



Our Lady of the Assumption Preschool
Family Handbook
2024-25

Rev. James D. Duffy, S.M. - Pastor
Kathleen Jackowski - Director

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church and Preschool welcome you. Our Lady of the Assumption Preschool opened our doors on November 7, 2005. From that moment, the school has sought to educate the youngest members of our parish and community in the ways of the Catholic faith. The preschool years lay the pathway for children in their educational, social, and spiritual development. The love of learning, sense of self-worth and accomplishment, cognitive learning and social, language, fine motor and gross motor development begin in these early years. OLA Preschool is dedicated to providing each child with the opportunity to grow and develop in an environment of spirituality, love, nurturing and encouragement.

Parents are always the child's first teacher, and we pray that our parish and preschool will become your family's home community. We welcome your collaboration and support, and we look forward to learning from one another's collective experiences.

Each child, parent, and teacher are an integral piece in the foundation of our program, and we value working together as a team to provide our parish and community families with the highest quality Catholic preschool experience. We look ahead to our year together with faith, excitement, and dedication as we join in the partnership with God to give you the very best preschool experiences possible.

Be assured of my prayers for you all.

God Bless,

Mrs. Kathleen Jackowski
Director



Our Lady of the Assumption Preschool Family Handbook

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General Information

Mission Statement

“Loving to Learn, Learning to Love”

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church and Preschool are committed to providing every child with an early learning experience grounded in the Catholic faith. Faith and spirituality are woven throughout a curriculum encompassing the domains of social/emotional, cognitive, and physical development. Through instruction, students will gain an appreciation for the blessings of our Lord, their own lives and those of others, and our world, while achieving the love of learning.

Goals and Philosophies

- To provide all children with a developmentally appropriate experience of the Catholic faith.
- To provide each child with a healthy, safe, secure, and loving environment filled with positive guidance, nurturing, and attention.
- To provide experiences fostering development of language and literacy.
- To provide cognitive learning with experiences in the areas of math, science, social studies and the arts through developmentally appropriate activities and practices.
- To provide the opportunity to teach children awareness, love, and respect for people of all abilities, nationalities, and cultural backgrounds.
- To provide the opportunity for children to learn to appreciate and nurture the environment and natural resources in our world.
- To encourage individual responsibility for oneself through socialization and the opportunity to succeed as a member of a group.
- To provide a play-based atmosphere where children’s choices direct their activities, maximizing positive interaction and minimizing the need for re-direction.

OLA Preschool is supportive of the development of all students. A partnership between home, school, and community specialists is beneficial to those students requiring services. A written consent will be required to allow communication between school and community specialists. Community specialists will present a valid background check when initially visiting the preschool. All volunteers and visitors are required to complete the Archdiocese of Atlanta’s Safe Environment training (VIRTUS).

Enrollment/Disenrollment of Students

Our Lady of the Assumption Preschool is not licensed by the state of Georgia; as a parish-based half-day program, OLA Preschool is exempt from licensure by Bright From the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning www.decal.ga.gov 404-657-5562. An exemption approval letter is posted at the Preschool entry.

Our Lady of the Assumption Preschool is accredited through Cognia.

OLA Preschool strives to provide a fully inclusive environment for our parish and community. Events are planned during the school year to advance the partnerships between the church,

preschool, and elementary school communities. Students are admitted through the application process. Placement is at the discretion of the director. Families currently enrolled in the program have first choice for placement of their currently enrolled students and siblings, followed by returning families. Active OLA parish families are next offered placement, followed by Catholic families from other parishes and then non-Catholic community members. OLA preschool families are encouraged to be active parishioners, both in tithing and volunteering, in order to maintain the “first choice” as an active parishioner in the registration process of the preschool.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN ACTIVE CATHOLIC AT OLA:

For Parish verification, required for Baptisms, Marriages, Catholic School admittance, etc. a person is to be registered in the parish, attend Mass regularly and be involved in Time, Talent and Stewardship. Participation through offertory envelopes is one means of verification. If you choose not to use envelopes or are unable to contribute at any time, please make a notation of your prayerful support on your envelope and place it in the weekly offertory. We will then be aware of your continued participation.

In accordance with the Catholic Church, Catholic Preschools shall not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnic, or national origin. In addition, OLA Preschool complies with Internal Revenue Service requirements that tax-exempt private schools be non-discriminatory in their enrollment policies. OLA Preschool strives to provide an inclusive program for all children. The faculty of OLA Preschool serves our students in the image of Jesus Christ, meeting them where they are and who they are each day. Respect for all people is prominent in Catholic teachings. OLA Preschool seeks to model this teaching so that we may live it together as a community.

Our goal is to create an atmosphere where all children are safe and successful. If it is determined that our program is not appropriate for a child, that child may be dis-enrolled. The following are situations that could, potentially, require the parents to find another program for their child.

- Failure on the part of the parents and/or family to comply with the rules and regulations outlined in the Family Handbook.
- The administration’s determination that the actions of the family are not constructive to the program. These actions include, but are not limited to, negative posts on social media sites, school review sites, and any other email, text, post or publication which undermines or maligns the reputation of the school or school personnel.
- The school’s determination that the child’s behavior is continually disruptive and interferes with the well-being and learning experiences of the other students.
- The school’s determination that the child’s behavior is a physical threat to themselves, the school staff or student population. **This includes bullying, biting and aggression toward another child or staff member.** We take all allegations of bullying very seriously. Bullying will be dealt with appropriately. Upon the first instances of aggression or bullying, an Incident Report will be written, signed by the parents, teachers, and director, and kept in the student’s file. Upon any subsequent incident, the child’s parents may be called to immediately retrieve the child from the Preschool. Repetitive instances of **biting or aggression** will result in the **removal** of the student from the school. Refunds for the remainder of the term will not be granted.

