



ST. MALACHY PARISH SCHOOL
Kindergarten Information

The St. Malachy Parish School kindergarten program is concerned with the development of the whole child, not merely the acquisition of certain skills and facts. We strive to facilitate each child with their spiritual, physical, mental and creative development; their attitudes and social relationships; and their character and personality growth. We want your child's school experience to take place in a stimulating educational environment, while increasing self-identity and the feeling that each child is truly valuable. Our hope is that your child will recognize kindergarten as a secure and happy place where each child has an opportunity to experience independence, to develop social contacts with children of his/her own age, to express ideas verbally as well as non-verbally, and to investigate and discover. **Most importantly, we hope that your child will deepen his/her relationship with God and increase his/her knowledge of your child's Catholic faith.**

The kindergarten parent letters are posted weekly on our school website-

www.saintmalachyschool.org and click on either kindergarten class link. You can check out what we are currently learning about and our weekly activities.

HOURS-we follow the same hours as the rest of the school
Morning Class- 7:15- Morning supervision begins in the gym. After the school announcements and prayer, the kindergarten children go with their teachers to their classrooms.

After 7:45- tardy-report to the school office in the main school building.

2:25-classes end and staggered dismissal schedule begins from the main school
Extended Day Care is available until 6:00 P.M. for an additional fee.

Curriculum



RELIGION

Our Religion program is a developmental program, based on scripture and rooted in the teachings of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The children learn to see themselves as belonging to the Catholic community and are encouraged to make Catholic beliefs and traditions their own. The children learn through Bible Stories, poetry, games, songs, finger plays, role-playing, creative movement, and various hands-on activities. The children respond to what they learn by using many ways to pray such as litanies, blessings, psalms, visualizations, poetry, singing, pantomiming, creative movement and storytelling. Each lesson has a psalm with gestures. Some of the topics that the children learn about are:

- † the holiness of God's name
- † the holy Bible
- † the marvels of creation and of how people are God's unique creations
- † respond to God with silence, prayer, and gratitude
- † encouraged to have a listening attitude to God and a desire to choose what God wants for them
- † Mary said yes to God and is the mother of Jesus
- † Jesus' gift of new life at Easter
- † The Holy Spirit helps us to live as Jesus did

- † Express their love for God through prayer, forgiveness and performing acts of kindness for others
- † The lives of some saints are taught close to their feast days.
- † The parts of the Mass are introduced. **In the third quarter, the kindergarten children attend Mass every other week, with older students assisting each child. During the fourth quarter, the kindergartners will attend weekly Mass. Each class will lead one prayer service.**



LANGUAGE ARTS

We give the kindergarten children many tools to put reading together, if they are ready! The children read in small groups according to their comprehension and decoding ability.

The kindergarten children work on the following skills:

- ✓ The alphabet, letter names, printing capital and small letters on the lines
- ✓ Associating one sound with letters, including short vowels
- ✓ Identifying sounds at the beginning, middle and final positions in words.
- ✓ Identify rhyming words
- ✓ Read high frequency words
- ✓ Learn the functions letters serve as their sounds are blended to form words with word families.
- ✓ Learn word attack phonics skills
- ✓ Construct sentences
- ✓ Spell words
- ✓ Improve manual dexterity through writing, cutting on lines, coloring within lines, and gluing.
- ✓ Improve directionality, eye-hand coordination
- ✓ Listening comprehension development of a variety of genres of literature
- ✓ Increase vocabulary
- ✓ Increase attention span and ability to follow directions

Writing Workshop

Writing workshop consists of the children making picture books. This involves two processes going on at the same time- composing and spelling. We ask the children to do the best they can with drawing and spelling as five and six year olds. Most children will start composing picture books by only drawing pictures with no

letters/words in their books and then develop from there. We will nurture and support your child to grow from whatever point he/she is starting, through side-by-side teaching, read aloud literature, and share time. These are the dimensions we will be encouraging as your child grows in his/her composition development. As we work with children, we will focus on only one or two issues at a time. The children are also inspired by and learn from their classmates during writing workshop. Writing and reading abilities enhance one another.

Understanding about Texts

- 📖 Is the child's book about one topic? The picture books should become more focused over time and the connections between ideas should become stronger and more meaningful.
- 📖 How has the child organized the book? Does it move through time –tell what happened next (narrative) or through a list of ideas about something (non narrative)-and keep it consistent through the whole text?
- 📖 How is the child representing meaning in the book-is it all in illustrations or a combination of invented/conventional spellings and illustrations?
- 📖 Does the child read the book basically the same way over time- hold it's meaning through drawings and/or invented/conventional spelling?
- 📖 Is the child crafting the book in the manner of other picture books he or she has seen-but using his/her own ideas?
- 📖 What does the book show the child understands about genre: informational books about topics of interest; how-to books about things they know how to do; counting books; ABC books; question/answer patterns; etc.?

Understandings About Process

- 📖 Does the child engage in revision while composing a picture book- change something, add something, take something out, move something around, or scrap it all and start over?

