

# Donahue Academy of Ave Maria Preschool Parent Handbook



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## Our K-12 School

Donahue Academy of Ave Maria is a Catholic, Classical school in which students encounter Christ and pursue excellence in all things. Our students will deepen their love of God and others through the pursuit of all that is true, good, and beautiful.

## Our Preschool

The preschool at Donahue Academy complies with the Florida Catholic Conference Early Education Program Standards, as well as the Department of Children and Family Services.

The mission of our preschool program is to offer a school-year parish program, that will prepare our children for kindergarten at Donahue Academy the following school year. The intentional curricular experiences along with guided age-appropriate activities, offering the highest quality of early learning with exceptional attention to the social and emotional development of our youngest children to ensure a successful transition from the preschool stage toward entry into kindergarten at Donahue Academy.

### Preschool Program Goals

- To provide a positive preschool experience
- To provide opportunities through play-based learning on individual needs, interests, and abilities
- To create a desire to learn
- To develop a positive attitude toward self and others
- To provide opportunities for growth spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically
- To provide activities that are both self and teacher directed
- To develop readiness skills for the Donahue Academy kindergarten program

## Our Program

The curriculum offered at our preschool is based upon currently accepted principles of Early Childhood Education. All activities are developmentally appropriate, with learning goals designed specifically for prekindergarten age.

The curriculum meets diocesan religion and academic requirements, as well as follows the standards outlined in the Florida Early Learning and Development Standards: Birth to Five. Catholic culture and faith are expressed and threaded throughout all learning experiences. The church's teachings are developmentally appropriate elements of the program.

Habits of prayer and praise is a natural part of each day's experience and acknowledges God's love and care for all of us. The preschool children will visit the chapel at least 1-2 times a week and they will attend Mass on Holy Days and special occasions during the school year.

As a parent or guardian, it is important that you are aware of the skills and concepts your child will be learning in the school setting. As the primary teacher, you will want to work with the classroom teacher to reinforce that learning. By working together, we can ensure maximum student learning.

We encourage you to guide and support learning in the classroom by following the suggestions of ways you might work with your child. When home and school work together, student learning and achievement is more readily accomplished.

In implementing the complete curriculum, the preschool teacher will make decisions about the order in which concepts and skills are taught and the types of learning experiences that will be provided. In making these decisions, the teacher carefully considers:

- the experiences, needs, interests, and skills of each child.
- information shared by parents and guardians about the child, and
- appropriate teaching methods to be used.

## Catholic Identity

The Catholic schools of the Diocese of Venice find their true justification in the mission of the church. Our schools are a means for the local church to evangelize, educate and contribute to the formation of a healthy and morally sound lifestyle among its members. Our schools fulfill this responsibility by ensuring that all aspects of the school are rooted in Catholic education philosophy, which brings faith, culture and life into harmony.

Our school community actively promotes discipleship of Jesus Christ as integral to their Catholic culture and mission. Our school offers a curriculum infused with Catholic beliefs, Gospel values and the Catholic Social Justice Teachings.

### ***CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE TEACHINGS***

**Life and Dignity of the Human Person:** This principle is the foundation for the other six teachings and calls for a reverence of life at all stages. Issues range from poverty to abortion, war and economic policies and systems.

**Call to Family, Community, and Participation:** We live life in various communities. Our responsibilities include service to school and parish and involvement in the political system.

**The Rights and Responsibilities of Every Person:** This call involves both our personal and societal rights and duties.

**The Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable:** Essential to the Gospel, this challenging theme calls for consideration of the marginalized and most in need in society.

**The Dignity of Work and the Right of Justice:** The right of the worker is key to making a living. Issues involve just wages and safe and healthful working conditions, as well as opportunities for education and training and societal support for those in situation limiting their ability to work and find work.

**Love of Neighbor: Solidarity with All Peoples:** The justice principles apply to all racial, ethnic, and religious groups. Respect for cultural and religious differences and valuing the contributions to society by every group is essential.

**Care for Creation:** Response to this theme encompasses awe and wonder, gratitude and reverence for the beauty, intricacies, and mysteries of creation on micro scales: past, present, and future.

# Religion

Religious education strives to enable students to develop a personal relationship with God. Through the study of Catholic faith, students are prepared to celebrate God's love, proclaim God's message and live in accord with His message. Children at this age are capable of learning appropriate behaviors and attitudes toward prayer and an awareness of God in their lives. They are experiencing God's word and gifts and beginning to respond to God on a personal level. Preschool students "experience the loving presence of God in our daily lives."

