

Our Kindergarten Mission:

Kindergarten is a year of emotional, intellectual, spiritual and social growth and development. Students begin to accept responsibility and accountability for their actions and choices. A bridge from free exploration to a more guided exploration and hands on learning experience is constructed. Kindergarteners use prior knowledge of phonemic awareness skills in order to progress into basic phonics skills. These phonics skills enable the learners to build a basic foundation for becoming proficient, independent readers and writers. Through observation, inquiry, and questioning kindergarteners will begin to develop higher order thinking skills crucial to their future academic growth. While the curriculum is academic based it is full of adventure, excitement and educational fun!

Art: The Visual Art Program at Saint John Vianney aims to inspire, challenge, and empower each student through exposure to the arts. It is our goal that students will become life-long learners, appreciators, and supporters of the Fine Arts.

Art creation is the foundation of our program. Students are expected to take pride in their work while developing their craft with patience and perseverance. The curriculum addresses both historical and contemporary practices, exposing students to a wide variety of media, techniques, and processes in two and three dimensional design. Students are taught how to evaluate and analyze art, thus, gaining an appreciation for a wide range of styles, movements, cultures, and historical works of art. Students learn concepts and vocabulary associated with the visual arts, as they are expected to communicate these ideas in visual, oral, and sometimes written form.

The range of art projects is as varied and diverse as the unique individuals that create them. The Visual Arts Program supports all subject areas and incorporates cross curricular instruction as much as possible. From mathematics to religion, the arts span all disciplines and require higher order thinking skills, creative problem solving, self assessment, expression, and awareness. The art curriculum is derived from Diocesan Standards and strives to remain current with state, national and global trends in art education.

GRADES K-4 CONTENT AND ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS:

Content Standard #1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
Achievement Standard: 1. Students know the differences between materials, techniques, and processes. 2. Students describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses. 3. Students use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories. 4. Students use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner

Content Standard #2: Using knowledge of structures and functions: *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students know the differences among visual characteristics and purposes of art in order to convey ideas. 2. Students describe how different expressive features and

organizational principles cause different responses. 3. Students use visual structures and functions of art to communicate ideas

Content Standard #3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas: *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students explore and understand prospective content for works of art. 2. Students select and use subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning

Content Standard #4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationships to various cultures. 2. Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places. 3. Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art

Content Standard #5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others: *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students understand there are various purposes for creating works of visual art. 2. Students describe how people's experiences influence the development of specific artworks. 3. Students understand there are different responses to specific artworks

Content Standard #6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines *Achievement Standard:* 1. Students understand and use similarities and differences between characteristics of the visual arts and other arts disciplines. 2. Students identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum

Foreign Language: The foreign language program in Kindergarten is designed to allow our students to experience other cultures through literature, music, art, dance, and other entertainment. Students learn and recite proverbs, short poems, songs, prayers and anecdotes, to identify people and objects from oral and written descriptions, to use appropriate gestures and oral expressions for greetings, leave-takings, and common classroom interactions. Our students are introduced to and participate in age-appropriate cultural activities including games, Catholic Spanish customs, and traditional Spanish celebrations. They begin to recognize and identify people, Spanish saints and objects from oral and written descriptions and use this information in other school subjects.

Language Arts: The language arts program encompasses listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills necessary for future proficiency in these disciplines. Phonological awareness, letter recognition, vocabulary development, and listening comprehension are explicitly and consistently developed throughout the year.

During the course of the year speaking skills are strengthened through work with singing, rhyming, sharing experiences and ideas, and conversing with peers and adults. Our Kindergarten students recite from memory, tell simple stories, and participate in group discussions. Listening skills are strengthened by following oral directions, hearing stories and songs on a daily basis, by discriminating sounds, and then answering orally to

specific questions about a lesson demonstrating basic comprehension skills. Reading skills continue to develop letter recognition, common word recognition, syllable identification, blending and segmenting of sounds, producing rhyming words and organizing events in sequential order. Students will begin to develop age-appropriate strategies that will assist them in reading, such as meanings of words, identification of vowels and consonants, the use of picture clues and background knowledge to get the meaning of the text, and discern the main idea of a story. Every child will observe and participate in a variety of writing activities focused on meaningful words and print in their environment to include letters, numbers, and high-frequency words. They will continue to reinforce age-appropriate writing skills such as writing their first name and their last name using only one capital letter at the beginning of each, all upper and lower case letters of the alphabet, numbers, and simple words, reproducing patterns with 3 dimensional objects by using a 2 dimensional paper model, and developing awareness of relationships of parts and wholes using more abstract figures and discriminating likeness and differences in symbols, white shapes, figures, and designs with subtle differences in detail and orientation. Each area is designed to enhance the child's confidence in their ability to communicate. The students will begin to use journals, write spelling words, use punctuation, and write simple sentences.

