

St. Philip Neri School

Second Grade - Mrs. Suer

2024-2025

Dear Second Grade Families,

Welcome to our second grade classroom! I am looking forward to working with you and your child throughout this academic year. Included in this packet is general information about curriculum, policies, procedures, and expectations.

Second grade is full of new and exciting opportunities for learning and growth – both academically and socially. I am excited to share this year's journey with your student!

Classroom Philosophy

I believe that every child has the ability to learn and succeed in this classroom. It is my intention to provide a safe and positive learning environment for your child. My goal is that this classroom experience will prepare and contribute to each student's academic and social development by adding to the strong foundation that is already set in place. In this classroom, students are able to explore, ask questions, make mistakes, and ultimately feel confident in their learning experience. I know that all children are unique, and I will encourage their eager minds and loving hearts each day.

Classroom Learning Expectations

- RESPECT yourself, others, and things.
- CONTRIBUTE to the learning environment.
- FOLLOW school and classroom rules and procedures.

Our classroom is a safe and respectful environment where everyone is expected to be ready to learn and to let others learn as well. Our expectations for how we work and how we treat ourselves, others, and our materials are posted in our classroom.

Behavior Expectations

Students are expected to behave in a manner that complies with the St. Philip Neri Parent/Student Handbook. I urge you to read the handbook thoroughly and refer to it as often as needed. The Schoolwide Learning Expectations (SLEs) teach students to be respectful, responsible, reverent, lifelong learners. Throughout the year, we will refer to our SLEs to ensure we are making good decisions. I look forward to positively recognizing children with SLE awards when they model these behaviors.

If a student is not following school and/or classroom rules and expectations:

- They will be given a general reminder to self-correct. If the student chooses to continue the behavior, they may be asked to take a moment to reset outside the classroom and/or

visit a buddy classroom.

- Students may also be asked to complete a reflection form to consider the impact of the behavior on the learning environment and/or others.
- If the behavior continues, a PCF (Parent Communication Form) will be sent home. The PCF should be signed and returned the following day.

This behavior protocol will support student success and facilitate a classroom learning environment that enables all our students to be respectful, responsible, reverent, life-long learners.

Uniform Policy

A student attending St. Philip Neri School should always be in full uniform unless otherwise specified. Please follow the uniform policy outlined in the Student/Parent Handbook and please label all sweatshirts and/or sweaters with the student's name.

Family Communication

A weekly update will be emailed and posted to our class website to highlight what we are learning and focusing on in the classroom. This update will also touch on upcoming events and assignments.

The best way to reach me is through email. I will return emails as soon as I am able to (within 24 hours). I ask that email length be kept to a minimum, and if a phone call or in-person meeting is needed, we will schedule one. If there is an urgent matter during school hours, please contact the school office, and I will receive the information.

Family Volunteers

The teacher/family relationship is a partnership. We are on the same team, working toward the same goal – your child's success and well-being. There may be various opportunities to volunteer, including in the classroom and on field trips. I look forward to sharing our class experiences with you!

All individuals who want to volunteer in the classroom or chaperone on a field trip must complete the VIRTUS training (<https://virtusonline.org/virtus/>). You also must have your fingerprints on file with the Diocese of Oakland. All up to date insurance documents and drivers license information must be turned in to the office if you wish to drive on a field trip.

Please follow the guidelines set forth in the SPN Student and Parent Handbook for volunteering with students. If you are going to volunteer in the classroom for more than twelve hours a month, you must fill out a TB form. Contact the front office for the form.

Field Trips

Field trips are a wonderful way to enrich the students' learning experiences. I am hoping to have at least two-three offsite field trips, and I will request drivers when needed. I also use

buses for certain trips. When applicable, the cost of field trips will be billed on monthly tuition statements. The number of field trips is, in-part, determined by student behavior. I have high expectations that my class represent our school in a respectful, responsible manner, and I rely on chaperones to be serious about reinforcing our Student Learning Expectations during outings. Stay tuned for updates throughout the year about upcoming field trips.

Birthdays

Free dress will be given on the SPN designated day for all birthdays in each respective month. Birthday parties are not allowed at school. Due to an increased number of food allergies and dietary restrictions, food treats/goodie bags for student birthdays will not be distributed at school. As a replacement, students with a birthday will be acknowledged at morning assembly by the Student Leadership Council (SLC) with a small gift. In addition to the acknowledgement from the SLC, second grade acknowledges birthday students with a song and a few non-edible goodies from me and Mrs. Serles. If parents want to acknowledge their student's birthday, they can donate a book to the classroom library.

Star of the Week

Each week there will be a "Star of the Week". The student who is the Star of the Week will be given an "About Me" sheet to complete a week in advance and will bring it to school on the next Monday (or Tuesday, if the Monday is a holiday). The student will have the opportunity to present their sheet to the class, answer questions, receive compliments, etc. and then it will be hung in the classroom until the end of the week. Students may also bring a special item to share, such as a favorite book, toy, etc. – the item should fit in their backpack.

Community Meetings

Community meetings are an engaging way to build a strong sense of community and set children up for success socially and academically. Each morning, we will gather together to review our schedule, read our morning message, and share about and pray for important events and intentions in our lives.

Additionally, at the end of each week we will gather for a closing circle to reflect on the week using the following prompts: I enjoyed..., I learned..., or I appreciated... I love our reflection time together, and it ends our week on a high note!

As needed, we hold whole-class or small-group meetings to address behavior and/or interpersonal issues that arise. The goal is always to maintain a safe and respectful environment where all students are able to learn and thrive.

STAR Assessments

Students will take STAR assessments four times per year. These assessments are snapshots of a student's math and reading skills and are used as one datapoint in my evaluation of where students may need additional support, reinforcement, or challenge.