## ***Curriculum Scope***

- Learning that we treat others as Jesus would have us do.
- We should treat others the way that we would want to be treated.

## ***Primary Concepts***

- Who is God and Who is Jesus?
  - God is our heavenly Father.
  - He is the creator of all things and creatures.
  - Jesus is God's son.
  - Mary is the mother of Jesus.
  - Joseph is Jesus' earthly father.
- We Worship & Pray Together
  - We make the sign of the cross.
  - We talk to God through prayer.
  - We pray the Hail Mary, Our Father, and Angel of God.
  - We pray before snacks and meals.
  - We go to church. It is God's house.
  - We are baptized.
- Right & Wrong- The Golden Rule
  - Loving words and actions toward others are right; Unloving words and actions are wrong.
  - Treat others, as we want to be treated.
  - Sharing with others is right; when we don't share we cause others to be unhappy.
  - Being sorry when we have hurt someone; forgiveness
  - God wants us all to be happy.
- The Holy Bible- The Holy Book of the Church
  - God helped people to write the Bible.
  - The Bible tells us what God made- everything.
  - The Bible tells us about Jesus.
  - It tells us Jesus loves children; He is always with us.
  - It tells us the Christmas story.
  - The Bible tells us about Jesus' family- Mary & Joseph
  - Stories of Jesus ministry

## ***As a parent/guardian at home, you can help your child in Religion by:***

Asking your child what he or she is learning about God; Joining together in prayer, including the Sign of the Cross, the Our Father, and the Hail Mary; Visiting church together and observing various items; Celebrating with family and celebrating family history, heritage, and uniqueness; Letting your child lead grace before and after meals; Helping those in need – collecting food, clothes pencils, etc.; Reminding him or her to care for God's creations; Making a "chore" chart and monitoring responsibilities; Going as a family to celebrate Mass with the Church family; Talking about Mary as our Mother and the Mother of Jesus.

# Social & Emotional Development

## *Preschool students learn Responsibility for Self & Others; Pro-social Behavior:*

- Plays well with others
- Maintains ongoing friendships
- Seeks out and tries difference experiences, activities, materials
- Remains on task for increasing amount of time
- Show flexibility and inventiveness by using materials creatively
- Demonstrates self-confidence and good self-image
- Accepts transitions well
- Demonstrates good control over feelings
- Identifies human feelings and can describe them
- Functions with increasing independence at school

# Language Arts

The Language Arts Curriculum is designed to develop students' skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Development of these skills assists in communicating clearly, convincingly and meaningfully. It guides us in respectfully communicating in a variety of cultural contexts.

## *Listening*

- Correctly retells what is heard; retells a story.
- Participates well in listening activities.
- Responds and repeats instructions of two or more sequential steps.

## *Speaking*

- Asks & answers some questions with detail.
- Increasingly complex questions toward further understanding.
- Vocabulary is increasing to include feelings, humor, & relevant ideas.
- Uses sentences to communicate.
- Connecting sounds with letters.
- Participates in Show & Tell.
- Initiates & extends conversations with at least four exchanges.
- Says please, thank you, good morning, good-byre on a regular basis.

## *Reading*

- Knows alphabet from memory.
- Identifies upper & lowercase letters.
- Discriminates sounds of language.
- Recognizes rhyming words.
- Makes letter sound connections.
- Recognizes colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, brown, white, gray, pink.
- Chooses to read or enjoy looking at books on his/her own.
- Chooses books for information.
- Familiar with concepts that represent opposites.
- Names days of the week.
- Names months of the year.

## Writing

- Prints first name.
- Writes some letters correctly.
- Beginning to write some words.
- Knows spoken words can be written down to convey meaning.

## Mathematics

The Mathematics Curriculum is built upon strands that function as the framework for the study of mathematics at all grade levels. Developing a solid mathematical foundation means nurturing student confidences and increasing successes. Each of the categories skills should be mastered in preschool.