Teachers will make every attempt to help guide children to positive behavior through redirection and positive reinforcement of good behavior. Consistent inappropriate behavior will be noted and documented by the classroom teacher. A conference may be called with the parent to determine the best way to correct inappropriate behavior. If the behavior continues, the director may recommend that the child remain home from OLA Preschool until the aggressive phase has passed.

Re-entry to the classroom is subject to mutual agreement. The agreement may be withheld by the child, the parent, or the school administration with or without cause.

It is the goal of OLA Preschool to support parents and children in growth and development. Through open communication, the school and parents will work to create a plan which will suit the needs of the child, the family, and the school.

Families are welcome to request the presence of an interpreter when attending meetings and conferences. Families may request that documents and policies are provided to them in a language which is preferable to them.

Re-Enrollment

Placement in the current school year does not guarantee first choice placement in the coming year. All students will be placed at the discretion of the director. Students enrolled in the Younger 2’s program will be placed in two-year-old classes first.

Our Lady of the Assumption Preschool is a parish-based program. Admission and attendance to our program in no way guarantees admission to OLA Catholic School or any other Archdiocesan or private school. All schools complete an independent admissions process and are their own determining entity for admission.

Tuition and Fees

The 2024-25 Tuition and Fee schedule for each class appears below:

	Tuition Per Term 3 terms Fall, Winter, Spring
PMO Little Hearts	\$1090
Y2 TTh Ladybugs	\$1090
2s TTh Bees	\$1190
2s MWF Butterflies	\$1410
3s M-Th Frogs*	\$1815
*Friday Stay & Play	\$300
3s M-F Rainbows and Owls	\$2090
Pre-K M-F Superstars	\$2160

At the time of registration for the 2024-2025 school year, one term's (three months) non-refundable tuition was paid in advance and will be applied to the spring term of the 2024-2025 school year (March 2025). The fall term tuition will be collected in September and the winter term tuition is collected in December. Families will receive a statement to review two weeks prior to the tuition being charged.

For security, we cannot accept cash or check payments. Tuition and fees will be collected by the school through Tuition Express. All families are required to register for Tuition Express and sign and return the Tuition Express Contract to secure their placement in the preschool. A **non-refundable** \$25 fee will be applied by Tuition Express if an account is declined. All accounts must be current prior to the start of school.

Mrs. Meredith Satalin serves as the preschool financial assistant and can be reached at rainbows@olachurch.org. Mrs. Satalin will respond to all questions associated with billing statements. We ask for your patience as Mrs. Satalin also serves as a lead teacher Monday-Friday. Childcare, tax, and all other statement requests will be processed within 14 days of receipt of the request.

Confidentiality of Records

Children's records are private and therefore cannot be obtained by anyone other than parents or legal guardians. In addition, teachers will refrain from discussing a child with anyone other than his/her parents or legal guardians. OLA Preschool uses COR Advantage (an online tool) to assess, evaluate, and measure student progress. Anecdotal notes and observations are included in the measurement of progress. Families who wish to share information with another institution must give consent in writing.

Operating Information

Calendar

All families have received the 2024-2025 school calendar both via the online link and a one page pdf. Our online calendar is accessed through our website www.olapreschool-atlanta.org under the 'Parents' tab or through the quick links at the bottom of the website. Details for a specific calendar entry can be found by clicking on the entry. The calendar is continually evolving throughout the year as the faculty strives to meet the needs of our families. The preschool director reserves the right to make changes in the calendar at any time as deemed necessary. Teachers create and send monthly calendars which include classroom specific activities.

Our holiday closings will follow the schedule of Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School, as closely as possible. Emergency closings will be determined by OLA Preschool and OLA Catholic School. OLA Preschool will make every attempt to notify parents of an emergency closing via email/text. There will be no financial reparations made for emergency closings. Make-up days for these closings may or may not be scheduled at the discretion of the director.

Hours and Days of Operation

The Preschool school day begins at 8:45am for all classes. Parents are asked to refrain from bringing children to school before 8:45am as it interferes with the staff's ability to prepare for the day and our morning prayer.

PMO (Little Hearts) and the Younger 2's (Ladybugs) dismiss at 11:45am. All other classes are dismissed at 12:45pm. Late charges in the amount of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed for all children picked up after 11:55am and 12:55pm.

PMO/Little Hearts will operate on a separate exemption from Bright From the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. PMO is offered on Monday and Wednesday. Students may not register for another class in conjunction with PMO. PMO students will not nap and not be given bottles. Students will provide their own sippy cup, snack, and diapers.

Carpool Procedures

OLA Preschool will operate a carpool for drop-off and pick-up beginning on the first day of school and we appreciate your cooperation in adhering to the procedures outlined below as the safety of our students, families and staff is our first priority. All students are to arrive and be picked up via the carpool line. Drop-off will begin at 8:45am and pick-up begins at 11:45am/12:45pm. Carpool cards will be distributed at our Back to School Night/Parent Meeting and must be visible from your rearview mirror at drop-off and pick-up. New families will receive a hanger. **Please make certain that your carpool card is clearly visible for both drop-off and pick-up. Carpool cards placed on dashboards are not visible to the staff.** Use the hanger provided and please make every effort to arrive on time.

Entering/Exiting the Campus: Enter the campus using the front/main entrance (not the back gate) and go left. Do not cut through the small parking lot directly to the right. Stay to the left. Once you have passed the small lot, move to the right and follow the road around to enter our carpool line. Please do not block the small parking lot on either end. Cars on campus for reasons other than carpool will use that lot to exit the campus during our carpool. Once you have pulled into the unloading/loading area directly in front of the school, pull all the way forward and place your car in park. To exit the campus, please drive to the upper parking lot and out of the entrance at the front of the church. If the rear gates are open, drivers may exit through the rear gates at dismissal. The rear gates are not to be used to enter the carpool line for drop-off or pick-up and left turns into the carpool line will not be permitted at any time.

