

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT Pre-K!



Dear Pre-K Parents,

Welcome to Pre-K at Holy Rosary Academy! I am excited and feel privileged to have your child in my Pre-K class at HRA. This is a special time and I am looking forward to a terrific year with each child. The beginning of the school year is an exciting time in the lives of young children, especially pre-k students. Going to school can be fun, frightening, exhilarating and exhausting. The parents of young children often have some of those same feelings. The beginning of the school experience and year can be worrisome. I have prepared this packet of information to introduce myself, our classroom and the school. Hopefully it will answer many questions you may have that will help to get our year off to a smooth start and ease worries. Please keep this packet in the B.E.A. R. book for future reference.

A LITTLE ABOUT THE TEACHER☺

I would like to take this time to introduce myself. My name is Carol McCabe and I grew up in Nashville, TN. I am a graduate of Middle Tennessee State University where I received my Bachelor of Science degree in early childhood/elementary education and a Masters Degree in Special Education. I have one son, Chase, who attends Middle Tennessee State University majoring in Electronic Media Journalism. Out of school, I was a kindergarten teacher, an Assistant Director and a Pre-K teacher at a child

care center. For ten years, I was a pre-K teacher and the Curriculum Director at Belmont Weekday School. This is my seventh year to teach at Holy Rosary. I taught Kindergarten here for 5 years before I moved to Pre-K to start up our program last year. It is my goal to provide your child with a supportive, loving and engaging environment where I help them to become independent thinkers that learn to make good decisions to manage themselves, while developing an essential lifelong love for learning. With teamwork and cooperation among parents, teachers and students, we will all have a "BEARY" good year!

DAILY ROUTINE

Pre-K Schedule for 2011-2012

7:30 - 7:45 Arrival and Tub Time at tables
7:45 - 8:00 Morning Message and Calendar Time
8:00-8:15 Word Workshop
8:15 - 8:45 Circle Time (Reading Workshop - including read aloud, mini lesson with Letter People, ABC and Word Fun and guided reading time)
8:45 Bathroom and Water Break
9:00 - 9:30 Small Group and Literacy Centers
9:30 Religion M, W, F Science T, Th
10:00 - 10:20 Writing Workshop - Handwriting Without Tears Curriculum (includes independent practice; Word Wall fun; making books and journal time/small groups)
10:30 - 11:00 Lunch
11:00 - 11:30 Recess/Bathroom
11:30 - 12:20 Bathroom/ Support Classes M-Th and Art and Special Activities on F.
12:30 - 1:30 Story and Rest Time
1:30 - Snack and Bathroom
1:45 - 2:15 Math MWF/ Social Studies T& Th
2:00 - 2:30 Center Time and Get ready to go Home
2:30 Dismissal

EXTRA CLASSES & TEACHERS: We will have several "extra teachers" and classes this year that you will probably hear about from your children....

Religion- Mrs. Welch (Mon., Wed., Fri.) Mass to begin on Wed. in Jan.

P.E. -Mrs. Malmin & Mrs. Mascari (T, Th.)

MUSIC- Mrs. Melton (Mon.)

LIBRARY- Mrs. McGowan and Mrs. Schroder (Tues.)

COMPUTER- Mrs. McCabe beginning in Jan.

SPANISH- Miss Walker (Wed.)

In addition, we have on staff a full time guidance counselor, Miss Ely. She will visit our classroom from time to time to cover important topics such as feelings, friends and personal safety.