- Sort objects by color, shape, size.
- Continues a sequence/pattern in logical order.
- Identifies shapes: circle, square, triangle, rectangle, cross, heart, diamond, star, oval.
- Recite numbers up to at least 30 or higher.
- Recognizes numerals up to 30 or higher.
- Knows ordinals (first, second, third...)
- Counts objects up to 20 or higher.
- Uses 1-1 correspondence to compare two sets.
- Completes next number in a series.
- Reads a graph.
- Measurement.
- Simple addition & subtraction.

## Science

The Science Curriculum is designed to give learners a greater awareness of how science is integrated into their daily lives and its importance for survival. Most importantly, the Science Curriculum is a foundation for greater understanding of science in relation to our Catholic beliefs and a deeper appreciation of our Creator. Teaching students to respect God, themselves, others, and our world is an integration of our Catholic Social Justice Teachings of Care for God's Creation.

- Finds alternate solutions to problems.
- Tests cause & effect.
- Use of various standard measures, words & tools.
- Study of various weather changes; seasons.
- Study of the life cycles of plants & animals.
- Habitats of animals.

## Social Studies

The Social Studies Curriculum is designed to integrate our Catholic values with the development and understanding of the key components of History, Geography, Civics & Government, and Economics. Our Preschool Curriculum provides students with the beginning skills and knowledge to understand they actively participate in society.

- Be aware of people from different cultures, languages & customs.
- Know family members and their placement/roles in families.
- Engage in role-play.

- Aware of and use phones, computers, TV, cameras, and other technology used in daily living.
- Show interest in leadership by role-playing.
- Pledge to the American Flag.
- Study the community helpers and their roles.
- Understand elections and voting; civic responsibilities.
- Develop an awareness of school, city, state, country and world communities.
- Understand community service.

## Fine Arts – Music & Art

The Fine Arts Curriculum plays a major role in developing the Christian call to message, worship, community and service. Whether through stained-glass windows or Gregorian chants, the arts have enhanced the ritual and religious drama from medieval mystery, morality and miracle plays to vestment, incense and bells. Art and Music are integral parts of every culture. They expand our worldviews and appreciation for diverse nationalities.

The preschool students will use a variety of art materials for expression; appreciate the creative movement; and participate in creative movement; participating in music activities.

## Health

The Health Curriculum contributes to the lifetime wellness of our students. Students are challenged to develop critical thinking skills and problem-solving strategies. Through the Health Curriculum, students learn to appreciate the sanctity of life, Christian values and principles and take responsibility in making healthy choices in an ever-changing society. Students are instructed in Self-Care Skills and Physical Health.

- Demonstrate hand-washing skills.
- Put on jacket/sweater and shoes him/herself.
- Identify healthy foods and know about making good nutritional choices.
- Learn about Physical exercise and its value.
- Develop personal hygiene routines.
- Know first & last name and age.
- Recognize his/her printed name.
- Identify basic body parts.
- Know fire safety procedures.
- Knows community helpers.
- Know appropriate use of 911.
- Independently follow routines and directions.
- Raise hand to speak.
- Refrain from interrupting.
- Walk with the class/group.
- Play safely; follow rules inside and outside.
- Know how to clean up; put away materials.
- Know how to carry equipment.

# Physical Education

The Physical Education Curriculum has been created to help our students to acquire knowledge about a variety of movement experiences that will develop a positive self-concept. Students learn to make choices related to physical education based upon Catholic Christian values.

## ***Gross Motor Skills***

- Walking forward / backward along a wide-beam
- Running / making quick stops and turns
- Jumping in place with both feet
- Balancing on each foot; hopping on each foot
- Skipping, galloping
- Forward somersault
- Throw and catch a ball; bounce a large ball
- Kick a large ball forward
- Pedals forward and steers with speed and control
- Easily moves up/down stairs, ramps, ladders, sliding boards

## ***Fine Motor Skills***

- Uses crayons, markers, pencils appropriately with increasing coordination and control
- Copies and draws simple shapes, letters, and words including name
- Appropriately uses scissors
- Appropriately uses paints, brushes, glue, paste
- Assembles puzzles; attention to detail; planning
- Uses play dough appropriately
- Strings beads / lacing

# Assessment

Our program embraces the individuality of each child by promoting a unique learning experience; each child is encouraged to develop at his or her own pace and the progress of each child is gauged on a periodic basis. Age appropriate research based screening and assessment tools are used to identify the developmental levels and growth of your child. Ongoing assessment of progress takes place and is used to plan activities for individual children and for groups of children.