Morning Carpool

Morning carpool will begin on the first day of school. The director and preschool faculty will greet children in the carpool line each morning. Parents are to remain in the car with the car in **PARK**. A teacher will help your child exit the vehicle. **Students must exit on the passenger side for the safety of all involved.**

Parents arriving after carpool has concluded are asked to ring the doorbell (to the left of the preschool doors) for admittance. The director or a staff member will escort late students to their classroom.

Afternoon Carpool

Children will remain in their classrooms for dismissal. Pick-up will begin daily at 11:45am (Little Hearts and Ladybugs) and 12:45pm (all remaining classes). **All cars must display their carpool sign provided by the preschool.** All vehicles must be in PARK before a preschool staff member will help your child enter the vehicle and all students will be loaded on the passenger side of the car. **We are not permitted to fasten your child into their car seat.** We ask that you move your vehicle out of the carpool lane and slightly down the parking lot along the red curb/Murray Center to fasten your child into their car seat before exiting the campus.

No child will be dismissed to any individual unless written consent has been submitted by the parents. A driver's license or photo identification by the driver will be required.

No child will be placed in a car without a car seat.

Additional Carpool Reminders

Children are not to be left unattended in parked cars nor are they to stand in the sunroof of a car or hang out of an open window.

If you need to confer with a teacher, please arrange a time before or after the school day – teachers' full attention must be given to the children during carpool.

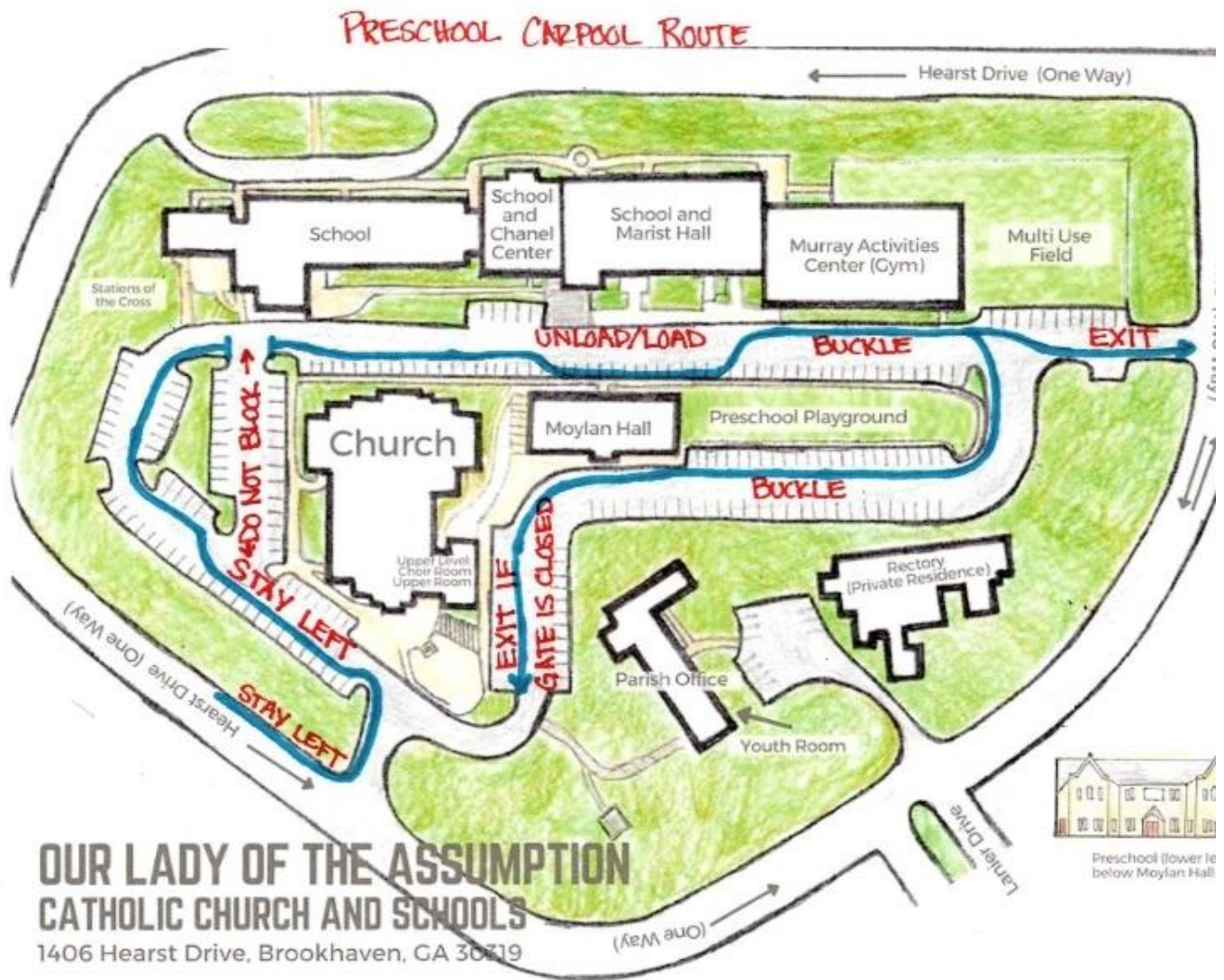
Please keep in mind that there will be parents, children, delivery vehicles and other cars in the parking lot when you are arriving to or leaving from the carpool area. **PROCEED SLOWLY and USE CAUTION. USE OF CELL PHONES IN THE CARPOOL LINE IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED,** for the safety of all. This includes calls on hands-free devices.

CARPOOL CARDS MUST BE DISPLAYED ON A HANGER AT ALL TIMES.

OLA Preschool does not allow the use of golf carts in the carpool line.

PLEASE NOTE: The OLA parking lot serves the church, preschool, and school. As per our Building Superintendent, no one is to park in a handicapped or reserved parking space without authorization. In addition, no car is to park along the red restricted curb around the church, or school. If a verbal request for compliance fails to result in adherence, a child's continued enrollment in the preschool may be at risk. Excessive speed through the church campus is a danger to all and poses a serious safety issue. The speed limit in the parking lot is 5 mph.

