



All about

# Kindergarten

at Holy Cross Academy



*It's the Spirit here that counts.*



**Holy Cross Academy is  
part of the North Hills  
Regional Catholic  
Elementary Schools  
with a commitment  
to providing a quality  
education in the Catholic  
tradition. The Academy  
offers preschool through  
grade 8 and is accredited  
by the Middle States  
Commission of Colleges  
and Schools and is a  
member of the National  
Catholic Education  
Association.**

**Welcome  
to Holy Cross Academy**

# Our Kindergarten Philosophy

**THE GOAL OF HOLY CROSS ACADEMY'S KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM** is to provide the foundation for your child's education. Our program is geared to make your child's transition from home to school as smooth as possible, and to make each child's first experience with school a successful and happy one.

The program is designed to help foster positive self-esteem by providing each child with many experiences of achievement. Our Kindergarten students work both independently and in cooperation with others in a group. Our program provides opportunities for social, emotional, and spiritual growth as well as expands language development, math, science and social studies skills and physical growth.

Holy Cross Academy teachers play an active role in helping students explore, discover, manipulate, observe, express, and implement in the classroom. To assure a well-rounded learning experience for each child, they utilize a variety of current, tested, and proven learning strategies called cooperative learning, adaptive learning, and integrated learning.

## Characteristics Of Kindergartners

*Physically, the Kindergarten child:*

- Has tremendous drive for physical activity
- Is quiet for only short periods of time
- Needs a frequent change in activities
- Enjoys games with plenty of movement
- Tires easily
- Has usually developed hand preference
- Generally has less-developed small muscles and more developed large ones

*Although each Kindergarten child is different, they share some common characteristics:*

- They want to be thought of as grown up even while reverting to infantile behavior at times
- They like big words, yet sometimes use baby talk
- They can be direct and to the point, yet are not sure of the difference between reality and fantasy
- They laugh and cry with ease
- While limited in experience, they understand more than most people think

Emotionally, Kindergarten children need recognition for accomplishments, a sense of belonging, praise, encouragement, and consistent direction. They thrive on trust, fairness, and achievable standards. They find security in definite routines.

*They also:*

- Have a strong emotional link with home
- Are not always able to distinguish right from wrong according to adult standards
- Are serious and business-like in play activities
- Have a constantly growing sense of humor

*Socially, the Kindergarten child:*

- Seeks companionship of other children
- Is anxious to gain group approval
- Is protective towards playmates and siblings
- Needs adult help in learning to share materials and taking turns
- Is not able to work and play without frequent approval
- Has few adult prejudices
- Is willing and eager to assume responsibility within his or her own level of maturity
- Chooses and changes friends frequently

# Kindergarten Objectives

## *Language Development*

- To develop ability to talk with others
- To become more expressive and to improve vocabulary
- To use verbal skills to solve problems
- To exchange ideas and ask questions
- To become familiar with nursery rhymes, stories and poems
- To listen to stories and directions and retell them
- To improve ability for simple recall and sequence

## *Social and Emotional Development*

- To develop a positive self-image
- To begin the development of responsibility
- To increase self-reliance
- To develop self-control
- To display good manners
- To enhance curiosity
- To explore new concepts and ideas
- To become both a leader and a follower
- To share belongings and experiences
- To respect others' rights; to wait for their turn

# Holy Cross Kindergarten Curriculum

## *Religion*

Religious education is an integral part of a Saint Sebastian School education. The secure and accepting atmosphere of a Catholic school and the values integrated into everyday life are why parents choose our school for their children. Our Kindergarten program helps a child develop the understanding that God calls us to celebrate His love for us through His gifts. Students at this level should be attending Mass on a regular basis with their families. They will attend Mass at school and other religious activities.

## *Mathematics*

Students demonstrate number sense, including an understanding of number systems and operations and how they relate to one another. Students compute fluently and make reasonable estimates using paper and pencil, technology-supported and mental methods. They identify, classify, compare and analyze characteristics, and they use patterns, relations and functions to model, represent, analyze and solve problems.

## *Language Arts*

Students acquire phonemic awareness by learning to recognize and decode printed words, developing skills that are the foundations for independent reading. They discover the alphabetic principle (sound-symbol match) and learn to use it in figuring out new words. They build a supply of sight words that helps them learn to read quickly and accurately with comprehension. Students acquire vocabulary by listening to books and other texts and conversing with adults and peers. They use context clues, as well as direct explanations, to gain new words. They learn to apply word analysis skills to build and extend their vocabulary.

## *Physical Education*

Physical activity is an important part of the Kindergarten student's every-day life. A structured physical education class is taught once a week. At this level, students develop large muscle coordination through running, skipping, hopping, jumping and catching a ball. They are also introduced to team sports.

