



Dear Parents and Prospective Students,

Welcome to St. Joseph Preschool! As you'll see, we are proud to share our tradition of excellence in Catholic education. St. Joseph Preschool develops the whole student – mind, body and spirit – and prepares children for success in Kindergarten. We hope you'll see how warm and welcoming our school community is - it's something we value and hope to pass on to all who visit with us.

Please take some time to read through the enclosed information to learn more about our Preschool, and feel free to call us with questions. We hope you decide to join our community, and encourage you to complete your registration materials as soon as possible. Please return the following to our School Office to ensure a place for your child; our Pre-K classes fill up quickly!

- St. Joseph Preschool Application
- Diocese School Information Form
- Birth certificate
- A non-refundable \$100 registration fee (payable to St. Joseph School) – fee is deducted from tuition

For acceptance, consideration will be given to:

- Class size – for preschool, we have a 20-child per classroom limit
- Child's age – for Pre-K3, child should be 3 years old by September 1; for Pre-K4, child should be 4 years old by September 1

An acceptance letter will be sent following the completion of the registration materials.

We hope that the following information helps you to learn more about St. Joseph Preschool. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us.

We thank you for considering us in your search for high quality education.

Sincerely,

Rita Stasi
Principal

Preschool Information

Preschool Options / Hours

- Pre-K for three-year-olds: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30 am – 11:15 am
- Pre-K for four-year-olds: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 am – 11:15 am

Special Activities

- Halloween Parade
- Christmas Social
- Catholic Schools Week Activities
- Valentine's Party
- Easter Celebration
- End-of-Year Picnic

2016 – 2017 Tuition

- Pre-K3: \$1,355
- Pre-K4: \$1,895

Other Information

- Enjoy convenient drop-off and pick-up service - without leaving your car!
- There are no uniforms for preschool students; they wear school-appropriate attire.
- We love “messy” art projects that allow free expression of ideas.
- See more important information in our “Frequently Asked Questions” section.

Meet Our Preschool Teachers



Mrs. Kathy Kuper

Mrs. Kuper is a graduate of St. Joseph School and has been a member of St. Joseph Parish for over 40 years. She has a bachelor's in Education from Lewis University, and a minor in Theatre with concentration areas in Music, Reading and Science. Mrs. Kuper has more than 20 years of experience teaching in Catholic schools and religious education programs. She believes that every child is a precious gift from God, and that each is naturally curious. Mrs. Kuper wants each of her students to grow in the Catholic faith, and strives to create a positive, caring and respectful learning environment for her students.



Mrs. Carol Aldridge

Mrs. Aldridge joined St. Joseph Preschool in the fall of 2015. She previously taught at St. Alexander Preschool in Villa Park, and before that was the Early Childhood Parent Coordinator for Lombard School District 44. She has also taught in 1st through 3rd Grade classrooms, and brings a wealth of great experience to our youngest students.

Preschool Curriculum

St. Joseph Preschool follows the Diocese of Joliet early childhood curriculum guidelines. In addition, we aim to meet the Illinois Early Learning Standards benchmarks in all subject areas. Curriculum supports the fact that children learn through play. Providing opportunities for exploring and discovering through hands-on activities is an important part of the learning process. Both teacher-directed and child-initiated activities are used to cover all areas of development.

Religion lessons help the children discover God, our loving Father. Children learn to appreciate all he has given us and how to be thankful. Jesus is introduced as a friend and someone we can talk to anytime. Students learn that Jesus loves all people, and did many wonderful things during his lifetime. Prayer services led by the teacher expand on lessons and celebrate holidays, holy days and liturgical seasons. Both classes use an early childhood religion program published by Our Sunday Visitor. Lessons involve songs, activity sheets, Bible stories and prayer.

Language Arts skills are incorporated into all areas of learning throughout the day. Children develop listening skills through the use of stories, poetry and rhymes, games and following directions to complete a task. Speaking skills are practiced through Show and Tell, dramatic play, interacting with peers, and sharing experiences at group time. Daily story time led by the teacher helps develop a love of literature and provides a chance to introduce pre-reading skills.