It is the responsibility of the child's parent to ensure all parties authorized to drop off/pick up their child (childcare providers, grandparents or other persons dropping off or picking up) are aware of, and comply with, all carpool rules and regulations. Parents will be responsible for any late charges incurred by authorized caregivers.



Back to School Night/Parent Meeting

Prior to the start of the school year, parents will be invited to join the director and staff for a Back to School Night. The director will introduce the staff, review policies and procedures, and answer any questions. Parents will then go to their child's classroom where they will meet the teacher and learn about the procedures and routines for the classroom. OLA Preschool tote bags, spiritwear and car magnets will be available for purchase.

Meet and Greet Days

Before the school year officially begins, children and parents will be invited for a specific time to visit the classroom and meet the teachers. This time will give both parents and children the opportunity to become familiar with the teacher and classroom setting to ensure a sense of security and wellbeing.

Enrichment Programs

Classes will attend a sports, music, and Spanish class once a week in addition to chapel. Mrs. Peggy Coxen is our Sports teacher. Mrs. Rebecca Uihlein teaches our weekly music classes, and Mrs. Maria Thomas teaches our Spanish classes. The director conducts our chapel lessons.

Afterschool Programs

Lunch Bunch: The *Lunch Bunch* program is an optional lunch/play period offered to students in the PMO and Younger 2's classes once the classes have settled into the school routine. Advance registration is required for *Lunch Bunch*. Registration forms (in two month increments) will be emailed to families. Pre-registered lunch bunch is \$14.00 per day and "emergency" attendance (if space is available and approved by the director) is \$18.00 per day. Late charges will apply to families who do not pick their children up by 12:55pm. All policies regarding a child's adjustment to the Preschool environment also apply to the *Lunch Bunch* program. If a child is not adjusting well to this after school addition to the day or if behavioral problems occur, it is the discretion of the director to suspend a child's enrollment in the program.

Movement Matters is offered on Tuesdays for Younger 2's. There will be a separate registration form for this class and registration is for the semester.

Ms. Peggy's Movement Matters/Sports Matters will be offered in the fall and spring as well as Yoga with Ms. Kelly. Informational flyers will be sent in August and December with specific information regarding the days, times, and cost. **Enrollment in the fall semester does not guarantee enrollment in the spring semester.**

Creative Movement and Dance will return to OLA Preschool to offer Pre-Ballet (3s) and Tap/Ballet (4s). An informational flyer outlining days, times, and costs will be sent in August and December. **Those enrolled in the fall semester will get first placement for the spring semester.**

Classroom Information

Daily Activities and Curriculum

OLA Preschool utilizes a variety of resources including The Creative Curriculum and Get Set for School. All teachers use the GELDS (Georgia Early Learning and Developmental Standards) and COR Advantage objectives when developing their lesson plans. OLA Preschool piloted and has implemented a phonemic awareness program associated with Sightwords.com and developed by respected educators Betsy Primm and Donna House. Learning Without Tears continues to be a strong component of our curriculum. These resources offer teachers a framework for planning and implementing a developmentally appropriate program. Our children will experience a full and varied day of independent and teacher-directed activities, learning primarily through play-based experiences. Emergent literacy is extremely important, and the children will be involved in extensive language-based activities. Students will be given ample time to choose the centers in which to play and will be allowed to move freely through these centers. These centers will include but are not limited to: Dramatic Play, Literature, Science/Nature, Housekeeping, Blocks and Manipulative Play, and Art. Teacher-directed activities may include science or art activities, small group math activities, reading, finger plays and rhymes.

All students at OLA Preschool are continually assessed during the school year, and throughout their years at the preschool, using the COR Advantage online assessment tool. Assessments are based on one-on-one observations of student performances during play-based learning designed to meet and master objectives specifically applicable to OLA Preschool.

Specific and developmentally appropriate objectives are established for each age group to provide a strong foundation on which to build each successive year. Our preschool curriculum encompasses the following areas:

1. Cognitive: This involves processes such as acquiring information, memory, imagination, problem solving and understanding concepts.
2. Physical: This includes using the body with control and efficiency including fine motor skills such as pinching and cutting and using writing, drawing and painting tools, plus gross motor skills such as walking, running, balancing, and jumping.
3. Social-Emotional: The children learn to care about themselves and others as they work cooperatively in a group setting. Emphasis is placed on being kind to one another, sharing, taking turns, and responding appropriately to feelings.
4. Language: Children develop the communication skills of listening, following directions, conveying their thoughts and ideas, and problem solving in an acceptable manner.
5. Emergent Literacy: Children will be surrounded by a print-rich environment, listen to stories often and participate in activities which build literacy as they learn that print conveys verbal meaning and phonemic awareness.

Music is encouraged in the classroom and teacher-directed music activities will be provided in addition to our weekly music class. Gross motor activities, games, music, movement, and outdoor play are enhanced through our *Spunky Sports* and *Creative Movement* programs. *Spanish* is offered to all the children through the instruction of our Spanish teacher.

All teachers at OLA Preschool are required to complete a minimum of 10 hours of professional development annually.

Spirituality

It is our goal for the preschool children to experience spiritual growth and understanding in our Catholic environment. All students will be presented with lessons from the Bible to foster an understanding of Jesus's loving protection and the unique aspects of the Catholic Church. They will also learn traditional Catholic prayers, blessings, and gestures. We will celebrate the saints' feast days as they are reflected in the children's lives. OLA Preschool will honor our fathers in conjunction with the observance of St. Joseph's Day. Our mothers will be honored at the May Crowning.

Classroom songs and finger plays, the ABCs of St. Teresa, and Bible stories, will enhance the spirituality of our children through our curriculum. Preschool teachers refer to the Archdiocese of Atlanta's K-12 religion curriculum, which includes the study of the liturgical seasons and the colors which represent the seasons, the Stations of the Cross, and praying the Rosary. Of particular note, preschool students will study the stained-glass windows in our church which depict the mysteries of the Rosary. The pastor and priests of OLA Parish are regular visitors to the preschool. Bishops of the Archdiocese of Atlanta are invited to visit the preschool when visiting the campus of OLA.

