

First Grade Information



Welcome to First Grade at Holy Rosary School. For eleven years, Mrs. Kester is the first grade teacher. Mrs. Mackin is the instructional aid for the primary grades and as such assists in first grade regularly.

If you ever need to contact me you may call and leave me a message. We have phones in the room but during school hours you will be forwarded to voicemail. You may also email or send a note with your child. Asking to talk with me as the children walk in the door in the morning is not the best time because the children are all ready to start the day. Please let me know if there is a change in the way your child is picked up after school or if there is a significant event affecting your child such as a family illness, moving, a death, or a medicine that causes a behavior change. While I make every possible effort to return calls and emails promptly, I do not do this while I have children in the room. It is usually lunchtime or after school before I can return your call.



Curriculum



The first grade curriculum includes many subjects including: math, reading, phonics, writing, handwriting, social studies, science, art, and religion. Religion instruction has two focuses: theology and participating in the faith. We attend First Friday mass, weekly mass during Lent, and special prayer services for Thanksgiving, Advent, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and other times. First graders learn prayers and are expected to participate appropriately at mass and prayer services.

Many lessons are taught across the curriculum which means that several different disciplines are included in an unit. For example, when we do a unit on Australia we will learn about the people that live there (Social Studies), the climate and animals, (Science), write about it, and do related art projects.

Specialists

PE: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Please check that your child is wearing athletic shoes on PE days or has shoes to change into if he/she isn't. Girls should wear some sort of shorts under their jumpers on PE days. Other specialist classes include:

Music: Monday and Thursday

Spanish: Thursdays and Fridays

Computer: Tuesday

Library: Wednesday. Library books should be returned as soon as you have finished reading them since only one book can be checked out.

School Attire



At Holy Rosary School there are five kinds of dress days:

1. **Usual uniform days:** These are the majority of the school days. There are many uniform options available for the students from the Dennis Uniform Company. Catalogs are available in the office. There is a uniform exchange closet in the lunchroom that is free to all. Watch the length of the girl's skirts. It seems that first grade girls grow in spurts. One morning you will notice that the outfit is too short! Also please replace or repair pants that have holes in the knees.
2. **Formal Uniform Days:** When we have mass or an assembly the children are expected to wear one of the uniform sweaters or the uniform sweater vest. If we are going to mass we ask that shorts are not worn. If it is a warm day, children can change after mass during recess. We have mass on the first Friday of the month, holidays, and Fridays during Lent. Assemblies are on Fridays whenever there is not mass.
3. **Spirit Day:** The children may wear any style of pants, keeping in mind that this is a Catholic School and the pants should not be too tight, too short, or too baggie. If hip hugger type pants are worn, please be sure that they are modest in design so that the child may bend over and work without worry of exposure. The pants should be free from holes and stains. The Holy Rosary School Spirit shirt or sweatshirt is to be worn. If you do not have the Spirit Shirt the usual school uniform is to be worn. Other blue shirts or shirts from sports teams are not an option.
4. **Free Choice Days:** The children may wear any style of pants, keeping in mind that this is a Catholic School and the pants should not be too tight, too short, or too baggie. If hip hugger type pants are worn, please be sure that they are modest in design so that the child may bend over and work without worry of exposure. The pants should be free from holes and stains. Tank tops are not allowed and dresses or skirts should be of a modest length. Bare mid-drifts are also not acceptable.

5. Occasionally there may be a special dress occasion like Hawaiian Day or favorite sports team day.

Other



All shoes should be low heeled and closed toe, have buckles, ties or Velcro.TM They should be tied at all times. Tennis shoes should be worn on PE days. Please, no boots or clogs.

Post earrings only. Fingernail polish should be natural in color which means light pink or clear.

Hair should be groomed away from the face so as not to cover the face. Hair color should be of a natural hue. Boys hair must not extend over the ears or eyebrows or go below the top of the shirt collar.

Earthquakes



We keep an earthquake kit from each child in the classroom. A note goes home each fall explaining what to put in the student's earthquake kit. As soon as the kit is assembled please bring it to school so that we will be prepared. Please remember that space is limited so do not add extra or oversized items. The students practice earthquake and fire procedures on a regular bases.

Grades



Holy Rosary is on a trimester system which means that children are given report cards three times a year: December, March, and June. In October and April formal parent teacher conferences are scheduled. Between the report card times there are progress reports that are sent home to keep you abreast of your child's progress. These are sent home approximately every three weeks.

Communication



Every Wednesday a **Family Folder** is sent home. Inside this folder is a collection of important notices about what is happening at the school including a calendar of upcoming events and a letter from the principal. Please remove all of these papers, read them, and return the empty folder

to school before the next Wednesday.

Every Friday I send home the student's work for the week stapled together with a newsletter about first grade. It will contain some of the same information from the Wednesday folder, but will also have additional information specific to first grade like what we are studying.

Recess



The primary children have a fifteen minute morning and afternoon recess daily except on half days and early dismissal days. After lunch they also have a half hour recess time. There are two teachers outside at all recesses which greatly exceeds the state safety guidelines of one teacher to 60 students at recess. Children are expected to participate in recess and when the weather is cooler, bring coats so that this is possible. We will have indoor recess time when it is raining outside, but we do go out if it is damp, cold, or windy.

We stop at the bathrooms on our way outside in order to limit the need to come inside during recess to use the facilities.

Testing



The children are given a reading test three times a year: September,

March, and May. Also checked is the mastery of the Spalding Phonics sounds and the one hundred sight words for first grade. Chapter tests are given in Math and Phonics. Spelling tests begin during the second trimester of school.

Homework



Homework is part of the curriculum at Holy Rosary School for grades one through eight. The purpose of homework in first grade is twofold. The first purpose is to practice what has been learned in school and to inform the parents about what those lessons are. The second is to teach responsibility. The child learns to take the homework assignment home nightly and return it completed the next day. The worksheet that is given as homework should usually take less than fifteen minutes to complete neatly. Normally, a child should be able to do the assignment by her/himself. If you are unsure of how the assignment is to be done, please just attach a note and I will gladly go over it with your child the next day. Please check the homework after it is finished to monitor for neatness, completeness, and accuracy.

In addition to the homework sheet, first graders need to read and be read to for a minimum of an hour a week. A chart to track this reading is sent home every Monday and should be returned the following week. After the Christmas Vacation weekly spelling lists will be sent home for memorization. Math fact practice will also be included throughout the year.

Accelerated Reader

As the year progresses, children will begin using the Accelerated Reading Program.TM This computer generated comprehension program is designed so that children can read books on their individual reading level.

Birthdays



If you wish, a nut-free snack may be sent to school in honor of your child's birthday. We will eat it near the end of the day. Please do not send flowers or balloon bouquets to school to be delivered to your child. We also ask that you do not plan on bringing cameras and family members such as grandma and grandpa to school for the snack. If you are having a birthday party and want the invitations passed out at school, we will do that if all of the girls, all of the boys, or the whole class is invited.

Vacations



Occasionally families take vacations during the school year. If it is necessary for your family to do so, we will keep your child's work to complete when you return. We will ask that your student keep a journal about the adventure while away.

After School Care

The school maintains a state licensed facility. Mrs. Johnson is the coordinator for the after school program. If you need this service, please contact her for more information. There is full time, part time, and drop in care available on full days of school and on Mondays that we dismiss at 1:30. If you plan to use the drop-in service, you must contact Mrs. Johnson first and have all of the proper forms returned. At this time, we do not have before school care available.

If you are late picking your children up after school, they will be waiting for you in the office.