Literacy Pre-K4 uses the Rowland Reading Program, Happily Ever After. Pre-reading skills are taught in each unit and introduce concepts needed to become successful readers. Skills covered are print awareness, left to right tracking, letter recognition, comprehension, listening, visual development and fine motor skills. Some of the concepts taught are same and different; top, middle and bottom; across, over and under;; left and right, long and short; wide and thin. As children complete the activity pages, they practice understanding and following directions.

Mathematics Through use of manipulatives, games and activities, the children are able to use critical thinking skills, solve problems and reason to understand math concepts. Counting, sorting, making patterns, estimating, measuring, comparing objects and number recognition are some of the concepts learned.

Science We take a hands-on approach to science by letting the children's natural curiosity teach them about the world around us. The children make observations, discover how things work, and see cause and effect relationships. Some concepts learned are volume, balance, life cycles and physical properties of matter. Our science curriculum is supplemented by literature, art projects and cooking activities.

Motor Development Large and small muscle development is addressed in the program. Gross motor skills are improved through games, play, creative movement and use of gross motor equipment. The Fine Motor Center provides children with opportunities to do puzzles, play games and use manipulatives. While working at the Writing Center, the children are able to practice proper pencil grip and use of scissors.

Art and Music The arts give the children an opportunity to express themselves. Various media used in open-ended art projects allows for individual creativity. Music is used to teach concepts, enhance religion lessons, and provide opportunities for creative movement and calming. It allows the children to sing with a group and learn words and melodies.

Social Students learn social skills necessary to get along with their peers and function in a classroom setting. Sharing, taking turns, caring for materials, cooperating with others, following directions, and communicating effectively are skills emphasized throughout the day.



Parent Perspectives

Parents are raving about their child's preschool experience!



“We've experienced a few preschools in the area. Without question, St. Joseph meets our needs best:

- Outstanding teachers who provide energy and love. They plan fun projects and pack the days with activities, all within a comfortable routine.
- Appropriate introduction to Catholicism. Our kids surprise us with their thoughtful comments as they apply classroom lessons to everyday life.
- Opportunity for parent interaction. Parents are invited to be parent helpers, which is a great way to get to know the teachers, students and program.
- Seamless transition to Kindergarten. Our son had a very easy transition to Kindergarten this year. There was no anxiety because he knew the teachers already, and they knew him. He also knew most of his classmates.”

Kerry Griffin

“We are very pleased with St. Joseph Preschool. Our son had fun each day, while learning a lot. The teachers are wonderful, and it was obvious they truly enjoyed being with the children. We also appreciated the many opportunities to interact with the kids. When our son was ready for Kindergarten, he was well prepared and comfortable making the transition.”

Mara Kearney

“My daughter participated in Pre-K4 during the Preschool's first year and I was really happy with her experience. The program has a nice balance of academic, social, emotional and spiritual growth. The teachers truly care about the children's development and work throughout the school year to ensure achievement in all areas. Because so many of the children from my daughter's class continued at St. Joseph School, her transition to Kindergarten was very smooth. I have older children at the school, and I definitely enjoyed the convenience of having all my kids in one place and on the same schedule!”

Maria Lifka

“I would recommend St. Joseph Preschool to any parent in search of a warm, safe, loving, educational environment. I find the staff to be nurturing and attentive to my child's needs. They work hard to create an educational environment to encourage each child to thrive. My daughter was excited to go to school each day to see her friends and teachers, and learned at such a fast pace! She received a wonderful balance in all areas of child development and was more than ready for Kindergarten.”

Gina Mazzocchi

“My son is in Pre-K3 at St. Joe's and we are very happy with the program. They have a wonderful curriculum that focuses on intellectual, emotional and social development. A major benefit of being enrolled in the program is that the kids form friendships in Preschool that carry over to Kindergarten, and then grade school.”