Parents will receive communication regarding their child's developmental progress (Progress Report) at least twice per year, January and May. Parent conferences are held twice per year, October and April (Goals & Work Samples). Summaries of the results of child observation forms used during schedule observations of the child are shared with parents, and parents are encouraged to participate in the goal-setting process for the child.

## Admission

Donahue Academy of Ave Maria admits students of any race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship programs, and athletic or other school-administered programs.

Admission may be denied if the student does not meet the school's standards of achievement and behavior. It is also the right and duty of the school to decline the application of students who require professional competency beyond staff training. Donahue Academy may not be able to meet the needs of all learners, particularly those with significant learning disabilities. For this reason, parents must include complete and accurate information regarding disabilities prior to admission.

Admission to the school is a privilege and not a right that is afforded qualified applicants. All students are accepted on a probationary basis through the first marking period of attendance at the school and may be asked to leave the school with or without cause; enrollment then is granted on a year-by-year basis at the discretion of administration.

## Preschool Student Acceptance Policy

All children enrolled in the preschool program must be 4 years old by September 1. All children must be fully toilet trained to enroll. *Selection of new students will occur in the following order:*

- All students currently enrolled in the Donahue Academy preschool program
- Children from families with siblings currently enrolled at Donahue Academy
- Children from registered families of Ave Maria Parish
- Children from registered families of neighboring Catholic parishes

## Donahue Academy Preschool Requirements for Admission

- Pre-Enrollment visit to the preschool classroom by the parent/guardian
- School Application completed in full
- Paid Registration Fee
- Tuition Agreement
- Parent Handbook receipt signed and on file
- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate

## Florida State Requirements for Admission

- Authorizations for pick-up, any pertinent custody documentation on file.
- A completed DH Form 3040, Florida State Student Health Examination (Yellow Form)
- DH Form 680, Florida Certificate of Immunization (Blue Form)

## Tuition

Tuition for each school year is determined by the needs of the school, and is set by Donahue Academy and Ave Maria Parish, subject to change as the cost of operations increase. The current tuition rate for preschool:

Preschool Registration Fee (nonrefundable): \$200.00

Preschool Tuition Half Day: \$3,150.00

Preschool Tuition Full Day: \$6,200.00

Our school is dedicated to providing quality Catholic education, but the school must operate on a budget and that budget is predicted on the tuition being paid in a timely manner. Payments must be kept up-to-date. Students will not be allowed to begin the new school year if there is any outstanding payment due. Report cards and school records cannot be released unless and until tuition and fees are paid in full. Delinquent accounts shall subject the student to dismissal. The school will not refund monies once received. There is no refund for any tuition or fees for voluntary or involuntary withdrawal. After one week in each semester, families will be responsible for the entire semester's tuition whether or not the student completes that semester at Donahue Academy.

The tuition will be automatically withdrawn by FACTS Tuition Management from a predetermined bank account of your choice. You may elect to have your automatic tuition payment withdrawn on either the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. If the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of the month falls on a weekend or bank holiday, the payment will be withdrawn on the next business day.

Please see FACTS informational pages regarding declined payments. As to the school policy regarding declined payments:

- A. First declined payment: your child/children may continue attending school.
- B. Second declined payment: your child/children will not be permitted to attend class until your account is paid in full.
- C. Third declined payment: if no other arrangements have been agreed to, your child/children may no longer continue at the Academy. Payment would still be due to the school.

## Discipline

The purpose of discipline is to help a child retain control of his/her emotions and actions, not to stop the expression of feelings and moods. Above all, a child needs love, patience, and understanding. The only worthwhile discipline is prompted by motivation from within and is based on the Gospel values of Jesus Christ. Respect for God, self, and others will be stressed. Developmentally-appropriate expectations help children to choose suitable behavior. Staff members are trained to provide positive discipline methods which encourage self-control, self-direction, cooperation and self-discipline. Such methods include redirection, diversion from negative behavior, encourage alternative activity, removal from the situation and communication.

## Chronic Disruptive Behavior

Repeated unacceptable or dangerous behavior can result in the child's removal from the program for the safety and well-being of all children. Children displaying chronic disruptive behavior, which has been determined to be upsetting to the physical or emotional well-being of another child or teacher, may require the following actions:

- Conference – The conference will have the format of identifying the problem and establishing goals. Parents and teachers will participate in creating approaches toward solving the problem.
- Suspension – Suspension from the school for 1 to 5 days. The director may immediately suspend a child at any time he/she exhibits behavior harmful to himself or others.
- Dismissal – The director reserves the right to dismiss any child whose behavior is disruptive or harmful to other children or teachers.

