

An Overview of the Kindergarten Curriculum & Program

Morning Activities: As your child arrives at school each day, a task will be set out to help them get seated and focused. These activities will initially include manipulatives and puzzles. As the weeks progress, this time will be used for **Math tubs**, **literacy games**, journals and assembling **mini-books**.

Morning Meeting (Morning Message/Calendar Math): Each morning, the children will gather as a class for a meeting time. We will begin with Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. They will review our schedule for the day and we may share a book that will focus on character building or community building themes. The teacher, with assistance from students, will then lead the Morning Message and Calendar Math. The children will then independently work in their **Daily Calendar Notebooks** and record the calendar information for that day. The Daily Calendar Math time reviews the following concepts: Date (Days, Months, Seasons, Etc.), Counting (Cardinal & Ordinal), Skip Counting, Odd & Even, Place Value, Tally Marks, Graphing, Weather, Temperature, Time, Estimation, Patterns, Money, & Sets.

Chapel Time: Each morning, the children will meet as a group to pray, share thoughts, and discuss the virtue of the month. The Kindergarten children will meet for a more formal chapel time on Wednesdays with Reverend Caroline. They will also join Mrs. A once a week in the Choir room for special stories and songs. During the course of the year, we will learn about various biblical events and people. The children will learn about and celebrate Advent and Lent with their classmates. The underlying goal is to express to the children how much God loves them and to help foster this special relationship.

Reading/Language Arts/Phonics Program: Our reading program is a balanced literacy program which incorporates various approaches and styles. The program will offer instruction in the following areas: letter names, sequencing the alphabet, correlating phonic sound and letter formation, rhyming, single and blended consonants, short/long vowel sounds, concepts of print, decoding short vowel words, recognition of simple sight words and simple sentences, sentence structure (capitalization, and punctuation), story elements (setting, characters, plot, main idea, etc.) and comprehension.

Daily lessons integrating Literature, Poetry, and Music will build a foundation of phonemic awareness through rhythm, repetition, and patterns of sounds in language. Poems, charts, big books, and a word wall provide the children with a print-rich environment that will teach essential skills. Many of the poems and rhymes used in class will be kept in a **Poetry Anthology** and reviewed on a regular basis. Systematic direct phonics instruction will also take place within our reading program through **Saxon Phonics**. This program allows for growth and development in the areas of print awareness, phonemic awareness, and decoding skills. More specifically, the children will practice the following skills on a regular basis: word manipulation and phonetic coding, as well as sound, syllable, and word segmentation. Emphasis will also be placed on becoming familiar with the various word families (vowel patterns), as well as learning to recognize high frequency words (“**Popcorn words**”). Our program also allows for guided reading opportunities where the children will participate in small group/individual instruction with decodable readers and leveled text. These components are blended in order to create a quality program that will foster a love for literature and reading and provide the children with the essential skills that they need to blossom into confident, independent readers.

Texts and Resources:

Saxon Phonics

The Wright Group

Building Blocks

Reading a-z/Starfall/Tradebooks

Marc Hartman/Dr. Jean Feldman

Shirley Handy

Writing Program: The children will be encouraged to communicate ideas and creativity through writing and pictures. They will be involved with both whole-group and independent writing activities on a day-to-day basis. Their writing development will be fostered through the following whole-group activities: language-experience writing (dictations), shared writing (composing text), and interactive writing (children actively engage in the writing as well). The **Morning Message** and **Predictable Charts** are two writing activities that the children will engage in. The children will be involved in the “authorship” of co-writing books with classmates. The children will play an active part in illustrating and writing these **cooperative books**. Along with your child’s classroom authorship, each child will also be given the opportunity to write independently in their own **journal**.

In order to help each child develop proper handwriting skills we have incorporated the **Handwriting Without Tears program** into our curriculum. The program provides daily instruction that follows the three developmentally based stages-imitation, copying, and independent writing. Instruction for proper pencil grip and correct letter formation will take place daily while reviewing capital letters and numbers. Instruction will then shift focus to the proper formation of lowercase letters as well. The letters will be taught in a developmental sequence as opposed to alphabetical order.

Texts and Resources:

Handwriting Without Tears
Building Blocks

Math Program: Our math program will provide instruction over the course of the year in the following areas: Number and number sense, Computation and estimation, Measurement, Geometry, Probability and Statistics, and Patterns & Functions. Concepts include the following: Patterning and sequencing, comparing and estimating, sorting and classifying, graphing, counting and writing, set recognition, number-set correlation, shape recognition, awareness of basic coins and their value, time awareness, and awareness of simple concrete operations (simple add-subtract).

