

CURRICULUM

RELIGION

Our program is based on the Blest Are We (Silver Burdett Ginn,) series. Some of the major concepts include, God's gifts of the world, God's gift of people, Jesus, Loving others and celebrations for holy days and special days. We foster recognition of God in the child's everyday life, using simple terms, Bible stories, daily prayer, opportunities to attend Mass, and classroom prayer celebrations. We try to incorporate a Catholic identity element throughout our curriculum.

MOTOR SKILLS

Large and small motor activities are the keystones of our curriculum. Muscle development takes place through play, rhythmic, games, exercise, and the use of manipulatives. It is through these means that children learn to coordinate their body movements with skill. Motor activities are integrated within all other subject areas as well.

Large muscles develop when children have plenty of space and opportunity to jump, roll, push, drag, squeeze, crawl, catch, throw, and climb. We try to get the children out on the playground for at least 10 minutes everyday throughout the year.

The children participate in a separate P.E. / Swim program that alternates once a week. Certified P.E. and swimming instructors lead these classes.

Small muscles develop as children learn to manipulate puzzle pieces, blocks, and other small materials, as well as painting, coloring, cutting, and printing.

SCIENCE/ SOCIAL STUDIES/ HEALTH

These subjects are integrated with the other curriculum areas. Our methods include hands on activities, exploration, discovery, experimentation, observation, hypothesizing, graphing, stories, and more. We meet with our 5th or 6th grade students, our science buddies, to explore science.

Some of our units include, but are not limited to seasons, plants, insects, and our bodies. Keep in mind that themes may change a bit from year to year, depending on the group dynamics or teacher preferences.

Social Studies mainly centers around the various holidays of the year as well as our community and our friends.

FINE ARTS

Art and music give children the opportunity to use their imaginations and express themselves in both verbal and non-verbal ways.

The children experience music in the classroom and receive formal instruction with the Music teacher every other week.

Children experiment in the graphic arts, within the kindergarten classroom, using crayons, markers, paints, cutting folding, gluing, clay, and more. The children receive formal instruction with the Art teacher every other week. In addition, the Parent Organization sponsors wonderful fine arts performances throughout the school year.

LANGUAGE AND READING READINESS

This area includes listening, speaking, interacting, expressing, writing, and pre-reading skills.

The foundation of communication skills begins long before children come to school. Our program opens doors for children to actively participate in an environment where they can expand skills basic to all learning.

We incorporate elements from three different programs to help the children develop the skills that they will need to be successful readers. The Harcourt Story Town series is a broad program rich in literature, phonemic awareness, phonics, word recognition, comprehension skills, and writing. The Reading Readiness program by Suzanne Carreker of the Neuhaus Education Center is a multi-sensory approach based on the importance of phonological awareness and letter recognition in the acquisition of reading and spelling skills. Michael Heggerty's Phonemic Awareness activities are strictly auditory. The daily reinforcement of rhyming, initial sounds, ending sounds, and word play serve as a solid preparation for reading success. In addition, the children experiment with the writing process, moving from picture writing to composing simple sentences by incorporating phonetic spelling.

Assessment of children's progress occurs through individual oral interviews, written samples and through the **Diagnostic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills, (DIBELS)**. The assessments enable us to evaluate children's progress on skills practiced and to provide additional activities if necessary.

MATH

Mathematical experiences at the early childhood level help to develop children's abilities to observe and explore the world around them and record and describe what they see.

We use the Harcourt K program. During the year, children will participate in a wide variety of mathematical activities. Children will learn through hands on experiences, discussion, and exploration.

There are two parts to the math program. The first part is the Daily Meeting and the second part is the lesson that occurs at least three times a week and is done in small groups.

During the Meeting, the children answer questions and participate in discussions about the calendar. They identify the month, year, date, day of the week, and count the days we have been in school. They identify patterns and write numbers.

New concepts and skills are introduced and practiced during the formal group lesson. Children have an opportunity to practice and extend these new skills independently at school and through homework activities.

Concepts and skills that we work on include: sorting and classifying, recognizing and building patterns, “more than”, “fewer than”, numbers to 31, solid figures and plane shapes, counting by 5’s, 10’s, and 2’s, some money counting, telling time to the hour, graphing and reading graphs, and simple addition and subtraction.

Regular assessments are built into the program. The assessments enable us to evaluate children’s progress on skills practiced and to provide additional activities if necessary.