



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Preschool
 2115 S. Rural Rd.
 Tempe, AZ 85284

**Parent Handbook
 The ABC's of OLMC Preschool**

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A.

Absences

If your child is sick and cannot attend school, please call the preschool office at 480-966-1753 or email your child's teacher, or the director at monica@olmctempe.com

After School Childcare

After school childcare starts from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Students will have storytime, recesstime, and craft time. Parents may pick up anytime before 6:00 p.m. There will be a late fee charge if a child is picked up after 6 p.m.

Arrival

All classes start at **8:00 am** until 12:15pm. Early drop off is available in the morning at 7:00am. It is essential that our students arrive on time for school, ready to learn, and understand the importance of being on time. It is important for children to develop good habits at an early age and to learn that school is important. We need all parents to set a good example by having their children arrive at school on time.

For the safety of all children, park **only** in the parking lot behind the church and walk your child to class each morning.

All mornings should begin as follows:

The sign-in/out book: Located just outside the classroom door. It is required by the Arizona Department of Health and Safety that any persons designated to sign your child in and out must write their first name initial and full last name and must be at least 16 years of age. By law, preschool staff can only release your child to persons that you have previously listed in your child's file. Due to our pick-up procedures, your child's teacher or preschool director will sign out your child.

Washing Hands: During drop off, all students will start off the day by washing their hands before beginning any morning work/activities.

Please send your child with a backpack and lunch to school. Lunch is provided by the parents. Inside the backpack should always contain: a school folder, water bottle, and a Ziploc bag with a change of clothing (shorts/pants, underwear, shirt, and socks). Please mark all personal items with the child's name. The folder will contain important information regarding classroom

newsletters, announcements, and notes from your child's teacher. All water bottles must ONLY have water.

B.

Bathrooms Readiness

In the best interest of the children, the preschool/pre-kindergarten has adopted a policy regarding bathroom accidents and children being fully, independently potty trained. Due to our licensing throughout the state of Arizona, students must be **fully** potty trained to attend OLMC Preschool/Pre-kindergarten classes. To be fully potty-trained means not having consistent accidents, being able to wipe/clean, and dressing themselves. Both programs expect parent cooperation with their child's bathroom readiness. Pull-ups are not allowed in either program. For more information, please refer to the OLMC Preschool bathroom readiness policy.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a very special day for every child! Talk with your child's teacher at least one week in advance if you wish to send in special snacks. If you are having a party for your child and are only inviting a few children from class, we ask that you mail any invitations to avoid hurt feelings.

Book Club

We are pleased to take part in the Scholastic Book Club. When you order a book, our school receives bonus points which will be used toward earning books for our school. Every two months, your child will bring home a book order form. There is no obligation to parents. If you wish to order a book(s), there will be directions attached to the order form with information to order online. When books are delivered, we will place them in a plastic bag so that the other children do not feel left out when they see others receiving books.

Backpacks

Parents are encouraged to purchase a backpack for their children that is durable, easy for their preschoolers to carry, and can hold their child's lunchbox, water bottle, and folder. Small backpacks, though cute, are discouraged.

C.

Conferences

Progress report conferences will be scheduled in the fall and optional conferences in the spring. Additional conferences can be scheduled at any time. Always feel free to speak with your child's teacher before or after class. Our progress reports were developed through the collaborative efforts of a cohort of Preschool Directors and the Diocese of Phoenix.

Continuous Training

Our staff are continuously trained at least 18 hours per year. This includes the Diocese of Phoenix In-Service 2, 5 hours training, Fall and Spring. We are also trained in Empower, helping children to live healthy lives. We are committed to furthering staff members and childcare provider knowledge on the Empower Program and Empower standards. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will make sure that our staff members receive three hours of training annually on age and developmentally appropriate Empower topics.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of students. To guarantee that Our Lady of Mount Carmel School community has the best interest of the students in case of an emergency situation, all employees are expected to be familiar with the procedures listed in the plan. All employees will report any threats to appropriate authorities/school staff.

