



Early Childhood Education

Pre-Kindergarten (4)

Early Childhood Education in the Archdiocese of Louisville

Early childhood programs in the Archdiocese of Louisville are designed to provide a lively, imaginative, and stimulating learning environment. Children have the opportunity to learn through hands-on experiences that promote Catholic attitudes, traditions, and values, creativity, exploration, and problem-solving in an age-appropriate manner. Children establish a positive self-image and self-confidence. They learn to be a good friend and an eager participant. Children are welcomed into a community of faith where they experience God's love for them and foster their love for others.

The vast array of learning experiences focus on the spiritual, cognitive, social, emotional, language, and physical domains. These domains are connected and enhance the development of the whole child.

Early childhood programs throughout the archdiocese recognize that there is variability in the rate of learning from child to child and even from one domain to another in an individual child. Each child is a unique individual created by God. Focus is placed on the uniqueness and potential of each child. By getting to know the children, teachers are able to set realistic goals for each child that are challenging yet achievable.

Early childhood programs in The Archdiocese of Louisville recognize that children learn best when they are active and engaged and when the activity is meaningful and socially interactive. This is accomplished through a balance of child-guided and teacher-guided experiences. Children have the opportunity to select activities and also to participate in teacher-led small and large group experiences.

Play is a young child's natural way of learning. Early childhood programs provide opportunities for teachers to actively engage with and support children in their play. Intentional learning focused on particular concepts and skills is embedded in play experiences.

Kindergarten readiness means that the child enters kindergarten ready for success at that level. The child has the tools necessary to engage in learning experiences. The intentional gathering of multiple sources of evidence over time provides the kindergarten teacher with an understanding of the rising kindergarten child's strengths and needs. Examples of well-rounded assessment strategies include formal, developmentally appropriate readiness assessment (commercial or school-generated), as well as observation of the child in realistic Pre-K(4) settings and situations, family interviews, and student work samples. Analysis of the information guides decisions about teaching and learning.

Approaches to Play and Learning – Pre-Kindergarten

Essential Understandings

- Learning through play builds engagement and socialization.
- An active imagination leads to exploration and discovery.
- Developing attentiveness enhances learning experiences.
- Active engagement builds comfort and joy in learning.

Content Guidelines

Performance Standards

Discovery	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show interest in discovery and learning • demonstrate a sense of wonder • engage in tactile experiences
Adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choose a variety of familiar activities • show willingness to try new and challenging experiences • demonstrate initiative • accept changes in routines and adjust to new situations • transition from one activity to another • consider a variety of strategies when solving problems
Imagination and Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage in pretend roles with real and make-believe objects • approach tasks and experiences with creativity and imagination • use new or inventive strategies to explore objects • engage in increasingly complex play
Attentiveness and Persistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain attention and focus • work at a task despite distractions • persist at challenging activities • demonstrate ability to complete a task • maintain engagement during an experience
Response and Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recall past experiences and apply this information to new situations

Social and Emotional Development – Pre-Kindergarten

Essential Understandings	Guided Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to form positive relationships with adults and peers leads to self-confidence. • Mindfulness of the feelings of others enhances interactions within the classroom community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is it important to treat others the way you would like to be treated? • How do your actions and words make others feel?
Content Guidelines	Performance Standards
<p>Sense of Self</p> <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Feelings and Emotions</p> <p>Classroom Community</p>	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a positive sense of self-identity and self-awareness • express positive feelings about themselves and confidence in what they can do • display self-control • form relationships and interact positively with familiar adults • form relationships and interact positively with other children • demonstrate the social and emotional skills needed to successfully participate in groups • use politeness, sharing, and other positive social interaction skills • gain teacher’s attention in appropriate ways • wait patiently for a turn to do an activity • identify, manage, and express feelings • recognize and respond to the needs and feelings of others • accept correction in a positive manner • respect and care for classroom environment and materials

Motor Development – Pre-Kindergarten

Essential Understandings

- Strong motor skills enhance brain development and learning.