All classes participate in monthly service projects to aid and support the less fortunate in our community. Seasonal service projects are conducted throughout the year. Building faith through service is an excellent manner in which to teach young children the importance of respecting all

lives. Service projects demonstrate to our children the way in which we live our faith recognizing spirituality in all people. Building relationships with communities outside of our own expands the experiences of the OLA Preschool community and benefits others. During the school year, OLA Preschool partners with Children's Healthcare of Atlanta to serve children with all types of illnesses and disabilities.

In past years, OLA Preschool families have enjoyed and maintained connections with the families served through the Catholic Charities and Mercy Care Adopt A Family programs. The refugee families have received household goods needed to establish a new home. Refugee and identified families in need have received Christmas gifts.

Clothing and Supplies

All students will need a tote bag with two double handles that can be loaded from the top, not a backpack. Backpacks are difficult for our younger students to pack and unpack and require teacher assistance. This hinders development of independent self-help skills. OLA Preschool backpacks will be distributed to the Pre-K Superstars only. OLA Preschool tote bags bearing the logo will be available for purchase for all students at our Back to School Night. All children should have a full change of clothes (including socks and shoes) available daily, even those children who are toilet trained – messes are an inevitable companion to trying and learning. Be sure to label all pieces of clothing. Children in diapers should also have 2-3 diapers (labeled with the child's name) available each day. If using pull-ups, they must have the Velcro pull tabs on the side. Pull-ups or training pants that do not have side tabs require an extended amount of time for the teacher to remove all clothing when a diaper change is needed.

Shoes should be sturdy and enclosed for play outside on the playground. **Crocs, sling-back, slip-on shoes, boots and sandals** are not appropriate, as they may impede play activities and are a safety hazard. We encourage girls to wear pants or shorts to allow for freedom of movement indoors and out. We bring the children outside as often as possible, so please be sure that adequate clothing is available during cold weather, including gloves and hats. **If rain boots are worn to school, please include a pair of shoes suitable for play.**

Small, pierced earrings are the only jewelry/accessories permitted. No necklaces, bracelets, watches or hats.

If your child carries a special stuffed animal or blanket, we will request that it be kept out of the classroom. "Comfort" toys cannot be carried in the classroom due to hygiene issues. Toys are to be kept at home with the exception of scheduled show and tell days.

Toilet Training and Toileting Accidents

Parents of children who are learning to toilet train are required to communicate with teachers about the child's progress training in school. As a developmentally appropriate program, OLA Preschool recognizes that toilet training is a skill which develops over time and requires practice. Children are not considered toilet trained until they are able to verbalize the need to use the bathroom without prompting. Students are **NOT** to be sent to school in underwear until the teacher gives consent.

All students are required to wear diapers, pull-ups, or underwear. **Failure to follow this health standard will result in the child being diapered or a phone call to the parent to come to pick up the child.** All parents of students in two-year-old classes are required to complete, sign, and return the toilet training contract prior to the first day of school.

Students in the 5 day 3-year-old program and Pre-Kindergarten must be potty trained prior to the start of the school year. Students who have more than 2 accidents will be asked to return to pull-ups. In the event of repeated bm accidents, parents or caregivers may be called to clean and change children so that classroom ratios may be maintained. A \$25 sanitization fee will be applied to the family account after 2 bm accidents.

Snacks/ Lunches

Families alternate the responsibility for providing the class snack each week (with the exception of PMO/Little Hearts), assigned by the classroom teacher. Snack foods are to be purchased new, and sent in the original unopened packaging, except for cut fruits and vegetables. We encourage fresh fruits and vegetables, cheese, bread items and sugar-free snacks. The children provide their own sippy cup with water; therefore, juice is not required. Popcorn, whole grapes, and **cheese sticks** are choking hazards for children under 3.

We are a nut-free environment. *Please check ingredients listed on wrappers to ensure the snacks you are supplying meet this standard.* A wide variety of nut-free snacks is available in stores. Students with food allergies will be required to bring their own snacks daily and for special functions and will be left off of the weekly snack rotation.

Individual lunches are supplied by the child's parents and should be free from **candy, soda, and dessert.** In accordance with our school's *Nut Free Policy* (see Food Allergies), parents are asked not to send nut products or foods processed in a nut factory. Please read the ingredient description of all processed food packages. Staff will send unacceptable items home in the child's lunch box. Napkins and utensils are to be provided by the family in the lunchbox. **Lunches should be packed in a manner which requires as little assistance as possible, to provide for as little touch as possible.** The Preschool does not have refrigeration available for lunch boxes so please include ice packs, if necessary. We are also not equipped to cook or reheat any lunch items.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta emphasizes the need for children to maintain a healthy diet. Families who consistently send lunches high in sugar will be asked to incorporate more fresh fruits and vegetables as well as proteins. **OLA Preschool is not licensed to provide food service.**

Birthdays and Holiday Parties

If you would like to do something small and special for your child's birthday, please contact your child's teacher in advance. **Latex balloons and candles are forbidden as they are a safety hazard for small children.** We also discourage party favors, mylar balloons, and juice boxes. Rice Krispy treats, large cookie cakes and cookies are special treats for the children and will be much less messy than cupcakes. In accordance with our policy, **all party foods must be nut-free.** Please check with the baker prior to bringing baked goods into the preschool. If, upon inspection, the preschool determines that food for the party does not meet the nut-free requirement, **the food will have to be sent home unused.**

Classes will host four holiday parties during the year: Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter. We will also celebrate special days such as Saint Nicholas' Day and St. Patrick's Day, etc., though parties will not be held. Classroom teachers and room parents will offer a sign-up for parents wishing to assist in the party planning. These parties should be as simple as possible and we request that mylar balloons, party favors, and goody bags not be included in our parties. In order to maintain safety and abide by the fire code, only parents signed up to help with the party are able to attend. We will hold an all-school Thanksgiving Feast and End of Year Celebration. Planning/organizing for those parties will be done through the room parents with each class being assigned a specific role.

