

**Diocese of Wilmington**

**Early Childhood  
Guidelines  
Pre-Kindergarten 3**



2019



## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS**

We believe that all children are unique creations whose lives are a gift from God. We recognize that parents are the child's first teachers in the faith and prepare children for success in school by being involved in their child's education from birth.

We recognize and value every child's diversity in culture, home environment, development, learning style, and ability. Collaboration and partnership among all those associated with the child (parents, child-care professionals, teachers, health care providers, and community resources) contribute to the child's development and school success.

Children entering a three-year old or multi-age program in the Diocese of Wilmington must be three years old by August 31<sup>st</sup>.

Children entering Pre-Kindergarten Programs in the Diocese of Wilmington must be four years old by August 31<sup>st</sup>.

The following principles are the foundation for Pre-Kindergarten Programs in the schools of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington.

- Children will understand that prayer is a gift from God, and will be taught to pray.
- The child's work is their play and builds the foundation for later learning.
- Classroom environment and learning opportunities are developmentally appropriate and foster spiritual, cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and creative growth in the preschooler's educational experience.
- Multiple instructional modalities include hands-on learning, teacher-directed instruction, whole-group instruction, and peer interaction which fosters Kindergarten readiness.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Religious education during the early childhood years seeks to foster growth in a wider faith community. This is accomplished by educating our children in the ways of our faith through knowledge and practice.

### **Knowledge of Faith**

- Identify that God created all things
- Demonstrates understanding that God calls us to be kind and loving
- Understand that making the Sign of the Cross is a way to show respect to God
- Recognize that Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are the Holy Family
- Learn and participate in daily prayers

### **Liturgical Education**

- Learn the liturgical seasons of the Church: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter
- Learn about the Saints and their Feast days
- Learn the appropriate gestures for Mass celebration

### **Moral Formation**

- Understand that life is a gift from God and that we must care for all living things
- Demonstrate understanding that God calls us to be kind and loving to all people
- Demonstrate the ability to express sorrow when we have hurt others and to forgive others when they apologize for wrong doing

### **Learning to Pray**

- Learn that prayer is a way that we talk to God
- Attempt to make the Sign of the Cross
- Learn and participate in daily prayers (*morning prayer /grace before meal/ end of day prayer*)
- Learn to be respectful and reverent during prayer and religious activities

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT**

Language and literacy development is an integral part of early childhood education. The following skills will be taught and integrated during formal and informal classroom instruction and play in the preschool program. Parents are also encouraged to provide experiences that will help children to learn these skills as they prepare to enter preschool.

### **Language**

- Communicate to be understood by peers and adults
- Using an appropriate volume to speak
- Communicate using words appropriate to the situation
- Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly
- Respond to hearing his/her name
- Demonstrate understanding of messages in conversation by listening and responding appropriately
- Follow one to two step directions

### **Literacy/Reading Readiness**

- Show and interest in books and/or engage in reading-related activities
- Interacts with a variety of types of texts (stories, poems, nursery rhymes, songs)
- Listens with interest to a story
- Begins to answer questions related to a story that has been read or told
- Hold a book upright, turn pages from the front of the book to the back
- Develops knowledge of the alphabet
- Shows an awareness of print including name
- Begins to form the letters of his/her first name
- Uses scribbles, symbols, or drawings to express experience through pictures and play

## **MATHEMATICS EDUCATION**

The mathematics curriculum in the preschool program provides young children with knowledge and practice in understanding numbers, geometry and spatial relations, patterns and measurement, data collection and problem solving.

### **Number Sense**

- Become aware of numbers 0 to 10
- Begin to use language to compare numbers of objects (*less than, greater than, equal to*)
- Learns how numbers relate to everyday life
- Count in sequential order from 1 to 10
- Use 1:1 correspondence when counting objects up to 10
- Identifies numerals 0 - 10 in print
- Begins using ordinal numbers to describe the position of objects (*first, second, third, etc.*)

### **Geometry and Spatial Sense**

- Recognizes and names two dimensional shapes
- Identifies positional terms (*top, bottom, middle*)
- Able to put together/take apart puzzles
- Begin to recognize the concept of same and different
- Shows an basic awareness of symmetry
- Begins to understand basic time intervals (*morning, afternoon, evening*)
- Begins to use language to describe an understanding of time (*days of the week, months, years, seasons, yesterday, today, tomorrow*)

### **Patterning and Measuring**

- Create and extend simple repeating patterns
- Participates in activities that include measuring
- Begin to use non-standard units of measurement

## **Data Collection and Problem Solving**

- Compare and contrast objects
- Sort, categorize, classify, and order objects in a series or group according to one or two attributes (size, color, etc.)
- Contribute, display, and interpret simple graphs
- Make predictions based on observation/information

## **SCIENCE EDUCATION**

Young children are naturally curious and enjoy exploring and asking questions. The teaching of Science in Pre-Kindergarten builds upon this natural curiosity and exploration by providing the time, skills, and structures to help children formulate and investigate their questions. Children in Pre-Kindergarten are expected to learn both the content and process of science.

