



Mercymount

Country Day School

Preschool - Pre-K Handbook



Revised, August 2023

WELCOME!

Welcome to Mercymount Country Day School Pre-Kindergarten Program.

We hope the following information concerning our program will help answer any questions you may have about our philosophy, methods, policies and programs.

ACCREDITATION

Mercymount Country Day School is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and by the Rhode Island Department of Education to conduct educational programs for Pre-Kindergarten children. Many of the school's policies are required by the state, the RI Department of Education, and the Diocese of Providence.

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

In Mercymount's Pre-Kindergarten program, we strive to create a pleasant, safe and challenging environment for each child by providing a variety of learning experiences and activities. We endeavor to give the children an opportunity to think, create, explore and discover the world around them as well as the gift of their own uniqueness.

We also hope to instill in our children a Christian way of life based on Christ's invitation to always do the loving thing.

The children are encouraged to grow spiritually, mentally, socially, emotionally and academically through proper guidance, careful selection of materials, and a well-planned program.

It is our aim to provide a loving environment where self-confidence along with a positive self-image is realized.

Mindful of the maxim "that nothing grows unless you love it," we seek to create an atmosphere of love and learning where the goals and objectives of our Mission statement may be brought to fruition.

MISSION STATEMENT

Faithful to Catholic educational tradition, Mercymount Country Day School sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, ensures the development of strong academic skills, nurtures creative abilities, creates a sense of community and promotes social responsibility. In the spirit of Catherine McAuley, we affirm that each child is a unique gift of a loving God, open to God's presence in others and in all creation.

ENROLLMENT

To be accepted for enrollment at Mercymount's Pre-Kindergarten, a child must be three (3) years of age by September 1st of the given year. The child's birth certificate and baptismal certificate must be presented at the time of registration. In-house screening is conducted for new students entering Pre-Kindergarten. In addition, Early Childhood Screening (Child Outreach) is conducted by the Cumberland Public Schools. The State of Rhode Island requires Pre-Kindergarten children to have all necessary inoculations, and health and immunization forms must be filled out by your physician before entering school. Required forms and immunization requirements are posted on our web site at <https://www.mercymount.org/student-experience/health-services>. Students are also required to present evidence of lead screening. All medical forms must be received prior to the start of school.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school year is from the end of August to mid-June. The Pre-Kindergarten session begins at 8:30 a.m. through 2:50 p.m., and is a five-day program. Before Care and After care are available for a fee.

TUITION INFORMATION

Arrangements may be made for FACTS payments through the Finance Office.

FOOD

Students will be required to bring a lunch and drink each day. Lunch will be eaten in the Preschool/Pre-K classroom. Students will not take part in the cafeteria lunch program. No peanut or tree nut products please.

Students should also bring one nutritious snack and juice box or water each day. Students participating in the After-Care program will be provided with a second snack. Students should also have a reusable water bottle.

CLOTHING

Pre-K uniforms are purchased through Donnelly Uniform Company. Sneakers may be worn every day (all white for girls/all black for boys. **No flip-flops or sandals for safety reasons.**

SICKNESS AND ABSENCE

If on a given day, your child is absent due to illness or will be late, please notify the school at 401-333-5919 or email the school office and/or your child's teacher as soon as possible. If your child has a cold, runny nose or sore throat, he/she should be kept home. In the event your child becomes sick during the school day (fever above 100°, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat), you will be notified by the school nurse and required to take your child home. Students must be symptom free for 24 hours prior to returning to school. Students absent for 5 or more days require a doctor's note to return to school. Students returning to school without a note will be excluded from school. Any student with an injury must bring in a doctor's note with specific dates in order to be excluded from gym class and/or physical activity.

MEDICINES

In the event that it is necessary for the school nurse to administer prescribed medication, it must be in a properly marked container from the pharmacy, accompanied by a note from the parent and a signed doctor's order. This includes epi-pens for food or bee allergies; these must be brought to the nurse on the first day of school. Required forms are available on the school website.

Please note, over the counter cough syrup and cold medicine are not dispensed during school hours.

RELEASE

If your child is to be released at dismissal by someone other than the parent, we require that a written request be made in advance by the parent. In an emergency (car trouble, etc.), no child will be released to anyone unless confirmation is obtained by the school from the parent either by telephone or an email to the teacher. A copy of the individual's driver's license must be given to the teacher and/or office personnel to be kept on file.

TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS/CONFERENCES

Once a year, at the end of the first trimester, parent-teacher conference will be held. You will be invited to visit the school and be given the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with his/her teacher. If at any other time you wish to speak to the classroom teacher, please call the school or email the teacher to set up an appointment. The Pre-K teachers use FACTS; important information will be communicated.

VACATIONS AND SNOW DAYS

The yearly calendar will be included in the September PIE Memo; is it also available on the web site. In the event of a delayed opening or school closing, Mercymount communicates the change via the school's emergency notification system, email and/or the local media.

CURRICULUM

Mathematics

The purpose of the Mathematics program at Mercymount is to provide students with well- developed mathematical skills. The Pre-Kindergarten Math program is designed to provide young children with an introduction to the most basic of mathematical concepts, and to make them aware of how these concepts are at work in their everyday life. Students will:

- engage in early math concepts, counting and matching
- become familiar with a simple graph
- count by ones and match quantities with numerals
- compare sets using appropriate language
- identify, describe and reproduce patterns
- sort and classify objects
- name, describe, sort and draw two-dimensional shapes
- write and identify numbers

Science

The purpose of the Science program at Mercymount is to encourage students to understand the world around them by using their senses to observe and gather information. The Pre- Kindergarten Science program is designed to help the students understand the world through experiments and hands-on activities. Students will:

- begin to understand the effect that people have on their environment
- apply science knowledge and skills to solve problems
- describe and communicate observations through drawings and graphs
- identify properties of objects and classify according to these properties
- make predictions and plan investigations

Social Studies

The Pre-Kindergarten Social Studies program is designed to help the students understand that they are part of a family and a larger community. Through this recognition, they will become aware of the need for rules, rights and responsibilities.

Students will:

- know the important rules of the classroom
- verbalize “place names” such as their address, and familiar places in the community
- understand their role and value as a member of the classroom community
- demonstrate an awareness of time (yesterday, today, tomorrow)
- show an awareness and appreciation of the similarities and differences among people

Language and Literacy

The purpose of the Language program at Mercymount is to provide students with the tools and strategies necessary to become lifelong learners. Through speaking, listening, reading, and writing, students will become articulate, effective communicators with a deep appreciation for the written word. Students will:

- listen to stories to learn new information, develop vocabulary and appreciate literature
- express themselves using painting, drawing and writing materials
- display listening skills and identify and express feelings
- demonstrate an awareness of print concepts
- identify and produce rhyming words
- recognize letters of the alphabet

Religion

The purpose of the Religion program at Mercymount is to provide students with a knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and to deepen their faith in the Catholic Church. Using the standards set forth by the Diocese of Providence and the Sisters of Mercy, students learn about their faith through Scripture stories and Mercymount’s religious education program. Students will:

- learn traditional prayers
- practice Christian values of faith, charity, honesty, love and mercy
- attend prayer services and Mass on holy days
- share in the collections for the poor and those in need

Creative Arts

The purpose of the Creative Arts program at Mercymount is to provide students a vehicle for expressing their ideas and feelings. Through visual arts, drama, music and movement, children will enhance their creativity, a critical skill for later success.

Students will:

- create art using a variety of media
- participate in pretend play
- re-enact familiar stories
- explore a variety of music and musical instruments

Social and Emotional

Students will:

- learn acceptable group behavior (i.e. sharing)
- learn to relate with peers and adults
- learn awareness of the feelings of others
- develop self confidence
- create a good self-image (positive reinforcement)
- learn to communicate their feelings in socially acceptable ways
- learn self-help skills to become independent of parental help
- listen when others are speaking
- develop the ability to control impulses
- show persistence in tasks
- participate in finding solutions to conflicts

Sample Day in the Life of Pre-Kindergarten at Mercymount

Morning - 8:35 - 11:40

- Morning greeting
- Learning Centers
- Snack
- Recess
- Specials (TBD)

Midday - 11:45 - 1:30

- Story time
- Lunch
- Rest

Afternoon - 1:30 - 2:50

- Quiet activities
- Closing circle
- Dismissal