Volunteers and Visitors

We encourage our parents and their families to share their many talents with our children and staff. OLA Preschool is blessed by the support of the OLA Preschool Parent Council, led by Mrs. Sarah Lanpher. The parent council serves in an advisory role and as a support to our families. The parent council consists of two parts, committee chairpersons and room parents. Committee chairpersons serve in specific roles to support the director and the school throughout the year. Room parents serve as a liaison between the director, classroom teachers, and families. A full introduction and list of room parents and committee heads will be sent to all families at the start of the school year. If you wish to be considered for a parent council position or room parent, email the director at kjackowski@olachurch.org or our parent council president at sarah.lanpher@gmail.com.

Safe Environment Program/VIRTUS:

All parents wishing to volunteer, including but not limited to classroom volunteers and mystery readers, are required to undergo all Safe Environment requirements as set by the Archdiocese of Atlanta. Completion of an in-person VIRTUS training is required. Upon completion of the training, a link to the Safe Environment required documents will be emailed to parents to be completed and submitted to the church office manager. The safe environment screening is valid for five years and is valid throughout the archdiocese. Visit <https://archatl.com/ministries-services/safe-environment/safe-environment-compliance/> for more information and to register for a class.

Parents who have completed the required safe environment program may come into the school for the purposes of volunteering. Following the completion of volunteer events, parents must exit the preschool, so that classes may resume the educational schedule. Parents may escort special visitors into the school for parties and special occasions for a brief period. Repeat visitors will be required to undergo background screenings and Virtus.

All visitors and volunteers will be asked to sign in at the front door and should dress in an appropriate manner consistent with our Catholic school values. Clothing, including logos, hemlines, and necklines, must not conflict with the school's Catholic identity. Clothing of a tight or revealing nature should not be worn.

In accordance with the Archdiocese of Atlanta's Safe Environment Policy and Employee Manual, parish and school employees are never to be alone with students. This policy includes babysitting for school families, tutoring, and driving students to and from school.

Photographs/Video/Social Media

Your child will be photographed throughout the school year by the classroom teachers. Photographs for each class and event will be posted to albums on our secure PhotoCircle app. Families will receive a link at the beginning of the school year to gain access to specific classroom albums. The photographs will be used for art projects or special books that you may receive throughout the year. Our parish bulletin, e-news, Instagram, and Facebook page use photographs of preschool activities, as well. Students are never identified by name in any post or publication.

In circumstances in which your child will be singing or performing in a special program such as the Christmas program, classroom parties, parent celebrations, etc., please be informed that many parents do video tape and take pictures. Although they are focused on taking pictures of their own child, it is inevitable that others could also be in the picture or video. If you do not want any possibility of this occurring, then please notify the school that your child will not participate in the specific activity.

OLA Preschool teachers use Kaymbu, an online assessment tool, to track each child's individual progress. These observations and reports are only shared with the parent and are not accessible by anyone other than the classroom teachers, the director and the parents.

Our Lady of the Assumption Preschool does not allow any parent or teacher to use unrestricted internet access, including Facebook and Instagram, to view or post pictures taken on school property that would have another child that is not their own in the picture.

No video/audio recording may be used during parent-teacher conferences. This policy also includes tape recording of conversations, either in person or on the phone, by or among students, parents, teachers, or school administrators.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta requires all parents to sign the Permission to Participate Form, which will be kept on file. The form is used to determine parental preferences in areas such as the directory and photographs/videos which may be used for print or internet publications from OLA Preschool. Parents will have the option to select separate permissions for Kaymbu, PhotoCircle, the church website/bulletin, school website/Instagram, and the Georgia Bulletin.

Health, Safety and Emergency Information

All faculty members, volunteers, and parents of OLA Preschool are considered mandatory reporters of child physical, mental/emotional, and sexual abuse under Georgia state law.

OLA Preschool follows the Buckley Amendment/Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Where applicable, families must provide custodial agreements, which will be kept confidential. OLA Preschool will share student records with both parents and/or abide by the custodial agreement. Children will be dismissed to non-custodial parents in accord with the custodial agreement on file.

Allergies

Food Allergies

Our food allergy policy requires a diagnosis by a physician and a written food allergy plan, with the child's photo attached, which must be on file with the preschool office prior to the first day of school. The medical form is provided by the preschool or can be found on our website and is to be completed, signed, and dated by the child's pediatrician. This form will be kept in the child's confidential health folder. In addition, the form will be posted on the inside of the child's classroom closet door.

This plan will include:

- The food(s) to which the child is allergic.
- Detailed description of symptoms the child may exhibit after ingesting and/or coming into contact with the allergen.
- Procedures to reduce exposure to the food causing the allergic reaction.
- Procedures to be followed when a child needs treatment for an allergic reaction.
- Notification to the parent when a child is administered any medication for an allergic reaction.

The parent must provide the current medications, including Epi-Pen, Jr. (preferably 2, for the classroom and emergency out-of-classroom bag), necessary to treat the child. Expiration dates will be provided, and parents will be notified when new medication is necessary.

The OLA Preschool community is committed to providing reasonable prevention measures to ensure the safety of our children. The school staff will closely inspect all foods brought into the classroom to screen for foods that are hazardous to the allergic child. If a child has a severe allergy, we will request that the parent be present during birthday and holiday parties to ensure the safety of the child. Parents may request that their child be seated separately from the class community if they feel this extra measure of safety is necessary for their child and a teacher will accompany the seated child. If requested by the Preschool or family, parents of a severely allergic child will provide the snack for their child **daily** and only food received from the child's parent will be given to the child.