Content Guidelines

Performance Standards

Gross Motor Development

Students will:

- develop large muscle control and coordination
- develop strength, balance, flexibility, and stamina
- develop ability to move in space with coordination
- throw and catch a ball or other object
- kick a ball (stationary and rolling)
- stand on one foot for 5-10 seconds
- hop on one foot
- ascend and descend stairs using alternating feet

Fine Motor Development

- develop small muscle control and coordination
- develop and use eye-hand coordination when performing assorted tasks
- explore and use a variety of tools (e.g., pencil, spoon, crayon, paintbrush, scissors)
- hold pencil, crayon, and paintbrush properly when using them on a variety of surfaces
- hold scissors correctly and use scissors effectively to cut paper (lines and curves)
- trace accurately with a pencil
- draw recognizable shapes, objects, and people

Language and Literacy Development – Pre-Kindergarten

Essential Understandings	Guided Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening is important to understanding of the message.• To communicate effectively, it is essential that the speaker is able to express ideas clearly.• Phonological and phonemic awareness are essential foundational skills for early reading.• The development of active listening skills and memory aid in comprehension.• The use of emergent writing skills is a means of communication.• Increased vocabulary promotes the ability to understand and communicate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What must we do to be good listeners?• How can we clearly communicate our ideas and knowledge to others?• Why is it important to speak clearly and audibly?• How can discriminating between sounds support pre-reading skills?• How can careful listening help us understand what we hear?• How can we convey information through the pictures that we draw?• How can we figure out what an unfamiliar word means?

Content Guidelines	Performance Standards
<p>Listening Skills</p> <p>Communication Skills</p> <p>Phonological and Phonemic Awareness</p> <p>Alphabet Knowledge</p> <p>Comprehension</p>	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize the intent of non-verbal and verbal cues • listen to stories, directions, and conversations • follow directions that involve a two- or three-step sequence of actions • listen to and recognize similar and different sounds in words and rhymes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate needs, wants, or thoughts through non-verbal gestures and actions, facial expressions, and/or words • speak clearly enough to be understood • speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly • speak in appropriate tone • speak in five- to six-word sentences • use increasingly complex and varied vocabulary, language, and sentence structure • initiate, ask questions, and respond appropriately in conversation with peers and adults in one-on-one, small group, and large group interactions • ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something • describe familiar people, places, things, and events • use most grammatical constructions well • use appropriate pronouns • recite simple finger plays and nursery rhymes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize words that rhyme in games, songs, and stories • match or produce words that rhyme • adds or substitutes individual sounds in simple, one-syllable words to make new words • identify initial sound that corresponds to a picture or object <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate the ability to recite the alphabet by rote memory • recognize and name most uppercase and lowercase letters, especially those in own name • identify sounds typically associated with letters that are frequently used • understand the connection between letters and sounds • begin to associate sounds with letters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate understanding of stories and conversations • predict what will happen next in a story using pictures as a guide • recall information from a story • retell a simple story in sequence • identify characters and the role they play in a story

Word Recognition Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize written first name • demonstrate awareness and beginning knowledge of environmental print (e.g., stop, on, restaurant or store logo)
Reading Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initiate stories and respond to stories told or read aloud • represent stories told or read aloud through during play • show beginning understanding of concepts about print • engage in “reading” (e.g., look at pictures in a book; pretend to read) • “ reread” a book that has been read by another
Emergent Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand that writing is a means of communication • use scribbles, shapes, pictures, letter-like symbols, or dictation to represent thoughts or ideas • begin to copy or write own name using an uppercase letter for only the first letter
Background Knowledge and Vocabulary Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify meaning of words in read-alouds, conversations, and descriptions of everyday items in the world around them • make use of new vocabulary in an appropriate manner • use strategies to figure out word meanings (e.g., look at pictures, ask someone, use context clues) • use previous experiences and acquired vocabulary to demonstrate a bigger understanding of the world around them and the world beyond them
Book Knowledge and Appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate interest in a range of texts • identify the function and location of a book’s front, back, top, bottom, and spine • demonstrate how to turn the pages of a book properly • know that books are read from front to back • point to where to begin reading • recognize that text flows from left to right and top to bottom • recognize that there are spaces between words