Peggy Porcelli

Our Tradition of Excellence

Our faculty and students are award-winning!

An award-winning Pre-K to 8th grade Catholic school, St. Joseph offers students a challenging academic education while building their love of God and commitment to improving the world. We encourage each child to become the person God calls him or her to be in a faith-filled, nurturing environment.

- Our graduates are well-prepared for high school, earning academic awards and scholarships
- Catholic values are woven into all spiritual, educational and extracurricular activities
- All-Day Kindergarten, plus Extended Care and Holiday Care are offered to Grades K-8
- Average class size is 24 students, offering a personalized approach to learning
- No-cut sports begin in 5th grade and include football, volleyball, cross country, basketball and track; youth sports teams (K-4th Grade) are organized through the YMCA and DG Park District.
- A variety of activities are offered for student enrichment; see “Extracurricular Activities”

Awards & Accolades

We are very excited about recent awards and accolades for our faculty and students, which demonstrate excellence in education:

- 2016 Nazareth Academy 8th Grade Math Contest:
 - SJS earned 1st Place Team award
 - SJS placed two students in top positions
- 2016 Benet Scholastic Bowl (4 Tests – Math, English/Literature, Science and History):
 - SJS 8th grade teams took 1st place in Math and Science, 2nd place in History and 2nd and 3rd place overall
 - SJS 7th grade team took 3rd place overall
- 2016 Montini Math Contest: With more than 420 participants representing 33 schools...
 - SJS 6th grade team took 10th place
 - SJS 7th grade took 9th place
 - SJS 8th grade team took 2nd place (individual students awarded 5th place and 2nd place)
- 2016 Athletic Victories:
 - Boys Football: JV - 5th/6th Grade Finished 2nd place in our division. Varsity - 7th/8th Grade finished the season 4-4.
 - Girls Volleyball: Both the 7th & 8th Grade teams won this year’s Bronco Bash Tournament hosted by Montini High School. 7th & 8th Grade A girls also won the DPL championship tournament.
 - Cross Country: 6th Grade girls and boys teams and 9 individuals repeatedly received ribbons. St. Joseph School co-hosted a cross country meet for 26 area Catholic schools.
 - St. Joseph 2015 Alumni led the Downers Grove South girls cross country team to a 4th place at the state meet this fall.
- 2015 Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal Award to Principal Rita Stasi
- 2015 Nazareth Academy Scholastic Bowl: SJS placed 2nd out of 20 competing schools
- 2015 Nazareth Academy Math Contest:
 - SJS earned top honors overall (1st Place)
 - SJS placed four students in the top 5 positions of the contest, earning 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th Places

- 2015 Montini's Annual Math Bowl Junior High Competition:
 - SJS 7th Grade Mathletes earned 3rd place out of 500 competing private and public school students
 - Two students earned Top 10 honors overall
- 2015 ICCP Math Competition for 7th and 8th Graders: With 146 participants representing 19 schools...
 - SJS 8th Graders had the Top 3 individuals scores and won the whole contest
 - SJS 7th Graders had the Top 2 individual scores
- 8th Graders won Gold and Silver Awards at the 2015 Illinois State Science Expo

We Also Think You'll Appreciate...

- Progressive Technology Program, including iPads for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, laptop instruction for Grades 3 to 5, and 1:1 Take-Home Chromebooks for Middle School
- Interactive Smart boards, Mimios, projectors and document cameras in all K-8 classrooms
- Online Grade-book communicates grades, assignments, report cards, attendance, class schedules, school calendar, and email to/from teachers and staff. Parents can logon and check their child's progress anytime.
- Streamlined communications through "Monday Morning Messages," website and online calendar
- Spanish is taught in Grades K-8
- Endorsed Reading Specialist on staff for Grades K-5
- Social Worker available by appointment for K-8 students (and their parents, by request)
- Curriculum includes STEM activities

Award Winning Faculty



Rita Stasi, Principal of St. Joseph Preschool & School Awarded “2015 Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal”

“For her outstanding dedication to the education profession, Catholic ideals and school leadership,” Lewis University and the College of Education presented the 2015 Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal Award to Mrs. Rita Stasi on April 30, during a ceremony at Lewis University. Mrs. Stasi was chosen from over 60 Catholic school principals in the Diocese of Joliet, demonstrating the many facets of her strong leadership and faith-based approach.