Critical Incident

Critical incidents include situations involving threats of harm to students, school staff, or school facilities. Critical incidents include but are not limited to fires, natural disasters, use/threatened use of weapons/explosives, active shooter incidents, and the taking of hostages. Such incidents require an emergency response involving law enforcement and/or emergency service agencies.

CRITICAL INCIDENT TEAM MEMBERS – The Critical Incident Team Members shall include the following: principal, pastor, assistant principal, school secretary, preschool director, technical assistant (as appointed by the principal), and school nurse.

In the event of a Critical incident drill, parents will be notified prior to the start of the drill. The door to the classroom will be locked and shall not be opened to anyone that the teacher cannot identify as a police officer or an obviously non-threatening person.

Teachers will direct students to specific areas within the room out of the line of sight from the windows. Teachers will instruct the students to sit down on the floor and be quiet. To keep the children calm we will talk to them through this process and sing to them until the drill is over. Please contact the director with any questions regarding this drill.

Curriculum/Activities and Programs

OLMC Preschool is a Christ-centered, play-based learning environment. We enrich students' lives by offering them hands-on experiences, encouraging social-emotional skills, and bringing the awareness of Christ into their rapidly expanding world. Your child will develop math, science, language, social, spiritual, and emotional skills through a wide variety of activities. Our caring and professionally trained staff will, in partnership with the family, develop the skills each child needs to have success in kindergarten.

OLMC Preschool embraces the developmental philosophy of learning, which respects each child as a unique individual, and supports the knowledge that young children learn best through play and hands-on experiences. Through daily classroom activity we strive to maintain a

BALANCE between:

- Child-directed & teacher directed activity
- Structure & flexibility
- Group needs & individual needs
- Children's interests

Daily activity offering always includes:

- Creative Arts
- Blocks
- Dramatic Play
- Sensory Materials
- Manipulatives
- Science
- Literature
- Music & Movement
- Snacks
- Outdoor Play

D.

Discipline

In preschool, we work to eliminate any potential problems before they occur. Our staff expresses appropriate respect and affection for the children and model positive social interaction and expression of feelings. Should there be a disciplinary problem, we use several techniques that help children to internalize rules and become self-directed in their behavior. These include offering choices, problems solving, natural and logical consequences, ignoring, redirecting, and a “cooling off” time in an area of the child’s choice. We will work together with parents to keep the lines of communication open.

The school administration is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all students and staff. In order to maintain the good order, safety and the welfare of the school community, situations may arise in which school administration or staff may restrain, redirect, or escort or otherwise use such physical contact as is reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

1. Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student him/herself).
2. Significantly disrupting the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or any school function, despite receiving reasonable instruction to cease

such behavior.

Dismissal

At the end of the class day, please sign-out your child on the attendance sheet. As stated earlier, we will only allow the child to leave with the people listed on your child's registration form. You are required to keep that list updated. If someone other than the usual person will be picking up your child, parents will email or call their child's teacher or preschool director to notify the change.

Pick up time is 12:15pm for all classes.

Extended care pick-up time is 3:00pm.

After school pick up time is 6:00pm.

We do give parents a fifteen minute grace period before applying charges from 12:15pm to 12:30pm; extended care from 3:00 to 3:15pm. If you are later than fifteen minutes, there will be an extra charge of \$4.00 per half hour. There will be a \$2.00 per minute charge after 6:00pm.

Drop In and Schedule Change

If parents request an extra day for their child/children to attend preschool outside their designated days, if allotted due to classroom occupancy, parents must communicate with their child's/children's teacher or director. Parents will be charged \$50.00 per day per child. One complementary schedule change is permitted during the school year. Any decrease in days during the school year after the first complementary schedule change will be charged \$150.00 per schedule change (decrease only). This charge includes extended care changes. An increase in hours during the school year will not be an extra charge.

E.

Early Morning Drop Off

We offer early morning drop-off Monday through Friday from 7:00am-8:00am in room 4. Parents must sign in their child before leaving preschool grounds. It is required by the Arizona Department of Health and Safety that any persons designated to sign your child in and out must write their first name initial and full last name and must be at least 16 years of age.

