



SAINT THERESE
Nursery School

Curriculum



St. Therese Nursery School Program Curriculum

St. Therese Nursery School utilizes a theme-based curriculum that changes over a four-to-six-week period. Utilizing the State of Connecticut Early Childhood Learning & Developmental Strands, the staff designs developmentally appropriate lesson plans and corresponding assessments. A copy of this framework follows this introduction. The framework is divided into eight key areas of development: cognitive, social, and emotional development, physical development and health, language and literacy, creative arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Many of these areas overlap and concrete examples are given under each standard.

Using this as our framework, the students are also exposed to activities based on a multiple intelligence approach to meet the needs of each individual child. The multiple intelligence approach was designed by Dr. Gardner of Harvard in 1983. A synopsis of the background and the intelligences follows the strands.

Our faith is integrated into our program following our liturgical calendar. Utilizing books, songs, and visits to our church to introduce and celebrate our faith. Sharing Jesus' infinite love for others is our premise as a Catholic nursery school. We also utilize a faith formation program called Seeds each week that corresponds with the weekly Gospel. This has a home component as well for families to explore more together. This is easily integrated into the experience of nursery school, learning to get along with others! We also incorporate our faith through monthly service projects. Whether we collect canned goods for Thanksgiving, hats, and mittens on our snowman mitten line for a shelter, or design and donate a tree to Ronald McDonald's House annual Trees of Hope, our children are learning the rewards of giving and serving others. Prayerfully, they will continue this and have a life filled with service to others!

Parents are made aware of themes and supportive books and songs through each teacher's monthly newsletter that is sent home as well as posted outside of each classroom.

Children are exposed to the curriculum in a variety of groups. Whether it is whole group during meeting or story time, small group on a specific tray activity or mathematical skill, individual with the teacher or with a partner, the varied groupings allow the teachers to ensure the acquisition of knowledge across all areas of development.

AaBb

Handwriting without Tears

Our program currently utilizes the “Handwriting without Tears” program. This program was designed by occupational therapists to assist in not only proper pencil grasp but, letter formation and spatial awareness as well. As stated in the Handwriting without tears website, the program does the following:

- Engaging techniques and activities that help improve a child's early self-confidence, pencil grip, and body awareness skills.
- Multisensory techniques and consistent habits for letter formation to help all children learn handwriting—from preschool through cursive
- Instructional methods that use fun, entertaining, and educationally sound principles

The program introduces letters in a non-sequential order with a focus on grouping the letters by their formation. A letter regarding proper formation and the order is sent home in the beginning of the school year. For more information on this program, you may visit their website at www.hwtears.com.



Classroom Centers

***Art Center:** Children will create a wide range of artwork: drawing, painting, coloring, working with clay, creating collages and structures utilizing recyclable materials.

***Block Center:** A variety of blocks, ramps, supportive thematic props. Building upon architecture and engineering in our designs.

***Dramatic Play:** Each classroom houses child size furniture including a refrigerator, stove, sink, and cupboard. Dress up clothes, dolls, and a puppet theater enhances creative play.

***Science/Sensory Table:** A water/sand table that includes props for both water and sand and other sensory materials. This table also serves as an area for scientific exploration such as the transformation of snow to water in the winter months.

***Manipulative Area:** These pre-mathematical and fine motor activities are placed in trays allowing children an opportunity to classify, build, and problem solve with fine motor materials such as puzzles, pegs, beads, strings, and laces.

***Literacy Center:** An age-appropriate book section which includes picture books, story books, and poetry books, including a wide range of topics: families, humor, word and alphabet, cultural diversity, seasonal/holidays, fantasy, and true stories.

***Music and Movement:** A classroom collection of musical instruments, a CD player, and age-appropriate music.

Multiple Intelligences Theory and Implementation in the Classroom

I. Introduction

Dr. Howard Gardner, a psychologist and professor from Harvard University, developed Multiple Intelligences Theory (MI) in 1983. His theory is an important contribution to educational practices and reform movements around the world. It challenges the traditional view of “IQ” and enables educators to take a renewed look at our views about learning and development. In the book *Frames of Mind*, Gardner questioned the validity of “IQ” score in deciding human intelligence because IQ tests only measures one's ability to handle academic subjects, and it predicts little of success in later life. He proposed that there are at least seven basic intelligences ((1) Visual/Spatial Intelligence, (2) Musical Intelligence, (3) Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence, (4) Logical/Mathematical Intelligence, (5) Interpersonal Intelligence, (6) Intrapersonal Intelligence, and (7) Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence). And recently, in 1996, Gardner added the eighth intelligence--naturalist intelligence to his theory. Gardner pointed out that “it is not if you are smart, but how you are smart.” (Gardner, 1983) The following criteria have been used in MIT to identify intelligence: it “entails the ability to solve problems, it involves a “biological proclivity,” it has “an identifiable neurological core operation or set of operations” and it is susceptible to encoding in a symbol system...which captures and conveys important forms of information” (Gardner 1999: 15-16). These different kinds of intelligences reflect learners’ myriad ways of interacting with the world. Although each person possesses all intelligences to some degree, some intelligences are more strongly exhibited than others. By various stimuli and education, MI can be nurtured and strengthened or ignored and weakened.

II. Multiple Intelligences Theory

a. Description of the Eight Intelligences:

- Linguistic Intelligence involves the capacity to use language effectively and creatively no matter in writing or speaking. Linguistic people like to use language to express their ideas, convey information, and understand other people. They are good at memorizing names, places, or other detailed information.
- Logical-mathematical intelligence is the ability to use numbers effectively and engage in higher order thinking. People with this intelligence like to reason and analyze problems, work with numbers, and explore patterns and relationships. They are able to control visuals and mental pictures from various perspectives.

Description of the Eight Intelligences Continued:

- Spatial intelligence is the ability to manipulate and perceive objects or forms mentally and then to transfer those perceptions either mentally or concretely. They like to learn and think by visual stimuli and tend to organize things spatially. So, they learn best through graphic images.
- Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence involves using people's whole body or parts of their body to solve problems, to express ideas and emotions. Bodily-Kinesthetic learners like to touch, talk, create things, and move around. They are good at physical activities such as dance, hands-on tasks, constructing models, and any kind of movement.
- Musical intelligence is the capacity to think and express in musical forms. People with this intelligence own the sensitivity to the melody, sound, pitch or tone. They learn best through activities wherein they discriminate, transform, and express sounds.
- Interpersonal intelligence involves the capacity to perceive the feelings, intentions, and motivations. Interpersonal learners can discriminate the cues from facial expressions, gestures, or intonation and respond effectively to those cues. They like to join groups, communicate with others, and make a lot of friends. Such interpersonal learners learn best by interacting with people, cooperating, and leading others.
- Intrapersonal intelligence means learners have the ability to understand themselves. They have a clear picture in who they are, what they can do, and what they want to do. They like to work alone and achieve their goals. They learn best through getting in touch with their inner moods, intentions, and self motivations.
- Naturalist intelligence enables the learners to better relate themselves to the surroundings. They show strong interests in animals or natural phenomena. Being outside, making observation about the subtle changes in the environment, interacting with plants and animals allow such learners to perform with more confidence and ease.

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