

All children must be completely toilet trained. We understand that an occasional accident might occur. We will ask your child to clean and change him/herself by themselves in the bathroom. New clothes will need to be sent back the next school day. If accidents are occurring frequently, we will ask to meet to work on a solution. **For the protection and safety of your child and our staff, we will ask you to pick up your child to be properly cleaned if he or she has had a bowel movement in their clothes.** Our children are expected to wash their hands with soap and water after toileting, blowing their nose, before snack, as well as after playing with shaving cream or painting. Please reinforce this healthy behavior at home as well.

SHARING

Children are encouraged to participate in our sharing days. You will be informed of your child's sharing day. They may bring a toy or a picture or maybe something special to them that they found, i.e. a shell, rock, etc. Any items that resemble weapons are not

allowed. For example, no play swords or guns. Please arrange with the teacher if your child would like to bring their pet to school.

DRESS CODE

Preschool and Pre-K do not participate in the school's uniform. However, there are some restrictions, such as: no flip flops, no spaghetti straps, no short skirts, dresses, or shorts, and no jewelry that can be distracting. Girls wearing dresses or skirts are encouraged to wear shorts underneath. Please use your best judgment when you send your child to school.

- Please dress for the weather, bring a warm coat when it is cold outside.
- Hair must be clean, neatly combed and must not interfere with eyesight.
- Clothing must be neat, clean, and modest.
- Clothing must fit the child properly (loose clothing can be unsafe)

DROP OFF / PICK UP

Please bring your child into the school building each day and deliver him/her to the classroom. (This is for safety and eliminates missing children) You may use street parking around the school, or park in the parking lot in the back of the school by entering on Vancouver Avenue, and exiting onto Williams. The classroom door opens at 8:00 A.M. **DO NOT** leave your child in the hall if the door is not yet open. You must stay with him/her until the teacher can take responsibility for your child. It is important that your child is on time. If you would like your child to have breakfast in the classroom, he or she will need to be here by 8:00am. Our day will begin 8:15. Please write a note or call the school office if someone other than the usual person is to pick up your child.

Pick up time is 11:15 for Preschool and morning Pre-K and **3:10** for full day Pre-K. If you are unable to be at the school 10 minutes after morning dismissal, your child will be waiting in the office and a phone call will be made. Morning preschool and Pre-K parents may be billed for frequent late pickups. If you are unable to be at school 3:20 for afternoon pick up, your child will be sent to Beyond The Classroom, and you will be charged for these services.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM (BTC)

BTC is our before and after school care program. Before school care will open at 7:00am in the Cafeteria (Cantwell Hall). Miss Cecilia is the head teacher for BTC in the morning and afternoon. She will check your child in and escort them to their classroom at 7:55am. BTC will begin at 3:20pm after school. Pre-K will start BTC in their classroom and merge to the Cafeteria at 3:50. BTC is offered until 6:00pm. Pick up after 6:00pm will be charged an extra amount per minute.

All children in need of BTC will need a registration form before the school year begins. A \$25 registration fee is required at that time. Bills are sent home at the end of the month. If you like to have your bill emailed to you, please let the office know in advance. Balances need to be paid in full. If payment is 30 days past due, parents will need to find other care for their child/children.

CLOSURES

In the event of an emergency closing due to weather or unforeseen reasons, please listen to the announcement on the radio and television. **Holy Redeemer Catholic School will**

NOT automatically follow Portland Public Schools decision. We will make our own determination and ask that you tune in to TV channels 2, 6, 8, or 12. The school also subscribes to Craig Walker's FlashAlert service. To check information about Holy Redeemer School closures, go to: www.FlashAlert.net or check on local television stations or their websites. It will be posted on the homepage of our school website: www.holyredeemerpdx.org Our school has subscribed to an emergency service that allows us to call our parents. You can expect a phone call once a decision for a closure or a delay has been determined. Trust your judgment and stay home if you feel the risk is too great to come to school.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

When a problem arises we will try to help the child/children solve it by talking about it with those involved, helping them find a better way to resolve their problem and by removing the child from the situation if necessary. We sometimes use time-out as a *calming down* or *thinking about* it time. There is a no hitting, kicking, and/or biting policy at our school. If a problem continues, Mrs. Hunter, Mrs. Lee or Mrs. Torres will let the parents know so that we can problem solve together.

SAFETY

A safe environment is of top concern for us. We have rules in the classroom and on the playground to ensure your child's safety.

Preschool and Pre-K participate and practice Fire Drills, Earthquake drills, and Emergency Situations.

COMMUNICATION

Our philosophy is that we are partners. Please let us know if you have concerns or questions by either stopping in to talk to the teacher, emailing, or calling. Our assistants are very involved in your child's day, but when asking questions please approach your child's teacher. You are always welcome to visit the classroom or help out in the classroom. Sign up sheet for volunteering will be posted outside the Preschool and Pre-K classrooms.

Pre-K sends home weekly newsletter to inform parents what we are doing in the classroom and reminders of important dates. A school newsletter from the principal's office is also emailed weekly with important information. Please make sure you are reading both thoroughly every week.

VOLUNTEERING

Teachers encourage and appreciate parents volunteering. The extra help is much needed for those special projects. ANYONE wanting to volunteer must have a cleared background check through the Archdiocesan process. The forms are available at the school office. You will need to complete the background check request form, pay the \$15.00 fee, and watch for an email to proceed. ANYONE wanting to volunteer on a regular basis will need the Called to Protect training this fall. The training session is approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. More information about Call to Protect and the times the trainings are offered can be found in the school's weekly newsletter or at the front office. The office will inform teachers of the parents who are authorized to be in the classroom.

HEALTH POLICY

When to keep your child home due to illness:

In order to keep our school environment as healthy as possible, children with any of the following symptoms should be kept home from school:

- severe cold
- runny nose with yellow or green mucous
- a congested cough
- sore throat or earache
- red or discharge from the eyes
- vomiting or diarrhea the previous day or night
- skin eruptions, rash or inflammation
- signs of weakness or listlessness
- if the child has had a fever within the last 24 hours
- head lice
- strep throat
- fifth disease
- hand foot and mouth disease
- whooping cough
- measles/chickenpox

If a child comes to school obviously ill or becomes ill while at school, the parent will be notified to come and take their child home.

If a child becomes ill at school:

We will first try to reach the parent. If unable to reach the parent, we will then call the emergency contact/s you have listed on your registration form. These contacts may take temporary care of your child in the event that you are not available. Please keep your emergency contact information updated with current phone numbers. Parents should inform the teacher/ school office of any known health condition the child has that may require attention.

If your child gets a communicable disease:

It is essential that the other families in the school be made aware of any possible exposure. You should contact the school office as soon as possible if your child has been exposed to or has one of the following diseases:

- head lice -chicken pox -pink eye -ring worm -impetigo -scabies
- strep throat -fifth disease -hand foot and moth disease -whooping cough
- measles/chickenpox

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

We require the immunization history of your child on the County Health form and the school is in accordance with Oregon State law regarding immunization. Immunization documentation is part of our registration process.