Email

Our email address is monica@olmctempe.com. We check this email daily and it is a good way to send any questions or comments that you might have about the preschool or classes. We will send newsletters, announcements, calendars, and reminders to your email account on a weekly basis.

Emergency Dismissal

Although rare, in the event that the preschool cancels classes due to unforeseen reasons (example: broken furnace/ac unit) please make sure that we have a phone number that we can call each day to inform the person bringing your child to school about the cancellation. Also, we need the number(s) you wish us to call if school will need to dismiss early. Please list these numbers in your child's file.

Enrollment

Students will be enrolled by the director of the preschool. After enrollment forms and the registration fee are given to the director, the director will notify you that your child is officially enrolled.

Extended Care

Afternoon extended care is from 12:15 p.m.- 3:00 p.m. on scheduled school days. The students will have extra recess time, song activity, storybook time, and naptime. Students will use nap bags to hold a twin or crib fitted sheet, small blanket, airline pillow, and a stuffed animal for comfort. Personalized extra large canvas with child's name nap bags can be purchased for \$25.00. Or, parents can purchase a Ziploc bag for \$10.00 through our preschool. Per state regulations, any child staying for extended care will need a personalized bag or a ziploc bag to hold their nap items.

F.

Family-Style Snacks

We are committed to supporting your child in establishing lifelong habits of healthy eating patterns. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility: Serves snacks family-style whenever possible to support children in learning to serve themselves and develop healthy relationships with food. Our role as staff members and childcare providers is to provide nourishing food appropriate to the child's needs. The child's role is to decide whether and how much to eat. We will never force a child to eat or discourage a child from eating food that is healthy for them. Staff members and childcare providers model behaviors for healthy eating and positive body image in the presence of children.

Field Trips

As with all school activities, field trips are part of our educational curriculum. Teachers will plan, with advance notice, "on campus" field trips, such as visits to the church, atrium, McCready Hall, school library, and OLMC elementary school grounds. Trips will be planned with safety in mind, which are relevant and meaningful to your children. We do not offer "off campus" field trips.

Fire Drills

To keep the children safe, we will practice fire drills every month. The dates of our drills are listed in the attendance book for our state inspector. Under the advisement of the City of Tempe Fire Marshall we are asked to: 1. Practice fire drills with the building fire alarm. 2. Do not park in the front of the preschool building or church fire lanes. This is for the safety of all children attending Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School/Preschool.

Forms

All enrollment forms must be completed before any child attends class. This includes three emergency contact listings with working phone numbers, a completed blue health card, a diocesan photo release, and food allergy notification.

Fruit Juice

We are committed to supporting your child in establishing lifelong healthy eating and drinking habits. Too much juice may be linked to weight problems and is associated with tooth decay and decreased appetite for other nutritious foods. Fruit juice should be offered as appropriate to a child's unique needs. Children will be offered a variety of beverages that are nutritious for them, which may include water, milk, or juice as appropriate. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will: Limit 100% fruit juice with no added sugar. No more than 4 ounces will be served at one time to children. Fruit juice will only be served with meals such as our Thanksgiving Feast and class parties. Water will be offered throughout the day.

Fundraisers

We do several fundraisers throughout the year. The success of OLMC Preschool is a direct result of all parents fulfilling their responsibilities as listed below:

1. Spaghetti Dinner - four hours (minimum) of volunteering are required.
2. Pizza Friday - \$4.00 per slice of cheese pizza and milk or water.
3. Submit all forms and pay tuition and fees on time.

We are a non-profit organization, and any money received is applied to the scholarship fund, classroom supplies, or any additional need at the preschool.

G.

God is First

As Catholics, we start and end each day with a prayer and a prayer before our meals. The children will be taught the Our Father, Hail Mary, Guardian Angel, and the prayer to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Our classrooms and hallways are decorated to constantly remind the children of God's love for them. We attend Mass on Holy Day of Obligations, Catholic Schools Week, and May Crowning. We always encourage families to attend Mass. However, families must be early before doors are locked before Mass begins. Next, the children will attend Adoration weekly in

our New Divine Mercy Chapel. Each child will attend Catechesis of the Good Shepherd once a week as part of their preschool curriculum. In addition to prayer, part of each day is devoted to learning more about God and our faith, His love for us, and how He wants us to treat others.

