

St. Marks Nursery School – 2010/2011



We are aware that you and your neighbours may be considering options for the education of your preschool and/or kindergarten child in September and thought that it would be helpful to outline St. Marks' approach and curriculum for our classes. St. Marks is a not-for-profit Christian organization, which has provided a warm and loving educational environment for children in the Port Credit community since 1958. Our staff's years of teaching experience has taught us that children learn effectively through play, combined with structured seat time in order to consolidate academic concepts and develop social and motor skills. The low teacher-student ratios allow us to foster a positive self-concept in each child and to help each develop spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially. Our teaching staff and Pastor Jeff Miskus strive to ensure that your child knows that he/she is special and loved by God.

As a Christian preschool, children are able to participate in activities that lead to knowledge of Jesus' love, care and friendship through Bible stories, songs and prayers. The children learn that God is the creator of the world and that the Bible is God's word, which lead us in all that we do.

Ages 2 ½ to 3 Years

The Red Squirrels

The school experience is new to children of this age and in order for them to thrive in this new environment, St. Marks focuses on the many aspects of social development. The school provides an environment where routine and trust enable the children to separate from parents or caregivers and to learn and demonstrate increasing independence and a sense of what is appropriate and comfortable behaviour for them. Free playtime facilitates social interactions. These interactions help model behaviour, stimulate an interest in exploring, and practice the sharing of toys and materials. Confidence is built through the development of gross motor skills including riding tricycles, playing on equipment and interacting with their peers.

Structured classroom time allows the children to function in a more formal environment and learn to follow simple directions. Daily story time models reading and provides an opportunity to ask and respond to related questions. Various activities teach the children to recall words and coordinate actions and songs, identify objects, shapes and colours, and begin the understanding of numbers and counting. Puzzles and crafts are used to develop fine motor coordination and reinforce colours, shapes and counting.

In the 2 ½ to 3 year class, the overriding goals at St. Marks is that the child enjoys the school experience and learns a love of learning and a strong sense of self and that he/she is special and loved by God

Ages 3 to 4 Years

The Yellow Butterflies

The school experience may or may not be new to children of this age group. St. Marks focuses on social development and the emerging academic concepts in the 3 to 4 year class. Students learn a sense of belonging and increased confidence in their growing abilities. Peer interactions help each child to respect the rights of others, share toys and materials and play and work cooperatively in games and to accomplish tasks. Children are encouraged to observe and make discoveries in a variety of situations.

Beginning mathematics is taught including number recognition, rote counting, number quantity, serialization, sequencing, sorting and patterning. Children learn to visually discriminate between colours, shapes, and the alphabet letters in their name and other's names. Our daily story-time models reading, improves valuable listening skills and introduces reading comprehension through questions and explanations. Students are encouraged to use common words to express ideas and formulate questions and answers. Monthly show and tell helps to build confidence in each child's ability to express multiple ideas in a group setting.

Preschool children are given the opportunity to develop their gross motor skills through outdoor activities including playground activities, riding bicycles and tricycles, catching and throwing balls and beanbags, balancing and dancing.

Our songs and finger plays provide the children with a fun platform to reinforce memory work, develop fine and gross motor coordination and follow simple directions. Classroom work helps the children increase their fine motor skills through cutting, brushwork, holding crayons and colouring, stringing, beading and using primary pencils to trace their name and complete exercises such as dot to dot.

In the 3 to 4 year class crafts are used to help bring the learning together through counting, colours, spatial awareness, sequencing, pattern recognition and fine motor practice.

The preschool curriculum introduces children to science, music, French and cooking activities.

As in all classes at St. Marks, the overriding goals are that the child learns a love of learning, a strong sense of self, and that he/she is special and loved by God.

Kindergarten

The Blue Birds

The Kindergarten years provide an important opportunity to lay the academic and social foundations which are *vital* to the child's experience in the primary years ahead. Kindergarten children focus on a more structured program with Jolly phonics and math-based activities appropriate for the revised curriculum. Students are taught the sound language (JK), reading (SK), pattern recognition, sequencing and addition and subtraction. Crafts are used as a basis to stimulate creativity while practicing math skills including patterns, and numbers and honing fine motor skills. Gross motor play in our age appropriate playground channels the children's' energy while providing a safe environment for physical skill development. Children are introduced to music, science, cooking activities and French.

Language and Reading

St. Marks Nursery School employs *Jolly Phonics* that provides a thorough foundation for reading and writing. It teaches the letter sounds in an enjoyable, multi-sensory way, and enables children to use them to read and write words. Mrs. Gallant reads stories with the children and leads a group discussion, which stimulates each student's reading comprehension and oral response.

In addition, children learn a sight vocabulary through classroom labels including colours, days, months and common objects. Our language and reading program will also include the learning reading series from Ladybird which focuses on reading fluidity and confidence for those Kindergarten children who are ready to read.

Read with me program: each child receives their own book bag, containing a book to be read and a journal with follow up activities, to help promote comprehension, word recognition and printing skills. Books and activities are changed regularly.

Monthly show and tell for each student develops early public speaking skills and confidence and allows the children to learn a little more about each other.

Mathematics

Kindergarten children are taught the basic concepts of mathematics including number sequencing, event sequencing, classification and sorting, spatial orientation, pattern recognition and completion, serializing objects based on size, object comparison, weight scale, graphing, shapes and comparisons. Addition and subtraction are introduced as individual children display an understanding of quantity and order.

Social Interactions and Sense of Self

The children are able to develop a strong sense of self-esteem through sharing personal experiences and thoughts during group discussion and activities, to stand up for one's rights, and to understand and respect differences. We model sharing toys and materials, constructive conflict resolution and responsibility for one's actions and one's environment. Children are encouraged to plan and persist in tasks, use creativity and imagination to develop multiple solutions to problems and apply information and experience to new contexts. The students are encouraged to develop team skills in large and small groups through play and structured activities.

Motor Skills

Kindergarten students at St. Marks are given the opportunity to participate in numerous gross motor activities including playground activities, riding bicycles and tricycles, catching and throwing balls and bean bags, balancing, and dancing. Fine motor skills are honed through printing, drawing, cutting, pasting, painting and play.

Putting It All Together

At St. Marks, we believe that the love of learning provides the basis for successful education. To that end, we provide our students with opportunities to grow and learn in a fun secure environment where play and crafts reinforce our academics and socialization. In addition, our low teacher-student ratios allow us to foster a positive self-concept in each child and help each to develop spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially. Our teaching staff and Pastor Jeff strive to ensure that your child knows that he/she is special and loved by God.