“It is truly a team effort,” Rita stated when accepting her award. “The St. Joseph School community is formed of teachers and staff, and parents and students who care about academics, each other, and our long-term well-being. It’s because of everyone’s efforts that I am here today. Together, we’ve worked to achieve great things, and I accept this award on behalf of everyone at St. Joseph’s.”

Under Rita’s leadership, the school has thrived. Since 2007, Rita has established St. Joseph Preschool, implemented full-day Kindergarten, developed a Spanish language program for all grades, converted the library into a Learning Resource Center, and increased the length of the school day to provide extended instructional time. Rita hired a Reading Specialist for K-5 classes to assist students in becoming strategic readers, and also a Social Worker to support the needs of students and families. She has been a proponent of enhancing the school’s facilities and technology program. Not surprisingly, enrollment has climbed 7% since Rita’s arrival.

Academically, St. Joseph’s has maintained a strong performance, scoring in the top quartile nationally on standardized tests, winning local scholastic bowls and math contests, and earning alumni valedictorian honors and scholarships at local high schools. The school is also a place where Catholic values of service

and charity are as important as academic excellence. St. Joseph students live their faith by organizing prayer services for the ill, donating clothing and supplies to people in need, collecting food for the hungry, and cooking/serving meals to those without permanent housing. Choosing service over self-interest is a trademark of Rita Stasi, her staff and school families.

As part of the award nomination process, many gave powerful testimony to Rita’s extraordinary leadership. St. Joseph’s pastor, Fr. John Phan, shared, “Mrs. Stasi always puts others before herself.” The president of the St. Joseph School Board indicated, “Mrs. Stasi is the definition of ‘above and beyond.’ She is an extension of each and every family that belongs to our school.” A staff member wrote, “The students have tremendous respect for her. She sets the tone for compassionate and respectful interaction.”

A parent nominator affirmed, “My children have received a wonderful, faith-based education at St. Joe’s in large part due to Mrs. Stasi’s efforts. She shows remarkable focus on her 462 students, and a commitment to our faith in everything she does. She is a hard-working leader with a positive, ‘can-do’ approach. She exemplifies what it means to be a caring, supportive Catholic school principal.” And finally, from a Downers Grove Village Commissioner, “Mrs. Stasi has kept St. Joseph’s on the leading edge. Simply put, St. Joseph School is a staple of the Downers Grove community, and Rita Stasi is its engine.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should my child attend St. Joseph Preschool?

St. Joseph is a Catholic community that offers students a challenging academic education while building their love of God and commitment to improving the world. We educate the whole student – mind, body and spirit – and encourage each child to become the person God calls him or her to be. Ultimately, our goal is to prepare children for academic and personal success in a faith-filled, nurturing environment.

What is the greatest attribute of your school?

An award-winning school, St. Joseph nurtures spiritual growth, provides challenging intellectual opportunities and encourages each child to succeed.

Can you tell me the key benefits of your Pre-Kindergarten program?

According to our parents, the program's primary benefits include:

- Excellent curriculum and teachers
- Opportunity for parent interaction
- Seamless transition to Kindergarten
- Convenient curbside drop-off and pick-up service
- Balance between education and social interaction

Do you serve a snack?

Yes, snack time is an important part of our day. Each child takes a turn bringing in a snack for the class. We begin with prayer to give thanks to God. The snack helper assists in carrying the snack to each table. Snack is served family style, which means students learn to serve themselves and pass the snack to their friends. The children also pour their own water.

How do you handle discipline?