Mathematics and Logical Thinking – Pre-Kindergarten

Essential Understandings	Guided Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of knowledge of numbers and quantities during play and activities reflects understanding. • Mathematical reasoning is used in everyday tasks. • Building upon the understanding of quantities leads to a stronger foundation for future mathematical learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can numbers be incorporated into this play activity? • How can we use mathematical concepts to help us solve problems? • How can we use numbers to simplify our lives?
Content Guidelines	Performance Standards
<p>Number Concepts and Operations</p> <p>Patterns and Relationships</p> <p>Spatial Relationships/Geometry</p> <p>Measurement</p>	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate increasing interest in numbers and counting • show understanding of numbers and quantities during play and other activities • count by rote to 20 • demonstrate understanding of one-to-one correspondence between objects and numbers • state the number that follows a number from 1-9 • recognize numerals 0-10 • understand concepts of more, less, and same • demonstrate beginning ability to add and subtract numbers with manipulatives • recognize, duplicate, and continue simple patterns using sounds, objects, and attributes of objects • sort objects into groups by one or more characteristics • order or sequence several objects on the basis of one characteristic (e.g., height, weight) • identify and name common shapes • identify and use common shapes and position words during play • understand and use words for the order of objects (e.g., first, second) • understand and use position words (e.g., above, below, in front of) • demonstrate understanding of directional movement (e.g., left, right, up, down) • measure by height, length, and weight using nonstandard and/or standard units • make comparisons between at least two objects (e.g., longest, shorter, thickest)

Scientific Thinking and Problem-Solving – Pre-Kindergarten

Essential Understandings	Guided Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the five senses helps us to develop awareness of the world around us. • Learning the body parts and their functions helps to develop personal health habits. • The development of foundational scientific concepts helps develop critical thinking skills. • Self-help skills promote independence and lead to a safe environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the five senses help us to learn more about our world? • How can practicing personal health habits keep us safe and healthy? • How can understanding specific scientific concepts help us understand the world around us? • Why is it important to care for ourselves?
Content Guidelines	Performance Standards
<p>Observation</p> <p>Investigation</p> <p>Scientific Concepts</p> <p>Personal Health and Wellness</p>	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the five senses to observe and explore • name the five senses and their functions • explore the natural world by observing and making predictions • use the senses to investigate and describe properties of material objects (color, size, shape, texture, flexibility) • recognize and use a variety of tools for investigation of the environment • recognize and name body parts and their functions • understand weather and seasons • recognize and name the basic colors • participate in a variety of physical activities that enhance personal health and fitness • engage in active physical play indoors and outdoors • identify and practice personal health habits (e.g., washing hands, caring for teeth and eyes, covering coughs and sneezes, blowing nose) which affect self and others • demonstrate healthy eating habits by eating a variety of nutritious foods

Self-Help Skills

- exhibit ability to be separated from parent for an extended period
- develop awareness of own needs and the ability to communicate those needs
- develop inter-dependence in caring for self and the environment
- demonstrate increasing independence with basic self-care skills
- care for self in the restroom
- use fork or spoon as appropriate for eating
- clean up after work/play period
- keep track of personal belongings
- fasten and unfasten own clothing without assistance (zipper, shoes, jacket)

Social Studies – Pre-Kindergarten

Essential Understandings

- Knowledge of personal information is essential.
- Community awareness leads to active citizenship.

Guided Questions

- Why is it important to know your personal information?
- How does understanding our community help us to be better citizens?

Content Guidelines

Personal Information

Community Relationships

Performance Standards

Students will:

- state first and last name
- recite address
- recite phone number
- recite parents' names
- recite birthday

- recognize and appreciate similarities and differences between self and others
- recognize and describe the roles of workers in the community
- begin to recall recent and past events
- identify characteristics of the places where they live and play

Creativity and the Arts – Pre-K

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Essential Understandings	Guided Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art fosters creativity and is an avenue for personal expression.• Creativity and the arts promote the development of the whole child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does this creation/experience make you feel?• What did you gain from this experience?• How does being exposed to the different art forms expand your awareness of the world around you?
Content Guidelines	Performance Standards
<p>Creativity</p> <p>Appreciation</p>	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• use a variety of media, materials, and tools for creative expression• demonstrate self-expression and creativity in a variety of forms and contexts, including play, visual arts, music, drama, and dance• show and talk about what they have made or done • show interest and respect for the creative work of self and others• demonstrate appreciation for different forms of artistic expression• share opinions and thoughts about art and creative expression in a respectful manner