Our program integrates several styles and approaches in order to present a challenging yet developmentally appropriate curriculum. The children will receive Math instruction in both a whole class and small group setting. Daily calendar activities, **Learning Centers**, Math tubs & mats, **glyphs**, manipulatives, **Zero the Hero**, **math journals**, literature, and music will all be utilized to provide instruction with a hands-on approach. The children will keep a Daily Calendar Notebook and will also collaboratively work on **Math Big Books**. **Mathematics Their Way** and **Hands On Standards** will provide a base for our program. Both of these programs possess a hands-on approach with the belief that manipulatives provide a concrete experience from which a child can then move on to more abstract reasoning and thought processes.

Texts and Resources:

Mathematics Their Way
Hands-on Standards/Learning Resources
Mark Hartman
Dr. Jean Feldman

Social Studies and Science Program:

- **September:** Me, My Body, Organs, Five Senses, Citizenship, Family, Apples, Johnny Appleseed
- **October:** Christopher Columbus, Community, Fire Safety, Fall, Pumpkins (physical properties)
- **November:** Fall, Native Americans, Pocahontas, Pilgrims, Thanksgiving
- **December:** The World Around Me (Diff. Cultures & Traditions), Maps/Globes
- **January:** Winter (Weather Changes), Water (solids,liquids,gas), Work (needs vs.wants, money, goods), Martin Luther King Jr.
- **February:** Dental Health/ Light & Shadows, Presidents, Famous African Americans
- **March:** Nutrition, Earth (Land/Water) and Animals
- **April:** Spring (Weather Changes), Life Cycles, Earth-Recycling
- **May:** Magnets, Math/Globes, Patriotism, State-Country Symbols, Betsy Ross

Famous Person's Tea Party- The Kindergarten students will have an opportunity to learn about famous people/heroes that have had an incredible impact on the world in which we live through the Famous Person's Tea Party Program. Throughout the year, time will be set aside for the children to learn about various people that have made a place for themselves in our history. This program will be a collaborative effort between the parents and the teacher. The parents will choose a Famous Person that they would like to talk with the Kindergarten children about and will then be asked to present information on this individual through literature, special activities, projects, etc. (The teacher will assist with ideas and preparation, if requested). Children love to have parents visit the class and this is a wonderful way to spend time with your child- sharing time and teaching about the Famous Person that you feel exemplifies the virtues and life lessons that you would like to pass on to your child.

Scientist of the Week- Each week, one student will be chosen to assist Mrs. Moore in the weekly Science class and be the *Scientist of the Week*.

Culture Box-During the month of December, the children will learn about various cultures and traditions from around the world. In order to bring in a home-school connection and learn more about one another, the children will be asked to create a *Culture Box* at home and fill it with pictures, mementos, books, art, fabrics, recipes (or sample foods), etc. that tell about their culture(s) celebrated at home. The children will need guidance from the parents. This will give families a wonderful opportunity to discuss family culture and traditions throughout the holiday season. The children will then share their Culture Box with the class prior to the Winter Break.

Spanish: The year will start with a review of the basics: greetings, numbers, and colors. Listed below are the Spanish themes for the year. For each theme, the children will learn a song, share a Spanish book, and play games to reinforce vocabulary. Everyday expressions will also be taught throughout the year. Any questions or requests, please call Senora Hummel at 703-753-1014.

Sept.-Review Greetings/Colors
Oct. -Numbers 1-30/Calendar
Nov.-Classroom

Dec.-Christmas
Jan.-Body Parts
Feb.-Family

March-Animals
April-Food
May-Fiesta/Cinco de Mayo

Outdoor Play: Following Lunchtime each day, the class will go outside for twenty to thirty minutes to engage in large motor activities. The Kindergarten will have access to the playground equipment. The teacher and the assistant will reinforce safety rules, adequately supervise, and provide an alternative game or activity.

Lunch Time: The children will enjoy lunch with their classmates each day. Prayer will be offered and good manners will be encouraged. The lunch should be provided by the parent and sent into school on a daily basis. Please be sure to send in healthy foods that are nutritious and will provide an energy boost. Some suggestions are fruit, raw vegetables, yogurt, crackers, and pretzels. Please refrain from sending candy, chocolate, gum, pudding and sweets to school. Please note that even though parents will be providing lunch for their own child each day, it is still essential that the teacher be informed of any food allergies. Throughout the year, children will celebrate birthdays and special events where it may be necessary to provide an alternative food choice. **It is best for children with allergies to have a supply of an appropriate, safe treat for special days.** We are a peanut free school for all school wide events. It's best to be cautious. (I have enclosed a list of Safe/Unsafe snacks for a Peanut-free school. Please review it.) Thank you.