Most preschoolers are just beginning to learn how to interact with peers and other adults in a school setting...it's a learning process. We believe in modeling appropriate behavior and giving explanations as to what behavior we expect in school. As issues arise, we assist children in working out their conflicts using words. At times, it's helpful to redirect a child to another activity.

Is the Preschool secure?

Yes. The church doors are locked, as well as the downstairs door to the Preschool. Visitors must be buzzed in. The church elevator requires the use of an access code during school hours. When the school enhancement project is complete the Pre-K will move to the new classrooms in the school.

How does the teacher communicate with parents?

A weekly newsletter highlighting activities completed that week, as well as reminders for the following week. Additionally, a monthly calendar is sent home with the snack schedule and upcoming events listed. A Monday Morning Messenger email is sent to the entire school with helpful information, and occasionally classroom parents will send emails to the parents.

How can parents contact the teacher?

Parents may contact the teacher via email (kkuper@sjsdg.org or caldridge@sjsdg.org), telephone (630-969-4306 x2025), or in person.

What is the school's curriculum?

Religion, Language Arts, Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies, Motor Development, Art and Music, and Social.

What is included in Religious Education?

Catholic values are emphasized in all spiritual and educational activities, including a daily classroom prayer.



What is the maximum class size at St. Joseph?

There is a maximum class size of 20 Pre-K students per class. Since classes fill up quickly, you are encouraged to return your registration paperwork as soon as possible to ensure a place for your child.

When does registration begin for new school families?

Registration begins with the Preschool Open House in January, followed by the St. Joseph School Open House during Catholic Schools Week on the last Sunday of January. Registration continues until the classrooms are full.

Is there a waiting list?

Currently, there is not a waiting list, but Pre-K classes fill up quickly. Please return your registration materials as soon as possible.

What admission policies are followed at St. Joseph School?

The order of priority is as follows:

1. Siblings of current St. Joseph students
2. Children of St. Joseph parishioners
3. Children from other parishes whose parish does not have a Catholic school
4. Transfer students from other Catholic schools
5. Transfer students from public schools

Additionally, a child must be three years old by September 1 to enter the 3-Year Pre-K Program. A child who is four years old by September 1 is eligible to enter the 4-Year Pre-K Program.

Is there a registration fee?

There is a \$100 non-refundable registration fee required at the time of registration for the next school year. This fee is deducted from the following year's tuition.

Are other required fees in addition to tuition and registration fees?

You are expected to be an active contributor in Sunday stewardship through the parish. Families are also asked to participate in development initiatives that support our Second Century Fund – including events, raffles, Manna gift card purchases, sponsorships, etc. At your discretion, you may contribute to bi-annual collections for teachers' monetary gifts (Christmas and Year-End).

Is tuition assistance available?

Yes, please ask our principal for details about our Tuition Assistance program for qualifying families.

What is the school's daily schedule?

- 3 year olds: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30 am – 11:15 am
- 4 year olds: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 am – 11:15 am
- Kindergarten – 8th grade: 7:45 am - 2:20 pm

What are your parish boundaries?

There are no boundaries.

Other questions?

Please call us at 630-969-4306 or send an email to sjsoffice@sjsdg.org.

Preschool Application

Application for Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 Programs

Answers to the following questions will help our preschool teacher to be prepared at the beginning of your child's preschool experience. Please complete a separate form for each child.

