



The Good Shepherd School

The Kindergarten Program at Good Shepherd School Monday-Friday, 8:45am-3:00pm

Caring for others, cooperation, responsibility, independence, and respect for others have been established as the core values of Good Shepherd School. We strive to incorporate these values into our daily school environment and curriculum. The Good Shepherd kindergarten program emphasizes reading readiness, phonics, and mathematics in preparation for a first grade or pre-first experience. Academics and a sense of order blend with spontaneity, creativity, and fun! Engaging classroom activities foster a love of school while providing fundamental building blocks for future learning. Opportunities for cooperative and dramatic play encourage the development of the imagination and promote flexibility and critical thinking skills. Our 6:1 student to teacher ratio helps to build confident and independent learners through this foundational year.

I. To foster the development of a positive self-concept and a positive attitude toward school, the children will be encouraged to:

- show pride in accomplishments and products created.
- exhibit confidence in their own abilities.
- acquire developmentally appropriate academic readiness and social skills through guided group instruction and academic activities and supervised interaction and play with peers.

II. To nurture independence and self-control, encouraging an increased awareness of the relationship between freedom and responsibility, the children will be encouraged to:

- use appropriate expressions of positive and negative feelings.
- work cooperatively within a daily routine and follow and anticipate a daily schedule.
- expand attention skills and the ability to follow multi-step directions.
- recognize, don, snap, button and zip their own clothing.
- show responsibility for personal possessions, including “homework” and newsletters.
- maintain interest in a play activity without adult encouragement.
- use materials and equipment appropriately.
- ask for assistance when necessary.

III. To guide the development of social skills in a caring and nurturing atmosphere, the children will be encouraged to:

- participate in group and individual experiences and discussions.
- use and respond to appropriate social cues and expressions, including “please,” “thank you,” “let’s,” “excuse me,” and “I’m sorry.”
- role play and pretend in order to discover successful interactions.
- develop an awareness of the world around us and our responsibility to it.

- play cooperatively, interact with peers, take turns, and listen while others are speaking.
- accept and respect individual differences and the feelings and needs of others.
- develop the ability to lead and to follow.
- respond positively to adult guidance and direction.

IV. To inspire a developmentally appropriate understanding of God and His love, the children will be encouraged to:

- participate in a weekly chapel service that includes prayers, stories, songs, and seasonal activities.
- learn prayers to be said before snack and lunch.
- participate in a Christmas service that expresses the importance of the birth of Jesus.
- praise God through song, prayer, and stories.

V. To encourage children to think, reason, question and experiment while developing problem-solving skills and the ability to think critically, the children will be encouraged to:

- listen critically to literature and poetry, laying the foundation for a love of books, learning, and reading.
- participate in scientific “hands-on” experiences designed to arouse and expand natural curiosities.
- detect patterns and compare lengths, sizes, numbers, and amounts.
- distinguish between fantasy and reality.
- anticipate the consequences of simple actions.
- use imagination to explore in independent and teacher-directed activities.
- understand and anticipate humor, experimenting with silly language, movements, and situations.

VI. To further language development while enhancing receptive and expressive language and vocabulary, the children will be encouraged to:

- participate in small and large group discussions.
- recall and describe events and stories.
- listen to, participate in, and repeat finger plays, songs, poems, literature, and class discussions.
- speak clearly, articulate, and use complete sentences and proper pronouns.
- incorporate verbal directions into play activities.
- demonstrate an understanding and use of a wide range of words in meaningful context.
- use language to stimulate judgment, comparisons, and evaluations.
- learn their addresses, phone numbers, and birthdates.
- modulate their voices for indoor and outdoor activities.

VII. To develop, refine, and strengthen small motor and large motor skills, the children will be encouraged to:

A. Fine Motor:

The children will continue to develop and improve awareness of left to right progression, finger manipulation, and hand-eye coordination by having the opportunity to:

- roll, squeeze, poke, and mold play dough.
- paint with fingers and at the easel.
- color within the lines, copy, and trace.
- string beads
- imitate finger plays.
- manipulate puzzles, blocks, toys, and clothing.
- proficiently handle scissors, pencils, crayons, markers, and paint brushes.
- establish left or right dominance when printing and/or drawing.
- print the letters of the alphabet and numbers to 20.