Asthma/Environmental Allergies

Parents of students with asthma and environmental allergies are required to present a detailed plan from their doctor outlining the protocol to be followed in the event of an asthma or allergy episode. A form is available by request from the preschool and available on our website and should be completed, signed, and dated by the child's pediatrician.

Medications to treat asthma or allergies require the authorization to administer medication form. Current medications must always be presented to the director in original packaging.

In the event of high pollution, students will remain indoors for big body play.

Emergency Procedures

Unannounced fire drills will take place monthly. In the event of a fire drill, all staff members will accompany the children out of the facility. Each classroom teacher will bring their class roster of children in attendance for the day. After leaving the building and relocating, head counts are taken

to ensure all children are present. The same procedure is completed upon arrival back into the classroom.

In cases of inclement weather, children will remain inside the facility. No child will be allowed to leave the facility unless accompanied by a parent or an approved escort. Children will be kept together away from windows and exit doors. No child will be released from the school during a period of severe weather such as tornado warnings. Tornado drills will be held twice during the school year.

OLA Preschool follows a strict protocol for suspicious persons and intruders on our campus. In the event of suspicious activity, all classes will move indoors. Interior and exterior safety shades will be drawn. No one will enter or exit the preschool until the facilities manager, campus security or Brookhaven Police Department deem the campus clear of danger. Classes on the playground will move into Moylan Hall and exterior safety shades will be drawn. No one other than the facilities manager, director, pastor, campus security officer, or Brookhaven Police Department will enter Moylan Hall during the period of suspicious activity.

In the event of an active threat of danger, all classes will move into designated and practiced safe areas. Classes will remain in designated areas until the Brookhaven Police Department clears the campus of any threat. Communication to parents will take place through director/room parent text messages.

Maintenance including but not limited to painting, carpentry, and repairs will not take place during school hours.

Health Policies and Procedures

Absences/When to Stay Home

Parents are asked to email the director and classroom teacher in the event of a planned or unplanned absence. Teachers are not required to send assignments/homework for prolonged absences or family trips. While every effort is made when possible, teachers are not required to have the child make up missed projects or activities.

Any child arriving at the school with a contagious disease (such as chicken pox, head lice, pink eye, fever, vomiting, severe coughing, sore throat, unidentified rash, or general illness,) as determined by the director, will be required to be picked up. **Children must be symptom free without medication for twenty-four hours before returning to school.** This is necessary to prevent the spread of illness to other children or staff. Families will be notified immediately in the event of the presence of a communicable disease in the program.

It is under the discretion of the director to determine if a child is too ill to be in school. This decision will be based on the presence of a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, vomiting or diarrhea, severe cough or nasal distress, conjunctivitis, head lice, unidentified rash or the symptoms of strep throat, flu, or chicken pox. If a family is contacted regarding the illness of their child, the child will be kept isolated from the general population until they can be picked up. Children who are ill and uncomfortable *in any way* should be kept in their home environments until they are ready to return to school.

Antibiotics

It is Archdiocesan policy that any child prescribed an antibiotic must remain home for a minimum of 24 hours regardless of a doctor's directions.

Injury/Incident Reports

All families are required to return the Medical Authorization and Liability Release form. In the event of injury requiring medical assistance, staff will make every effort to reach parents or emergency contacts. If the parent cannot be reached and it is determined by the faculty that medical assistance is required, 911 will be contacted without the verbal authorization of the parents. A faculty member will accompany the child to the hospital. All medical expenses incurred in the transport of the injured child and treatment will be the responsibility of the parents. Under no circumstance will faculty members transport children to a medical facility. All documentation regarding the injury will be completed and signed by the parent and kept on file. Injuries resulting in medical treatment by a physician must be reported to the Archdiocese of Atlanta within twenty-four hours. Minor injuries will be reported to the family via an Incident Report the day of the injury. The parents are required to sign the report and return it to the director.

Medication Administration

No medication will be administered to a child (even topical lotions, including diaper rash creams, or over-the-counter medicines) without the written authorization of the parent and/or physician; the required Archdiocesan form can be found on our website under "Required Forms" or obtained from the director. Teachers will monitor and make note of any adverse reaction to medications administered with said authorization. Medication is to be in its original bottle with the name of the doctor, name of the medication, date of prescription and dosage clearly marked. Sunscreen and insect repellent should be applied prior to entering school for the day. First aid in the form of band aids and ice packs can be used for minor cuts and bruises.

Immunizations

As required by the Health Department, Georgia Department of Human Resources, children who do not have current immunization records on file will not be allowed to attend school until such documentation has been received.

Serology/antibody testing and bloodwork is not recognized by the Archdiocese of Atlanta as proof of immunization.

All children attending Catholic parish preschools must meet Georgia state standards for immunization. State law requires a 3231-vaccination form be current and on file before a child enrolls in school. OLA Preschool requires a current 3231 before a child can enter the program. Only the 3231 form will be accepted. Certificates of immunization must be readily available in the event of a disease outbreak, and/or a visit from BFTS or the Health Department.

In the event of a contagious disease epidemic, outbreak or exposure, children with medical exemptions or delayed/alternative vaccination schedules will be required to remain at home until their health and safety is no longer at risk.

- **Religious Exemption**

The Catholic Church does not recognize an immunization exemption based upon matter of conscience/religious convictions and does not accept any alternative or homeopathic immunization that has not been approved by the FDA.

- **Medical Exemption**

Parents requesting a medical exemption from any Georgia State required immunization must provide a detailed explanation of the child's disability and/or disease as documented by a licensed pediatrician. This documentation must be provided on the pediatrician's office official letterhead, must contain the physician's medical license number, and must state if the medical exemption is temporary or permanent. If the exemption is temporary, a schedule of immunizations must be included.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta reserves the right to obtain a second opinion. The medical exemption must be renewed annually.

Infectious Disease Policy

The primary responsibility for the prevention and control of infectious diseases lies with individuals, families, and public health authorities. Schools are not responsible for providing expert infectious disease advice or treating students; this is the role of medical practitioners and health authorities.