We ask parents to assist in guiding our children in the acceptance of responsibility and in teaching them early to accept the consequences of their actions. If parents feel that they cannot support and accept the responsibility for helping enforce our rules and policies, the parents may be requested to withdraw their child from our program.

Discipline will be handled primarily by the classroom teacher. In the event this is insufficient, the director will assist the teacher. If there is any misunderstanding in a disciplinary procedure, please confer with the teacher first, then contact the director.

## Expectations of Behavior

- Children must follow the rules of the classroom and playground.
- Children must show respect for school property.
- Children must show respect for authority.
- Children must not harm other children.
- Children must not use bad language.
- Children must not disrupt the class routine.
- Children must not be habitual biters.

## Health & Hygiene

Upon enrollment in the school, every student is required to submit a Florida School Entry Health Exam Form DH3040 (yellow form) and a Florida Certification of Immunization Form DH680 (blue form), as well as current emergency contact information.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the preschool teacher in writing regarding food allergies, asthmatic condition, insect allergies, or any other physical or health condition diagnosed by a physician and critical to providing the child with proper care. If a special diet is required for a child by a physician, a copy of the physician's order, a copy of the diet, and a sample meal plan shall be provided by the parent and maintained at our school.

If your child will be missing school for a medical reason, please be sure to contact the office to report his/her absence, and if due to a communicable disease, please inform the office of that also. For the well-being of the child and out of concern for classmates, the sick child should be fever-free, vomit-free and diarrhea-free for a 24-hour period before returning to school. When the student returns to school, he/she is required to bring a written note from parent/guardian.

When a child develops a rash, such as impetigo, ringworm, pinkeye, etc. during the school day, the parent will be called and the child must be picked up immediately. A doctor's note is mandatory for re-entry into the classroom.

In the event of illness, the parents will be notified and expected to pick up their child immediately. This is for the child's benefit as well as the other children present. If the parents are not available, the emergency contact list will be used.

## Medication Authorization

A Medication Authorization form must be completed before any prescription medication will be dispensed from the nurse's office. Asthma inhalers, epi-pens, insulin must be stowed in the office for safekeeping.

## Injuries

When a child is injured, regardless of the nature of the injury, an injury report is filled out at the time of the incident. The parent will be asked to sign the report which will be kept in the child's file. A copy of the report

will be provided to the parent. First aid kits are present in the classrooms and first aid is administered following specific guidelines:

- If the injury requires further evaluation and/or treatment, the parents will be notified immediately.
- Any time a child has a head injury, no matter how slight, a call is placed to the parent.
- In the event of serious injury your child's medical emergency form gives Donahue Academy permission to call 911.

## Parent Communication

We recognize the importance of parent involvement in their child's growth and development. Our open door policy allows you to chat briefly and spontaneously *before* the preschool program begins or *after* dismissal of the last child.

For longer parent/teacher or parent/director conferences, we do ask that you schedule an appointment to ensure that the staff member is free from the classroom responsibilities when you arrive. Periodic conferences to discuss your child's progress are scheduled by the director and/or teacher during October and April (Goal Setting and Work Samples). Progress Reports will be provided during January and May.

We encourage you to come to us with your concerns. Please contact the office, and the teacher will get in touch with you. After communicating your concerns to the teacher, you may contact the preschool director if you feel that further discussion is needed. All questions or concerns about preschool school administration or procedure should go directly to the preschool director.

Always go directly to the person if you have a concern, whether it is a staff member, teacher, administrator or another parent. Please be careful never to gossip, as this is contrary to Christian charity and the spirit of our school. Gossip is any talk that criticizes, demeans, puts down or casts a negative light on someone else in his or her absence, and is corrosive to community life.

Christ commands that we forgive and love each other and live in accord. As a Catholic school, Donahue Academy strives to create a positive and forgiving environment. If personal hurts and dislikes occur, it is expected that the parties will attempt to reconcile and forgive each other, and this in all interactions charity, common courtesy, and civility will be maintained, especially in public. As reconciliation is being pursued the general population should not be aware through words or actions (or lack thereof) that there is animosity and discord between the parties.

