

General Information St. Brigid Kindergarten

Dear Parents,

The following are topics that pertain to the curriculum, daily schedule, and classroom policies and activities. **Please save and refer to this during the year but always feel free to contact me if you have questions or concerns.**

Specials:

Music: Monday and Friday

Physical Education: Tuesdays and Thursday – **Please make sure your child wears gym shoes on these days. Girls wear shorts under their jumpers. Please label all jumpers and sweatshirts/sweaters.**

Computer: Wednesday

Lunch is at 12:05. We will have a morning snack. Please send a little healthy snack every day with your child, such as apple sauce, fruit snacks, yogurt, crackers, etc.

DISCIPLINE: I use assertive discipline in my classroom. For example, “Joe, I like the way you raised your hand.” “I am so proud of the way you walked quietly in the hall.” It usually works because children enjoy compliments and positive remarks.

I also use a “**Levels of Behavior**” program that helps raise student responsibility. It consists of four different levels – E, S, N and U:

Excellent–

- Develops self–discipline
- Shows kindness to others
- Does good because it is the right thing to do

Satisfactory–

- Compliant with directions
- Cooperates with others
- Conforms to expected standards

Needs Improvement–

- Bosses others
- Bothers or disturbs others
- Breaks classroom standards

Unsatisfactory–

- Noisy
- Unsafe
- Out of control behavior

Students begin the day on level S. If they're caught doing a good deed or being extra well-behaved they will be asked to move their clothespin up a level. Every child gets one warning before moving down a level. The next time they misbehave they will have to move down a level. However, students are always able to improve their behavior and get their clothespin moved up a level. Clothespins will be moving up and down throughout the day as a result of the students' behaviors. Levels will be recorded at the end of the day. If a student develops a continual behavior problem, I will contact the parents and we will work on a Behavior Management Plan together.

Our classroom does have a **Treasure Chest** and students have an opportunity to get a little treat from it every Friday. In order to go to the Treasure Chest, a student must be on Level E at least once a week and Level S the rest of the time. The Treasure Chest contains small toys, pencils, erasers, bookmarks, etc. (If you ever want to make a donation to the Treasure Chest, it would be appreciated!)

I also have a **"Compliments Jar"** in my classroom. Several times during the day, I try to catch the entire class cooperating, following a classroom rule, receiving a compliment from another teacher, etc. When this happens, I put cotton balls in the jar. When we fill the jar, the class gets a reward (extra recess, movie with a treat, etc.) **It helps our class work together as a team.**

LANGUAGE ARTS: Kindergarten uses The Land of the Letter People® curriculum. It is a research-based, classroom-tested, balanced literacy program that promotes successful reading and writing in the kindergarten classroom as it addresses all areas of the curriculum that...

- Is thematically organized and integrates all subject areas
- Fosters individual success
- Supports the Reading First initiative
- Is a research-based, comprehensive, classroom-tested program that works
- Promotes word building, reading, and writing for kindergarten children while allowing each child to move at her or his own pace
- Balances the best of phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principle, and predictable and decodable text with literature-based learning
- Offers flexible, easy-to-use, thematic teaching units that make planning easy
- Models social skills and conflict resolution
- Creates a motivating and fun-filled instructional environment

WRITING WORKSHOP: Your child will begin writing in our class immediately. At first, the creative process may consist only of pictures and a few letters. Soon individual words will begin to appear in their work. As the process develops, I encourage the use of "inventive spelling" – writing words the way they sound to the child (phonetically). At the beginning, this often

excludes vowel sounds and sometimes the final sound. I also encourage the children to use the word wall that is in our classroom. It is a list of simple sight words. Please encourage your child to write often (a thank you note to Grandma, a letter to a friend, a sentence about a picture they drew, etc.). Writing will not be sent home on a daily occurrence. Each child has a Writing Workshop folder with their writing inside. Throughout the year we will go through the writing process and work on brainstorming, drafting, editing, revising, and publishing. Our class will also write and illustrate several class books. When we make a class book, I work with the children individually to help them edit their writing.

MATH: Our Kindergarten uses a program called **Mathematics Their Way**. It relies on hands-on learning through learning stations and full-class math experiences. Throughout the year students will learn about patterns, sorting and classifying, counting, comparing, graphing, number at the concept level, number at the connecting level, number at the symbolic level, and place value.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES: Two or three times a year, I will assign a special project that can be completed by your child with your help. It will have a theme, such as homes, 100th Day, timelines, etc. Your child will have the opportunity to share their project with the class.

MASS: Kindergarten students will attend Mass weekly on Wednesdays at 8:15 a.m., as well as on Holy days. They will sit with 8th grade buddies. Please feel free to join us at Mass.

PRAYERS: In Kindergarten, we will learn the following prayers: The Sign of the Cross, Our Father, and Hail Mary. We also sing some of our prayers and make up our personal prayers to thank God and ask for His help.

SOMEONE SPECIAL: In our classroom, we have an “All About Me” bulletin board. Each child will have a turn to be the “Someone Special.” If your child is the “Someone Special” for the week, he/she will bring home a certificate on Friday. Please help your child gather pictures and objects for the different categories noted on the form. Your child may also bring his/her favorite book to school that week for me to read to the class. **This activity is a great way to encourage oral language, practice listening skills and build self-esteem.**

SUPPLIES: Glue sticks, crayons and pencils will need to be replaced several times during the school year. You may want to buy these supplies while they are still on sale. I will try to send a reminder home or have a reminder in my newsletter about supplies running out.

BIRTHDAYS: You are welcome to send a treat for your child’s birthday. We will sing together in class during our morning meeting. The snack will be passed out during lunch in the cafeteria. Please make note of our classroom allergies.

ALLERGIES: We have students allergic to soy, corn, egg whites, milk, wheat/gluten free and nuts in our classroom. Please try to avoid these items if at all possible. If you do send in a snack for the class which includes any of these allergens, please attach a note so we are aware. Thank you.

TRANSPORTATION: If your child is going to go home a different way than normal, please write me a note. If you forget to write a note, please call the office and they will let me know. Thanks! It is a priority with me that your children are safe.

VOLUNTEERING: It is mandatory that you take the Child Protection Decree class and get fingerprinted through the Archdiocese to participate in field trips, be a room parent, volunteer in the classroom, etc.

COMMUNICATION: Every student will take their green "Take Home" folder everyday. This will include classroom, any parent notes, and papers sent home from the office. A weekly newsletter will go home every Monday to communicate curriculum, activities, etc. for the week. Please empty this folder every night and return the next day.

However, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns with a note, email or phone call. I will get back to you ASAP. I believe that communication is very important! I am usually at school until 3:30 (372-3222). I check my email day and night (including weekends) so that is also a reliable way of getting a hold of me (jnoward@stbrigidxenia.com).

Thank you in advance for all your help and cooperation. Your children are a precious gift and I will do my best to help them learn and grow. I am looking forward to a great year in Kindergarten!

Sincerely,
Jenny Noward