

# Parent Handbook

Full Day Junior Kindergarten at  
St. Gabriel School

2025-26



9935 Johnnycake Ridge Road • Concord, Ohio 44060

440/352-6169

[www.St-GabrielSchool.org](http://www.St-GabrielSchool.org)

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Being CHRIST ~ Every Day ~ Everywhere,  
through teaching, learning, leading and serving.

### **Our Belief Statements:**

We believe that we are all made in the image and likeness of God and all members of the St. Gabriel Community deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.

We believe that the Catholic faith is at the center of our teaching and learning.

We believe in living our Mission each day and leading by example.

We believe that each child has unique needs and talents and we celebrate differences.

We believe in working with our students so they can reach their fullest potential.

We believe all learning is a life-long process and strive to instill a love of learning in our students.

We believe that learning is a team effort between the student, their family and St. Gabriel School.

We believe in providing a strong and challenging academic curriculum and impactful instruction based on current best practices.

We believe in fostering critical thinking, problem solving, and directing the students to apply their knowledge in everyday experiences.

We believe in developing the God given talents in our students for use in service to others.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

To communicate the Gospel message of Jesus Christ by providing the child opportunities to play, be creative, explore and question.

To become a member of a larger, structured Christian community which fosters respect and serving God and others.

To develop an awareness of the sacraments by immersing them in the fundamentals of Christian living.

To provide opportunities to interact with their peers in order to enhance their social development.

To participate in praising and worshipping God by celebrating simple prayer experiences.

To develop an understanding of the Catholic tradition through participation in a faith community, sensory based experiences, stories and songs.

To develop their knowledge and skills in basic academic subject areas.

To develop a greater sense of self-confidence and to promote respect for self, others and the environment.

To celebrate the joys of being a child of God.

## **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Incorporating the goals stated above at home and during family encounters.

Completing all forms and making payments on a timely basis.

Being on time when dropping off or picking up your child.

Keeping your child home when ill or contagious or fevered.

Reporting your child's absence by calling the school.

Dressing your child appropriately in uniform for indoor and outdoor play.

Discussing problems or concerns with the teacher and/or principal and avoiding criticism of the teacher or school policy.

## **SCHOOL**

St. Gabriel School:

9935 Johnnycake Ridge Road | 440-352-6169

General school hours are Monday-Friday, 7:20 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The school is not in operation during evening hours or on Saturday and Sunday. After hours, messages may be left on the school voicemail.

## **JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN STAFF**

All staff are made up of persons qualified to teach and aide in school. Each classroom will have a lead teacher and an assistant. The lead teachers hold a bachelor's college degree, licensed pre-K to Third Grade by the Ohio Dept. of Education. All staff will be trained in first-aid, communicable disease, awareness of child abuse and CPR. They will be required to take professional development to maintain all necessary credentials.

## **STAFF/CHILD RATIO & MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE**

The Junior Kindergarten classrooms will not exceed the following state required ratios (teacher/student):

- 1:14 four & five year olds
- 35 Square foot per child in designated classrooms.
- Because we desire to provide a higher level of quality care we will strive to maintain a 1:10 ratio for Junior Kindergarten staffed by two qualified adults; a lead teacher and aide.

### **LICENSED CENTER**

The facility is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Education. This license is posted in a conspicuous place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on Junior Kindergarten's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing law and rules governing child care are available for review at the facility upon request.

The administrator and each employee of the Junior Kindergarten is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, ORC, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent, custodian, or guardian of a child enrolled in Junior Kindergarten shall be permitted unlimited access to the facility during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the facility, or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of their presence.

Rosters of the names and telephone numbers of the parents or guardians of the children attending Junior Kindergarten are available upon request. The parent roster will not include the name or telephone number of any parent who requests that their name or telephone number not be included.

The licensing inspection reports and complaint investigation reports, for the current licensing period, are posted in a conspic-

uous place in the facility for review.

The licensing record including compliance report forms, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments are available for review upon request from the Ohio Department of Education.

It is unlawful for the school to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101et seq.

