St. Philip Neri School
Second Grade - Mrs. Suer

Back to School Night 2022-2023

Dear Parents,

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 course of this 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 visit a buddy classroom and/or take a

moment to reset outside the 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.

Parent Communication

A weekly update will be posted to our class website as often as possible to highlight what we have been learning and focusing on in the classroom and what is upcoming. 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.

Parent Volunteers

The teacher/parent relationship is a partnership. We are on the same team, working toward the same goal – your child's success and well-being. Depending on health guidelines, 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 who want to volunteer in the classroom or chaperone on a field trip must complete the VIRTUS training (https://virtusonline.org/virtus/). Every parent volunteer must complete this training. 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. At this time, all volunteers must provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination as well.

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 student's learning experiences. Stay tuned for updates throughout the year on upcoming field trips. I am hoping to have two-three offsite field trips, and I will request drivers when needed.

Birthdays

Free dress will be given on the SPN designated day for all birthdays in each respective month. Students are welcome to celebrate their individual birthdays by bringing in a **small treat** to share with the class. I encourage treats to be healthy and low in sugar. With a handful of birthdays each month, large sugary treats might be a bit much. If you do bring sugary treats, please make them mini size (mini cupcakes, donut holes, brownie bites – as opposed to a large-size item). Treats must be nut-free. Non-food items are also welcome and a great choice to avoid allergy complications! ☺ Please contact me ahead of time if you plan on bringing something to hand out. (24 students)

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 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 Circles

Community circles 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…, I appreciated… I love our reflection time together, and it ends our week on a high note! ☺ Usually I either pass out a small piece of fruit, candy, or other non-edible treat. This is my small gift to the children. If you wish to contribute something one week (count of 24), please let me know. I will gladly accept!

As needed, we hold whole-class or small circles 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.

Curriculum:

The following is the list of curriculum we will be using this year in 2nd grade:

Religion: Be My Disciples, RCL Benziger

- Sacramental preparation of Penance and First Holy Communion
- Developing knowledge of grade-appropriate church doctrine, history, and making the right 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; Time for Kids Magazine

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

Science: Mystery Science

- Exploring patterns and shapes in landforms and bodies of water, properties of the Earth's materials and the types of changes they can experience, evolution of landforms, and habitats and ecosystems in 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 of addition and subtraction
- 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 the use of longer, more complex fiction and informational texts
- Using the writing process to write longer, more structured narratives, informational texts, and opinion pieces

Handwriting: Zaner-Bloser

- Refining basic strokes
- Introducing cursive

AR (Accelerated Reader):

- We will continue the AR program this year. Students will take the STAR assessment four times during the year to determine their reading level and identify skills for development. Once a student reads a book at their appropriate reading level, they will write a brief reflection and then take a quiz on that book. These quizzes evaluate their level of comprehension. I will keep track of the books tested with an 80 percent or higher score and work with each child individually. Students are expected to read at least one book and complete the related test each week. The goal is to help students increase their comprehension skills with both fiction and non-fiction texts,

develop confidence, and enjoy the reading process! ☺

Enrichment Classes:

- Spanish – Senora Romero
- Art – Senora Romero
- Music – Mr. Quinones (a.k.a. Mr. Q)
- Physical Education – Mr. Croft
- Garden Science/Library – Ms. Smeal (a.k.a. Ms. Kristen)

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) in their GREEN homework folder. Homework should take no more than 10-15 minutes along with 15 minutes of reading each night. 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 parent's 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 designed or intended to cause stress or anxiety. If your child is struggling with homework, please contact me.

A note about nightly reading:

Independent student reading is the single most important factor for students to experience success with 2nd grade reading. Children learn to read by reading! The expectation is that students and parents will make every effort to read for at least 15 minutes each night.

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 suggest that you and your child sit down to review the work sent home.

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 make the student who is struggling beside them 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 thoughts, 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.
- Math work is done only in pencil.
- Give your best effort and maintain a positive attitude.
- Ask for help when you need it.

Time Away from School

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 for an appointment, 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. Below you will find key contact information:

Mrs. Catherine Suer: csuer@csdo.org
Class website: https://www.spnalameda.org/academics/classroom/second-grade/
SPN phone number: (510) 521-0787
Attendance alias: spnattendance@csdo.org

Thank you,
Mrs. Catherine Suer