COMMUNICATION☺

WEEKLY COMMUNICATION: A weekly family folder from the office will be sent home each Friday with the eldest student in each family. The folder carries communications about calendar changes, upcoming events, menus, and other important information. **Please read and keep all communications. Sign the folder and return it with your child the following MONDAY to receive the next week's communications.**

DAILY COMMUNICATION: Your child will have a "BEAR Book" to carry to and from school every day. Bear is an acronym for: **Bring Everything Always Ready**. This three ring binder will contain all of the papers, notes, and other communication necessary for home and for school. Each night please check the folders, review the day's behavior and work with your child, initial the calendar and return the book to school the following day. There is a pocket to send money back and forth to school as well. After you have looked over the work and discussed it with your child, **please keep the work**. Your child should bring his/her HRA tote bag to carry belongings, including the B.E.A.R. book to and from school each day.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE TEACHER: Any time you need to contact me, please feel free to send a note with your child, phone me at school and leave a voice mail message, or an e-mail. My e-mail address is mccabec@holyroary.edu. I will respond to your note, e-mail, and reply to phone calls as soon as possible, but please keep in mind that the majority of the day I am with your children and not near a phone. An open line of communication is extremely important to me and I hope to you as well.

Pre-K CALENDAR & Pre-K NEWS: At the beginning of each month you will receive a calendar showing all the important events that will take place in

Pre-K and a homework calendar with fun activities to practice. Please keep your child's calendars in his/her B.E.A.R Book and then remind your child each morning to cross out the correct day, it will help him/her become more familiar with numerals, days of the week, months of the year and concepts concerning time. Along with the calendar, you will receive a Pre-K Weekly Newsletter that updates you on things that will be happening throughout the week, such as field trips, letter of the week, high frequency words, etc. Pre-K calendar and Pre-K news will arrive home in your child's B.E.A.R. book.

CLASS WEBSITE: Check the school website weekly for events and information of what is going on in the classroom. The classroom newsletter, a list of high frequency words and many other activities will be listed on it. I have included useful information as well as links to other sites you might enjoy.

PRE-K DAILY ACTIVITIES & SCHOOL PROCEDURES☺

ARRIVAL & TARDIES: The Pre-K program is a part of HRA and operates on the same calendar year and daily schedule. The school day for HRA is 7:45am - 3:00pm Monday - Friday. For the safety of our Pre-K students and to minimize the confusion in the front parking lot Pre-K arrival and dismissal will be in the back parking lot by the gym. Their school day is 7:45-2:30. School begins promptly each day at 7:45am. The children are expected to be **in their rooms and ready to begin their day on time and picked up promptly at 2:30.**

Arrival

Every morning parents will park in the back parking lot and walk their child to my (Mrs. McCabe's) room using the sidewalk to the back door. Please sign your child in every morning with your initials and the time of arrival. Children can arrive at school from 7:15-7:45. Please drop your child off by 7:30 to ensure they are in the classroom on time. We use the early morning time from 7:30 -7:45 to unpack tote bags and prepare for the day, therefore, it is recommended that they get to school by 7:30 in order to give them plenty of time to complete all morning tasks and not feel rushed! Children arriving after 7:45 are considered tardy and must have a tardy slip to be admitted to class. Our classroom door will be promptly locked at 7:45. WHRA with morning announcements begins promptly at this time and our day has begun.

Children arriving after this will have to enter school with a parent at the main entrance and report to the office. **Please** do not knock on the back door of the classroom after 7:45 am because I cannot open it at that time. Our day has begun and I am with the children. We go by the school clock and if the door is locked you are tardy! When children come in late to school it is disruptive to them and their class members. They also miss out on part of their day and an essential part of the curriculum. This is really hard on a young child and can make their entire day difficult. **The tardy policy at HRA is strictly enforced, so please review it in your handbook.** Any child arriving at school before 7:15 must be registered for ESCAPE. Pre-K children who go to ESCAPE in the mornings can not arrive before 6:45. They will enter the building through the main doors and go to the dining hall. For the first day of school (Thurs.), pre-k parents may park in the back parking lot and walk your child to the room and come inside to sign them in and see the room. **After the first day, we ask that you walk your child to the room and sign the clip board hanging inside of the room by the door with your initials and the time. Give your child a kiss and a hug and let them enter the door by themselves. Please do not come in the classroom with your child after the first day. Remember, one of the most important goals for Pre-K is to teach our little ones independence.**

Rainy Day Arrival

On Rainy mornings, you will enter at the back parking lot by the gym doors from 7:15-7:45. Mrs. Welch or Mrs. McCabe will be there to let you in and you will walk your child to the classroom to sign them in. The gym back door will be promptly locked at 7:45. After this time you will enter at the office.