Library: During their weekly library visit, the kindergarteners begin to discover the realm of possibilities that can feed ones imaginations. Each child begins to develop the skills essential to becoming an active and thoughtful library user. The class listens to literature for pleasure and information often participating in the storytelling, drama, songs puppetry, finger plays and poetry, then relating the elements of the literature to personal experiences and predicting the outcomes of each story. Then each child is able to share in the selecting of their own books, verbalizing requests in locating materials, learn the proper procedures to checkout their selections at the circulation desk and to return the materials. The students begin to predict outcomes, discern the different types of literature, such as fairy tales, folklore, poetry, etc. and to share opinions about the materials heard, read or viewed. Each visit is designed to spark the child's imagination, enhance the desire to read and to discover a world beyond their scope of existence.

Math: The aim in Kindergarten is to introduce the children with interesting and exciting opportunities for mathematical thinking. This process tends to be hands on using manipulates and games to develop recognition of numbers to 100, simple time concepts, counting, measurements, seasons, temperature, patterns, size, quantity, geometric shapes and to solve problems. The children will begin to count by twos, fives, and tens, add numbers with sums to 10, subtract numbers from 10, identify equal parts, to name the days of the week, months of the year, and to tell time to the hour and time to the half hour. Students are introduced to the number sentence both horizontally and vertically, describing, and creating patterns as well as how to choose the correct operations to solve problems. The introduction to graphs and charting lends to the purpose to record experiences and create opportunities to discuss quantitative relationships such as more, less, equal, etc. which are more meaningful to them and to identify similarities and differences. Group discussions about information gathered and recorded allows the

children to appreciate different ways of thinking and finding a solution to a problem. Students construct their own graphs from given data and become more proficient in identifying and reading graphs.

Music: The sense of music skills is a sense of rhythm and pitch. The Kindergarten student chants, sing songs, and do rhythmic activities to develop their singing voice and lend toward group music experiences. They begin to follow the directions of the conductor, to differentiate tempo, rhythm and beat and to interpret mood of music. Students will explore and experiment with a variety of musical instruments and dance to develop their natural inclination toward self expression and creativity to reinforce self-esteem and foster enjoyment. Students will learn about songwriting and write lyrics about something dear to them. Students will also write their own melody with chords to accompany their lyrics. Students will be introduced to Sibelius software in the computer lab to begin the process of creating music.

Physical Education: The emphasis in PE is on the development of each child's strength, endurance, co-ordination, balance, and large muscle activities such as running, galloping, climbing, throwing, catching, kicking, dancing, bending, etc. Students are introduced the necessity of warm-ups of body muscles before strenuous exercise, movement in a space without collisions, and the wearing of proper clothes and shoes for physical exercises. Students begin to demonstrate the ability to lead and follow, dribble, kick and catch a ball, understand directions such as back/forward, right/left, top/bottom etc., and maintain balance in a variety of postures. Continued development of the concept of shared space, equipment, group co-operation, and team effort is an important part of the Kindergarten experience and curriculum.

Religion: In Kindergarten, the children learn how the Church is family – Mystical Body of Christ – with Jesus as the Head and all its members as the body. Jesus is the model for living the Christian life and the saints who have gone before us have modeled Jesus' life for us as a witness.

God is the supreme authority and has given parents authority over the children they have. In the family we learn Christians values and that when we live in harmony with ourselves, family, nation, and the world, there will be peace. Each child learns that they have a responsibility in their family, neighborhood, parish, and community to be an example of Jesus to each other to bring about this peace. Forgiving and being forgiven, joy, love, and peace is part of being in a family.