### **ADMISSIONS / AGE AND TYPE OF PROGRAM**

A child attending the Junior Kindergarten must be four years old on or before **September 30th to enter the current school year**. All students participate in an assessment prior to start to ensure success.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

St. Gabriel will not discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

### **SCHOOL YEAR**

The St. Gabriel School will be in session from 3rd/4th week of August and ending typically the last week of May. A yearly calendar is accessible at [St-GabrielSchool.org](http://St-GabrielSchool.org) at all times. This calendar should be consulted to determine school breaks, holidays, etc.

### **REGISTRATION POLICY**

Registration of children will take place in January. An application must be completed and then will be reviewed for acceptance. St. Gabriel parishioners (those who are registered in the parish, attend and contribute, and/or volunteer consistently) and those with school siblings are given first priority. Remaining available spaces will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.

After acceptance into the program, registration forms must be returned with a non-refundable instructional fee to reserve a space for a student. A student will not be considered as enrolled until the registration fee is paid. The school reserves the right to assess all incoming children to determine readiness for the program. All children must be toilet trained before entering the program. Children **cannot** wear pull-ups at school.

### **WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

Parents are asked to submit in writing if they plan to withdraw their child at least one month in advanced.

### **REPORTING ABSENCE**

Please call the school at 440-352-6169 if your child is absent or planning to be absent.

If the illness is of a contagious nature, please notify the school immediately.

If the absence is a scheduled vacation or time off, please inform your teacher.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSING**

If the Mentor Schools and/or Riverside Schools are closed due to weather, St. Gabriel will also be closed. Please check your email and news stations for closings. If there is an emergency which only affects St. Gabriel School, parents will be notified via an e-blast. Planned calamity days are in the calendar. Parents will be notified if used.

### **HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

A weekly newsletter and monthly calendar will be sent home to inform parents of classroom activities, special events, and any other important news.

The teacher may also maintain her webpage with information as well as use email for communication.

The school at large will communicate through weekly Bear Essentials on email to communicate school community activities and events.

Conferences will be held twice a year in late fall and early Spring in the form of Kindergarten assessment. Conferences can also be requested at any time by parents or by teacher.

### **TUITION AND FEES**

Tuition is determined yearly by the St. Gabriel Budget Committee. Tuition may be paid monthly or annually. Tuition policy is to be followed as outlined in the Tuition Policy Agreement signed by parents or guardians.

### **STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE**

St. Gabriel School is called to be a community based on the shared acceptance of the message and challenge of the Gospel. Growth in self-discipline, a healthy responsibility for Catholic moral values, and a loving respect for the rights of all persons are encouraged and nourished.

### **GUIDANCE POLICY**

The goal of guidance is for each child to achieve self-regulation. Good guidance is founded on a loving and caring relationship between adults and children. Setting clear and fair behavioral limits that are enforced consistently and regularly are key elements in a positive disciplinary practice. This policy applies to all staff and parents while they are at the school. To prevent children from hurting themselves and others. To prevent the destruction of property, materials, and equipment. Limits help define the boundaries of behavior for children.

The following developmentally appropriate practices will be used:

Children will be guided to appropriate behavior by setting clear and consistent expectations for classroom behavior.

Positive reinforcement will be used to encourage preferred behavior, for example, “You are showing patience. When you wait your turn, this helps everyone get a turn. Thank you!”

Using their mistakes as learning opportunities.

Guiding children to resolve conflicts using their words rather than physical force.

Helping children to verbalize the problem and then mediate the situation as they devise solutions to their own problems.

Redirecting children to more appropriate behavior or to another activity.

If a child is having difficulty with self-control after two to three weeks of school the teacher will initiate a conference (and/or a class observation time) with the parents to discuss the situation. A plan of action for the child will be set up at that time with input from both the teacher and parents (and school principal, if necessary). If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive to the class and the child is unable to practice self-control after an additional three weeks, a conference with the school Principal, and other school resources will be held to help the child. In extreme cases of violence, hurting others or themselves, or destructing property, dismissal from school will be necessary.

We will also adhere to all licensing rules of :

*A school staff member in charge of a child or a group of children shall be **responsible for their discipline.***

The written **discipline policy** describes the St. Gabriel School philosophy of discipline and the methods of discipline. This written policy shall be on file at the school for review. Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are to be used at all times, and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking w/ child about the situation, and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.

**Behavior management/discipline policies and procedures** ensure the safety, physical, and emotional well-being of all individuals on the premises.