Attendance at any school may be denied to any student reasonably suspected of or diagnosed with a contagious or infectious disease that could be harmful to the welfare of other students, faculty, and staff.

Schools reserve the right to require a statement from the student's primary care physician authorizing the student's return to school. Schools will respect the privacy of all its community members. Parents of children attending the school will be notified that their child has been exposed to a communicable or infectious disease in a manner that avoids identifying any community member who has been identified with the disease, to the maximum extent appropriate in each particular circumstance.

During periods of infectious disease, some operational procedures and events may be added, modified and/or cancelled including but not limited to:

- Prevention techniques – hand washing education, coughing and sneezing education; hand sanitizers in classrooms; sanitizing wipes in classrooms for computers, desks, common areas, etc.; tissues in all rooms; sanitation procedures; and if appropriate, the mandated use of facial masks along with social distancing.
- Preparedness – Schools will comply with CDC, State Department of Health guidelines, and directives from the Office of Catholic Schools.
- Response – Schools will follow the Office of Catholic Schools policy for school closures (Policy 5285) and directives from State and Local (County and Municipal) jurisdictions. The Office of Catholic Schools will provide a written Reopening of Schools Plan specific to the infectious or communicable disease present.

- Recovery – Schools will publish a return to school procedure in accordance with directives from the Office of Catholic Schools which aligns to the Reopening of Schools Plan approved by the Superintendent of Schools.

Security/Head Counts

The doors to the preschool, church, and Moylan Hall will remain closed and locked. Visitors should ring the bell to the left of the front door for admittance. The security camera is located to the right of the door.

As children transition from one location to another, teachers will perform head counts upon departure and again upon arrival to ensure the safe relocation of each child. Teacher to student ratios will always be maintained. These ratios are 1:5 for PMO, 1:6 for Two's, 1:8 for Three's and 1:10 for Four's. Two classes will be on the playground at a time to ensure adequate supervision in the case of minor accidents or toilet needs. Teachers will always keep cell phones at-hand to stay in contact with the director while out of the preschool building. Totes containing first aid supplies, allergy-response supplies, and class rosters with parent contact information will always be kept with the teachers when they are away from the classroom.

Staff and Family Communications

It is important for our families and staff to communicate closely for the positive and consistent development of our children. Before school begins, each family will be asked to review and revise the family contacts and authorized release information. In the instance of families with divorced or separated parents, a copy of the authorized custody agreement must be on file with the preschool. All email communications will be directed to the home email address indicated on the child's application. If a parent wishes to include additional emails on the school distribution list, please email the director.

Room Parents will collect cell phone numbers and email addresses at the beginning of the year. Each room parent will create a text chain and email distribution list for his/her class. The faculty and administration look to the room parents and parent council as a liaison between home and school. They are a wealth of knowledge and can often times field questions or concerns allowing the teachers to focus on the children.

Communication Folders are provided by the Preschool as our daily method of keeping in touch with preschool families. **Please check the communication folder daily.** Parents are to send any notes to the teacher or the office staff, or any forms that are to be returned to the preschool, in this folder. The teachers will check each folder after all the children have been signed in for the morning. Teachers will send communications through the student's folder in addition to communicating via their school email accounts. Monthly calendars, bi-monthly newsletters, special event updates etc. will be sent via email to reduce our printing costs. The director will communicate via her email address (kjackowski@olachurch.org). Please be sure to add this address to your contacts/safe senders to ensure receipt of the director's communications. ***It is the responsibility of parents to read and refer to class/director newsletters, class calendars and the Google calendar for information.***

We will make ourselves available to you as much as possible through all avenues, including one-on-one appointments as needed or requested. E-mail "conferences" are discouraged. The use of e-mail is appropriate for information such as dates, times, snacks, etc. but not for issues of a

personal, emotional, or behavioral nature. Please direct all emails to the following addresses. Parents are asked not to use the preschool@olachurch.org general account, as this is merely the host for the filtering of classroom emails. The preschool general account is not monitored. The director is to be copied on all communications.

Parents are asked not to text teachers and administrators on their personal cell phones. Respect for the faculty's privacy is appreciated.

PMO- littlehearts@olachurch.org

Y2- ladybugs@olachurch.org

TTh 2's- bees@olachurch.org

MWF 2's – butterflies@olachurch.org

M-Th 3's- frogs@olachurch.org

M-F 3's- rainbows@olachurch.org

M-F 3's- owls@olachurch.org

PK- superstars@olachurch.org

The entire faculty at OLA Preschool is considered part-time, and as such, is not compensated for overtime and is ineligible for benefits. The preschool faculty will respond to emails and phone calls during normal work hours.

Parent-Teacher conferences are conducted twice during the school year for our three-year-old and pre-kindergarten students. All other classes will have one scheduled conference in the spring. Additional conferences may be requested by either the parent, teacher or director and will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time. Please do not use carpool, arrival, or dismissal times to confer with your child's teacher. Issues of a sensitive nature should be addressed only to the lead teacher in a manner where confidentiality can be assured.

The OLA Preschool directory will be sent to each family. The directory is to be used solely for the purposes of communication between parents and faculty members as they pertain to school. The school directory may not be used for the purposes of business or sale.

As a faculty, each member of the OLA Preschool team is dedicated to the welfare and happiness of each child in our care. When you leave us a message, either through the telephone or by email, we will make every effort to get back to you as soon as possible regarding any need that may arise regarding your child. It is our goal to work together with our families as we strive for the healthy development of the children at Our Lady of the Assumption Preschool.

Mrs. Jackowski can be reached by email, kjackowski@olachurch.org, or by office phone (404) 978-0073. Email is the most effective way to reach Mrs. Jackowski quickly as she is often out of the office away from the phone visiting classrooms or attending to student or faculty needs. Meetings with Mrs. Jackowski are by appointment only.

We look forward to working with you to provide each child a meaningful and faith-filled preschool experience.