## *Music*

The rhythmic sounds of music are interesting to Kindergarten students. At Holy Cross Academy, they sing in the classroom and they attend regularly scheduled music class. The music program teaches the skills and provides the experience necessary to understand, participate in, and appreciate the art of music. The students use the rhythm instruments in the classroom and experience some orchestral

instruments through listening and hands-on activities. They work on singing in different voices (high, low, soft, loud), finding and keeping a steady beat or rhythm, and using music to tell a story. They sing and/or listen to a variety of music including traditional folk songs, classical music and some world music. Children participate in the Christmas concert and practice music for Mass.

### *Art*

Early art experiences include the reinforcement of art elements (line, color, shapes, texture and form) and the opportunity for students to express their skills through a variety of media and techniques. Students are able to paint using watercolors and tempera paint. A variety of sculpture materials also are used throughout the year, including salt dough and clay. Creativity, individuality and exploration are encouraged.

### *Library*

In addition to reading experiences in the classroom, our Kindergarten students have scheduled time in our library each week. While in the library, the students are taught how to find books and spend time listening to stories to supplement their classwork.

### *World Language*

At Holy Cross Academy, students are introduced to Spanish in Kindergarten. Children learn basic conversation phrases such as “good morning,” “please,” and “thank you.” They also learn to recognize the phrases in their Spanish written form.

### *Computers*

Most children, but not all, at this age have already had some experience with computers in their homes. A computer class is offered each week for our students where they learn the basic terms of the computer and begin learning techniques such as proper hand placement on the keyboard.

# Enrollment Information

Holy Cross Academy is open to all children regardless of religion, race or ethnic origin. Children who are not Catholic are expected to participate in religion classes and to attend all religious functions of the school and/or church. We offer full-day Kindergarten; hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

All Kindergarten students must be 5 years old on or before September 1. Copies of birth and baptismal certificates and the child's immunization record are required with the registration form with a \$200 non-refundable tuition payment.

## Admission Health/Immunization Requirements

The Pennsylvania Department of Health, in cooperation with the Allegheny County Health Department, mandates the following requirements for admission to school:

- A physical examination
- A dental examination
- Proof of the proper immunizations

***All immunizations must be completed before the first day of school.***

## Faculty

Holy Cross Academy teachers are certified by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and are accredited by the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

## Tuition/Financial Assistance

When a student enrolls at Holy Cross Academy, parents enter into a contractual agreement to pay tuition and other fees on time as a condition of that enrollment. Tuition rates are determined each spring. Every effort is made to keep tuition affordable while continuing to provide quality education. Financial assistance is available for qualifying students and their families.

## Uniform Requirements

Kindergarten students are required to wear the official Holy Cross Academy uniform.

## Extended Care Program

An extended care program is offered in the mornings from 7 to 8:15 a.m. and in the afternoons from 3 to 6 p.m. each day for a fee. This service is available on a daily, weekly, or yearly basis.

## Preschool Program

For families with 3 and 4-year old children, Holy Cross Academy offers morning preschool from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. for 3-year-olds; a half-day program for 4-year-olds from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. and a full-day program for 3 and 4-year-olds from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

## Transportation

Busing is provided by the public school district in which a student resides. The districts are required to bus to other schools within a 10-mile radius from the school district boundary lines. Public school districts that transport to Holy Cross Academy include Avonworth, Fox Chapel, Hampton, North Allegheny, North Hills, Pine-Richland, Pittsburgh Public, and Shaler Area.



## *Support Services*

Holy Cross Academy provides speech support services through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for students in grades K-8. The specialists work with students individually or in small groups. Referrals may be requested by teachers or parents. Math and reading support services begin in first grade. A school nurse and school guidance counselor are also available through the AIU.

## **Before School Begins**

The success of your child's Kindergarten experience is highly dependent upon your willingness to be a part of your child's learning environment.

We suggest the following activities to help your child feel more secure and happy in making the adjustment from home to school:

- Teach your child his/her full name, parents' names, address and phone number
- Teach your child to dress independently (tie shoes, zipper jackets, hang up clothing)
- Teach your child to be independent about appropriate toilet habits
- Let your child share in home responsibilities, conversation and activities
- Establish a regular time for sleep, meals and play
- Be sure your child listens to others and follows directions



## **Mission Statement**

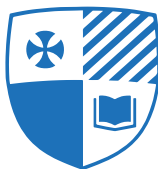
Rooted in Gospel values and committed to academic excellence, Holy Cross Academy seeks to foster spiritual development, service to community and a life-long love of learning in every child. To build a Christ-centered foundation for our students, we encourage collaboration between our children, families and community. Our goal is to develop outstanding, well-rounded students who are leaders in their communities, who are known by their service to others, and who achieve success in all facets of their lives.





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*Holy Cross Academy is part of the  
North Hills Regional Catholic  
Elementary Schools*