The **school's methods of discipline** apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

- (1) There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- (2) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
- (3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- (4) No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.
- (5) No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.
- (6) Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- (7) Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
- (8) Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use, and food shall not be used as a reward for behavior.
- (9) Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.
- (10) The school shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the Jr Kindergarten program.

The **guardian** of a child enrolled in the school **receives the school's written discipline policy.**

All preschool **staff members shall receive a copy of the school's discipline policy** for review upon employment.

### **DRESS CODE**

Junior Kindergarten children wear red polo style red shirts (long or short sleeved) with khaki bottoms (shorts, skorts, skirts, pants-all ok) with gym/soft sole shoes with Velcro. School spirit sweat-shirts may also be worn.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Please label all clothes and personal items. Lost & Found articles will be placed in a box in the office/gym office. Periodically all unclaimed articles will be sent to various missions. Lost valuables will be locked up and can be claimed through the teacher.

### **HEALTH AND ACCIDENT PROCEDURES**

St. Gabriel School staff is trained in first-aid and CPR. In case of minor injuries or illness, the child will be treated by school health aide and parent will be called. In the case of more serious medical situations, the school furnishes an emergency authorization form which directs the school's course of action in each individual case. **It is essential that the parent notify the school of changes of phone number, address, email, or employment throughout the school year so this information is always up-to-date. An accident report will be completed and sent home if necessary.**

In case of an emergency and/or accident, the school will follow the posted medical and dental emergency plan. The school will administer first aid, summon emergency transportation (if necessary) and contact parents.

An incident/injury report will be completed and given to the person picking up the child on the day of the incident/injury, if any of the following occur:

The child has an illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid.

The child receives a bump or blow to the head.

The child has to be transported by emergency squad.

An unusual or unexpected event occurs which jeopardizes the safety of the child.

If a child requires emergency transportation, the report shall be available within twenty-four hours after the incident occurs. The report shall be reviewed with the parent, and shall be signed by the child's teacher, the principal or nurse of the facility, and the parent. Copies of the report are placed in the child's school file, in a special "incident/injury" file at the school and given to the parent.

The school **WILL NOT** transport children in an emergency medical situation. EMS will provide transportation if needed.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS CARE POLICY**

For the care of child with special needs, a written care plan will be required from a physician/medical person/parent. This written medical care plan will be followed after approval by the administrator. The plan will be kept in the child's file for reference.

### **HEALTH REPORTS**

All health forms and immunization forms must be completed in full and are due on or before the first day of school. Please advise the office immediately regarding any delays.

### **CONTAGIOUS DISEASE**

Parents are asked to contact the school immediately when their child has been diagnosed as having a contagious condition. This includes strep throat, head lice, and chicken pox. **When a child has been home with an illness, the child should not return to school until free of symptoms and temperature has been normal for at least 24 hours.** If they are **not** symptom free, a doc-

tor's note will be required stating that the child is not contagious. Notice of the contagious diseases is sent home to parents of children who are exposed in the school and a general announcement will be posted on the school bulletin board.

### **STREPT THROAT CULTURES**

If a child has had a throat culture, he/she should be kept home the following day until the results of the culture are known.

### **DISMISSIAL DUE TO ILLNESS**

When a teacher suspects a child is ill, or when a child becomes ill or injured during the school day and needs to go home, the child will be isolated until a parent or other responsible party can be reached to pick them up.

Staff will be trained in communicable disease so they can recognize any signs and symptoms of illness. Proper hand washing and disinfection procedures will be reviewed and taught to all staff and children. This review shall be given to each new employee and discussed periodically at staff meetings.

No staff member shall attend the school if they exhibit signs of communicable diseases. The administrator reserves the right to request a physician's note for a staff member to return to work.

The "Communicable Disease Chart" from the Ohio Department of Health is posted in the class for review by parents and staff.

Children with minor cold symptoms, or those not feeling well enough to participate, will be observed within the group and monitored for worsening conditions.

