Parent Guide to Your Child's Kindergarten Program

Christian Learner/Social Emotional Learner

Christian Learners/Social and Emotional Learners possess skills and attitudes that are the foundation of learning. Our thinking, approach and actions should show everyone we are Christians. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) assists students to gain and apply knowledge, attitudes and skills to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions. The tenets of Christian living and SEL competencies support the individual throughout life. Acting as Jesus would want us to act is the goal of everyone in our Catholic school community- teachers, parents, students, staff, principals and pastors. The skills learned through understanding, adopting and practicing social and emotional competencies and the values of our Christian faith will help ensure your children have a fulfilling life. So, welcome to our Catholic school. We are pleased to partner with you in the education of your children. We promise our prayer and support, and we ask for yours. We trust Jesus to bless the education we offer in His name.

Religion

The parents and family have always been recognized as the first teachers of their children in Faith. When they come to school, the teacher enters into partnership with the family. In Kindergarten the 4 areas of the Catholic Catechism are taught: Creed, Sacraments, Christian Living and Prayer.

A Sample of What Your Child Will be Working on in Kindergarten

- The story of creation and God the Father as the Creator
- God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Becoming a member of God's family in Baptism
- Learning proper behaviors and practices when attending Church and Mass
- Celebrating Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter
- Learning how to live as followers of Jesus and making good choices
- Learning and strengthening the basic prayers

English Language Arts & Literacy

Learning new language skills is a hallmark of kindergarten. Your child will learn about the alphabet and its role in reading. Your child will practice rhyming, matching words with beginning sounds, and blending sounds into words. Practice with these types of activities is a powerful step toward learning to read and spell correctly. The size of your child's vocabulary is another key factor in his or her ability to read and comprehend books and stories. Your child also will begin to experiment with writing and will be encouraged to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing letters to share information, ideas, and feelings.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Naming upper and lower-case letters, matching those letters with their sounds, and printing them
- Comparing the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories, such as fairy tales and folktales

- Retelling familiar stories and talking about stories read to them using details from the text
- Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to describe an event, including his or her reaction to what happened
- Stating an opinion or preference about a topic or book in writing (e.g., "My favorite book is . . .")
- Taking part in classroom conversations and following rules for discussions (e.g., learning to listen to others and taking turns when speaking)
- Speaking clearly to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas, including descriptions of familiar people, places, things, and events
- Asking and answering questions about key details in stories or other information read aloud
- Understanding and using question words (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how) in discussions
- Learning to recognize, spell, and properly use those little grammatical words that hold the language together (e.g., a, the, to, of, from, I, is, are)

Mathematics

Young children arrive in kindergarten with widely varying knowledge in math. By the end of the year, your child must have some important foundations in place. One of the most important skills your child should develop is the ability to add and subtract small numbers and use addition and subtraction to solve word problems. This will rely on gaining some fundamentals early in the year, such as counting objects to tell how many there are. Addition and subtraction will continue to be a very strong focus in math through second grade.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Counting objects to tell how many there are
- Comparing two groups of objects to tell which group, if either, has more; comparing two written numbers to tell which is greater
- Acting out addition and subtraction word problems and drawing diagrams to represent them
- Adding with a sum of 10 or less; subtracting from a number 10 or less; and solving addition and subtraction word problems
- Adding and subtracting very small numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., 3 + 1)
- Correctly naming shapes regardless of orientation or size (e.g., a square oriented as a "diamond" is still a square)

Science

Your child in kindergarten is filled with wonder and awe as they discover and interact with their world. They will be encouraged to ask questions, investigate possibilities and solutions. A simplified introduction to the scientific method will be part of their science experiences. As they investigate, they will be encouraged to use their powers of observation to see patterns, likes and differences as well as simple cycles of nature. The program is designed to be hands on and experiential. Thus, they will also begin to use the tools of science such as thermometers, magnifying glasses, magnets, etc.

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A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Observations about weather and climate while observing types of precipitation and changes in the seasons.
- Talk about different forms of severe weather and the people who are community helpers during times of severe weather
- Investigate the interactions of pushes and pulls and observe what happens in these interactions
- Observing plants and animals, including humans and how they live and meet their basic needs for food, air and water

Social Studies

Learning about themselves and their immediate world is the kindergarten program. As they interact more and more with groups and environments outside the home, they are gradually learning to navigate those groups. In this context, they will be given the opportunity to gather and interpret new information, begin to experience some sense of past, present and future as well as look at factors that influence them and their families such as where they live, the jobs and stores in their community, and service and civic agencies.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Investigate their world from the focus of home and family to who lives in their neighborhood
- Experience their neighborhood and how it fits into their town or community
- Identify jobs and services in their town and community
- Discovering something of how their town or community was in the past
- Talking about traditions of their family and community

Physical Education

The skill development in the Kindergarten physical education program is integral to your child's success in the areas of English/Language Arts and math in particular. As the child develops his or her motor skills and coordination, the pathways of the brain are imprinted and formed for patterning which is integral to ELA and math. The Kindergarten program emphasizes motor skills, movement, and space recognition. Personal and social behavior focusing on respect of self and others is a strong component and building block for team activities in the future.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Practicing hopping, skipping, jumping and running
- Performing and controlling movements of the body in different directions and positions
- Engaging in the movement of balls and the coordination of that movement with hand and foot
- Participating in activities that recognize personal space and general space

- Follow instructions and general rules especially in group activity

Music

The Music program for your Kindergarten child is focused around creating music, presenting music, responding to music and connecting music with everyday life. Music has long been seen along with religion and art as ways to take learning and life experiences and synthesize and integrate them and then perform the task of making meaning of life experiences.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Learning about and identifying music beat and directional movement
- Experiencing different types of music and identify which genres appeal to him or her
- Responding to music through song and dance
- Learning to perform music for an audience

Art

The Art program for Kindergarten is focused around the same core areas as the music program but in relation to the visual arts.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Exploring and experiencing a variety of art media and different types of making art
- Learning how to present their art with the beginnings of balance and spacing
- Selecting different types of art that they like and begin to learn to identify what appeals to them
- Observe some of the paintings of the great artists
- Identify the purpose for artwork, their own or someone else's