I am interested in the ____ 3-year-old program ____ 4-year old program

I am interested in St. Joseph School's K-8 program following preschool ____ Yes ____ No

Name of child _____ Gender ____ Birth date _____

Names of parents (or Guardian) _____

If Guardian, what is your relationship to the child? _____

Address _____

Home Number _____ Cell Number _____

Email Address _____

Names and ages of siblings _____

Language spoken: ____ English ____ Other; please indicate: _____

Date of St. Joseph Parish Baptism: _____ (if baptized at other parish, please attach copy of baptism certificate)

1. For 4-year-olds, has the child had previous preschool or play class experience? ____ Yes ____ No
Where _____ Date _____ How Long _____

2. Are there persons other than parents and siblings living in the home? ____ Yes ____ No
Who? _____

3. Father's occupation _____ Mother's occupation _____

4. Has there been anything unusual in the home or the family situation such as divorce, family death, family illness, a recent move, etc.? _____

5. Which hand does your child show a preference? ____ Left ____ Right ____ Ambidextrous

6. What special interests does your child have? _____

7. Do you feel your child will need any special help in these areas? ____ Hearing ____ Vision ____ Speech

8. Has your child participated in the Downers Grove Public School Preschool Screening Program? ____ Yes ____ No

9. Is your child taking any medication? ____ Yes ____ No If yes, please describe: _____

10. Is your child under treatment for any special conditions? ____ Yes ____ No
If yes, please describe: _____

11. Has your child ever been hospitalized? ____ Yes ____ No
For what? _____ For how long? _____

12. Please indicate if you have concerns with:

- Elimination
- Allergies
- Frequent nosebleeds
- Hay fever
- Sinus
- Hyperactivity
- Asthma
- Other: _____

13. Are your child's playmates: Older Younger Same age

14. Do you read to your child daily? Yes No

15. Do you go on family outings? Yes No Where? _____

16. How does your child share in family responsibilities? _____

17. What regular TV programs does your child watch? _____

18. Approximate bedtime: _____

19. What have you found to be an effective means of discipline for your child? _____

20. Does your child:

- Put on coat and boots? Yes No
- Tie own shoe laces? Yes No
- Take care of toilet needs? Yes No

21. What is your child's attitude about starting school this year? _____

22. Is your child afraid of any of the following: Dark
 Being alone
 Strangers (nurses, etc.)
 Strange animals
 Making mistakes
 Other: _____

23. Would you be able to assist the Preschool teacher during the year? Yes No

If yes, please explain interests: _____

Diocese Information Form

Answers to the following questions are at the request of the Diocese.

School: St. Joseph School, 4832 Highland Avenue, Downers Grove, IL 60515 County: DuPage Parish ID#: _____

STUDENT INFORMATION

Date Baptized and Church _____

First Communion Date _____ Reconciliation Date _____ Confirmation Date _____

Name of Child (last, first, middle) _____ Sex ___ M ___ F

Entrance Date _____ Grade _____ Religion _____

Email Address _____

Former School _____ City, State _____

Birth date _____ Birthplace (city, state) _____

Address (address, city, state, zip) _____ Telephone _____

How many miles do you live from St. Joseph School? _____ What public school would you attend? _____

Home Situation (please circle situation that applies):

- 1) Living with both parents
- 2) Parents separated; living with mother
- 3) Parents separated; living with father
- 4) Father deceased; living with mother or mother/stepfather
- 5) Mother deceased; living with father or father/stepmother
- 6) Parents divorced; living with mother; father; mother/stepfather; father/stepmother
- 7) Living with guardians
- 8) Living with single mother/father

If 2 - 8 are circled, who has custodial rights? _____

FATHER, STEPFATHER, GUARDIAN (circle one) INFORMATION

Name (last, first, middle) _____

Religion _____ Parish _____

Home address (if different from student's) _____

Birthplace (city, state) _____ Education completed (circle) 12 13 14 15 BA MA Phd

Are you a St. Joseph alumni? ___ Yes ___ No Home Telephone _____ Work Telephone _____

Employer _____ Occupation _____ Title _____

MOTHER, STEPMOTHER, GUARDIAN (circle one) INFORMATION

Name (last, first, middle) _____

Religion _____ Parish _____

Home address (if different from student's) _____

Birthplace (city, state) _____ Education completed (circle) 12 13 14 15 BA MA Phd

Are you a St. Joseph alumni? ___ Yes ___ No Home Telephone _____ Work Telephone _____

Employer _____ Occupation _____ Title _____