

DIOCESE OF RALEIGH EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM

PHILOSOPHY

The Diocese of Raleigh Early Childhood Centers believe that a developmentally appropriate Catholic preschool experience provides an environment that allows freedom to play, explore and discover the wonders of God's world in the course of a child-oriented day. We believe children learn most effectively through sensory experiences and activities that stir the imagination and encourage exploration.

It is essential for children to develop a well-adjusted sense of self in an environment that affords opportunities to attempt new skills and recognize that learning involves trial and error. Within the classroom, children freely interact with peers and adults developing a sense of trust and respect for individuals. By providing a curriculum that integrates all areas of a child's development, children can learn and reach their maximum potential

CURRICULUM – SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The *Curriculum - Scope and Sequence* complements and helps implement the philosophy, goals and mission of the parish and the Early Childhood Center. The *Scope and Sequence* serves as a framework for the teacher to plan developmentally appropriate lessons and activities that guide a child's first learning experiences. It is a continuum showing the incremental levels of development within five **Domains**, primary areas of development.

The framework includes **developmental objectives** that describe what the young child can reasonably be expected to know and be able to do within each Domain. These objectives determine the focus of child-initiated and teacher-directed classroom activities. To further define the developmental objectives, **indicators** provide age appropriate examples of knowledge and skills. By observing what a child can do within each objective, the teacher can determine and articulate a child's progress and plan learning experiences to provide for the child's next stage of learning.

The Domains included in the *Scope and Sequence* are:

- **Spiritual**
Experiences that assist children in: learning about Jesus' life and teachings; developing a relationship with God through prayer; beginning exposure to Catholic traditions; treating self and others with respect.
- **Social/Emotional**
Experiences that nurture a child's ability to communicate a sense of self, to exhibit independence, to interact appropriately with peers, to show self discipline and respect for others, to participate in a variety of activities and to show an appropriate degree of persistence, to cope with new or challenging situations and to communicate his/her own needs and feelings appropriately.

- **Physical**
 - Self-Help, Health and Safety** - being able to take care of personal needs, helping to care for the classroom and keeping oneself healthy and safe
 - Fine Motor** - small muscle strength, dexterity and coordination
 - Gross Motor** - large muscle strength, flexibility and control
- **Cognitive**
 - Language and Communication** focuses on **oral language** - using a growing vocabulary, listening and responding to spoken language, being able to communicate needs, feelings and ideas; **phonological awareness** - progressing in recognizing the sounds words and parts of words make; **print awareness** - understanding that print carries a message; **book knowledge** - appreciating books; **comprehension** - understanding what is heard and read; **alphabet knowledge** - developing letter knowledge; and, **writing** - expressing self through drawings, scribbles and letter-like forms.
 - Mathematics** includes using **numbers and counting** in class activities and play; **geometry and spatial sense** - developing concepts of shape and position; **measurement** - recognizing measurable attributes like length or height; **displaying and analyzing data** - matching, sorting, and ordering objects; and, **patterns/algebra** - recognizing patterns.
 - Science** consists of exhibiting curiosity about and gaining knowledge of how the world works and beginning to engage in predicting, observing, experimenting, and recording, otherwise known as the scientific process.
- **Creative Expression**
 - Music** focuses on singing and playing rhythm instruments; responding to music with movement; and understanding musical elements such as louder and softer.
 - Art** includes using a variety of sensory materials for creative expression.

The curriculum is not limited to the objectives found in *Scope and Sequence* but involves all experiences the child encounters. In order to stir the imagination, encourage exploration and aid in the acquisition of new knowledge, the teacher presents **units of study or themes**, determined by topics of interest to the young child, and structures **classroom centers** that create the environment for engaging in creative play and experiential learning.

“The goal of early childhood education is to help a child develop the abilities, the understanding, and the disposition required for success... Early childhood learning environments must be carefully designed to provide a variety of opportunities for children to see, hear, touch, and connect with their surroundings. It is through these sensory experiences that preschool, pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten children master the basics of learning readiness.” Mari Blainstein, NAEYC Journal, July 2005

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<p>A. SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES</p> <p>A.1 Begins to learn about Jesus' life and teachings A.2 Begins to develop a relationship with God A.3 Discovers and appreciates God's creation A.4 Worships God through prayer and song A.6 Respects self A.7 Treats others with respect</p>
<p>B. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL OBJECTIVES</p> <p>B.1 Communicates a sense of self B.2 Exhibits increasing independence in the classroom, i.e., separates from the caregiver easily, chooses own activities, etc. B.3 Interacts with peers B.4 Demonstrates self-discipline and respects needs and rights of others B.5 Participates in a variety of learning activities B.6 Demonstrates increased persistence with tasks B.7 Copes with challenging situations B.8 Communicates needs and feelings appropriately</p>
<p>C. PHYSICAL OBJECTIVES</p> <p>Self-Help C.1 Takes care of personal needs C.2 Assists in care of classroom</p> <p>Health and Safety C.3 Engages in healthy and safe practices</p> <p>Fine Motor C.4 Develops small muscle strength, dexterity and coordination, i.e., using playdoh, drawing utensils, and scissors</p>
<p>C. PHYSICAL OBJECTIVES</p> <p>Gross Motor C.5 Develops large and small motor skills, endurance, coordination and balance</p>
<p>D. COGNITIVE OBJECTIVES</p> <p>Language and Communication</p> <p>Oral Language D.1 Understands and uses a growing vocabulary D.2 Listens and responds to spoken language D.3 Communicates needs, feelings and ideas</p> <p>Phonological D.4 Progresses in recognizing separable and repeating sounds in language, i.e., rhymes, matching beginning sounds D.5 Understands that print carries a message</p> <p>Book Knowledge D.6 Demonstrates knowledge and appreciation of books</p> <p>Comprehension D.7 Understands information received from written and oral stories and texts</p> <p>Alphabet Knowledge D.8 Develops increasing understanding of letters</p> <p>Writing D.9 Expresses self through drawings, scribbles and letter-like forms</p> <p>Mathematics E.1 Uses numbers and counting in classroom activities and play Geometry and Spatial Sense E.2 Develops concepts of space and shape</p> <p>Measurement E.3 Recognizes attributes that can be measured, i.e., length, weight, height, and makes comparisons between objects based on these attributes</p> <p>Displaying/Analyzing Data E.4 Matches, sorts and orders objects by attributes such as color, shape or size</p> <p>Patterns/Algebra E.5 Notices and understands patterns and relations, i.e., stamp-clap-stamp, red-green-red</p> <p>Science F.1 Learns about their world and how it works. F.2 Begins to practice the process of predicting, observing, classifying, hypothesizing, experimenting and communicating, i.e., weather and seasons</p>
<p>G. CREATIVE EXPRESSION OBJECTIVES</p> <p>Music G.1 Sing songs and plays a variety of simple instruments G.2 Responds to sounds and music G.3 Understands music by singing, playing instruments, moving and verbalizing to demonstrate awareness of the elements of music</p> <p>Art G.4 Enjoys experimenting with a variety of sensory materials for exploration, representation, creative expression G.5 Shows respect for own work and work of others</p>