H.

Half-Days

For families of children only in the preschool, release time is at 12:15 p.m. on OLMC school half-days, just as it is on regular days. For families of children in the preschool and the OLMC elementary school, half-day pick-up is at 12:45 p.m.

Home-School Communication

We provide many opportunities to keep you informed including:

Bulletin Board Notes: We have a bulletin parent board located outside the patio between the double doors. Please check it for new announcements, such as school pictures, fundraisers, events, and program

Parent Newsletters: Your child's teacher will provide a weekly newsletter with information on curriculum and events.

Parent Programs: We provide many opportunities for parents to observe what their child is learning in class. We will have a Christmas and Promotion program in the evening. Family and friends are invited. Most programs are held in the church or hall.

Class Dojo: Class Dojo is an app platform for parents and teachers to communicate, post photos, and create class sign-ups in a safe, secure way. In the beginning of the year, teachers should give parents access code to make a Class Dojo account.

Hours of Operation Class Days Age Requirements

OLMC Preschool accepts students from ages 3 through 5 years in conformance with licensing regulations. We offer an early morning drop off at 7:00am for students who need early morning drop off. All OLMC Preschool classes start at 8:00am.

8:00 AM – 12:15 PM	2-day program	3 years old
8:00 AM- 12:15 PM	3-day program	3 years old, young 4s, and Pre-K
8:00 AM – 12:15 PM	Mon. - Fri.	3 years old
8:00 AM – 12:15 PM	Mon. - Fri.	Young 4s and Pre-k (4 &5 years old)
12:15 AM - 3:00 PM	Extended Care	3, 4, and 5 years old
3:00 PM – 6:00 PM	After School Care	3, 4, and 5 years old

In compliance with licensing regulations, registration and emergency forms must be received prior to any child's admission to the classroom. All other health and immunization records shall

be submitted at this time as well. Children whose forms have not been received by the designated deadline may be excluded from the classroom until such forms have been received.

I.

Illness

Do not send your child to school for 24 hours after he/she has had a fever over 100 degrees, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, or a severe cough. If your child has a communicable disease, inform the preschool so parents of exposed children can be alerted.

Immunization

All immunizations must be up-to-date, and a copy of the immunization record must be kept in the preschool office.

Religious Belief's Exemption Form can be found at AZ Department of Health Services.

Injury

Should your child become injured at school, your child will be taken into the director's office and assisted accordingly. The child may need a band aide, ice applied, observation, and/or a call to the parent for emergency assistance. If we are unable to reach you by phone, we will call from the emergency information sheet that is on file for your child. Please keep the information updated. All injuries and/or accidents will be documented and signed by the teacher and director. You will always be told of the incident and offered a copy.

Insurance Information

OLMC Preschool carries liability Insurance as required by licensing regulations rule #R9-5-308.

We are insured by:

The Catholic Mutual Relief

Society of America

10843 Old Mill Rd.

Omaha, NE 68154

K.

Kindness

Preschool is the time children begin to learn social skills. Our teachers will help the child learn about their own emotions, friendship, and empathy for those around them. With the aid of biblical stories, music, and books we will discuss these beneficial lifelong skills.

L.

Lice

Head lice is a common occurrence among young children. Head lice spreads from person to person by direct contact with hair or by sharing items such as hats, brushes, etc. Lice do not carry diseases or illnesses. However, they do cause a nuisance. OLMC Preschool has a “**NO NIT/HEAD LICE**” policy. This means that all nits and lice must be removed from the hair before your child may return to school. If head lice are discovered on one child, the entire preschool will be checked. Children with head lice will be sent home immediately and a notification letter will be sent home to the classmates. For more information on lice, please refer to OLMC Preschool No Nit/Head Lice Policy.

Late Arrival

Late arrival starts at 7:55am. If parents are late, please use the frontage road and ring the bell. We understand parents will be late once in a while due to traffic or doctor appointments. However, it is important for children to develop good habits at an early age and to learn that school is important. We need all parents to set a good example by having their children arrive at school on time.

