

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

The curriculum at St. Mary of the Hills Preschool is designed to enhance and address numerous areas of development. These areas include:

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL- Encouraging interaction between children to progress to different levels of play (parallel, interactive, etc.) and to help acquaint children with various social skills such as sharing, cooperation and following rules. Since children develop at different levels, we focus on providing a nurturing environment that is sensitive to the individual needs of each child. The dramatic play area and the block area are great places for the enhancement of these skills as well as snack and lunch w/teacher times.

COGNITIVE – Working on specific learning skills focusing on math and science development through planned activities as well as tailored manipulation of materials. Such concepts include: recognition of numbers, shapes & colors, sorting and classifying objects, patterning, one to one correspondence, estimating, predicting, observing, experimenting and exploring. Many of these types of activities occur during circle time as a group, in the discovery area with the manipulation of materials, or even in the block area.

LANGUAGE-LITERACY - Language development is encouraged through modeling and social interactions. Literacy development is enhanced through the use of word walls, letter of the week, letter bag, stories, writing centers and written words on the classroom work and materials. Concepts include: letter recognition (upper and lower case), letter sounds, name recognition, understanding we read left to right and recognizing letters together make words. Daily story time, circle time and our reading/quiet areas are prime areas for these skills.

PHYSICAL – Fine and Gross motor skills are both physical traits that are worked on through different means. Fine motor development occurs through activities in the fine arts such as cutting, tracing, and writing or through activities such as working with clothespins and other small manipulatives. Gross motor skills are enhanced through large muscle development with outdoor play time using the climbers, running, hopping, skipping, as well as indoor play using the balance beam, tunnels, hoola hoops and basketballs. Indoor large muscle development can also be seen in the classroom during music and movement.

SPIRITUAL – Being a Catholic program we are fortunate to be able to focus on the aspects of our religion through stories, songs, visits to the church and chapel as well as discussions about the various liturgical seasons. Through these activities we can help promote a special relationship for each child with God and to develop a sense of unity as a religious community.

All our programs are developmentally appropriate “play based” classrooms. What this means is that the room is structured to encourage “hands-on” experiences for the students. Teachers plan out what specific skills they will be working on and provide materials to enhance these traits. Through observation, assessment, and interaction the teachers work with the children to determine and progress their developmental levels.