B. Gross Motor:

The children will strengthen muscles and improve balance and coordination by having the opportunity to:

- safely utilize indoor and outdoor play equipment.
- participate in a weekly Creative Movement class and other structured movement experiences, including a soccer class.
- practice the integration of muscles and rhythm.
- play games requiring movement, balance, and coordination.
- refine their ability to run, hop, skip, crawl, jump, gallop, tip-toe, kick a ball, balance, throw, and ride.

VIII. To develop sound health, safety, and nutritional practices, the children will be encouraged to:

- alert teachers and control needs relating to toileting.
- clean spills and put away materials with direction.
- practice a healthy diet, adequate exercise and rest, cleanliness, and appropriate care of teeth.

IX. To foster individual creative, artistic, and musical expression, the children will be encouraged to:

- participate in weekly art, and music classes.
- utilize provided materials that will allow them to express feelings and responses that may be difficult to verbalize.
- respond to music by listening, singing, moving, playing, clapping, and creating.
- increase their awareness of melody, rhythm, and tempo.
- appreciate masterpieces of the art world by discussing, imitating, copying, and imagining.
- dramatize “action songs,” poetry, and stories.
- experiment with primary and secondary colors and a variety of artistic textures and tools.
- contribute original ideas to classroom activities and discussions.

- exhibit flexibility in play and in the creation of products.
- participate in Thanksgiving, Christmas, and spring pageants.

X. Reading, pre-reading, mathematics, social studies, and science are presented to Good Shepherd students within a developmentally appropriate academic framework. To develop the skills needed for literacy and to give students in our kindergarten program a solid foundation for the more structured academics of elementary school, proficiency is promoted in the following areas:

- **Reading:** Kindergarten reading instruction focuses on solidifying an understanding of letter-sound relationships, developing phonological and phonemic awareness, mastering high frequency words, and expressing comprehension. Students develop blending and decoding skills in order to read and spell words. Students are taught essential writing skills as they begin to use writing to express creativity, respond to text, and communicate ideas.
- **Math:** Kindergarten students are provided with concrete experiences to develop mathematical understanding. Students explore number concepts through counting, sequencing, and the calendar. They begin to develop and refine skills in patterning, geometry, measurement, and simple addition and subtraction. Real-life math activities allow students opportunities to compare and contrast, problem solve, graph, and cook.
- **Science:** Kindergarten students learn to observe, experiment, and predict using their senses indoors and out. They learn and review basic facts about plants, animals, weather, and the seasons. Hands-on opportunities allow students the opportunity to connect predictions and ideas to experimentations and outcomes.
- **Social Studies:** Kindergarten students continually learn about themselves and their culture by exploring the family, peers, the community, world cultures, and geography. They learn to understand and respect themselves in relation to others while making connections to the world around them.
- **Library:** Kindergarten students are introduced to basic library skills and learn about books, including what an author is, the different types of books (fiction/non-fiction), and the parts of a book (beginning/middle/end). A love of reading will be nurtured both in the classroom and during the weekly Library special time.
- **Spanish:** Using the Spanish language, Kindergarten students sing and play games, greet one another, and use good manners. They also learn to count, name colors, and identify animal names in Spanish.

Typical Daily Schedule in the Kindergarten Program:

Arrival, Free Play, and Individualized Activities
Circle Time
Reading
Specials
Snack
Outdoor Play
Math
Lunch
Story
Directed Activity: Science, Social Studies, Cooking, Poetry, Author Share, Spanish, Phonics and Math Reinforcement
Outdoor Play
Dismissal

Possible Academic Units in the Kindergarten Program:

- Friendship
- Backyard Animal Friends
- Maps
- The Mayflower
- The Body
- Earth and Moon
- Plants and Seeds
- Seasons, Holidays, and Customs
- Leo Lionni
- Mrs. Wishy Washy
- Littleville
- Polar Animals

Special Classes and Programs for Kindergarten Students:

- Music
- Art
- Chapel
- Creative Movement
- Library
- Soccer Shots
- Fun with Foreign Language
- Carpool Safeties
- Community Outreach Program