

"Back to School Night"

August 24, 2010

Kindergarten

Dear Kindergarten Parents:

Welcome to Kindergarten at Nativity School! During the year, we will be experiencing many new and exciting things and your child will learn essential skills necessary to successfully progress throughout his/her many school years. Kindergarten is one of the first stepping stones in your child's education. It is at this level that the groundwork is laid and the foundation is established religiously, academically and socially. I look forward to a successful year in teaching your child.

- I. Introduction
 - A. Prayer
 - B. Introduction of Mrs. Trelut
 - C. Poem "All I Ever Really Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten" by Robert Fulghum
 - D. Mrs. O'Hare
 - E. Mrs. Foster
 - F. Kindergarten Parents

- II. Our Classroom
 - A. Exploration & Creativity
 - B. Curriculum
 1. **Religion:** "Blest are We," by Silver Burdett and Ginn Publishing. We will introduce the wonders of God's creation and discover our uniqueness and that in others. Human experiences are stressed to encourage the development of and appreciation for Catholic religion. The children will explore and discover their faith.
 2. **Reading and Language Development:** Houghton Mifflin. The children will be taught a phonetic approach to reading with decoding skills taught to give each child reading independence as early as possible. Penmanship compliments the entire process. Through reading, writing and speaking we will integrate the children's thought and ideas in topics such as: Look at Us! Colors All Around, We're a Family, Friends Together, Let's Count, Sunshine and Raindrops, Wheels Go Around, Down on the Farm, Spring is Here and A World of Animals
 3. **Handwriting:** "Bowmar/Noble Handwriting," by Macmillan/McGraw-Hill School. We will be working on holding of pencil (correct), posture and formation of letters.
 4. **Mathematics:** "Progress in Mathematics," by Sadlier-Oxford. The main objective of this mathematics program is to teach children the basic relationships and simple classifying skills needed in daily activities to instill interest, confidence and understanding. Informal, active and multi-sensory activities will be provided to encourage mastery of the following

important concepts: Classifying, sorting, ordinal position, spatial relations, comparison, quantity, graphing, basic addition and subtraction.

5. **Science:** "Discovery Works," by Scott Foresman. We will be doing hands-on units covering the Human body, Life Science, Earth Science, and Physical Science. Science will be presented weekly and will stimulate interest in the world around us.
6. **Social Studies:** "My World," by Houghton Mifflin Publishing. The children will be introduced to the world and community around them through discussions, presentations and field trips.
7. **Enrichment Courses:** Spanish, Physical Education, Music & Computers are offered twice a week by a teacher knowledgeable in each area.
8. **Special Studies:** Art in Action is offered twice a month. It is taught by a parent with other parent volunteers. Cooking will be offered twice a month. Library is once a week and aided by parent volunteers.

C. Daily Schedule (subject to change)

8:00 School Begins – Morning Prayer, Pledge, Attendance, Announcements, Calendar
8:15-8:45 Religion
8:45-9:00 Handwriting
9:00-10:00 Group 1 – Core Instruction (Reading/Language Arts and Math)
10:00-10:20 Snack and Recess
10:20-10:50 Music/Spanish
10:50-11:00 Review/Open Discussions
11:00-12:00 Group 2 - Core Instruction (Reading/Language Arts and Math)
12:10-1:10 Lunch and Recess
1:10-1:50 Clean-up and Rest
1:50-2:45 Social Studies, Science, Writing, Art, Story Time, Free Time...
2:45-3:00 Pack up and Dismissal

- ❖ Computers are on Wednesday/Thursday during Group Sessions
- ❖ Music is on Tuesday and Thursday mornings 10:20-10:50
- ❖ Art in Action on Friday afternoons
- ❖ P.E. and Spanish are on Wednesday and Friday mornings

D. Homework

1. Packet goes home on the 1st day of each week, and is due Friday. Homework will include a Reading Log, Language Development, Math, Writing & Religion, etc., depending upon the studies for the week. Reading to or with your child each night is required. Book Bags are supplied for your convenience. If Book Bags are not sent home for the week, use books from home/public library.

2. Time- Homework is assigned according to the number of nights in the week. Organize your time to spending one night per page of homework. This will allow your child to practice doing work regularly without feeling rushed. Also, this gives you some quality time with your child after a long and busy day.
3. Tips-
 - a. Have your child review the homework and "explain" it to you.
 - b. Read the directions out loud.
 - c. Monitor his/her work.
 - d. Review together.
 - e. Make it a positive experience.

III. Communication

A. Teacher and Parent Communication

1. Teacher Newsletter – It will come home monthly or more as needed. It will come home with the homework packet and give you information about the happenings of Kindergarten
2. Memos/Notes
3. Discipline Cards (Weekly on Friday)
4. Deficiency Notices
5. Report Cards
6. Blue Slips, Pink Slips, White Slips
7. Email sfoster@nativityschool.com
8. School and Classroom website: <http://www.nativityschool.com>
9. Scheduled Parent/Teacher meetings.