Special Once a Month Hot Lunch Opportunity- One Friday each month, we will be offering your child the opportunity to order out for a special hot lunch. At the start of that week, I will notify you of the choice that is available for that particular Friday (pizza, Mc Donald's) and the cost per child and you will have the opportunity to place an order for your child. If you choose not to order, your child may bring in their lunch from home. Since the children bring their lunch from home on a daily basis, we felt that this would be a nice change of pace and special treat for them to enjoy. More information regarding the Hot Lunch Program will be given in the upcoming weeks.

L.A.M.B. Program: Each day the children will enjoy a class period taught by a specialist in the following areas: Music/Movement (P.E.)-Mon. & Tues., Spanish-Wed., Science-Thurs., and Art-Friday. The children will also meet with a specialist once a month on Tuesday for a Story Time Workshop and Sign Language Class. The Kindergarten class will dismiss at 2:40 pm on the following days: Oct. 3, Nov. 14, Dec. 5, Jan. 2, Feb. 6, March 6, April 3, and May 1.

Homework-On Mondays, your child will bring home weekly homework activities. The assignment(s) for the week will be listed. Some weeks, there may be one activity that must be completed by everyone and other weeks there may be a few activities listed. The Homework assignments will be due on Friday of that week, but it can be returned any time during the week. Please help your child complete the activities and assist in correct letter formation.

Shortly after the start of the year, your child will bring home little books that they have already read at school. I highly recommend saving these books in a special space to revisit and reread throughout the year. We will refer to these books as "Shoe box Books." **These paper "Shoe box Books" will not need to be returned to school.** The books will go home as the children finish with them at school.

On Fridays, your child will also bring home their Poetry Anthology and their *Popcorn Words* (on a ring). Please have your child read the poems to you and review their words over the weekend. **The Poetry Books and the *Popcorn Words* must be returned on the following Monday. We will be using these items during the week at school.** Your child will feel successful and confident as a reader when given the opportunity to share this special time with you.

Progress Reports and Parent/Teacher Conferences

Progress reports will be distributed three times a year-in Nov., Jan., and May. The teacher will evaluate your child's progress in the following areas:

- ◆ Math
- ◆ Social Skills/Work Habits
- ◆ Reading
- ◆ Speaking & Listening
- ◆ Writing/Motor Development
- ◆ Social Studies
- ◆ L.A.M.B. Program (Spanish, Science, Art, Physical Ed., & Music)

Parent/Teacher conferences will occur in November (scheduled) and again in the spring (requested). Parents who wish to discuss their child's progress are encouraged to make an appointment for a conference. If you ever have a concern, please call the office number and leave a message. Your call will be returned as soon as possible. Parent/teacher communication is encouraged and very important.

Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (Pals)- Each child will take the pals screening in the fall and again in the spring. This screening will be used to assess the children in the following areas: phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, letter-sound knowledge, concept of word, and word recognition. The teacher will utilize the results of this assessment in the fall in order to tailor reading and writing lesson plans so that instruction is effective and individualized. These results will be shared with the parents during the fall conferences.

Classroom Management/Encouragement

Within the first week of school, expectations for the children regarding appropriate and inappropriate behavior within the classroom setting will be clearly set. I will seek the positive and place emphasis there. Children need to be encouraged with kind words and praise. They need to be in an environment where they are comfortable and confident. I will introduce the children to our class mascot who will assist us in looking for *good listeners*. As the year progresses, the children will have the opportunity to visit with our class mascot for special one-on-one time. The children will also strive to earn table points for working well with their peers and will periodically receive the opportunity to choose from our class treat basket.

The class will follow a *Green, yellow, red discipline plan* where each child starts their day on the color green. **Green signifies that we are on the ball and ready to Go!** The child is making the appropriate choices to do his/her best learning. **Yellow** signifies that he/she needs to **Slow Down and think about their choices**. **Red indicates that we need to Stop and take the time to discuss with parents the choices that were made that day** and how better choices can be made the next day. Your child will keep track of their days by filling in a weekly chart kept in their BANANA Book. Each day your child will be given a sticker (green, yellow, or red) that will indicate to the parent their child's progress for that particular day. This way, a parent is informed upon pick-up and can discuss the events of the day with their child.