DISMISSAL

School dismisses each day at 2:30pm for Pre-K students in the back parking lot. There is an optional 2:45 dismissal for kindergarten and first grade students. So it is important that Pre-K is picked up on time. No student above first grade will be allowed in the back parking lot for dismissal.

The children are taught to look for their cars. They must stay in line with the Pre-k teacher until they see the person picking them up and a teacher puts them in the car. At that time you will be asked to sign them out.

If you are late to pick your child up after 2:30 dismissal you will have to enter at the office to pick up your child. You will have to come to the room to pick them up and sign them out. Children registered to attend ESCAPE (our after school day-care program) will remain in the room with Mrs.

McCabe until ESCAPE staff comes to pick them up and takes them to the dining hall. **We must have written notification of the dismissal time your child will use this year.** Parents/guardians must sign their child in and out daily. **No one can pick your child up unless their name is with the office.** Please send a note with your child in the morning if someone other than the parents or a designated adult will be picking up your child. A HRA staff person will bring your child to the car and have a clip board for you to quickly initial and sign the time you pick your child up. **Please do not get out of your car to pick up your child.** When bringing or picking up your child, please understand that the teacher's responsibility is with the children. Therefore, this is not the time to ask questions or discuss your child's progress or talk to the teacher in any way that would take her attention away from the children. I am always happy to answer questions and talk with parents at the appropriate time! Please be patient for the first few days while everyone becomes accustomed to the parking lot procedures at dismissal.

ABSENCES: Parents are asked to call the school between 7:00 and 8:30 if your child will be absent. In the event of an absence, excuse notes (reason for absence) are required after each absence. The notice must include the reason for the absence, date, parent signature, phone number and name of child. The notes will be kept on file as part of the attendance record. A doctor's note is required after 3 consecutive days of absences. Please refer to the family handbook for full details of the school's policy. Because of the nature of the pre-k curriculum and program our day and work is mostly hands on, therefore, make-up work will not be sent home. It is especially important for this age to be at school and hear the lesson of the skill being taught. Hands on experiences are important for pre-k.

DISCIPLINE PLAN: In your child's BEAR book in the Behavior section is a copy of my Pre-k Discipline Plan that I use for positive and effective classroom management. Please read, discuss it with your child, sign and return the bottom portion to me by **August 19, 2011.**

MASS: Pre-K will meet with Father Mark and begin learning about attending mass in Dec. We will begin attending mass on a regular basis on Wednesday's with K-2nd grades unless there is a special all school mass like a grade Special Liturgy. We will attend mass on Thursday for special masses. Pre-K

will attend mass once a week. Mass begins promptly at 8:00am, so it is imperative you have your child to school by 7:30 on mass days. This will give us plenty of time to settle in, go to the bathroom, listen to morning announcements and walk over to the church in a timely manner.

POTTY TRAINING & BATHROOM BREAKS: Children entering Pre-K are expected to be fully potty trained. Please no pull ups. This includes wiping themselves after a B. M. While we understand that children of this age have accidents from time to time, we are only allowed, by law, to offer guidance and verbal assistance to the children.