Parents are particularly cautioned NOT to share of their own concerns about a teacher or staff member directly with their children. Once a student senses that a parent does not support the school or a teacher, it can be very difficult to reestablish the proper teacher/student relationship necessary for successful academic and classroom management. If a student voices a concern or a perceived injustice, often a simple, "You seem upset (or confused) by this; I will contact the school to look in to it more" is the best general response while you gather more information and contact the teacher.

## Weekly Newsletter

A weekly newsletter will be developed by the preschool teacher and sent home during the school year to inform you of what is going on in preschool. We will alert you to upcoming events, what your child will be learning, etc. We hope that you will be sure to open this newsletter and read it every week. This is just one way we will communicate with you. The newsletter will be distributed electronically to parent email addresses provided through Ren Web.

## RenWeb

RenWeb is the primary communication tool used by the school office and it is essential that you take the time to read through notices as they contain important information regarding school activities and procedures. In addition, all important registration and enrollment forms must be completed via RenWeb, as hard copies are rarely provided.

## Suggestions

We welcome your suggestions! If you have an idea that would benefit Donahue Academy and our school environment, please contact the preschool teacher@

## General Procedures

### Absences/Attendance

The teacher takes attendance and the school office follows up on any child absent from the program if a parent note has not been provided prior to that day. If it is necessary for your child to be absent from school, please call the office before class time and leave a message giving the reason for the absence.

### Abuse or Neglect of Children

In accordance with Florida State Law, when any abuse or neglect of a child is suspected, staff will file a report to the Department of Children and Families.

### Arrival and Departure

Our preschool day begins at 8:15 sharp. Parents or authorized adult (NOT OLDER SIBLINGS) are responsible for escorting their preschool age child to the east side (playground side) entrance to the building. The teacher and school nurse will meet you outside under the alcove to receive your child. Until further notice, each child will have their temperature taken before entering. Arrival may be up to 10 minutes early, approximately 8:05 a.m. Upon arrival, please sign your child in on the clipboard, say a quick good-bye to your child, and return to your car.

### Half-day Pick-up

Our half-day pick-up time is 11:30 at the east side door of the school - by the playground. Children will be signed out only to a parent or other authorized adult. You may park in the parking lot and wait in the shaded alcove by the side door. The teacher will dismiss children to the parent or authorized adult at the door. Parents should not enter the building through this door at preschool dismissal. If you need to stop by the office for any reason, you will still need to enter the building through the main entrance.

Please pick your child up on time! He or she will worry if you are late. We ask that you plan to be outside the door ready for pickup by 11:30. If you have not arrived by 11:35, you will need to enter the building through the front entrance and report to the office. If your child is not picked up by 11:35, your family's FACTS account will be charged a \$5 late fee, with additional charges at a rate of \$5 for every 5 minutes. If you cannot be reached, the office staff will contact the emergency numbers provided on your Authorized Pick-Up form.

## Full-day Pick-up

Our full-day pick-up time is 3:00 at the east side door of the school – by the playground. Children will be signed out only to a parent or other authorized adult. You may park in the parking lot and wait in the shaded alcove by the side door. The teacher will dismiss children to the parent or authorized adult at the door. Parents should not enter the building through this door at preschool dismissal.

Please pick your child up on time! He or she will worry if you are late. We ask that you plan to be waiting outside the door for pickup by 3:00. The dismissal of our Donahue student body is staggered to avoid large crowds. We begin with the youngest and make it a priority to ensure that they are safely in the care of their parent or guardian. After dismissing the PreK students, our teachers are responsible to help with the safe dismissal of the older children. Therefore it is vital to the safety of all our students that teachers are not left waiting for late pickups. Thank you for your careful attention to this. Once you have your child, please do not linger in the dismissal area. If you are picking up older children, you will have time to get into your car and pull into the carline. If your child is not picked up by 3:05, your family's FACTS account will be charged a \$5 late fee, with additional charges at a rate of \$5 for every 5 minutes. If you cannot be reached, the office staff will contact the emergency numbers provided on your Authorized Pick-Up form.

## Authorized Pick-up

If your child is going to be picked up by someone other than you, they must be on the Authorized Pick-up Form and must be prepared to show a picture identification card. No one may have access to any child without written permission of the custodial parent. If it is necessary for someone to pick up your child that is not on the Authorized Pick-up form, please send in a note to the classroom teacher ahead of time; a picture identification will still be required at pick-up.