A child with the following symptoms will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or guardian:

- Diarrhea (more than one time)
- Severe coughing (whooping) (red/blue face)
- Difficult or rapid breathing

- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)
- Temperature of 100°+ with other signs or illness
- Untreated infected skin patches
- Dark urine/gray or white stool
- Sore throat/difficulty swallowing
- Stiff neck
- Vomiting
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation

A child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be isolated immediately and observed for worsening symptoms. The parent will be notified and a decision will be made by the administrator and parent or guardian whether the child should be discharged. Anytime a child is isolated they will be kept within the sight of a staff member. The cot and any linens used will be washed and disinfected before being used again.

### **MILDLY ILL POLICY**

If children are exhibiting symptoms of being mildly ill (i.e. cold symptoms) and are not feeling well enough to participate in activities, we will call the parents to inform them of symptoms to be sure they are aware.

### **ALL MEDICATIONS**

#### **Oral, Topical, or Inhalation**

Only the school nurse or trained health aide will administer medications to a child. The guardian must complete a **Request for Medication** form from doctor prescribing medicine. This form can be found on website. All proper sections must be completed in the form. Medications will be stored in clinic inaccessible to children. Medications may **NOT** be stored in a child's book bag. The only exception to this requirement is for school age children that require the immediate use of an inhaler for a medical condition.

**PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS** must be in their original

container and administered in accordance to instructions on the label. Over the counter medications will not be administered without instructions from a physician. If parents request any different dosages or uses, a physician must provide written instructions on the Request for Medication form.

When medications of any type are administered, the day and time are documented, logged and kept for one year.

### **HAND WASHING PROCEDURE**

All students are instructed in proper hand washing techniques. Hands are washed before any snack is eaten and after using the bathroom. Public health standards and hand washing and disinfecting procedures are followed by the school employees.

### **NUTRITION**

A nutritious snack is served daily. Parents should inform the school of any modified diet, food allergies, or special needs of the child. Water bottles are encouraged to be brought daily and labeled clearly to keep children properly hydrated.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

Outdoor play opportunities will be provided as weather conditions permit. Children will not be taken outside when the temperature (wind chill and heat index factored in) drop below 20 degrees or rise above 90 degrees or during threatening weather. Outdoor play will be supervised by both classroom teachers. Teachers shall watch for potential hazards while observing children and shall actively supervise to prevent injury. In the event that an emergency situation should occur while outdoors, two-way communication devices (walkie-talkies) will be used so that another adult will be summoned without leaving the group unsupervised.

**Children should be dressed for possible outdoor play on any given day.**

On days that outdoor play is not provided, we will include time for indoor gross motor activities.

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

Parents of children may wish to send a simple treat for the class on the occasion of their child's birthday. If the child's birthday is in the summer, the birthday can be celebrated on their half birthday. Please check with the child's teacher on the date you would like to celebrate. Children may dress up on their birthday.

### **VISITORS**

All visitors to the school will be required to identify themselves at the office. Parents or guardians of a child enrolled in the pre-school are welcome to visit the school at any time after contacting the child's teacher or the office. Parents are also permitted access to all parts of the school during the orientation meeting. Parents or guardians wishing to help in classroom activities or field trips of any type must have VIRTUS training. Training times can be found on the parish website: St-Gabriel.org

### **SCHOOL'S RIGHT TO AMEND**

The school retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be promptly be notified in writing if changes are made.

### **SUPERVISION PROCEDURES**

**No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.**

### **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

#### **Morning Arrival**

Morning arrival procedures are in place with safety of all and positive start for the school day as the priorities.

- All cars, buses and student transportation vans enter "Entrance Only" driveway between the school and church.
- Students being driven to school as **car riders** must be driven

around to the back (north) side of school and dropped off at the back Delivery Entrance door C-9.

- **Front (bus only) and back (car rider) school entrance doors are opened for students' arrival at 7:20am.** School staff are on duty at both entrances between 7:20 and 7:50am.

- **Cars may not drive up to the front Office door to drop off children between 7:20 and 7:50am, but must drive around to the Delivery Entrance door C-9 or park and walk in A3 doors.**

- If it is necessary for a parent to come in to the school Office alone or with their child, the car must be parked in the parking lot near the church, and then everyone walks to the Office door. **Students and adults must follow and stay within marked coned walking areas.**

- Above all, whether parents are driving/walking anywhere in the lot, they must be extra alert, go slow, follow directions and signs, and be courteous. We ask that you follow all driving safety rules and respect the safety of all by NOT USING CELL PHONES WHILE DRIVING THROUGH PARKING LOT.