EXTRA CLOTHING: We ask that you send an extra change of clothes to be kept at school in case of an accident (**shirt, pants or shorts, underwear, socks**). **Please send elastic pants and shorts. Note: No belts in Pre-K.** The clothes you send might be older clothes (as close to uniform colors as possible) that are not needed at home because they are to be kept at school. Please make sure the clothes are labeled with your child's name and place them *in a large zip-lock bag with your child's name on the outside*. The zip-lock bag will be used to send dirty clothes home. If your child has a "wet" accident, the child will change into their spare clothes and assistance will be given if necessary. But, for any other bathroom accidents, you will be called to come and take your child home for necessary cleaning. The child is welcome to return the following day. This is for health and sanitary reasons. Please be sure to send in another change of clothes the next day after your child has an accident. Each day we will take 2 class bathroom/water breaks- one during the morning and one after recess before PE. We will also take a break before and after rest time. We encourage all children to use the restroom during these scheduled times so that class time can be focused on lessons, learning and fun instead of starting and stopping to use the restroom which distracts all learners. Our room is equipped with a bathroom in the classroom for emergencies or need; however disruption of class times is discouraged. Also, please help your child learn how to independently handle clothing (shirts tucked in, etc.). Please note that Pre-K can only wear elastic waist pants, no zippers or belts. I do understand that children may need assistance with clothing and I will be happy to help and assist the children.

LUNCH: Pre-k students go to lunch each day from 10:30-11:00 (on 11am dismissal day's we will not have lunch but will have a snack). The dining hall staff provides a lunch menu in the Friday Family Folder every two weeks with menus, cost of daily lunches, cost of meal tickets, milk, etc...Meal tickets should be purchased at the beginning of the week and tickets can be carried over if your child does not use it every day. Whether you are sending money for a meal ticket, a daily lunch, etc., **please send money to school with your child in an envelope with your child's name, amount, and what it is for clearly marked on the front. This envelope should be in the money pouch in your child's BEAR book.** Please do not send loose money to school. Children may purchase hot lunches at school or are welcome to bring their lunch from home. If your child brings his/her lunch please label the lunchbox or bag. Please note that HRA is a tree nut free school to accommodate children with related allergies. Please do not bring items to school that contain tree nuts. Examples are: coconut, almonds, pecans, walnuts, etc. We try to teach the children to eat healthy so please do not send candy or cokes to school and only one dessert. We only have 30 minutes to walk to the dining hall, eat and clean up. Your teacher eats during this time too. :) So please send items in that children can manage on their own. Please do not bring items that need to be cut or heated. Lunchables have a lot of parts to be open, you might want to open these parts and put them in zip locks. ☺**Ice cream and Cookie Day for Pre-K is Wednesday, so please only send money on this day for these items!** Parents are welcome to come to school to have lunch with their child from time to time. Please send a note with your child on the day you are coming so that you can be included in the lunch count we are required to send to the dining hall. When you arrive, please sign in at the office. **Please note the dining hall policy of no outside food being brought in at lunchtime, especially fast food.**

RECESS: The children are supervised by the teacher and/or aides during their recess outdoors after lunch each day. Please be aware of weather conditions and dress your child appropriately. Only on extreme cold or wet days do we have recess indoors.

REST TIME: In accordance with Tennessee State Law, we are required to have a daily rest time of a hour or so. This might be a little longer at the beginning of school. Cots will be provided, but we ask you bring a crib sheet for a cover. You may send a **small** pillow and you purchased the blanket to be

used with the tote bag. Please do not send any other covers due to lack of room. The children are not required to go to sleep, but are expected to rest quietly on their mat. All covers will be sent home each Friday to be washed and must be brought back to school on Monday. The children may bring a **small** rest toy (no larger than a beanie baby) to sleep with during rest time. This toy will only be for rest time and will stay in their tote bag except at rest time!

SNACK: The children will have snack each afternoon after rest time. A sign up list will be out the night of orientation. We ask that you sign up to bring in snacks for the entire class 2 weeks at a time. We have 10 children in class. The dates you signed up for will be posted on the website and listed on the monthly calendars. Please send in a simple, nutritious snack that can be handled as independently as possible. If sending in a drink (these are okay to send in but not necessary, we can go to the water fountain) please send in disposable ones and ones easy for the children to independently open on their own. Practice at home to open and insert straws is much needed. 😊 Please, **no candy or ice cream at snack time**. We normally have snack in the classroom, so if you send a snack that requires a fork or spoon, please supply those as well.

