



Welcome to the Little Saints Preschool Program!

We're so glad you're here! Following is a quick overview of our Preschool program's daily routine, key events, resources, and dates to remember. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me at dfinken@smsmn.org or 320-256-4257.

The Little Saints Preschool program is fully licensed by the State of Minnesota; this licensure ensures your child is learning in a safe environment with a professionally trained and extremely competent staff.

OUR DAILY ROUTINE: Every day starts with a high five, hug, dance, or fist bump! Practice writing name on sign-in sheet (first & last), morning message, religion, bathroom break, S.M.A.R.T., morning circle time, small learning centers (math, reading, and science), whole group activity (social studies, read aloud), free play/choice, one-on-one work with teacher, recess, bathroom break, prayer, lunch, bathroom break, nap/rest time, small reading group, free play/choice, bathroom break, snack, gym time, read aloud, prayer, dismissal. Every day ends with a hug or handshake!

WHAT	HOW	WHEN
ABC/123	Each week we focus on learning a new letter, shape, and number.	Ongoing
Birthdays & Half-Birthdays	We celebrate on the day or as close to their birthday as possible. Summer birthdays will be celebrated on the half-birthday. Your child may bring in treats to share with the class.	Annually
BLUE Wednesday Folders	Watch for the BLUE folders that come home in student backpacks. This is where you can expect to find some important school communications and information about school. Return the folder each day.	Weekly on Wednesdays
Conferences	Conferences will be held in the fall and spring of the school year.	Twice a Year
Curriculum	<p>The preschool curriculum is called Ready to Advance (Benchmark). It is a comprehensive early learning program. There are 10 units in this program; each unit has components of literacy, math, science, social studies, social/emotional development, and arts and physical development. Specifically, the following areas are covered throughout the school year:</p> <p>Math: Counting to 30, counting using 1-to-1 correspondence to 20, creating simple and complex patterns, sorting by 2 or more attributes, describing features of 2D shapes.</p> <p>Language Arts: Letter names and sounds, rhyming, alliteration, writing name independently using correct letter formation, book print concepts, vocabulary development, print and phonological awareness, follow oral directions, retell/sequence events in a story.</p> <p>Science: Taking care of self and environment, verbally identifying obvious differences and similarities, experimenting with floating and sinking, experimenting with wind and water, differences between shadows and reflections.</p> <p>Fine Motor: Cutting straight, curvy, and zigzag lines, drawing recognizable shapes and adding detail to pictures.</p> <p>Social Skills: Demonstrating increasing confidence in one's own ability, ability to resolve one's own conflicts, responding appropriately to other's emotions, building friendships through play, learning activities, and conversation.</p>	Ongoing
Family Volunteers & Helpers	Parents are welcome to visit the classroom anytime. We encourage all parents and family members to offer their time and talents for school projects and activities.	Ongoing
Field Trips	We go bowling twice a year (winter and spring); we also go to Hemker's Zoo in the spring. Parent volunteers are needed to attend these events. There will always be permission slips sent home before each field trip.	Ongoing, Throughout the School Year
Holidays	For each holiday, we will have a fun day. Parents are welcome to join us for centers of the day or snack time. We will celebrate Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter.	As Scheduled

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Homework	Children who attend preschool full-time will not have homework packets; children who attend part-time will have a letter packet and number sheet sent home to work on for the week. The teacher will review the work with the student.	Ongoing
Library/Media	Preschool students pick out a new book in the library each week. Students also get computer time in the media lab on Fridays that they don't attend mass.	Weekly
Lunch with Kids	You are welcome to come any day to eat lunch with your child. Please call Ms. Jenn in the office by 10AM if you want to eat school lunch so we can plan for this.	Anytime
Mass/Liturgy/Religion	Preschool students will attend mass once a month with their 5th grade buddies or for a special mass. We have daily prayer in the classroom before snack and lunch; we also use the "I Am Special" curriculum for religious education.	Monthly on Fridays
New Parent Pal	New parents will be assigned to all new families in preschool UPON REQUEST. New Parent Pals help a new parent learn the ropes, and feel welcome and part of the SMS family. Please feel free to reach out to me with questions or if you're interested in getting a New Parent Pal.	Ongoing
Preschool-5th Grade Buddies	Every preschool student is assigned a 5 th grade buddy. This buddy sits with them at Mass and participates once a month with a fun activity and other special events.	Ongoing
Preschool Promotion/Graduation	At the end of the school year, we have a fun Preschool Graduation Program to celebrate those students who are moving on to Kindergarten, followed by family activities.	Annually
SMS\$4Kids	SMS\$4Kids is a gift card program that allows schools to buy gift cards from businesses at a reduced rate, which is how the program makes money. Card purchasers buy the cards at face value. SMS parents can use profits from the cards to help reduce tuition commitments too. You'll receive info about this program in the fall.	Ongoing
SMS SPIRIT-PBIS School-Wide Behavior Plan	At St. Mary's, we focus on teaching our students what behaviors are acceptable, praising and rewarding them when they "get it," and helping them learn from their mistakes when they don't. This system is called Positive Behavioral Intention & Supports (PBIS). At St. Mary's, we call it SMS Spirit—a school-wide, positive behavior intervention system that teaches and re-teaches students how to demonstrate SMS Spirit in all school settings. The end goal: a nurturing, and respectful learning community where academic achievement is the focal point and all students feel connected and valued.	Ongoing
Star of the Day	Every student will be sent home a bag that they can fill with 3 items from home to share with the class. They can also bring their favorite book for the teacher to read. The class will make a book for the Star of the Day to keep.	Annually
S.M.A.R.T	Stimulating Maturity through Accelerated Readiness Training (S.M.A.R.T.) is a program that helps children's brains and bodies get ready to learn through fun physical activities that develop and enhance large and fine motor skills, balance and coordination, visual efficiency, attention, and hand-eye coordination.	Ongoing
Preschool Happenings	Each Friday, I'll post a classroom update on SchoolSpeak; this will include happenings from the past week as well as information for upcoming events.	Weekly



The school parent portal, **SchoolSpeak**, is your one stop for everything at St. Mary's. There, you'll find the latest happenings/school events, updates on curriculum, weekly and monthly newsletters, and critical information, including the following: Class Field Trip List, Mass Schedule, Lunch Menu, Little Saints Parent Handbook, School Calendar, SMS Strategic Plan, SMS\$4Kids Info, SMS SPIRIT-PBIS School-Wide Behavior Plan & Matrix.