



# Welcome to Kindergarten!!

“Every Child, Every Day!”

Dear Families,

Welcome to Young Fives at St. Therese Catholic School for the 2019-2020 school year!! I am extremely grateful and blessed to be able to teach your child this year and look forward to getting to know each student and their families even more. Our objective here at St. Therese is to meet the needs and various learning styles of all children in a spiritual and positive manner. Communication is essential to provide the best experience for your child. I plan to keep you informed of our daily schedule and curriculum as much as possible. Here at St. Therese, we strive to develop lifelong learning skills in each child. Therefore, throughout the year, please feel free to talk with me about any concerns you may have about your child.

## **Young Fives Schedule**

For the first semester, Young Fives students come all day Monday, Wednesday and Friday. At the second Semester, Young Fives students will start coming Tuesdays all day, making it a four full day week.

## **Daily Mid-Morning Snack and Occasional Special Snack Making**

Every day the children in our class will be provided a snack. I will provide nutritious snacks instead of having the children bring a snack to school. It's one less thing for everyone to remember, especially once the year gets into full swing! If your child has any food allergy, please let us know and we will accommodate accordingly. If the child has an allergy that requires to have a snack from home, we will probably waive your child's snack fee. **SNACK FEE FOR EACH CHILD IS \$20 PER SEMESTER.** The snack fee may be paid all at once or half at the beginning of each semester. If you have any problems, please see Mrs. O'Connor or myself to make other arrangements. In addition to a daily snack, your child will participate in occasional snack making activities throughout the year – I love to have special snacks and the kids love to watch and participate! We will get to test out our culinary skills to provide some hands-on, delicious fun that will have a focus on a current lesson/theme we will be studying!

## **Rest Time**

In the past, students began rest time after eating lunch, listening to a read aloud and having a bathroom break. This year, our specials schedule has some specials immediately after lunch so students will be resting after the specials classes. It will be very long days for the students and they will need a rest, especially at the beginning of the year. They are not required to sleep but they must remain quiet in their assigned area to allow those who want to take a short nap to do so. In the event that a child DOES fall asleep, I typically allow them to continue to sleep until they wake up on their own. (in the past, it's never been too long) I always make sure they aren't going to miss out on anything and I just can't bring myself to wake them because they always seem so peaceful! Please send a small pillowcase and a small blanket for your child to use. I will provide a small pillow. We ask that you send in a clean pillowcase often for sanitary reasons. Blankets will be sent home during breaks to be washed. If you would like to clean them more frequently just send a note. As the Young Fives students grow and they near Kindergarten I will slowly shorten the length of rest time until it becomes more of a quiet reading time.

## **Morning Drop-Off and Tardiness**

Please make every effort to have your child here on time every day. Children may be dropped off beginning at 8:30 a.m. They are to stay outside if a teacher or the principal are out there **or** go directly to the cafeteria to wait until the first bell rings. First bell rings at 8:40 a.m. Class begins promptly at 8:45 a.m. Students must be in the classroom and ready to begin at that time. If you arrive after this time, your child will be considered tardy and will need to get a pass from the main office. The only exception to this is the late bus. (Mrs. O'Connor has said there may be a slight adjustment to these times once St. Therese has the final bus run notification from Wayland Transportation.) Also, if you take your child out of school for a short time for an appointment, or leave early on a particular day, he/she will be considered tardy. This is school policy. Thank you ahead of time for your cooperation in this manner.

## **Book Orders**

I will be sending home book orders approximately once a month. This is a wonderful way to build your child's library at home or buy gifts for special occasions! Money orders, cash or checks are accepted. Checks must be made out to the book club from which you are ordering. Please do NOT make checks out to the school or the teacher. Online ordering is also accepted and VERY easy. Just use our class code that is written on the book orders. Once I receive orders by the due date, I place the order to be shipped. \*\*Please let me know if any books are gifts and I will wrap them so your child cannot see.\*\*

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are a VERY special time for young children! I will be acknowledging your child's birthday in various ways as close as possible to your child's actual birthdate. If your child has a summer birthday we will celebrate his/her ½ birthday in class. I will send home a reminder note with the celebration date listed prior to their birthday. If you wish, your child may bring in a treat to share with the class during our morning snack time. This is optional. If there are any allergies in our class, I will send home that information, so snacks can be planned accordingly so all students can enjoy them.

## **Change of Clothes**

Your child will need to keep a complete change of clothes including socks and underwear at school. Please label the items and place them in a gallon Ziploc bag that is marked with the child's name. I understand accidents and messes happen and I want to be prepared! Any dirty articles of clothing will be sent home to be cleaned. Please return replacement items the next school day or as quickly as possible.

## **Specials**

Your child is extremely fortunate to be able to partake in some specials classes. Each week, your child will attend Gym two times per week. The specials schedule places Music and Art during the days your child will not be at school (Tuesdays and Thursdays). Starting second semester, when Young Fives students start adding Tuesdays to their schedule, they will have music. We do get to enjoy music in our classroom through singing, dance parties and poems. Additionally, your child will be involved in many Art activities within our classroom. I love to be creative and know students learn so much when they get to be creative! Each child is required to have a pair of gym shoes to leave at school. These shoes are also valuable assets in case your child forgets their regular shoes during our long Michigan winter season.

## **Paint Smock/Apron**

Please remember to send a paint shirt or apron for your child for those fun, messy times where we paint, experiment or cook. This is a great way to keep students' regular clothes clean, or as clean as possible. An old

t-shirt would work just fine. There are several craft stores that sell children's aprons cheap if you'd like to go that route, just remember they will get dirty and stained...all part of the fun experiences we will have!!

### **Parties .**

Young Fives and Kindergarten students will be together during the three parties throughout the year. Traditionally, in the school, the room mom coordinates the parties – collecting snacks, games, crafts and anything else we may need. I will be providing a sign-up sheet for the room mom. My hope is that everyone can be involved with the party supplies and fun. There will always be something needed to be supplied or done. I don't want any parent feeling left out! Also, please join us for the parties! Kids love having their parents in the class to partake in the fun and craziness!!

### **Young Fives Curriculum and Homework**

A couple of summers ago I attended an EXCELLENT conference and I am very excited to be following a curriculum for Readiness and Pre-Writing, Literacy and Language and Math designed for young fives students called "Get Set for School." The program is designed through the Learning Without Tears company and provides a wide array of hands-on, experimental, movement and play-based activities for your child to succeed and be fully ready for Kindergarten. Additionally, I will be teaching Religion to your child as well! I am very much looking forward to this!

Regarding homework, I am looking for concerns or suggestions from parents! I feel that most of the work your child will be doing should be done through the teaching and learning in the classroom. We are fortunate to have such small, close-knit classrooms and that provides ample time to complete work we need to get done as well as more! I will occasionally send books home to read with your child because any extra reading is extremely beneficial. Please feel free to talk to me about any suggestions or questions that you have regarding homework, so we can do what is best for your child.

I understand this packet contains A LOT of information! If you have any questions or concerns, please **do not** hesitate to ask. You can reach me at school (269-792-2016) until 4:00 most weekdays. You may also send a note or just pop in in the mornings if I am in my room or you may also email me at **sttkindergarten@gmail.com**. I do ask that you please do not message me through social media if you have a concern about the class or your child. Please let me know how you would like to receive a few pictures throughout the year on the questionnaire. I like to snap candid photos so you can see the fun times we have in our classroom.

I am looking forward to this NEW, EXCITING school year with your children!!

Thank you and God Bless,

Mrs. Westervelt

St. Therese Y5/Kindergarten Teacher