PRE-K SPECIAL DAYS😊

STAR OF THE WEEK: During the year, each child will have a chance to be a "Star"! I will assign each child a week to be featured and before that week they will bring home the "Star Student" bag. The bag contains a poster to fill out along with a letter explaining the week and what needs to be brought in for this special time along with some special books to read with your child (it will also be listed on the monthly calendar) a week prior to your child's week asking you to send in pictures, mementos, favorite things, etc. to be shared with classmates. Return the bag, poster, and other items on your child's assigned week. You are invited to come and read to us during this week and also have lunch with your child.

BIRTHDAYS: Birthdays are SPECIAL days and we will celebrate each child's birthday at school. The summer birthdays will be celebrated on the closest date to his/her half birthday. A week or two before your child's birthday you will receive a note asking how you would like to participate in their

birthday celebration. You are invited to come and have lunch with your child on the day we celebrate his/her birthday, read a story to the class before lunch (10:15-10:30) and you may also send a special treat for our snack time. Please send napkins with the special snack and bring it to the classroom that morning before school. Please keep birthday treats simple (cupcakes, brownies or cookies, etc.) remember to bring tree nut free snacks. Students will also have a uniform break on their birthday. Remember, you must have a Diocesan Profile form on file in the office to participate in the classroom. Your child will also be bringing home "The Birthday Bag" when we celebrate his/her birthday. Please take time to read one or more of the books to your child and then fill out a page in the Birthday Journal. Your child gets to keep the card and gift, but please send the journal and books back to school with your child on the next day of school. This is a very sensitive age and in order to not hurt any child's feelings we ask that you do not send birthday invitations to school to be passed out. Please see HRA school hand book for school policy☺.

FIELD TRIPS: Pre-k will be going on 2 scheduled field trips this year: Walden Farm on October TBA, Nashville Children's Theater April 24, 2012 to see "*Click, Clack Moo*". We travel by chartered buses so some trips are chaperoned by the teachers unless it is a trip we need extra chaperones and parents are invited. Parents are welcome to meet us at the farm but parents can not ride the buses with us. Due to lack of space at the theater we are unable to invite parents to this one. Permission forms and information about fees will come home 2-3 weeks prior to each field trip. Your child must have a signed permission form for each field trip. We will also have a Water Play Day with picnic for the end of the year. Parents will join us for this fun time and information will be coming.

Mystery Can: We will not have Show & Tell as such in Pre-K because children are asked to bring in items to share from home for Star of the Week, Letter of the Week, during shape and color studies and much more. Instead, each child will have an opportunity to bring home our Mystery Sharing Can 2 or 3 times during the year. The Mystery Can will come home in a bag with a Mystery Can Clues book with a different child each week. The child will put an object in the can and write 3 clues about their object in the book and send the bag back to school. The clues will be shared at school and each

child will make 3 guesses about what the object is during the week. This is a fun way to develop oral language skills.

Other Special Days: Pre-K is a year full of fun and excitement. Children are only young once and I want this to be a year that they make memories that will last a life time. Through fun themes with hands on experiences, the children will gain confidence in their own abilities and develop a sense of accomplishment and independence. Creating a joyful learning environment helps to foster curiosity and opens up students to be creative in their learning. We will celebrate all holidays with fun and parties but will also have other special days with themes and units of studies. Some examples will be Johnny Appleseed Day Celebration- we will plant apple seeds and make products made with apples like apple tarts and applesauce; Celebrate fall with Scarecrow day; Nursery-Rhyme Day that will be at the end of our Nursery Rhyme study. We dress as our favorite Nursery Rhyme character and put on a play reciting rhymes we have learned. There will be 50's day with a Sock Hop and Ice Cream Party for our Valentine's Day celebration. Another favorite is Dr. Seuss Day where we dress as our favorite Dr. Seuss character and bring in the book. This is just a taste of the fun we will experience in Pre-K this year.

