

Early Childhood Curriculum: PreSchool

The preschool curriculum at Holy Family Catholic School embodies several developmentally appropriate components of early childhood instruction to foster the academic, social, physical and emotional growth of the children. They include, but are not limited to, *literacy, mathematics, the arts, science, social studies, playtime, physical education and technology.*

Religion

Religion is an integral part of the preschool experience at Holy Family Catholic School. We strive to build faith and values throughout the school day while the children are learning, working and playing.

We use Loyola Press God Made Me and God Made the World Early Childhood programs to engage the students and to help build their faith. It is a Christ-centered and age-appropriate program with lessons that feature Scripture passages, music, crafts, prayer, role-play and more. This program uses a multisensory approach in order that the children gain the building blocks for a lifetime of Catholic Faith.

The students have the opportunity to pray throughout the day and to attend and participate in special preschool prayer services.

Literacy

Vocabulary and Language

Children will experience language and vocabulary acquisition through songs, stories, poems, rhymes, fingerplays, movement activities, show & tell, color identification, and read-alouds.

Phonological Awareness

This component of literacy is hearing and understanding the different sounds of the spoken language. The students will be exposed to phonemic awareness skills by engaging in language play such as, playing with rhymes, noticing how words begin with the same sound, and clapping out individual words or syllables of a song, rhyme, poem or chant.

Print Concepts

Print awareness is the knowledge of connecting print with meaning. The children will learn that print carries a message, that it follows conventions (left to right directionality, uppercase/lowercase letters, spacing, punctuation, etc.) and that books have common characteristics (front cover, back cover, author, illustrator).

Letters and Words

The children will gain an understanding that a letter is a symbol representing one or more sounds and that these symbols can be grouped together to form words. We will focus on naming and recognizing both uppercase and lowercase letters, demonstrating an awareness of relationship between sounds and letters, writing our letters and names and introducing the students to journal writing.

Comprehension

We will work on understanding the meaning of both spoken and written languages by asking open-ended questions during a story and by helping children make connections to prior experiences during a lesson.

Understanding Books and Other Texts

The students will be introduced to storybook concepts such as a beginning, middle and end, a setting, characters, a sequence of events, recalling details, etc. as well as book handling skills.

Literacy as a Source of Enjoyment

We strive for the children to be motivated learners and to develop an interest in reading activities. Our goal is for the children to have a love of reading and to become lifelong readers.

Mathematics

Math activities will encompass the use of a variety of manipulatives to accommodate our hands-on learning approach! Many of the skills will be taught and reinforced during our daily Calendar Time lesson each morning.

Number Concepts

The children will practice counting 1-20, counting to tell the number of objects, comparing numbers, number symbols (naming numerals) and number writing.

Patterns

The students will work on recognizing, copying, creating and extending simple patterns.

Geometry and Spatial Sense

We will focus on identifying and describing basic shapes (flat and 3-dimensional) and learning about location and position (on, off, on top of, under, in, out, behind, below), movement (backward, forward, around, through, across, up, down) and distance (near, far, next to).

Measurement

We will be developing an understanding of the principles and uses of measurement by describing and comparing measurable attributes. The children will learn concepts such as longer, shorter, heavier, lighter, empty, and full. They will also use non-standard units (unifix cubes, paper clips, etc.) to measure an object.

Data Collection, Organization and Representation

In preschool, this involves analyzing, comparing and sorting objects.

Addition and Subtraction

The students will demonstrate an understanding of addition and subtraction by using objects, fingers and responding to practical situations.

The Arts

The children will be exposed to a wide variety of experiences in the arts throughout the day including movement/dance, singing and playing musical instruments, role-playing and dramatic play, fingerplays and poetry, and painting, drawing, coloring, and creating using a variety of media. They will benefit from the opportunities to work with different kinds of paint and paper, draw with crayons, markers and chalk, put together things with glue, cut with scissors and mold with playdough.

Science

Preschool children learn science by exploring the world around them. The students will experiment and discover their surroundings in the area of plants, animals, health, weather, and the Earth.

Social Studies

The components of social studies for our preschool curriculum include families, friends, community helpers, neighborhoods, the environment, citizenship, people from our past, and holidays/celebrations.

Playtime

Playtime is an important part of the preschool day. Research suggests that children learn a great deal through play. The children will have many opportunities to participate in a variety of playtime activities such as dramatic play, constructive play, organized play, and games with rules.

Physical Education

The children will develop their fine and gross motor skills in the school gymnasium during gym class as well as during outdoor recess (weather permitting). These skills include throwing, catching, running, jumping, skipping, etc.

Technology

The students will attend computer class in our computer lab once a week. They will also listen to music on our CD player and watch movies and educational programming on our DVD/VCR player in the classroom. The children have the opportunity to use both the SMART Board and iPads in preschool.

The Whole Child

Lastly, a complete preschool experience revolves around developing the skills of the whole child. It is our goal that the children grow not only academically, but spiritually, socially, emotionally and physically. We will instruct the children in Christian values, social skills and manners, independence, and in the structure and routine of school. It is our quest to build a foundation for the children to become not only life-long learners but loving and caring individuals.