

Curriculum Descriptions

Curriculum

St. Valentine Preschool provides a safe, fun and loving hands-on learning environment. Our students are encouraged to grow socially through play and learn to live with kindness as Jesus did. Our curriculum incorporates a variety of learning activities that challenge young minds each day. The curriculum includes Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Library, Art, Music, Movement and Faith.

To enroll your child in any of these programs or arrange for an individual tour with your child, please contact us at 412-835-5539 or jmills@stvals.org

Language Arts

We introduce Preschoolers to reading, writing and comprehension skills in many different ways to keep the learning environment fun. We focus on strengthening early literacy through daily stories and regular visits to the library. Readiness activities include crafts, large and small motor exercises, stories, songs and games.

Math

Math skills are developed through creative techniques that engage and capture each child's best learning potential. Through various games, songs, art projects and worksheets, students learn to compare and contrast, identify numbers, shapes, colors and patterns.

Science

Science is all around us, but for Preschoolers, so much in their world can be hard to understand. Watching the sun disappear at sunset, seeing water come out of a faucet then vanish down the drain, or marveling at the many colors of a butterfly can be mysterious, magical things. Our science curriculum helps students develop scientific thinking skills through observation and hands-on learning experiences.

Social Studies

Our Social Studies curriculum focuses on community and history. Through discussion and field trips to people and places around town, they learn about our community and the many jobs people have that make it special. Our students learn about our country through activities around historical holidays.

Library

Students can check out a book from the classroom's library to read at home. Visits to the library encourage children to view reading as a fun way to spend quality time with a family member.

Art

Art is a creative way for students to express themselves and learn the basics of colors, lines, shapes and textures. It strengthens their fine motor skills and reinforces following directions in a multi-step process to finish the task.

Music

Music is not only a fun way for students to explore their talent, but it also reinforces skills in other areas of the curriculum. Rhythmic patterns in music help children recognize patterns elsewhere. Music increases both fine and gross motor skills and helps develop hand-eye coordination. Memorizing songs and repeating musical patterns helps students grasp and remember what they learn throughout the class day.

Movement

Through games, free play, and child-appropriate exercises, movement helps children learn concepts such as balance, coordination, and rhythm. It is also an important tool for developing self-esteem. It teaches children about their own bodies and makes them more aware of other classmates and the space around them.

Faith

All groups enjoy listening to Bible stories from both the Old and New Testaments. Follow-up activities reinforce the story's message. Songs and prayers are also used to praise our God. Occasional visits from the Parish clergy and expanded lessons during Advent and Lent continue the children's spiritual journey.

Programs

St. Valentine Preschool offers programs for two-, three- and four-year-olds. All programs include age-appropriate elements from every curriculum area. In all programs, as the students grow and develop, we continually share your child's progress with you. Formal evaluations are also conducted in the Fall for three-year-olds and in the Spring for four-year-olds. The results are shared with you at individual parent-teacher conferences.

Tiny Hearts for Twos

The Tiny Hearts for Two program is a great introduction to the school setting for two-year-olds and their parent/caregiver. Each class meets once a week and follows a weekly theme that includes time for play one-on-one with the parent/caregiver as well as the other children in the group. Our goal is to provide play and early learning experiences to children who are just beginning to socialize with other children. The parent or caregiver stays with the child and participates with him/her in all activities. This class provides many sensory, language development, music and large motor skill experiences. It also includes teacher-directed crafts, snacks, songs and finger plays. The 90-minute class meets on Tuesday or Thursday mornings.

Note: Children who reach the age of 2 by September 1 will be admitted to the "Tiny Hearts for Two" program but do not need to be potty-trained.

Three-Year-Old Program

In our Three-Year-Old classes, students engage in activities that enhance their cognitive, social-emotional, motor and spiritual development. Monthly themes are incorporated into all areas of the curriculum. With a focus on providing a positive first school experience, classes in the program are structured to allow each child to separate from the home environment and learn to trust other adults. Each class is filled with creative play experiences and activities that foster growth in self-esteem, independence, listening, taking turns, using fine and large motor skills, and appreciation of music, science, community and children's literature. Classes meet two days a week (Tuesday, Thursday), and there are both morning and afternoon sessions.

Three-Year-Old Extended/Enrichment

The Three-Year-Old Extended/Enrichment Program (3E) offers students small group instruction in a very hands-on environment. The full day class provides time for expanding social and academic skills. The sessions are an extension of our preschool curriculum and provide a fun and enriching learning experience. Students benefit from the small group instruction and exposure to expanded language arts, math and fine motor concepts.

Children enrolled in the Extended /Enrichment Program should bring a lunch. A refrigerator and microwave are available. Teachers will warm the students' lunches when necessary. This program also provides 20-30 minutes of "Quiet Time" following lunch.

4-Year-Old Program

The Four-Year-Old program focuses on letter recognition and beginning sounds, math readiness skills, social skills, and other areas of development that are critical for Kindergarten readiness. The class helps students grow socially by learning to take turns, follow rules, try new activities and make new friends. Independence and self-help are encouraged as students learn to dress themselves and make their needs known when they need help. Many creative play experiences are provided as well as table activities that develop fine motor skills using crayons, pencils and scissors. Classes meet three days a week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday), and there are both morning and afternoon sessions.

4-Year-Old Extended/Enrichment

The Four-Year-Old Extended/Enrichment Program (4E) classes are offered to enhance your child's learning experience. Each class is an extension of our preschool curriculum and provides a fun and diverse learning experience. The full day class provides time for expanding reading readiness, language arts and math skill development. Students

benefit from instruction in small groups and exposure to new concepts in areas such as language arts, math and fine motor skills.

Children enrolled in the Extended/Enrichment Program should bring a lunch. A refrigerator and microwave are available. Teachers will warm the students' lunches when necessary. This program also provides 20-30 minutes of "Quiet Time" following lunch.

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