B. Nativity School Website - Principal's weekly letter, important forms...

C. Classroom Management

The program I have set up to manage classroom behavior is based on an assertive discipline approach. Assertive discipline stresses the positive, rather than the negative. It stresses "how to behave correctly, appropriately," rather than "how not to behave."

Some principles:

- ❖ Positive reinforcement: teacher praise, small rewards. The child will find self gratification for behaving appropriately.
- ❖ Warning system for inappropriate behavior: verbal warning, name on board, checks after name, limited verbal expression from the teacher.
- ❖ Consequences understood by the child so that the choice of behaving appropriately or not is the child's not the teacher's.

Good behavior will be acknowledged. On Friday, children who have had a good week will be rewarded with game time, a special treat, sticker, going to the prize basket...

Birthdays

Birthdays are very important and are a special day to honor your child. We will celebrate your child's birthday in class by singing, wearing a birthday crown and getting 5 or 6 birthday hugs from the teacher (and maybe a little pinch to grow an inch). If your child's birthday is during the summer, the parent and teacher will coordinate a special day to celebrate. Parents may bring in special treats to help celebrate. Please contact the teacher a few days prior so that plans can be made.

Parent Sign-up Sheets

I would love to see you in the classroom. I will have the finalized Academic Schedule to give out the first week of school. If you are interested in volunteering, you can look at the schedule and let me know when you would like to come in. There are plenty of things to sign up for. Please support your room moms.

- ❖ Scholastic Book Orders
- ❖ Book Bag Program
- ❖ Yard Duty Coordinator
- ❖ Cooking Club Coordinator
- ❖ Classroom Preparation
- ❖ Field Trip Chaperoning
- ❖ Holiday/Party Planning
- ❖ Art in Action helpers
- ❖ Library
- ❖ Computers

In Closing

I'm sure there will be many other areas to cover during the course of the school year. Please feel free to bring up concerns and questions to me. I look forward to keeping close contact with the parents of my students. Please feel free to call me at school (325-7304) and or email sfoster@nativityschool.com.

Again, I look forward to a terrific year. And most of all, please don't worry about your child, I will take excellent care of him/her.

Sincerely,

Susan Foster

ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN

All I really need to know about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain, but there in the sand pile at school.

These are the things I learned:

- Share everything.
- Play fair.
- Don't hit people.
- Put things back where you found them.
- Clean up your own mess.
- Don't take things that aren't yours.
- Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.
- Wash your hands before you eat.
- Flush.
- Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.
- Live a balanced life - learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.
- Take a nap every afternoon.
- When you go out in the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands and stick together.
- Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup: the roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.
- Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the Styrofoam cup - they all die. So do we.
- And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first word you learned - the biggest word of all - LOOK.

Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and equality and sane living.

Take any one of those items and extrapolate it into sophisticated adult terms and apply it to your family life or your work or government or your world and it holds true and clear and firm. Think what a better world it would be if we all - the whole world - had cookies and milk at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon and then lay down with our blankies for a nap. Or if all governments had as a basic policy to always put things back where they found them and to clean up their own mess.

And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out in the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.

[Source: "ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN" by Robert Fulghum. See his web site at <http://www.robertfulghum.com/>]

You say you love your children,
And are concerned they learn today?
So am I; that's why I'm providing
A variety of kinds of play.

You're asking me the value
Of blocks and other such play?
Your children are solving problems.
They will use that skill everyday.

You're asking what's the value
Of having your children play?
Your daughter's creating a tower.
She may be a builder someday.

You're saying you don't want your son
To play in that "sissy" way?
He's learning to cuddle a doll.
He may be a father someday.

You're questioning the learning centers;
They just look like useless play?
Your children are making choices;
They'll be on their own someday.

You're worried your children aren't learning,
and later they'll pay?
They're learning a pattern for learning,
For they will be learners always.

---Leila P. Fagg---

The Child Who Is Ready to Read Is...

Author unknown

a child who listens

*to directions without interrupting

*to stories and poems for five or ten minutes without restlessness

a child who hears

*words that rhyme

*words that begin with the same sound, or different sounds.

a child who sees

*likenesses and differences in pictures and designs.

*letters and words that match.

a child who speaks and can

*stay on the topic in class discussions.

*retell a story or poem in correct sequence.

*tell a story or relate an experience of his/her own.

a child who thinks and can

*give the main ideas of a story.

*give unique ideas and important details.

*give reasons for his/her opinions.

a child who understands

*the relationship inherent in such words as Up and Down, Top and Bottom, Little and Big.

*the classification of words that represent people, places and things.

a child who experiences

*everyday activities and events commonplace for his/her peer group.

*loving concern from adults around him/her.

a child who adjusts

*to changes in routine and to new situations without becoming fearful.

*to opposition or defeat without crying or sulking.

*to the necessity of asking for help when needed.

a child who plays

*cooperatively with other children.

*and shares, takes turns, and assumes his/her share of group responsibilities.

*and can run, jump, skip, and bounce a ball with comparative dexterity.

*and has adequate eye-hand coordination.

a child who works

*without being easily distracted.

*and follows directions.

*and completes each task.

*and takes pride in his/her work.

a child who feels

*good about himself/herself and his/her contributions to his/her group.