Curriculum

We will use the following curriculum this year in 2nd grade:

Religion: Be My Disciples, Family Life RCL Benziger

- Sacramental preparation of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion
- Developing knowledge of grade-appropriate church doctrine, history, and moral choices
- Strengthening our relationship with God through prayer and mass participation
- Focusing attention on how we live as children of God in his image through service, family life and discipleship

Social Studies: People Together: Adventures in Time and Place

- Studying people who make a positive difference in our communities
- Learning more about our families and cultures, both today and in the past
- Developing our knowledge of geography as well as map skills
- Exploring basic government institutions and practices as well as our economy

Science: Mystery Science

- Exploring landforms and bodies of water as well as the evolution of landforms over time
- Understanding the properties of Earth's materials and the changes they experience when heated or cooled
- Making connections between the adaptations of plants and animals and their habitats within different landscapes
- Using the process of investigation and experimentation to make predictions based on patterns, as well as observations

Math: Bridges in Mathematics, The Math Learning Center

- Extending understanding of the base-ten notation
- Building fluency with addition and subtraction facts as well as 2 and 3-digit solutions
- Interpreting word problems, including using currency and time
- Using standard units of measure
- Describing and analyzing shapes

Language Arts: Superkids, Zaner-Bloser

- Developing deeper skills in the areas of phonics, spelling, fluency and comprehension through daily practice and the use of longer, more complex fiction and informational texts
- Using the writing process to write longer, more structured narratives, informational pieces, and opinion pieces

Handwriting: Zaner-Bloser

- Refining basic strokes
- Introducing cursive

Enrichment Class Teachers:

- Art and Spanish – Senora Romero
- Music – Ms. Cho (a.k.a. Ms. Lydia)
- Garden Science/Maker Space – Ms. Smeal (a.k.a. Ms. Kristen)
- Physical Education – Mr. Croft
- Library - Mrs. Latham

Grading

K-5 grading is standards-based. Report card grading is done on a 4-3-2-1 scale with a 3 (Meets Expectations) as the goal for each standard by the end of the school year. A "4" is only given in special circumstances. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Homework

Homework will be assigned weekly on Monday and should be returned by Friday (unless otherwise noted). Each student will have a GREEN homework folder with the assignment sheet, their math homework book, and any other necessary materials. On average, homework should take no more than 10-15 focused minutes per day along with 15 minutes of daily reading (again, they can bring their AR books home for this if they would like to). During these 15 minutes of reading, I encourage students to read aloud to promote fluency (good pace, accuracy, and expression).

At this age, homework is meant to help students develop a sense of responsibility for completing assignments and turning them in timely. Students are learning that it is not their parents' job to complete their homework or to put it in their backpack for them. As an added resource, if your child attends Share and Care, I encourage them to use the homework time set aside by Ms. Mariem. Homework is in no way intended to cause stress or anxiety. If your child is struggling with homework, please contact me.

Completed homework and schoolwork will be sent home in a manila take-home envelope every other Friday. Please empty and sign the envelope and return it the next school day. I strongly suggest that you and your child sit down together to review their work as it is an opportunity for discussion, celebration, and if needed, support.

AR (Accelerated Reader) Program

Consistent reading of both fiction and nonfiction texts is a fundamental factor in a student's literacy growth in second grade. In addition to the core language arts curriculum and small group reading, we will continue the AR program this year for independent reading. STAR assessments will help determine a student's reading level to guide book choice. The process and expectations for AR independent reading are as follow:

- A student chooses and reads a book at their appropriate reading level.
- They will write a brief reflection and have it reviewed by the teacher.
- The student then takes a quiz on the book to evaluate their level of comprehension. Scores of 80-100% indicate strong comprehension.
- Each week, students are expected to read at least one book and complete the related reflection and quiz.
- As students start reading longer chapter books, this expectation will change to one book every two weeks.
- To meet these goals, students are welcome to bring their classroom library book home, but they must keep it in their backpack to use at school the next day.
- I will keep track of student progress and work with each child individually. If there is an

issue staying on track with goals, I will reach out to you.

Overall Goal: Students steadily improve their comprehension skills with increasingly complex fiction and non-fiction texts, develop confidence, and enjoy the reading process!

Growth Mindset and Quality of Work

It is important that the students take pride in their work, and I expect them to do their best. We will be working on developing/maintaining growth mindsets in second grade. Each student learns differently and certain content areas are going to be more challenging than others. Mistakes and challenges will be viewed as opportunities to learn and identify strategies that work the best for each student. We will develop consciousness about the words we use and how they affect our mindsets as well as the mindsets of those around us. For example, if a student announces, "This is so EASY!", it may cause a student who is struggling beside them to wonder, "If it's so easy for them, why don't I get it? What's wrong with me?". Being conscious of and thoughtful about our words and actions will help us create a supportive classroom community for ALL learners.

In terms of effort and quality, students should always practice the following:

- Heading includes name, student number, and date.
- Loose pages are kept neatly in a folder.
- Writing is neat and legible.
- Work is done in pencil.
- Give your best effort and maintain a positive attitude.
- Try first, but ask for help when you need it.

Time Away from School

It is disruptive when students miss school - for the student, the teachers, and classmates. Illness is unavoidable, and please continue to complete the daily health screening. Please try to schedule vacations according to the school calendar and minimize appointments during the school day.

Please see the SPN Student/Parent Handbook for policies on missing school for any reason. When you know your student is going to be absent / away from school, please email me (csuer@csdo.org) **and** SPN's attendance alias (spnattendance@csdo.org).

I am looking forward to a great year! Thank you for supporting SPN, your child, and myself.

Thank you,

Mrs. Catherine Suer