VOLUNTEERS☺

"PARENT ART": Each month Pre-K friends get excited to have parents volunteer to lead art projects. Parent Art time is on the designated Friday from 11:30-12:30. I allot an hour for instructions, preparation & clean up but please do not worry if your project will not last that long...we'd rather have too much time than not enough!☺ Please know you are responsible for coming up with the art project idea and have all of the materials prepared and ready to bring to school on your given day. Remember, to make these simple and child friendly. Children are easily pleased and have fun doing most things so please do not stress yourself out by spending a lot of time or money in planning these. We love to have projects that we can hang in the hallway on display so that the children and the other classes can see their work. I am always here to help with ideas and to help in any way☺.

Please note the school policy that younger siblings are NOT to participate in these activities in fairness to the students.

VOLUNTEERING AT HRA: ALL people (moms, dads, relatives, friends, etc.) who wish to volunteer in the classroom or school in any way, **MUST** have the required and current **DIOCESAN PROFILE FORM** completed and on file in the school office. This would include art projects, reading on birthdays, party participation, field trip chaperoning, clinic, library, and office volunteers, and any other activities with the students. If you have not completed a form, please do so, they are available in the school office. Forms must be complete ahead of time and entered into the school computer **(at least 2 weeks before the attended date)** before one can participate. Please note the school policy that when volunteering or attending a class activity or party siblings are not to participate in the activity in fairness to the students. We thank you in advance for your cooperation in this manner.

HELPING OUT IN THE CLASSROOM: I have discovered there just aren't enough hours in the day to do everything so-o-o, I am looking for some "at home" help. If you would be willing to make playdough, do some simple coloring or cutting for art projects or games, and help in special projects please let me know. This is a great way for working parents to feel a part of helping.

PRE-K STUDENT PROGRESS & SCHOOL RECOGNITION☺

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES & REPORT CARDS: We will have two scheduled parent-teacher conferences, one in the fall and one in the spring (note: Spring conference was accidentally left off calendar; it is March 21.) Please refer to the school calendar for dates. These conferences are very important to your child's education. Please put these dates on your calendar and plan to attend on this day. **We ask that you do not plan vacations during this time and note in the school handbook these are MANDATORY!** You must attend to receive your child's progress report. Pre-k will also receive reports of progress beginning at the end of the second nine-week grading period in January, and again after the third and final grading periods. Please feel free to contact me anytime you need to discuss anything with me and I will do the same.

Homework – Pre- K will have a monthly homework calendar to come home beginning in September. This will be full of fun and easy activities for you to do at home with your child to reinforce skills introduced at school. When the

activity is completed your child will color that day's square. Calendars will be kept in your child's bear book. Letter of the week activities and fun family projects will also be sent home from time to time. Examples are: a Family foot project, making a gingerbread man, etc. Young children need lots of repetition with early literacy and math concepts before they commit them to long term memory. We will be practicing these skills at school, but it is important to extend these skills at home as well. The more repetition children get with any skill, the sooner they are likely to remember them. So from time to time, I will send home a game or other activity that supports your child's learning. Please set aside some time to complete these activities with your child when they come home.

PRE-K ODDS AND ENDS😊

SUPPLIES: During the year, I will send home a note when it is time to replenish any supplies in your child's work box that have been used up. Please try to fill the missing supplies as soon as possible so your child may complete his/her work efficiently without having to worry about not having an item.

BOOK ORDERS: Your child will have the opportunity to order books for your home library each month or so. The book orders are from Scholastic Books and will be sent home each month attached to the monthly calendar.

FINALLY...😊

Please talk to your child about going to school and what he/she will be learning and doing and its importance. Talk positively about school. Encourage your child to discuss school activities with you each day. Your constant interest will play an important part in your child's positive and happy experience in school and learning success. I am delighted to have your child in my class and I look forward to working with you through the year and to make sure your child starts Pre-k on a positive note. Please keep this packet for future reference in your child's B.E.A.R. book. I GREATLY appreciate your support and anticipate a fun and successful school year.

Carol McCabe

