

SAINT PETER TRI-PARISH SCHOOL

Preschool Program

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Preschool Philosophy

The preschool program at St. Peter Tri-Parish School was established in 1980 to provide young children with a nurturing environment where they can develop spiritual, physical, social, emotional and cognitive skills as they discover the world around them and the gift of their own uniqueness.

Through the use of a hands on approach, we are dedicated to making our children's first school experience a positive one. Based in the belief that children learn best through concrete experiences, we pride ourselves in providing our children with direct interactions to instill a love in the process of acquiring knowledge. Research has proven that this goal is best accomplished through "play". Children's play is their "work".

Therefore, learning experiences are presented within a center-based atmosphere to help stimulate their natural curiosity, explore their interests and encourage a sense of independence. Centers facilitate and encourage children's growth through the use of manipulative toys, puzzles, games and books used to support exercise in counting, measuring, patterning and sequencing, estimating, while also encouraging letter recognition, language development and social interactions amongst their peers.

Our aim is to challenge our children to reach their individual potential, discover their talent and excite their interest within the framework of the Reggio Emilia emergent curriculum. Highlighting the use of the environment as a "second teacher", our educators listen to the children to establish an educational surrounding used to engage the children's senses. A project approach is used to present in depth studies of different concepts triggered by the children's interests and incorporate family involvement.

The greatest emphasis in our preschool program is placed on establishing a positive spiritual attitude toward developing appropriate social skills, which in turn enhance children's educational development and learning.

Our Preschool Program Goals:

- ◆ To provide a caring nurturing environment that fosters self-confidence, independence, a sense of community and a feeling of security.
- ◆ To help children develop a love of Jesus and knowledge of the presence of God in their lives.
- ◆ To provide healthy Catholic values to promote a spirit of sharing through a cooperative relationship with our preschool families.
- ◆ To help children construct knowledge of the world around them within a theme using hands on experiences through play centers and project approach.
- ◆ To provide interactive instructional play activities.
- ◆ To encourage physical, social, emotional, linguistic and cognitive growth within the framework of an integrated developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- ◆ To help children learn to get along and respect the rights and feelings of themselves and others.
- ◆ To stimulate creativity through the use of art and music.
- ◆ To inspire creative thought and a love for learning.
- ◆ To encourage foundational phonics with letter recognition, formation and sounds.
- ◆ To assist beginning mathematical skills and concepts such as counting, sorting, sizing and patterning.
- ◆ To encourage logical thinking and listening skills.
- ◆ To promote beginning science concepts.
- ◆ To strengthen fine and gross motor skill development.
- ◆ To promote role-playing and communication skills.
- ◆ To develop good work habits along with literacy and communication skills through the use of achievable goals, to prepare each child for future learning.

Spiritual Development

At St. Peter School, young children begin their journey into learning about their rich Roman Catholic heritage in our preschool program. Through daily prayer, play, and activity, we instill in children that through their faith they will come to know Jesus on a personal level. Through Bible stories and activities, they learn about the wonderful God who made and loves them. Through prayer experiences, worship and liturgy they learn to praise God, express thanksgiving, and experience a faith community.

Physical Development

Young children acquire a sense of their physical being through movement. Through physical activity in play and physical education class the children gain greater self-control of their body and muscles, as well as develop gross and fine motor skills.

Social and Emotional Development

At St. Peter School our preschool children are afforded daily opportunities to enhance and develop their social skills, such as helping, sharing, cooperating and communicating within a nurturing, center-based classroom which fosters a respect for self and acceptance of others' differences.

Cognitive Development

The preschool program at St. Peter School is organized to provide children with positive, meaningful experiences as they are introduced to basic academic skills. Acquiring and applying the necessary cognitive skills at a preschool age establishes the foundation in which a child is able to learn and grow at his/her own pace.

Faith Formation

At St. Peter Preschool we use the Faith-Development Program, ***Discovering God's World***, which introduces the children to the Catholic faith through information, formation, instruction, and participation. Our program helps each child develop a personal relationship with God through the use of the following themes within the Liturgical year:

Fall -- God's Gift of People

- God gives us our friends
- Everyone is special
- Everyone can give and receive help
- God gives us a family to love and care for us
- The Sign of the Cross is a sign of God's love

Winter -- God's Gift of Our World

- We use God's gifts to grow good things
- We help care for God's creation
- We appreciate what animals do for us
- We celebrate God's gift of light
- We celebrate the birth of Jesus, God's only Son
- We read in the Bible about God's love for us

