

St. Mark Lutheran School

Kindergarten Overview

1934 52nd Street
Kentwood, MI 49508
616-281-7892 www.smls.net

Thank you for your interest in our kindergarten class. We offer a “5 full-day” program and a “5 mornings” program and a combination of these two options, if necessary. The following is an overview of our program.

Schedule of the Day

- 8:10 Students may enter the building through the downstairs doors. Classroom door opens so that students may enter the room.
- 8:20 Instructional time begins with “Opening Activities” (greeting, pledge, and calendar).
- 8:45 Christian Lesson
- 9:10 Recess
- 9:25 Story time
- 9:45 Large Group Instruction in Math and Language Arts
- 10:30 Learning Stations/Small Group Instruction in Math and Language Arts (2 students per station for 15 minutes)
- 11:30 Wash hands/pray
“A.M. Only” Students go home
- 11:40 Lunch in the classroom
- 12:05 Recess on the playground
- 12:30 Listen to a story while relaxing on towels
- 12:50 Learning Stations/Small Group Instruction in Math and Language Arts/Snack/15 minute Recess
- 3:00 Closing Activities
- 3:15 Dismissal from the upstairs parking lot.

Jesus Christ is our center. Throughout the day, we try to follow Him in everything we do and say. We use the kindergarten curriculum by Concordia Publishing House called "Voyages." We read directly from the children's Bible published by Zondervan.

The majority of our math time is spent "learning by doing". A Saxon Math lesson is taught every day. The Everyday Mathematics text (The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) also provides us with numerous hands-on, real-world fun ways to experience math. We also use several activities from the Math Their Way series and a few worksheets from the Scott Foresman-Addison series.

Our language arts program integrates social studies, science, Zoo-phonics, Handwriting without Tears, and oral and written expression. Some of the activities that we do on a regular basis are writing in draft books (journals) using invented spelling and correct spelling, listening to the speaker and talking to the class, and listening to and reading children's poetry and literature.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES: Once a week for 30 minutes: Library, Music, Art, Physical Education, and Computer Lab

FIELD TRIPS: We try to attend at least three field trips a year -the butterfly exhibit at Meijer Gardens in April, a Lollipops Concert sponsored by the Grand Rapids Symphony and a play presented by local theater group, such as Circle Theater. We also try to go on at least two walking field trips. Parents are welcomed to join us on our walking field trips and are asked to help us by driving to field trip locations.

SNACK: Snacks are planned around food allergies and what is healthy that the children will eat. Each month a different snack item is assigned to each child to bring to school. Examples of what can be assigned are 3 apples, or a bunch of grapes, or a box of Life cereal or a box of graham crackers. Cold water is available for the children to drink. Sometimes the children serve themselves during afternoon learning station time or we have snack as a group at one time.

BIRTHDAY TREATS: Each child is welcome to bring a treat to celebrate his/her birthday. The treat can be eaten at lunch or at snack time. The treat could also be edible or non-edible and could go home with each child at the end of the day. Food allergies are taken into consideration and what date we will celebrate each child's birthday. Summer birthdays can be celebrated in September or May or on the half-birthday. If your child wishes to have a birthday party outside of school and invites the entire class, invitations may be passed out at the end of the school day. If you are only invite a selected number of classmates, please mail those invitations.

HOMEWORK: Daily homework can be educational games, poems and books to read together, and activity worksheets so that the children can show their families what they are learning in kindergarten. October through March the kindergarten students participate in the Pizza Hut "Book-It" program which rewards children for reading with an adult on a regular basis.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: Parents are welcomed to spend time in their children's school. Parents can volunteer to help us at the beginning of the school day by reading a picture book to the children, by helping the children at lunch, by monitoring the playground at lunch recess, and by conducting a learning station in the classroom.

WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN: By going online to fastdir.com you can receive, a news bulletin from the kindergarten classroom. The news bulletin quickly informs you as to what your child is learning in class and what special events are occurring. Mr. Bahr also writes a weekly school newsletter "News and Notes" that is usually available on Wednesdays on www.smls.net.

Often I am asked by a prospective family why they should consider St. Mark Lutheran School as a choice for their child(ren). Here are my thoughts:

1. Jesus Christ is the center of our school day
2. The kindergarten class size is small. During the seven years that I have taught kindergarten, the class size has ranged from 8 to 24 students. This year's class has 17 students enrolled.
3. All staff members care about and know each child personally.
4. We have a cohesive school staff who work together to help make this a Christ-centered, safe, and nurturing environment that challenges every child to use his/her blessings from God in order to fulfill God's plan for his/her life.

Finally, just in case you were wondering about my teaching background, here is a list of my teaching experience and college education:

Currently, I am a certified teacher in the state of Michigan.

Since the fall of 1999 I have taught kindergarten at St. Mark Lutheran School.

After teaching six years of preschool at St. Mark Lutheran Preschool, I assisted in the preschool program for three years while also teaching kindergarten part-time.

I previously taught for 13 ½ years in the special education classrooms in the states of Ohio, Virginia, Colorado, Maryland, and Delaware.

A Masters of Arts in Special Education/Early Childhood was earned from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

A Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education/Special Education was earned from the University of Millersville in Pennsylvania.

I also have earned additional graduate credits from Western Michigan University, Kent State University, University of Virginia, and University of Delaware.

We offer a "5 full-day" program or a "5 mornings" program or, if necessary, a combination of these two programs.

Thank you for your interest in the kindergarten class at St. Mark Lutheran School. Please contact us to arrange a tour of the building and a classroom observation. Please also call us to ask any questions or to discuss any concerns. The school telephone number is 281-7892. Our website is www.smls.net and my email address is dpoyner@smls.net.

Sincerely with God's love to all,

Mrs. Debi Crawford-Poyner