- Junior Kindergarten has a special system for morning arrival the first day of school. This includes a delayed start with less traffic and people so the routine can be established. If there is parent-child separation issue, the teacher and administration will work collaboratively with parents to resolve the issue in a timely and positive manner.

### Starting Time

7:20 am	School doors open, students may go to classrooms
7:45 am	Warning bell for JK-8
7:50 am	Tardy bell, prayer, morning announcements

### Afternoon Dismissal

- Afternoon dismissal procedures are in place, for a safe and positive end to the day.
- NOTE: Persons picking up students must be the family's authorized list and all must show legal identification (such as driver's license).
- After school clubs, sports groups, scouts, etc. come down with car riders and meet their leader, coach, etc. in the MPR.
- Again, above all, whether parents are driving anywhere in the lot, or walking anywhere in the lot, they must be extra alert, go slow, and be courteous. Also we ask that you follow all driving safety rules by and respect the safety of all by NOT USING CELL PHONES WHILE DRIVING THROUGH PARKING LOT.

### Dismissal Time

**2:30 pm**—Junior Kindergarten students will be picked up by guardians from their alphabetically designated door:

**Door B5:** A to G

Kindergarten Hall Door that opens to playground by shrine.

**Door A4:** H to R

Brady Hall/MPR Doors by small parking lot

**Door A3:** S to Z

Main Office Doors that crosswalk leads to

No child is allowed to go from the school to a car in the parking lot unless accompanied by an adult.

Those staying after for Cub Care will remain in the Junior Kindergarten rooms with staff. See Cub Care Handbook for pick up procedures from Cub Care.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Student safety is of highest importance to us. In order to manage a safe, orderly dismissal process which helps all of our students to successfully arrive at their after-school destination safely, we ask that everyone continue to respectfully follow the procedures below:

**All non-emergency after school plans must be made prior to 1:00pm.**

Messages are delivered to teachers at 1:45pm and we want to make every effort to honor your after school transportation plans.

Students who require early dismissal must be picked up no later than 2:00 pm.

### **Phone Calls/Communications during the School Day**

- Parents are asked not to call their child on any personal phone or device during school hours. In case of an emergency from guardians, the office should be called, and a message will be delivered to the student(s).
- Please be aware that because of dismissal preparations it becomes very difficult to deliver messages after 1:50pm. In case of an emergency or serious need from students (such as forgotten glasses, medicine), students may use the office telephone with the permission of the administration. They may NOT use a personal device.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The school has several phones located throughout the school building and office areas. These phones are also connected to the St. Gabriel parish office. The school also has professional grade walkie talkies for emergency preparedness and dismissal.

The school will have monthly safety drills varying at different times of each month. These drills will be recorded and dates are available for review.

Tornado drills will be conducted several times during the year.

A fire emergency and weather alert plan are posted in each classroom showing the plan of action to be taken. The plan will include an evacuation route. The staff is responsible for following the plans.

All staff will be required to be trained in CPR to meet the requirements in State Rule 5101:2-12-31.

In conjunction with the Lake County Emergency Management Agency and the Mentor School District (to which we belong), the following plan has been developed to protect students should an emergency at the Perry Nuclear Power Plant occur:

**Site Area Emergency** – students will be held at the school beyond normal dismissal time and will await parent pickup.

**General Emergency** – if this type of emergency is declared and an evacuation has been recommended for the area in which we are located, students will be bused directly to our receiving school, St. Mary's-Mentor. Teachers will proceed to the church with the children to board buses for St. Mary's. Teachers will accompany children to St. Mary's and attendance will be taken before and after arrival at the school. Should indications be made for distribution of potassium iodide (KI) to children (per written permission) will be done at this time.

In the event that a THREAT LEVEL RED is announced by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the following procedure will be followed:

**RED ALERT** – if the alert is announced when school is in session, the school building will be secured and children will remain until regular dismissal times *unless otherwise directed by the Lake County Emergency Management Agency* (see General Emergency procedures, above).

### **CHILD ABUSE**

A staff member will immediately notify the Lake County Department of Job & Family Services when the staff member suspects that a child has been abused or neglected.