Spring -- God's Gift of Ourselves

- God's gift of ourselves
- We use God's gift of our imaginations
- God made us to grow and change
- We celebrate God's love on Valentine's Day
- We celebrate Jesus' new life on Easter

Growing as God's Family

- We are so happy to belong to the Catholic Church
- We can pray to God anywhere, any time
- We celebrate Jesus and the new life he gives us
- We are special gifts of God

Math Readiness

A developmental approach is taken while meeting the needs of each child. Activities provide for a fun, hands-on experience. The following pre-math concepts are presented and explored by children in centers, large/small groups and individually:

Number Concepts

- Identifies shapes
- Reproduces shapes
- Classifies objects
- Counts by rote to 20
- Counts using one-to-one correspondence
- Creates and compares sets
- Estimates
- Recognizes and identifies numerals 1-10
- Prints numerals
- Recognizes number/object pattern
- Assembles a seven piece puzzle
- Identifies parts of a calendar

Measurement

- Explains distance using terms such as near and far
- Recognizes the concept of time
- Recognizes tools of measurement
- Aware of size and size order

Number Value

- Classifies objects into groups
- Recognizes more/less
- Understand the concept of whole and part

Language Arts Readiness

At the preschool level children are encouraged to develop expressive and receptive language skills. Meaningful, age-appropriate activities and experiences assist in this development. The following concepts are investigated:

Visual Recognition

- Recognizes first name in print
- Left-to-right progression
- Recites address
- Identifies some letter sounds
- Differentiates between upper and lower case letters
- Identifies most upper and lower case letters

Auditory Recognition

- Associates some letter sounds with appropriate letters
- Recognizes rhyming words
- Attends to stories

Comprehension

- Predicts outcomes
- Understands sequential order
- Identifies the main idea of a story

Literary Genres

- Exposure to fiction, non-fiction, plays, poetry, rhymes and tales

Literature Appreciation

- Recognizes the basic parts of a book
- Understands who an author is and what an illustrator does

Oral Expression

- Emulates language through puppets, role playing and music
- Expresses language through story telling

Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills are developed through coloring, cutting, tracing and pasting. Fine motor skills are also exercised through the use of lacing, play dough activities, finger plays and learning the manual and/or sign language alphabet.

Science

In early childhood students are naturally interested in everything around them. Their curiosity leads them to observe, collect and record information about the world around them---the earth, their surroundings and the visible objects in the sky. Therefore, as teachers we encourage our children's observations. As our young children bring these experiences and interests to school, teachers facilitate them and focus their explorations. In the process they learn to work with such tools as magnifiers and measuring devices to learn about such themes as:

Earth Science

- Weather
- The Four Seasons
- Earth surfaces...water, rocks, and soil
- Sun as a source of light and heat

Life Science

- Health and Nutrition
- Living things and the need for food, air and water
- Hygiene
- The 5 Senses
- Animals and Pets

Physical Science

- Energy..various ways objects move through space
- States of matter...solid, liquid or gas

Social Studies

In early childhood, learning in the area of social studies is built around the children's experiences with family, school, community, state and country. Picture books are read, stories are told and songs are used to learn about

the basic components of social awareness throughout the course of the year. Children learn about people and events celebrated within our nation by listening to stories in an effort to learn why we celebrate certain holidays along with other cultural events with the school population. Children also become familiar with our national symbols to help them develop a sense of civic identity. Through social events and planned activities the children strengthen their understanding and appreciation of God's creation and develop a sense of respect for diversity and differences of those around them.

Please Note: The above documentation is presented in accordance with guidelines presented by the State of Rhode Island Early Learning Standards. The goals will be exercised through developmentally appropriate practice in agreement with age-appropriate experiences.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

RELIGION

- *Practice of Christian virtues-patience, love, trust and kindness
- *Daily prayers, stories and songs

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

- *Vocabulary Enrichment
- *Rhythm and Rhyme
- *Story Telling
- *Listening Skills
- *Speaking Skills

READING READINESS SKILLS

- *Visual Discrimination
- *Color, Letter, Shape and Number Recognition
- *Sequencing
- *Left to Right Progression
- *Fine/Gross Motor Skills

THINKING SKILLS

- *Following Directions
- *Creativity/Imagination
- *Logical Thinking
- *Making Good Choices

SCIENCE

- *Classifying
- *Comparing/Contrasting
- *Tactile Discrimination
- *Predicting
- *Sorting

EARLY MATH

- *Spatial Relations
- *Measuring
- *Graphing
- *Counting
- *Shape Recognition
- *Number Recognition