- 📌 Is there any evidence that the child is thinking ahead/has plans about what to write next, while thinking about what the whole picture book is about?
- 📌 Has the child made any intentional crafting decisions in the book-make their writing more compelling and engaging for the readers of his/her book- for example- make the size or color of an illustration match its meaning or use repetition?
- 📌 How long has the child worked on the book? In one sitting? Over time? Is he/she building stamina for the act of writing?

Understandings About What it Means to Be a Writer

- 📌 How and for what reason has the child decided what to write about in the book?
- 📌 Is the child interested in an audience's response (what a reader will do or say) to his/her book?
- 📌 Has the child composed in a way that leads to new meaning while writing-did he/she learn about how to write better as well as the topic he/she is writing about?
- 📌 Is the child willing to take compositional risks- do things that are challenging for him/her when composing?
- 📌 Does the child show he/she understands his/her powerful position as author of the book-to decide everything about his/her book and accepting responsibility for the content?

From: *Already Ready* 2008 by Katie Wood Ray and Matt Glover. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.



Spelling Development.

Scribble Writing- As you may remember from their younger years, children begin to imitate adult writing by “scribble writing.” This looks like up and down squiggles, hopefully from left to right and top to bottom.

Inventive Spelling-This is the next stage and probably the stage your child is in currently. This stage also has several stages of growth within itself. First, they may begin with a string of letters in a row. They are moving from scribbles to the knowledge that letters are what make up words. During our kindergarten year, we will be striving for the children to begin using the phonics tools and sight words they are learning to move them into more book spelling. As they are doing this, you will see their growth in reading and writing. For example in the beginning of the year, they may write, "GILKMKLDSE" and tell us that says, "You are my favorite." Later in the year that same sentence may look more like, "you are mi favit." As you are reading your child's writing this year, please don't tell them that something is spelled wrong! Please ask them to read it to you or say, "Tell me what this says." Then when you see a word in Inventive Spelling praise them for all the sounds they did hear or ask if they would like to see the word in Book Spelling.

Book Spelling-This is where they are spelling words conventionally as we would expect. Please keep in mind that they will not reach full Book Spelling for many years to come! (Think about how many times we, as adults, have had to use Spellcheck, the dictionary, or ask a friend!) ☺ However, during the course of this year, you will see words spelled more frequently in book spelling, so it's important you know the term we will use in our classroom.

During Writer's Workshop if they need help in spelling a word that we have not learned yet, we will use several strategies: giving it to them on a post it note for them to copy, referring them to their Dazzle Word paper kept in their Writing folder, encouraging them to use the Word Wall for sight words and words learned in class, and allowing them to confer with a partner. We will be sharing together our writing pieces each day in order to praise new learning and take a moment to learn from our peers. Our hope is that the children will understand that their writing has meaning to them and that conventions allow people to understand what they are writing. They will be writing about their lives, not making up stories, as that is more difficult to make the words come

alive. The writing pieces that the children work on in class will be kept in a “works in progress” folder or a “completed work” folder. The completed works will be sent home at the end of each grading quarter, and you should be able to see progress over the year.



MATH

The children learn through hands-on experiences, discussion, exploration, and oral/written practice. New concepts and skills are introduced and practiced during a formal whole-group lesson. The children have ongoing practice with the following skills:

- ❖ cover and reproduce designs with geometrical pattern blocks
- ❖ identify halves
- ❖ Measuring and comparing objects
- ❖ create and read graphs
- ❖ identify shapes and solids
- ❖ Problem solving
- ❖ identify, writing, compare and order numbers
- ❖ Count by 1's, 2's, 5's and 10's to 100
- ❖ Act out and find answers for addition and subtraction story problems
- ❖ Tell time on the hour
- ❖ Identify pennies, nickels and dimes and understand how much each is worth



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The children are assigned a new partner each week. Together they choose a new table to sit at for the week. Sometimes, partners may share information, play a game together, or check and help each other with independent work.

The children are able to get to know each of their classmates better and this enables the children to be able to work more together during Learning Center Time.

DISCIPLINE

There are three rules that cover many behaviors.

1. Do what is right. (Use self control, do what the teacher tells you to do, be honest, participate in activities, clean up after yourself, use a quiet voice)
2. Do your very best. (Ask the teacher for help when needed, work carefully and neatly, listen carefully to and follow directions, pay attention to the teachers and the students who are answering questions.)
3. Treat others with kindness. (Touch others nicely, take turns, say kind words to others, listen to others, be helpful)

A stop light system will be used. Everyday, all children begin their day with a clothespin with their name on it on the green light. If children are not following the rules, they are reminded. If they continue to have difficulty following the rules, their clothespin will be moved to a yellow light. If they intentionally hurt someone or do not change their behavior after a yellow light, his/her clothespin will be moved to a red light. He/she will be given a five-minute time out, and a referral note will be sent home to be signed, to be returned the following day. Learning center time may also be withheld depending on the severity and frequency of the problem. If there are frequent episodes of yellow or red lights with your child, your child's teacher will talk with you to share ideas about how to help your child to improve his/her behavior. **Your support at home makes the biggest difference! All teachers in the building, especially the Specials Teachers may use the stoplight system with the kindergartners, as good behavior is expected throughout our school building.**

We strive to praise the children following the rules and making good behavioral choices. Their reward is being able to fully participate in all activities and receiving good conduct marks on their report cards. At the end of the day, if your child has stayed on the green light all day, he/she receives a sticker on his/her reward chart. When your child has earned 25 stickers and

has filled the reward chart, he/she selects a privilege from a list. Most importantly, they will be happy and so will their parents and teachers!