### **WATER SAFETY**

Water play in the classroom will be limited to a small water table with only 6" of water. They will be playing in the water by using

cups and pitchers and various water utensils. Children will not be going swimming or wading in water at the school.

### **AEROSOLS**

Aerosol sprays will not be used in the school when the children are present.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

The Junior Kindergarten program does not partake in field trips due to transportation limitations.

### **PARKING**

**Parents may only park in main school/parish lot** of the school for all school activities. Children cannot be left unattended in a parked car. **CELL PHONES MAY NOT BE USED DURING** pick up and drop off to ensure safety. Cars may not be left running at anytime.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parent involvement in the school is an integral part to the success of the child's education. The first step of parent involvement is for the parent to keep informed of the school's activities. This can be accomplished by checking the child's book bag daily and reading the monthly/weekly e-mails and calendars. Announcements may be sent home. Parents may email or call the teacher at anytime with questions or concerns. You are welcome to take this opportunity to discuss your child's needs and progress with teacher. In addition to the two scheduled parent conference days, a conference may be held at any time the parent and/or teacher feels it is necessary.

### **ORIENTATION**

An orientation meeting will be scheduled the week prior to start of school to provide parents with a general overview of the coming school year. Also at this time, parents can meet their child's teacher, look at the classroom, and ask questions about specific

classroom procedures.

### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

Parents will be invited to participate in various programs throughout the school year. They may also be invited to several programs where the children will demonstrate some of the songs, finger plays, and activities they have learned.

### **CONFLICT**

Every parent should contact the teacher or staff member when assistance is needed with problems or concerns related to our Jr K class. Parents are encouraged to discuss and resolve the difficulty directly with the teacher. If this approach does not work, the parent can schedule a meeting with the teacher and/or principal.

### **CURRICULUM**

A quality school should be designed to suit the developmental needs of young children, promoting their spiritual, emotional, social, physical, and intellectual growth.

The curriculum will be center based, using an integrated approach where learning occurs through active exploration and interaction in a "hands on" environment.

Multisensory activities that enhance the total development of the child are planned in a sequential manner that follows a theme or is a part of a unit.

The components comprising the curriculum of a quality preschool program are:

### **RELIGIOUS READINESS**

This is an integral part of the Catholic parochial school. It is the preparation time for more formal instruction in the years ahead. Religious readiness involves the development of a positive self-image in relationship to a loving God. This basis for a deep love

of God comes from the examples set by the family and spiritual life of the parish community. A child's sense of God comes from the warm atmosphere of love and acceptance in the school environment where the child learns about God's wonderful world. Classroom prayer and Children's Liturgy of the Word (on Wednesday mornings) are appropriate to the child's developmental level, prepare him/her to participate in the celebration of the Church.

## **LANGUAGE**

Language is the development of communication skills that enable a child to share his/her world with others. At the school level, these skills include listening, speaking, and thinking. Transferring thoughts into words is the primary skill upon which future language development is based. Learning experiences that promote an understanding of the sense of self, help the child express his/her thoughts and feelings in various ways. An awareness of the five senses will stimulate the child's curiosity as to the different ways his/her body receives information about life around him/her. Visual discrimination and memory, and auditory discrimination and memory, are important readiness skills that can be taught through play activities. Listening to and sharing stories, poetry and finger plays, as well as writing classroom stories about field trips, events, etc., enhances the love of language.

## **PERSONAL/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Personal/social development is the primary goal for the young child entering school. A positive self-concept is essential to successful learning. The more a child understands himself/herself, the better equipped he/she is to relate to other children and adults. Basic social interaction between two children, the teacher and a child, and as a member of a group, provide ways in which the child establishes autonomy and learns skills to help him/her relate to his/her world.

Personal development includes knowing name and age, eventually

learning address, phone number and birthdate, separating from parent with relative ease, caring for own belongings and respecting others.

Social development includes cooperative play, sharing, following directions, initiating conversations and play situations with peers, entering into group activities, developing a positive relationship with teachers and caring about others.

## **MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS**

A positive social development includes an awareness on the part of the child of the similarities and differences in family life styles and cultures.

Self-concept activities, stories, field trips, and holiday customs are a few multicultural activities that enhance the child's awareness that people are alike in many ways, but may have different ways of expressing themselves.

