

September 18, 2021

Dear PreK 4s families,

We certainly have had a fabulous, busy, and fun beginning of our PreK4s class. The children are getting more comfortable with the classroom, daily routine, new friends, and teachers. Here is a little peek of our themes this month.

God Made Me/Marvelous Me:

The past two weeks were filled with opportunities to celebrate how God made us and how special we are to our family and friends. The children listened to the story I Like Myself by Karen Beaumont, as well as other engaging books relating to the theme.

We discussed similarities and differences we may have from one another, learned a few chants, and created special projects. A special "ME" paper doll creation is on display on a classroom wall. The children enjoyed liquid watercolor paints and discovered their name magically appeared on the paper. In addition, the children measured and counted the length of their names with blocks. Hopefully you have heard about our fun together from your little one. It has been simply joyful.

Fabulous Friends Week:

In celebration of our friendship theme this week-- the children will be participating in activities that help foster new friendships with classmates. The children will listen to a few stories, play a game, learn how to be a good friend and more. On Monday, the class will create a BIG collaborative art project together using red paint and square shapes. This beautiful piece of art will hang on our classroom wall all year long. On Wednesday, the children will participate in two exciting activities to support getting to know one another. Be sure to ask your preschooler all about our puzzle matching and friendship bracelet activities. Here is a little overview to help get the conversation flowing.

Puzzle Matching:

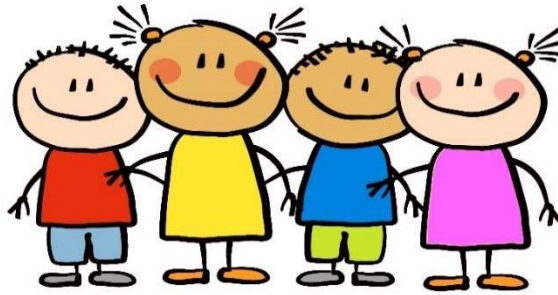
The children played a puzzle matching game that encouraged them to find another classmate's puzzle piece which matches their own puzzle piece. Once the matching puzzle piece is found, the two classmates had to connect the puzzle pieces to be sure they fit together. Then the two pals make a friendship bracelet at a table together.

Friendship Bracelet:

The friendship bracelet is an outward sign of how to be a good friend to others. Each colored bead represents a different trait to act towards a friend.

- Yellow: represents listening.
- Red: represents being loving.
- White: represents sharing.
- Purple: represents kindness—one of our favorite words and actions in the classroom.
- Blue: represents being helpful.
- Be sure to ask your child all about the puzzle matching game and friendship bracelet.

Friends at school
Are big and small.
Friends at school
Are best of all!!



Hello Weather:

We will finish off the month of September learning about weather. We will forecast the weather of the day, watch the sky, feel the wind on our skin and much more. Weather can be very fascinating to all of us. A few of our special stories during the week will include Raindrop, Plop by Wendy Cheyette Lewison, The Wind Blew by Pat Hutchins and One Windy Wednesday by Phyllis Root. In conjunction with our books, the children will be creating a finger paint umbrella, and a windsock to hang up at home. Be sure to ask your child later this month about the BIG parachute activity as they will be pretending it is storming, windy, raining and act out more weather fun.

Letter of the Week:

I will be introducing the letter of the week curriculum at the end of September. We will begin our study with the letter H which ties in perfectly with our theme—Hello Weather. Our focus will concentrate on the sound, as well as the formation and name of each letter.

A typical week may look like this:

****The letter of the week is introduced to the children. We learn the sound and name of the letter at morning meeting/circle time. During the week, the children will work in small groups with me to practice writing the specific letter.**

****To help support learning the letters, sounds and formation of the letters, the Zoo-phonics program is used with the children. Feel free to look up: Zoo-phonics online to learn all the animals. I have already been teaching the children the animal names and sounds in a chant style —so once a letter is introduced, the animal will be somewhat familiar to the class.**

****The children will create a zoo animal with a big letter each week. For example, Letter H will be our Honey Horse creation. The children will review the animal, sound, and formation of each letter all week.**

****An oral language activity is part of our letter animal creations. It is wonderful to listen to the creative answers the children have to the question at hand.**

****During the week, the children will each have an opportunity to pick out one item from our letter box to show the class. The letter box will be filled with objects/photos that start with the letter of the week, as well as items that do not start with the letter of the week. It will be fun to figure out if the objects go along with the letter/sound of the week.**

****Look for the zoo-phonics project to come home in your child's school folder.**

****I will have the letter of the week and zoo animal on the monthly calendar.**



Our Alphabet Creations:

The children make strong connections with the sounds/letters and zoo-phonics animals during the school year. To support your child's learning, it is encouraged to find a way to collect or save the animal letter creations that come home each week.

Ideas to show your child the value of the letter projects:

- *Display the letters by hang them up—playroom, closet door, basement wall, etc.
- *Or try placing each zoo-phonics animal project in a clear plastic protector (pages need to be trimmed) and then put each page in a three-ring binder.
- *Collect them with paper fasteners or on a metal ring.

It doesn't matter how you collect the letters. My main goal is to teach your children to love to learn, make connections with the sounds/letters and to be proud of his/her accomplishments. By discussing and collecting the alphabet projects at home, it shows your child that learning these concepts are valued by both home and school. It truly is a wonderful way to watch your child make progress as we make our way through the alphabet.

Groves in Preschool:

Alongside zoo-phonics, the children will be exposed to Groves Curriculum which is used in grades K-3 in our school. The earliest years of education are very important for children to be exposed to activities relating to the sounds in our language. In an age appropriate way, early literacy activities will assist the children in having a solid foundation before Kindergarten. Rhyming, initial sound exploring, and alphabet knowledge are some of the daily activities your child will build upon throughout the year.

Reminder for Snack Days:

Please send 2/4 food groups on your child's snack day. Individual sized packages are NOT necessary this year. It is more economical to purchase in bulk if you wish. If you would like another copy of the Snack Time procedures and food recommendations—please let me know. Be sure to send any plastic utensils if needed for the snack. There is no need to send napkins or a beverage. Thank you so much.

Faith Focus Sharing Day:

Please watch for a letter explaining our Faith Focus Sharing Day beginning in October.

School Website:

St. Joseph's School website is another place to look for PreK-8th grade information. Our school website is very user friendly. The PreK4s newsletters will be added to the school website, too.

Photos and Videos:

The Preschool Staff and School Administration request all families to refrain from taking any videos or photos of the PreK 4s or Lunch Bunch children while they are playing outside. It is out of respect for our children and their families to be aware of others and their privacy. Thank you.

Attendance Line:

If your child will be late to school or absent for the day, please call the Attendance Line which goes directly to the main school office. You are welcome to email me, as well. The Attendance Line is checked often throughout the day. **Attendance Line: 651-457-3031.**

Half Day Program Hours:

PreK4s: Class begins at 8:30 am. Doors open and curb side drop off begins at 8:20 am.

Class ends at 11:00.

Lunch Bunch: 11:00-12:00 pm

Thank you for being prompt at both drop off and pick up times of our day. It is most appreciated.

Sturdy Shoes:

Please be sure your little one wears shoes that have closed heels and toes. It is hard to resist the cute sandals and crocs, especially when it is warm outside, but our policy is to have sturdy shoes at school. Thank you.

Thank you for all you are doing to start the year off in a positive direction with your child. Your support means so very much. Your children are just precious and have captured the hearts of the entire Preschool staff.

Contact me if you have any questions.

Peg Dierberger

Email: pedierberger@stjosephwsp.org

School Website: stjosephwsp.org

Main office 651-457-8550