Licensing Information

OLMC Preschool is regulated by The AZ Department of Health Services office of Childcare Licensure.

They can be contacted at 602-364-2539.

The local office address is: 150 N. 18th Ave suite 400 * Phoenix AZ 85007

Inspection reports are available online at www.azdhs.gov or in the Preschool office here on our campus.

M.

Medication Procedures and Storage

OLMC Little Lambs Preschool does not administer medication at the preschool. However, lifesaving medication will be administered by the director, Monica Ferrance. In the event of her absence, the designee, Mrs. Anna Aguilera, will administer. The lifesaving medication is located in the upper cabinets in the preschool office.

Messy Work

Preschool can be messy, and work is never neat! Please understand that your child will be learning through development activities. The art projects that are produced in class will require the use of fine motor skills. It is essential for your child to master these skills. Pre-cut projects are not part of the OLMC Preschool curriculum. Although pre-cut projects are fun and easy for the children, they do not challenge or prepare them for kindergarten.

Music

Each week your child will be exposed to music. Every child will learn a sense of rhythm (pre reading skill), an appreciation for music of different cultures, and experience a time of free expression using a variety of instruments.

O.

Outside Play

Weather permitting, your child will go outside each day. For safety reasons, we ask that you do not send your child in sandals or flip flops. Part of the playground is exposed to the sun, so we ask that you put on sunscreen before school. Children will be asked to wear shoes at all times.

P.

Parent Access

Parents will have access to preschool campus from 7am – 6pm Monday through Friday in the areas where their children are receiving care. We are also a breastfeeding friendly facility.

Parent Responsibilities

OLMC Preschool recognizes the parent as the child's first and most important teacher and supports this role by providing opportunities for parents to participate in the education of their children. Parent participation in preschools is unique. When parents and teachers work together, the link between home and school is strengthened. For children, parent involvement demonstrates that education and school experiences are valued. For parents, classroom participation provides an opportunity to gain insight and understanding of child development and supports the development of parenting skills useful in everyday interactions with children. Parent participation means a greater investment and return. The cooperative efforts of parents and teachers working together provide the best learning environment for young children.

We at Little Lambs Preschool are committed to supporting the efforts of the Arizona Smokers' Helpline (ASHLine) to help parents quit tobacco. In keeping with this philosophy and to protect the health of our children, their parents, staff members and childcare providers, our facility promotes the ASHLine information on the dangers of second and third-hand smoke. We will also refer parents, when possible, to ASHLine, 1-800-556-6222 to speak with a "quit coach."

Pictures

The teacher will frequently take pictures of the children at work and play to display or use for a project. You are asked to sign the permission slip for these photos. We will also have a photographer come to our school to take pictures of the children for the school yearbook. The photographer comes in the fall and in the spring (only pre-k cap and gown pictures). You are not required to purchase the pictures. We only offer this as a service to help our families.

Pizza Fridays

For \$4.00, parents can order one slice of cheese pizza and milk or water for their child for lunch on Fridays. We order our pizza from Clockworks.

Pesticides

The preschool grounds will be sprayed with pesticides once a month. Parents will be notified by note 3 days prior to the spray date. The notice will be posted on the parent board outside the patio between the French doors.

Physical Activity

OLMC Little Lambs Preschool is committed to our children's health and understands the unique needs of each child. We encourage all children to engage in a variety of fun physical activities based on their age and development. Children who are inactive for long periods of time are more likely to become overweight. We will promote physical activity by following the guidelines below. This policy is for an 8-hour per day facility. Children are provided with at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day or as appropriate for CSHCN. This includes both adult-led and free-play activities according to the Empower guidelines. Staff members and childcare providers encourage both moderate and vigorous levels of physical activity and as adapted for CSHCN. Every child has the opportunity to participate in both outdoor and indoor physical activity and as appropriate for CSHCN. Children are encouraged to be active throughout the day by exploring their environment. Sedentary activity is limited to 60 minutes or less at a time, except during nap time and as appropriate for CSHCN. Physical activity is never used or withheld as punishment.