## **PLAY**

"With the young child, his work is his play and his play is his work." Children learn by doing. They need opportunities and experiences to explore, ask questions, test out their theories and draw conclusions. Play is the cornerstone of learning for the young child. What starts out as fun and play gradually turns into a learning experience. All play activities hold the potential for growth and learning. Playing teaches children about themselves and their world. Play is a way of life for children. St. Gabriel's school will offer young children the opportunities to learn and grow through planned developmentally appropriate curriculum that has its roots in play.

## **ART**

Art for the young child focuses on process rather than product. Art is a process of exploring and discovering, for example, what happens when two colors are swirled together or when crayons are placed on a warming tray. Art is being creative and enjoying the

“doing” of the activity. Imagination and materials are the only tools needed to be creative. The school ART program at St. Gabriel will have a variety of materials and medium with which to work. Our emphasis will be to encourage discovery and creativity in the young child.

### **MUSIC AND MOVEMENT**

Music is a channel for creative expressions in two ways: The manner in which sounds are communicated by the music-maker and the emotional and physical response that sound evokes from the listener. Singing, listening to music, using rhythm instruments and making instruments, dancing, and other rhythmic activities are ways of developing a love and appreciation for music. Rhythm and movement provide an outlet for creative expression and the joy of using the body in dance, games, and organized play.

### **MOTOR SKILLS**

Motor skills are a vital part of the young child’s development and are crucial to the learning skills he/she will need in the future. The school child learns with his/her body. These motor skills are not to be overlooked in favor of cognitive skills.

#### **Gross Motor:**

Body coordination, as appropriate to the child’s physical development is enhanced through large muscle activities of walking, running, jumping, and hopping. Hand-eye coordination is attained by throwing a large ball or bean bag, catching and aiming at a target. Games which require adherence to strict and limiting rules, however, are not appropriate for young children.

#### **Fine Motor:**

Eye-hand coordination is developed through manipulating clay, stringing beads, hammering, pasting, crayoning, painting, pouring, lacing, and using scissors. Dexterity and strength of the small muscles are developing skills that enhance reading and

writing readiness. Use of the natural hand preference is observed and encouraged, although hand dominance is not yet achieved. Eye tracking is another fine motor activity that promotes the left-to-right progression skill required for reading readiness.

### **CHILD EVALUATION**

*Parent Conferences:* Junior Kindergarten families will have the opportunity to have parent conferences twice a year. The conferences will promote a greater understanding of the needs and growth patterns of the child, as well as strengthen home-school communications. Any time a parent wishes to see a teacher, an appointment may be made with the teacher for a mutually convenient time. Teachers will regularly communicate with parents.

### **RELATED ARTS SCHEDULE:**

The teacher will give you a Related Arts Schedule at the beginning of the year. These classes will include Art, Physical Education, Music, Spanish, and STEM.

### **A NOTE ON NAP TIME:**

At St. Gabriel, we value rest as an important part of a young child’s day. Each afternoon, children will have a designated quiet time to nap or rest on individual cots in a calm, peaceful environment.

To help your child feel comfortable, we will provide or the family may provide an all-in-one nap roll (which includes an attached blanket and pillow) that rolls and velcros closed for easy storage and transport. Please label your child’s nap roll clearly with their name. The size should not exceed 21” x 50”.

While not all children may fall asleep, we do expect everyone to rest quietly during this time. Children who do not sleep will be given quiet, individual activities to enjoy on their cot, such as looking at books or soft drawing boards, to maintain a restful atmosphere for all. Thank you for your support in making nap time a soothing and beneficial part of our day!

*Junior Kindergarten*  
**Sample Daily Schedule**

7:20-7:50 Unpack/Bathroom/Morning Work

7:50-8:00 Prayer/Announcements

8:00-8:30 Morning Meeting/Movement

8:30-9:10 Heggerty Curriculum/Language/Literacy

9:15-9:45 Outdoor Exploration Play

9:50-10:15 Bathroom/Snack

10:15-10:50 Math

10:50-11:30 Bathroom/Lunch

11:30-12:10 Related Arts

12:15-12:35 Religion

12:35-1:00 Social Studies/Science (Centers)

1:00-2:00 Quiet Time/Nap Time

2:00-2:18 Pack up/Prayer/Dismissal

*This schedule is subject to change.*

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