## Bathroom Guidelines

Children enrolled in the preschool program must be fully potty trained and able to use the bathroom with minimal adult assistance. Pull-ups or diapers are not permitted. The teacher will be available to assist as needed. Please dress your child in clothing he or she can easily manage when using the bathroom. Class-wide bathroom time is scheduled periodically through the day, but the children may use the bathroom as needed.

## Birthdays

Until further notice, we have suspended any birthday treats to be passed out in the classroom. However, we do still celebrate and have our own classroom traditions!

Any birthday party invitations for an off-site birthday celebration may be handed out in school as long as there is an invitation for the entire class. Whole class invitations should be given directly to the classroom teacher and they will be sent home in a timely manner. We realize that it can be difficult to invite the entire class to your child's off-site birthday party. To avoid breaking little hearts, invitations not sent to the entire class must be mailed rather than left in cubbies or backpacks.

## Extra Clothes

Preschool children will need one set of spare clothes (does not have to be uniform) that are to be stored in the classroom in a clear gallon size ziplock bag with the child's name clearly indicated on the bag. The extra clothing includes: shorts, shirt, underwear and socks. Please make sure you label everything with your child's name including the ziplock bag.

## Healthy Daily Snacks & Beverage

A healthy snack and beverage will be provided by the parent and brought from home in a lunch box each school day. The school does not provide snacks or beverages for preschool age children. With the growing number of food allergies and/or food restrictions, this keeps all children safe and parents make the choice of snack and beverage before leaving home. Food allergies and food restrictions are to be documented on the Medical form (access on RenWeb). If you wish to send a beverage other than water, it should be a box or pouch with a straw. No open top drinks please.

NO cookies, candy, brownies etc please. Day to day snack and lunch time are used as an opportunity for the teacher and students to discuss healthy choices and nutrition.

Children attending the extended day program will bring their own lunch in addition to their morning snack.

Each child should also bring a water bottle from home every day. Please choose a water bottle that is spill-proof and easy for your child to open and close tightly on their own. Children are encouraged to have a drink of water at frequent times such as snack time, while rotating centers and upon coming in from recess.

## Image Authorization

The school asks parents to agree in writing (signified by the signing of the Statement of Acceptance form when the child is first enrolled) to the following rights of the school regarding student images:

1. To use the name, photograph, picture, portrait, voice, appearance, likeness, performance (herein after collectively known as "image") of your child in connection with its educational, promotional, or fundraising activities, or for any other legitimate purpose;
2. Right to use, reproduce, publish, exhibit, distribute, and transmit the image of your child individually or in conjunction with other images of printed matter in the production of brochures, slides, motion pictures, broadcasts (radio and television), audio or video tape, recordings, still photography, CD-ROM and any other manner of media now known or later developed;
3. The right to use, reproduce, publish, exhibit, distribute, and transmit the image of your child individually or in conjunction with other images or printed matter on the school's Internet website. No names or personal information such as home address or phone numbers will be published;
4. The right to record, reproduce, amplify, edit, and stimulate your child's image and all sound effects produced;
5. The right to copyright, in its own name, works that contain the image of your child;
6. The right to assign the above-mentioned rights to third parties.

## Labeling

Please label all clothing with permanent marker or laundry pen. This is particularly important when the weather cools down and you may send your child in a sweater. They inevitably come off and we hate to see clothing lost! Every child will have their own designated space to store items.

## Staffing and Child: Staff Ratio

We are committed to providing your child with the best possible qualified teachers. All staff are carefully screened (criminal and background checks, fingerprints, reference checks, etc.), and are required to meet all state and local requirements in order to work with young children. They are selected for their educational background, experience and training in working with children, and their ability to show genuine care and affection in helping children to develop into confident happy individuals. All teachers are trained in identifying

child abuse and have taken a 45-hour Childcare Certification class. Our preschool provides an enriching and positive environment for both teachers and children so that there is a harmonious balance of safety and fun in an ambience conducive to learning.

Currently, our preschool program will accept up to 20 preschoolers in one class, with one lead teacher and a part-time aide. The preschool class roster will never exceed 20 students with two teachers in one classroom.

