**Mrs. Lacombe**

**Overview of content areas in kindergarten.**

 What makes our curriculum stand out among other schools and gives purpose to every subject we teach is our Catholic faith. Teaching about God’s love is woven into daily lessons. In kindergarten children start to develop a stronger relationship with God through prayer, Bible stories, Christian traditions, holidays, school masses and how we interact with each other. Specific examples of what your child will learn through daily lesson will be character education (respect for all creation), family life (God’s greatest gift is life itself), Morality (knowing right from wrong).

Teaching about God can seem very abstract for young children so we use stories, role play, look to our school families and parents to help develop the core beliefs of what it means to be Christian, thus making it meaningful and applicable to our lives.

When you have a room full of curious 5 and 6 year olds teaching science at the kindergarten level just comes naturally. Children ask questions and they want to explore the world they live in. Our Diocese is adopting NGSS-The Next Generation of science standards. The core ideas are exciting and engaging. Students are expected to be observers, investigate, analyze, gather data, solve problems and communicate what they have learned but now there is a required engineering piece that will be explored. Topics include focus on motion and stability, energy, from molecules to organisms (with plants & animals), earth’s systems (weather patterns and the nature of plants and animals), earth and human activity and engineering design.

During the course of the year your child will actually start to use the scientific method to document and complete simple experiments. For example we will study what makes a shadow, where does energy come from, how do simple machines impact force, how does wind and water change the land?

I am always amazed at how much background knowledge kindergarten students bring with them in August. I guarantee that you will be amazed at how much your child will grasp new vocabulary & concepts in science.

Social Studies is so easily integrated with our school-wide learning expectations as we learn at this level what it means to be a good citizen, have responsibilities, and care for the world we live in. Why do we have rules and laws? What happened in the past, the present, and what could the future bring? Identify your needs and wants. We will focus on celebrating and recognizing state and national holidays, learn about Patriotic symbols. Compare city life to country life. Introduce basic map skills and students will have the opportunity to write and orally present their first reports involving community helpers.

Math instruction at the kindergarten level is fun….It is using manipulatives and games to help students develop number sense and become problem solvers. At Cosgriff, teachers use a variety of teaching strategies that have proven to be the best practices. Singapore math is one of these strategies. Students in kindergarten learn through 3 stages: concrete, pictorial, and abstract. Parents will be invited to a math night in the fall where you will go get more explicit details on the strategies we use at Cosgriff.

Kindergarten math curriculum focuses on learning numbers to 100, comparing quantities, skip counting by 2’s, 5’s, 10’s, non-standard measurement, addition, subtraction, gathering data and graphing, 2D, 3D shapes, beginning place value, calendar related activities. Math is a big part of our day. I predict right now that your child will love math and will come home wanting to teach you a new math game they learned in school. Even at this level we keep a math journal. It is the start of model drawing, building math vocabulary and problem solving

**Kindergarten Classroom Routines**

***Snack***

Kindergarten has 2 snacks daily. The morning snack is something you send for your child. Afternoon snack is provided by a child in our room on a weekly rotation. A calendar indicating who will provide snack will be sent home at the end of each month. All afternoon snacks should be easy to serve.

I prefer that my students bring in their own water bottle that is labeled with his/her name. Our room gets very warm and young children tend to get thirsty. Having your own water bottle is quicker than waiting in a line at the fountain. If you send in a water bottle on Mondays, we will be sure to fill them every day and take them home on Fridays for a good washing. Other drinks are not permitted. Please keep in mind that all snacks should be healthy and easy to serve. We are a peanut-free classroom.

Some suggested snacks; crackers, cheese sticks, pretzels, cereal, granola bars, fruit roll-ups, popcorn (already popped), fruit, vegetables, yogurt

***Label Items***

Be sure to label all items that your child brings to school (book bags, sweaters, ties, hats, smock). Students wear the same uniform pieces and it is impossible to guess who is missing what. Please label everything.

***Show-n-Teach***

We will have Show-n-Teach once a week in school. I feel that the purpose of Show-n-Teach is to promote language skills, share information, and build self-esteem. It makes a child feel good to show everyone something they found, they made, or something they recently learned. Your child may not want to participate at first, it is optional.

\*\*Show-n-Teach will be on a specific day of the week. I will let you know when our schedule is confirmed.

***School Mass***

Our school will attend weekly masses and parents are invited and encouraged to attend. However, it is important to note that kindergarten students are expected to sit as a class.

\*\*Students need to be in **dress uniforms** with good shoes for all school masses.

***Nightly Folders***

Please check and clean out your child’s folder nightly and return it the following day. In doing so, we are able to communicate more effectively and it will help everyone stay organized. Folders might have homework assignments, school notes, or completed class work in them. My aide will check folders here at school for any notes you might be have for me.

***Homework***

Students in kindergarten work very hard throughout the day. We have so much to cover that reinforcement at home will be needed. I believe that all my students need to read at night or be read to. Sharing a story and discussing it with your child, looking for new words or familiar words is so important to success in the early years. As we progress, your child will get weekly homework and will have projects to complete.

***Volunteers***

We will need volunteers in our classroom at center time and I look forward to having you in my room. Our room mothers, will be organizing this for me along with other events that will take place during the year. Please know that when you are working in the classroom you need to balance being a mom to your child and someone who has a responsibility to work with other students.

\*\* All parent volunteers need to be cleared through our Diocesan Safe Environment program.

***Communication***

I will do my best to send home a weekly letter on Mondays to keep you current on what is happening in our room and at Cosgriff. Be sure to check that nightly folder. If you have a concern or just need to share some information with me, please feel free to send a note via the nightly folder, or an email at school.

***Birthdays***

 If your child is celebrating a birthday we would like to make it a special day in school. Feel free to send in cupcakes or other special snack to share with the whole class**. Please** **do not send in birthday invitations for me to hand out unless everyone is included. I want to avoid any hurt feelings**. I will be happy to provide you with a list of addresses if you want to have a small group of friends.

***Best Part of Kindergarten***

I think the best part of kindergarten is the enthusiasm this age group has for learning and the anticipation and excitement parents feel when they see their child go off to school. It is really a privilege to be a teacher. I know that I am not perfect and God has given each one of us different talents. Keeping this in mind, I will work hard to help your child have a great year in kindergarten. Catholic schools educate the whole child, academically, spiritually, and physically.