### **Knowledge**

- Observe, describe, and discuss the natural world: living and non-living things, natural processes, and weather
- Learn about the environment and how to respect and care for it
- Become aware of ideas and language related to time (i.e. daily routines, order of events)
- Develop awareness and beginning understanding of changes in materials and cause-effect relationships

### **Scientific Skills and Methods**

- Use the five senses to gather information and explore the environment
- Learn to use simple measuring devices and concepts to gather information, investigate, and observe processes and relationships
- Participate in simple investigations to test observations, discuss and draw conclusions, and form generalizations
- Collect, describe and record information through a variety of means (i.e. discussion, drawings, maps, graphs, and charts)
- Observe and discuss differences and similarities among objects
- Develop an understanding of drawings, graphs, charts, and maps as a means of recording observations
- Explore the environment through hands-on activities using simple scientific tools such as magnifying glasses, measuring devices, and the five senses
- Learn to make predictions, articulate explanations and generalizations

## **CREATIVE ARTS**

Exposure and instruction in music, art, movement, and dramatic play, nurture the creative side of a child's early education. Besides formal instruction in these subjects, the early childhood environment lends itself to the integration of the creative arts in the daily routine of the classroom and play.

### **Music**

- Participate in a variety of musical activities
- Recall and imitate patterns, songs, rhythms, and rhymes
- Experiences music from a variety of cultures

### **Movement**

- Use movement to reinforce learning in all curricular areas
- Demonstrate through movement an awareness of different musical tempos, patterns, and beats

### **Art**

- Recognize and name basic colors
- Experience and use a variety of art media (play dough, paint, etc.)
- Create drawings, paintings, and other creations
- Express ideas through artistic creations

### **Dramatic Play**

- Participate in a variety of dramatic play activities
- Use creativity and imagination when assuming different roles in pretend-play situations



## **EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Classroom environment and learning opportunities are developmentally appropriate and foster spiritual, cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and creative growth in the preschooler's educational experience. While allowing the child to develop and mature at his/her own pace, the following indicators provide a guide for appropriate development of the child.

### **Self-Concept**

- Develop and express a positive awareness of self
- Develop independence in a range of activities, routines, and tasks
- Demonstrate satisfaction when completing task or solving a problem
- Maintain individuality as well as a positive sense of self within a group

### **Self-Control**

- Express feelings, needs, and opinions appropriately while respecting others
- Begin to understand how actions affect others; accept consequences of negative actions
- Follow simple rules and routines
- Use materials purposefully, safely, and respectfully
- Learn to solve problems in a positive manner

### **Cooperation**

- Begin to use compromise, negotiations, and discussions in working, playing, and resolving conflicts with peers
- Demonstrate ability to give/take during peer interactions by helping, sharing, and discussing
- Learn to take turns in games or using materials
- Be a helpful member in a group

### **Social Relationships**

- Accept guidance and directions from a range of familiar adults
- Show ability to develop friendships with peers
- Express empathy and care for others
- Communicate with familiar adults in an appropriate and comfortable manner
- Demonstrate positive social skills and manners

## **Knowledge of Self, Families, Communities**

- Know full name
- Identify their own gender
- Recognize similarities and respect differences among people such as gender, race, special needs, culture, language, and family structures
- Learn about community helpers
- Understand the structures of home, classroom, school, and parish
- Learn caution in unfamiliar and/or potentially dangerous situations

## **PERSONAL CARE**

### **Self-Help Skills**

- Become independent when dressing oneself
- Become independent in personal care and hygiene
- Learn to follow basic health and safety rules
- Manages bathroom needs independently (see attached contract)
- Become aware of good nutrition and manners while eating
- Able to clean up after oneself during lunch/snack

## **MOTOR DEVELOPMENT**

### **Fine Motor Development**

- Develop strength, dexterity, and control needed to use tools such as scissors, play dough, and writing tools/materials
- Develop hand-eye coordination in building with blocks, assembling puzzles, stringing beads, and using scissors
- Shows progress in using writing and art tools and various types of technology

### **Gross Motor Development**

- Develop an awareness of one's own body
- Learn control and balance in walking, climbing, running, jumping, hopping, marching, and creative movement
- Improve coordination in throwing, catching, kicking balls, and using playground equipment