## Toys

Personal toys are not allowed. The preschool classroom has a variety of toys, blocks and manipulatives designed to challenge, instruct and provide opportunity for social interaction. The school cannot be responsible for personal toys that can be lost or damaged. All toys brought to school will be kept by the teacher or director until picked up by the parent. Thank you for your understanding.

## Uniform Dress Code

The preschool dress and uniform expectation is listed below. The uniform can be purchased by going online to [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com). This is the same uniform that is required in kindergarten. Please no excessive jewelry, dangling earrings, watches, bracelets or necklaces. Simple hair bows and/or hair accessories should be utilized only to secure the hair away from the child's face during learning and play, not for display or show.

### ***Girls***

Blue plaid uniform jumper (Land's End) with shorts underneath; white knit blouse with Peter Pan collar (Land's End); white crew socks; solid white athletic shoe (non-marking)

### ***Boys***

Navy blue uniform pants or shorts; green uniform polo shirt (Land's End); black belt\*; white crew socks; solid black athletic shoe (non-marking)

\* If you think that a belt will hinder your son too much in the bathroom, you may choose to skip the belt this year! Many of the little boys uniform shorts have a built-in adjustable elastic.

## Volunteers

Because we consider the role of parents an integral part of the education process, we provide many opportunities for families to volunteer in the classroom, assist on field trips, and help the teachers with classroom projects. Service hours are not required for preschool parents. However, volunteer time in the preschool classroom can be applied to fulfilling the required hours for the K-12 program.

Donahue Academy has an active parent organization providing additional opportunities for involvement campus-wide. Parents who volunteer are required to complete a background check and be fingerprinted, as well as attend the Safe Environments training to insure the safety of our children.

# Safety & Emergency

## Closings/Delays

Donahue Academy follows the decisions reached by Collier County Public School with regards to school closings due to weather. During adverse weather conditions, parents should monitor the local media announcements. *In the event of a school **delay**, the preschool program will be canceled for the day.*

## Early Dismissal

In the event severe weather conditions or a threatening emergency situation make it necessary for the school to close early during the school day, you will be notified by a staff member so that you can make arrangements to pick up your child. In the event the school is unable to reach a parent/guardian, your child will remain with the preschool teacher until contact can be made.

## Evacuations

Donahue Academy and the preschool program meet the requirements of the Collier County Fire Department with monthly fire drills and periodic required fire and safety inspections. In the event of an evacuation emergency, there are pre-planned posted exits from each classroom.

## Security Cameras

The school campus is equipped with cameras to assist in ensuring the safety of our students and the enforcement of school policies. Cameras may be present both inside and outside the building and in the classrooms, main school office and hallways.

## Visitor Check-in

The safety of your child is of utmost importance. We take every precaution to make sure that your child's safety and security needs are met. In the interests of school security all visitors, including parents, must check in at the main office. Please always enter the school building through the front main double doors, which directly lead to the school office. Anyone that enters will be required to show a photo ID if they are not immediately recognized by the staff.

## Withdrawal Procedures

If parents wish to withdraw their child from the school, they are asked to notify the office several days in advance of the date of withdrawal. This gives the office sufficient time to complete proper records. After the first week of each semester, the entire semester payment is required. No refund of tuition or fees is available. The following circumstances will be considered grounds for termination of preschool enrollment:

- Non-payment of tuition
- Continued violation of policies by parent or child
- Donahue Academy's inability to meet the parent's needs or the child's needs
- Health/Sickness – communicable or infectious diseases that are neglected or go untreated
- Behavior issues as explained in the Discipline Policy

# Acknowledgement of Receipt of Preschool Parent Handbook

The preschool handbook is a guide for parents and guardians whose children are enrolled in the preschool program at Donahue Academy of Ave Maria.

This handbook contains both policies and guidelines to help parents understand the basic operational procedures of the preschool program. All school guidelines may not be contained in this handbook. Donahue Academy reserves the unilateral right to add, delete, modify, or amend the policies and procedures provided in the program, or program handbook.

This handbook constitutes an agreement among school, parent, and child. We endeavor to provide a quality education and to ensure that every opportunity for quality education is maximized.

Please tear out this page and return to the preschool teacher, making sure to sign in the appropriate space below. By signing below, I understand that I will be held responsible for following the guidelines and policies stipulated throughout this handbook. I understand that the policies of the preschool are set forth in this handbook and will apply to the child named below. The preschool reserves the right to alter these policies at any time with the understanding that all parents will be duly notified.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_