Parental Involvement

Parents are always welcome! One of the key elements to a successful Kindergarten year is the support and involvement offered on behalf of the families. **With that in mind**, I will need volunteers throughout the year for the following activities:

- **Famous Person's Tea Party-I am requesting that each family volunteer for our Famous Person's Tea Party program. This will require a period of your time for one day this year.** (For more info.-please refer to the section on the Tea Parties).
- **Room Liaison (Room Mom) to help recruit volunteers and coordinate events**
- **Learning Center activities** (this would entail a more regular commitment of time-weekly or bi-monthly for about a 45 min. period of the day)
- Special school events
- Field trips
- Parties-Food, treats, supplies
- At-Home projects-making books, making a game

I truly appreciate your support and feel that the children strongly benefit from the teamwork between parents and teachers. Thank you for your time and dedication.

Weekly Plans/B.A.N.A.N.A Books (Business & News & Notes Altogether)

Every Friday a copy of the plans for the upcoming week will be sent home. Each plan will include the following:

- ◆ A brief description of the activities planned for various subjects throughout the day.
- ◆ A brief summary of the objectives/learning goals for the week.
- ◆ Highlights for upcoming events, special projects, etc.
- ◆ Important messages and special requests

Since the plan provides a layout of activities and skills addressed, it enables parents to discuss with their child exciting events of the day and offers the parent the opportunity to review particular skills at home as well. All assignments/projects completed throughout the week will be sent home on Fridays.

Magnificent Monkey /Birthday Celebrations

Throughout the year, each child will be honored as our *Magnificent Monkey* for their Birthday Celebration. The Friday **before** your child's special day (birthday), I will send home our special *Magnificent Monkey* Bag which includes a special friend, a journal, books, poems, etc. Please take time over the weekend to share with your child and have your child (w/ your assistance) complete the "*I am Magnificent*" book that is included. Please send the *Magnificent Monkey Bag* and the **Completed Book/Journal** back to school on Monday. The book/journal will be shared with the class and available for the children to look over and read on their own time. **Enclosed is a schedule for the year. Summer birthdays are celebrated on their half birthdays (or as close to it as possible).** You are welcome to come in and join us on your child's birthday and share a treat with the class. If you are interested in visiting the class that week, please let the teacher know the previous week. On your child's Celebrations Day, they will bring home the **Birthday Bag**. Please enjoy together and complete the journal page and return to school. **Thank you.**

What to Wear and What to Bring

The children should come to school dressed in comfortable, sturdy, washable play clothes. Their shoes should be rubber-soled shoes/sneakers that facilitate running and provide a safe traction for the playground equipment. We encourage the removal of hood/neck strings to avoid possible choking incidents both on and off the playground. Please be sure that clothing is easy to manage as to encourage independence and self-help skills. All jackets, coats, sweaters, hats, boots, mittens, etc. must be clearly marked with your child's name.

Please send in a change of clothes (appropriate for the season) in a labeled zip lock baggie that can remain at school throughout the year. In the event of an *accident*, it is best to be able to offer a fresh change of clothes. If a change of clothes is not available, the parent will be notified and the child will wait with the Director until the parent arrives with a clean change of clothes.

Your child should bring a Little Graces tote bag to school each day in order to carry their lunch and to bring home folders, class papers, and projects. **Please label your child's tote bag.** (Toys from home are not permitted).

Special Requests, Reminders, and Dates

- ◆ Emergency forms must be handed in by the first day of school. ****Please Note-**The form must be filled out with complete addresses for Emergency contacts. Thank you for taking the time to promptly complete and return these forms.
- ◆ Look for information in the upcoming months regarding special fall, winter, spring, and end of the year events.

****** ADDITIONAL NOTES ******

“It takes a whole village to raise a child.”

African Proverb

As the Kindergarten teacher at Little Grace’s Preschool, I am dedicated to the education of your child. I value each child as a special individual. I have an appreciation for their unique personality, skills, and needs. I intend to meet the needs of each child and provide a happy place for meaningful learning experiences. I will create a nurturing environment where skills will be developed and enriched. There is no substitute for a parent’s active involvement in their child’s education, but together we can support and guide them through their journey of academic and spiritual development. ***As a member of our village, I am honored to help raise and educate your child.***

Dear Parents,

I am delighted to be the Kindergarten teacher this year at Little Graces Preschool. With your encouragement, your child will be a part of many exciting and rewarding experiences this school year.