Q.

Questions

There are several ways you can reach us if you ever have any questions:

1. Preschool phone number is 480-967-5567
2. Email the director at monica@olmctempe.com
3. Teachers and director are available before and after school

S.

Safety

Your child's safety is our top priority. Every exterior door is alarmed, and the alarm will beep when the door is opened. The door located off of Rural Rd. remains locked at all times. We ask that parents introduce themselves to the school office staff in the first week of school.

Schedule

A schedule is posted in each classroom. Your child's day includes prayer, outdoor play, centers, snacks, music, group activities, and circle time. Your child's teacher will provide you with additional information about the class.

Screen Time

Screen time is limited to three hours per week for children, excluding when screen time engages children in physical activity or is used for educational purposes. Screen time is not allowed during meals or snack times.

Sun Safety

To ensure the children are protected from overexposure to the sun's rays while outdoors, we ask parents to apply sunscreen to their children prior to arriving at our childcare program. Request that the child's parents provide a hat, lip balm, sunglasses, and clothing that covers the child's arms and legs, such as pants and a long sleeve shirt, for outdoor activity. Seek written permission to apply sunscreen to children while in our care. Provide shade for outdoor activities while at our program. Minimize outdoor activity during the midday hours of 10 AM and 4 PM when the sun's rays are the strongest. Stay aware of UV ray intensity by checking the UV index on theempowerpack.org to plan outdoor activity. Teach sun safety practices by modeling good sun safety habits. Follow sun safety policies, as outlined in the Empower Guidebook in accordance with the child's age group.

T.

Themes

We have many themes that we use throughout the school year as part of our curriculum. To enhance these themes, for example, community helpers, firefighters, healthy bodies, and pets, we would like to invite special visitors to come and talk to the children about their job or profession. If you would like to be a visitor, or know of someone, please talk to your child's teacher. This is fun for everyone involved!

U.

Uniforms

OLMC Little Lambs Preschool is exclusively available from Anton Uniforms online or at their Tempe/Scottsdale location. Anton Uniforms have the specific uniform requirements for our preschool. If you shop online, please use antonuniforms.com and make sure to select Preschool for the grade selection to ensure it is the Preschool uniform and not the elementary school uniform. The elementary school offers used uniform sales during the school year, where gently used pants, shorts, shirts, skirts, jumpers, and sweatshirts can be picked up at a discounted cost.

Monday-Thursday: The preschool uniform is worn, unless specific permission is given for non-uniform dress.

“Spirit Day” Friday: spirit t-shirts may be purchased in the preschool office for \$20.00. OLMC Preschool students may wear any OLMC shirt (light blue polo shirt, festival shirt, etc.) Students may wear any non uniform bottoms (jeans, khakis, skirts, shorts). Students may also participate in numerous out-of-uniform days for special occasions (Catholic Schools Week, Jeans Day, etc. as announced). Shoes: We recommend simple, closed toe and sturdy shoes for playing/climbing on the playground. Velcro fastener shoes are practical and easy for children. We recommend that parents do not send their child to school in sandals or flip-flops. Our curriculum consists of teaching children through creative play. Therefore, we paint, play with nature, and do anything that will engage our creative minds. It will get messy!

Updates

It is imperative to keep all phone numbers, addresses, and medical information updated.

V.

Volunteers

We rely on our families to help us with many different activities throughout the school year. Every volunteer must have their Safe Environment background check. It is offered online at the Diocese of Phoenix website. Please register for classes online at your earliest convenience. A link to the Diocese of Phoenix website can be found on the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish website at www.olmctempe.com

W.

Water in Water Bottles

Water keeps active preschoolers hydrated, reduces acid in the mouth that can cause cavities, and can help growing preschoolers maintain a healthy weight. Therefore, please fill your child(ren)'s water bottle(s) with water, not juice or sport drinks. Tooth decay is another reason not to fill water bottles with juice. One in every three children in Arizona has had tooth decay by their third birthday. Tooth decay, if left untreated, can cause health problems and can affect learning, speech, and eating.