

## Saint Michael's Catholic School

Pre-Kindergarten is an exciting time of new beginnings in the life of a child. The program at St. Michael's creates a very special community of learners. Children feel a sense of belonging as soon as they enter the school. Our main goals for this age group are to inspire a love for learning and offer a wide variety of experiences to begin the lifelong journey of seeking knowledge and a love for God rooted through a catholic education. In a nurturing, supportive environment, pre-kindergarten children will gain confidence, independence, preparedness for elementary learning, and self-love while growing in physical development.

### **CONFIDENCE**

The confidence of the child will be nurtured in a variety of ways. Recognizing the successes of the child no matter how small will be an important part of daily activities. Marking measurable progress and the recognition thereof will take place through positive reinforcement and praise. In addition, combining a mixture of easy, obtainable and challenging goals in a pyramid emphasis will build the foundation for a strong self-image.

### **INDEPENDENCE**

Each child will be encouraged to do tasks independently with frequent inclusion of tasks already mastered. This will ensure success and build a firm foundation for the child to move forward on his/her own. Individual projects and activities will always be designed to be within a child's capabilities.

### **PREPAREDNESS FOR ELEMENTARY LEARNING**

Various aspects of language development will be included in the program in order to build a child's abilities to express his/her view of the world around him/her.

**Verbal** – Various activities will focus on using the voice through song, rhyme and mimicking and story telling. Reading time along with story creation will aid in the letter and word game activities as well.

**Reading and Writing Readiness**- Children need to have an awareness of printed word in order to begin the journey of reading and writing. This will be accomplished through fine motor skill activities, recognition activities based on patterns, shapes and letters, as well as shapes in space participation.

**Cognitive Expansion** – Developing the mind to think in different capacities is key to laying foundations of meaningful learning. Activities such as memory exercises, sequencing with order and placement, critical thinking through simple problem solving and analogies, and second language introduction will develop the thought processes for a strong foundation. Musical activities will expand the mind of the child. In addition,

early mathematical concepts will be explored as well as thought processing through adult led child discussions and reasoning.

### **SELF-LOVE**

It is important that a child know he/she is accepted and valued even at a young age. Each child will be included and loved as a special individual in this world and will gain an awareness as on of God's children and His unconditional love. Within the save and secure environment, each child will learn how to express his/her own feelings. In a nurturing environment, a respect for the human spirit will always be paramount. A critique of "actions" rather than the child will always take place through positive guidance first and correction second. Each child will also begin to develop and awareness and love for our catholic religion.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Gross motor skills will be developed in a gym atmosphere full of fun and activity.

**Movement Skills-** Movement along with strength and flexibility activities will be carried out through music, song creation, letter recognition, and games.

**Reading Readiness and Cognitive Expansion** – In moving the child toward reading readiness and cognitive expansion, various activities will take place. Spatial awareness will be developed via gross motor activities in the gym and using the playground equipment. An increased perception and understanding of space will be gained by working with objects in space and the laws of physics from a young child's perspective. Cross curriculum exercises will involve cognitive expansion exercises such as reasoning, second language exposure and problem solving within the physical world.