I have developed a classroom discipline plan that affords every student guidance in making good decisions about their behavior and thus an opportunity to learn in a positive, nurturing classroom environment. Your child deserves the most positive educational climate possible for his/her growth, and I know that together we will make a difference in this process. The plan below outlines the classroom rules and possible rewards and consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behavior. They are:

Rules:

1. Be a Good Listener & Learner-Follow Directions
2. Be Respectful -use kind words and keep hands, feet, objects to yourself/self control
3. Be Responsible- Complete tasks and responsibilities

To encourage students to follow these classroom rules, I will recognize appropriate behavior with praise and rewards. Expectations will be reasonable and clear. I will respect their feelings and offer them a secure, trusting environment. Children will **NOT** be disciplined through the following actions: corporal punishment, confinement, isolation, withholding or forcing of food, demeaning verbal remarks, or punishment from another child. Furthermore, children will **NOT** receive punishment for toileting accidents. If a student chooses to break a rule, the following steps **will** be taken:

1. The child will receive a reminder of what is expected. Appropriate behavior/choices will be encouraged.
2. The child will be asked to move from Green to Yellow-the child will be encouraged to slow down and think about the choice made and how the situation could be handled better next time (problem solve).
3. The child will be asked to move from Yellow to Red-Time-out from "free time" for the child. A note will be sent home stating the problem.
4. Visit the Director; call parents

Please note: If these measures fail to remedy an ongoing behavioral situation, a conference with the parents and teacher will be called to discuss a "team approach" to assist the child in making more appropriate behavior choices.

Please discuss this classroom discipline plan with your child. I am looking forward to working with you as a team to ensure the success of your child this year. Please sign and return the form below. Thank you.

Sincerely,

I have read the discipline plan and discussed the classroom rules with my child.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Comments/Questions:

Special Kindergarten Events through the Year

- **October-** Fall Harvest Party (Oct. 31)-Dress up in costumes
- **November-** Thanksgiving Feast (Nov. 20)
Fifties Fun Celebration (50th day of School-Nov. 27)
- **December-** Share Culture Boxes (Dec. 14 &15)
Family Breakfast & Service (Dec. 18)
- **February-** Fun with *Zero the Hero*-100th day of School (date varies)
Luau (Feb. 23)- Dress up in Luau/Beach attire
- **March-** Celebrate Reading
St. Patrick's Day Celebration (March 16)
- **May-** Kindergarten Opera Presentation- (TBA)
Spirit Days (TBA)
- **June-** Kindergarten Rising Up Ceremony (June 1)

Volunteer Sign-up Sheet

If you are interested in volunteering in the classroom throughout the year please sign up below. Be sure to include the day(s) and time(s) that you are available, along with a phone number where you can be reached. If you are willing and able to make a weekly commitment, please indicate below. I will review the list and contact individuals for confirmation and thereafter develop a schedule for volunteers. Those that have indicated that they would like to volunteer for special events only will be contacted prior to the event in order to make arrangements.

Please specify under availability whether you would be interested in volunteering on a regular basis for the Learning Center activities and/or for Special Events only.

Thank you!

Name and Phone number

Availability

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

Famous Person's Tea Party Schedule

Fridays (1:45-2:10 pm)

Please review the schedule below and let me know if this day works for you. If there is a conflict, I will be happy to make changes. If you need assistance or ideas, please let me know. I am so appreciative of your support. I feel that this is a wonderful way to capture our children's attention and introduce them to some of the many wonderful individuals that have had an impact on our world today. Thank You!

September 29

October 6

October 20

November 10

December 1

January 12

January 19

February 9

February 16

March 9

March 23

April 20

May 4

May 11

Johnny Appleseed (Chapman)

Christopher Columbus

Gabriela Mistral

Pocahontas

Mozart

Martin Luther King Jr.

Jackie Robinson

George Washington

Abraham Lincoln

Dr. Seuss

Helen Keller

TBA

Jane Goodall OR Diane Fossey

Betsy Ross



Play-dough Volunteers

If you would like to make play-dough for the children, please sign up below. We would prefer to have a fresh batch each month. The recipe is enclosed in the Back to School Booklet. Please be sure to double this recipe so that there will be enough play-dough for sixteen children. I will contact volunteers prior to their assigned month. Thank you.

Sept./Oct. _____

Nov./Dec _____

Jan./Feb. _____

March /April _____

May _____

Play-dough Recipe

- ◆ 2 cups flour
- ◆ 2 cups water
- ◆ 1 cup salt
- ◆ 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
- ◆ 2 tablespoons food coloring
- ◆ 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Directions: Combine all ingredients and mix well. Microwave approximately 8 minutes stopping about every minute to stir. Continue until it seems like bread dough. It will be hard to stir after the first few minutes, kneading might be necessary instead of stirring. Let cool, then separate into about 8-10 small balls. **Put each ball into a Ziploc baggie and seal.** If dough seems too sticky after cooling, it may need to cook a bit longer. Be sure not to overcook.

**** Please double this recipe****