LEARNING CENTERS

Each child chooses the activity that suits his/her mood and need for the day. A limited number of children may take part in each activity. The activities involve independent work with little or no teacher help. In this way, the children may take enough time to work at their own rate and are free to experiment and discover for themselves as they participate in problem solving. The children are encouraged to quietly communicate with their peers and either work individually or in a group. During this time, the children will be developing basic skills, good work habits, and a growing ability to be purposeful and plan as they carry out their work.

The most important reason for Learning Center time is the opportunity to develop self-confidence and to experience success, while learning social skills! Some of the Learning Center choices may be -Pretend, Blocks, Books, Puzzles, Constructs, Marble Works, Create, Drawing, Watercolor Painting, Math, Marker board, and Train set.



DAILY SCHEDULE

- 1. Meeting Time-**The children sit in assigned rows and move up one space daily, so that new children are able to sit in the front everyday. The activities included are: the agenda for the day, calendar, the weather, counting how many days of school, movement songs and poems.
- 2. Reading Readiness**
- 3. Snack-10 minutes**
- 4. Math activities**
- 5. Recess-20 minutes-**the time for recess and snack may be adjusted according to the weather/season
- 6. Religion activities**
- 7. Lunch in the main school building**

Afternoon:

- 8. Quiet Time-20 minutes**
- 9. Writing Workshop**
- 10. Learning Centers-** time for teachers to work with individual children

11. Special class in the main school building

SPECIAL CLASSES

Each class meets once a week in the main school building.

- ☺ **Library-children may check out two books each week, if both books are returned.**
- ☺ **Music**
- ☺ **Art**
- ☺ **Gym**
- ☺ **Computer Lab**
- ☺ **Spanish**

SNACKS AND LUNCH

Parents are asked to send in nutritious individual snacks each day, packed separately from cold lunches. A well balanced hot lunch, including milk is served daily or you may pack a nutritious lunch from home. Milk is sold for cold lunches, if needed. Hot food from fast food restaurants and soft drinks are not permitted. Parents are asked not to take their student off campus for the lunch period- it counts for a half day absence. Parents are welcome to have lunch with your student at school for special occasions.

RECESS

To encourage large motor development, there will be a 20 minute recess in the morning on the playground. If the wind chill is below 32 degrees or the weather is inclement, we will have large motor activities indoors for recess.

QUIET TIME

To enable the kindergarten children to recharge their brains and their bodies, there is a 20 minute quiet time after lunch. The children are not required to sleep; they may quietly look at books, while listening to quiet music. Parents will be asked to provide a child sized beach sized towel for each child to lie upon.

UNIFORMS

Schoolbelles is our vendor for our uniforms. Their website for price and ordering information is www.schoolbelles.com and their phone number is 317-255-5275. The closest store location is 6180 Hillside Avenue on the

north side of Indianapolis. Our school number is 1422. Kindergarteners will follow the school dress code including a St. Malachy Schoolbelles monogrammed uniform shirt or Schoolbelles blouse for girls with the Schoolbelles plaid skirts, skorts or jumpers. **Girls need to wear shorts under the skirts, skorts or jumpers.** Plain white shirts (turtlenecks, long or short sleeved t-shirts) may be worn under the uniform shirt during colder weather. They need to be proper fitting plain navy or khaki slacks or plain blue or tan jeans and in good condition with no holes or frayed ends. They may be any brand. The pants may not have any designs, embroidery or appliqués. **Belts are not necessary for kindergarten.** New for this fall-any brand of navy or tan “uniform shorts” may only be worn in August, September and May. St. Malachy crewneck Logo sweatshirts or a navy Schoolbelles cardigan sweater/vest are worn during colder weather with the Schoolbelles uniform shirt underneath. Socks are worn and visible in sturdy shoes with backs. On Mass days (third and fourth quarters) no jeans or shorts are worn.

VOLUNTEERS

Room mothers and fathers help by arranging for volunteers for parties. Five parents help at each party. It is our school policy that younger siblings are not allowed to attend parties or field trips.

FIELD TRIPS

6 parent volunteers are needed to help supervise each trip. The children ride on a school bus and permission slips are needed for each trip. Some of the trips that we may go on are: apple orchard, kennel, dentist office, Sally’s Ceramics, Mexican grocery store, and a grain farm. We will have a police officer, fire fighters, and a doctor visit our classroom.

**Thank you for your interest in our
St. Malachy Parish School Kindergarten Program!**

Mary Feeney and Jennifer O’Connor- Kindergarten Teachers

If you have questions or would like to speak to us about our kindergarten program, please email us at:

mfeeney@stmalachy.org or joc Connor@stmalachy.org