God is Father and created all that is visible and invisible. God is the Trinity – three divine persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but one God. He created each person in His image. He sent His only Son to redeem all people. Every person has the right to life and is a gift from God. Jesus reaches out to every person – the poor, the weak, and the suffering – this is where the children learn to practice the corporal works of mercy. God created all things and all people, so the children and all people have the responsibility to

care for God's creation and see that all people are treated fairly, with respect, and have all their needs provided for. Jesus is the model of all that God wants us to become.

With our feelings which may be positive or negative, the children learn to deal with them in a nonviolent manner. Knowing themselves and responding appropriately directs their love for themselves and others to God.

The children learn to serve others and in serving others, serve God. The virtue which children should continually be reminded of is gratitude. God has given all people so many blessings for which all should be grateful. God loves each person with a tremendous love and calls all people to love Him in return and love our neighbor as ourselves.

The children are able to identify the stories of the Nativity – the Incarnation and identify the Holy Family as Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. They learn the titles of Mary – Mother of God, Blessed Virgin Mary, Mary our Mother, etc. They learn the significant events in Jesus' life – Christmas, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost and they explain these events.

The children learn Bible stories from the Old Testament and the New Testament. They discuss these stories and learn to see what God is teaching them. Through these stories they learn what their relationship with God ought to be.

The children learn the responses at Mass and they learn to identify the articles used in the celebration of the Mass and other liturgical celebrations. The children learn to articulate that the Liturgy is the prayer of the community. Formal prayers memorized and learned in Kindergarten are the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Angel of God prayer, and Grace before and after meals. The children identify the Rosary, devotions to Mary, spontaneous prayer, and the use of sacramentals as forms of private prayer. They learn to reverently make the Sign of the Cross. The gestures learned that are used in adoring our Lord are genuflecting, kneeling, singing, responding at Mass, bowing, and keeping modesty of the eyes. Spontaneous prayer is identified and used as a way of praying and talking with God.

The children learn that the Eucharist is the greatest gift Jesus gives us all. The bread and wine change into the real Body and Blood of Christ. This Mystery takes place at the Consecration at Mass and is the re-presentation of the Last Supper and the Crucifixion where Jesus gives Himself to us as a sacrifice. The children learn that Baptism is where they become a child of God and members of the Christ Body, the Church.

In Religion class, the children learn that God's love and mercy are immeasurable and all people must try to live in this love that God has for each person and become all that God intends them to become.

Science: Children are naturally curious and eager to work together to discover about the world, animals, plants, the earth and the universe through hands on activities which encourage the discussion and sharing of ideas as they work with various ways to process what they are observing. Activity and conversation fill the room as children participate in the activities to explore, investigate, observe, and describe a wide variety of exercises geared to expand and acquire scientific knowledge. In Kindergarten this program focuses on the scientific process, solids and liquids, comparing and measuring life science and healthy habits such as exercise, rest, cleanliness, and eating properly by distinguishing between healthy foods to help the body grow and non-healthy foods.

Social Studies: Each student begins to express and understand the concepts and language of geography in the context of classroom, home and community. A primary developmental goal for the child at this age is the formation of longer-term relationships with fellow students and the development of a firm sense of “group”. That each child show an awareness of and respect for desires of others, share and take turns in activities, develop self discipline and follow established rules, as well as adhere to reasonable classroom rules and routines, develop good table manners using a specific routine, begin awareness of jobs and what is required to perform them, by explaining the responsibility of one’s choices help each child enhance their relationships with others. Kindergarteners are introduced to how families are alike and different in composition, customs, and ethnic identity and recognize the reasons for working, the variety of careers, and that work is related to the physical and social needs of the individual or groups within the community. Students begin to identify people who influence the United States’ history, e.g. leaders, inventors, explorers, the symbols of the U.S. i.e. flag, eagle, patriotic songs, holiday, etc. and the map of the U.S. and its relationship in the world as represented by a globe.

Technology: The presence of computers in the classroom gives each child the opportunity to play games that reinforce other disciplines such as reading, math, etc. and to begin teaching simple word processing skills. Each Kindergartener goes to computer class once a week, enhancing the classroom experience with the use and understanding of the proper and responsible use of the Internet, basic computer terms and concepts, and the use of websites and graphics programs to create and research information to convey an ideas and further on topic knowledge.