



Grade 5 Handbook

Good Shepherd
Catholic School

2014-2015

Dear Parents,

I am delighted to welcome both students and parents to a new year at Good Shepherd Catholic School. This school year promises so much growth and success. Students will meet many new challenges and take pride in their achievements. They will grow academically, physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

Students will face many challenges this year. The emphasis for fifth grade is the change from teacher-lead learning to a student-driven learning process. This means that students will be expected to learn information from their reading of materials not necessarily covered first in class. Instead of focusing on acquiring reading skills, those skills are utilized to learn the subject matter. The fifth grade curriculum is extensive and the level of mastery expected is high. Fifth grade is going to be an exciting adventure towards Jr. High School.

This year your child will be eligible to participate in junior varsity sports (football, volleyball, basketball, and soccer). Please remember that students must maintain a "C" average to participate in this program. Students will also participate in the Walk Through the Revolutionary War as well as other fun and exciting programs that are unique to fifth grade.

Together we are going to take a journey that will be faith-centered, learning intensive, and full of joy and love. I look forward to a great year together. If you have any questions or concerns during the school year, please contact me directly. I am open to your ideas and insights.

Sincerely,

Shannon Stephens

Curriculum Overview

Religion

This year we will be exploring the sacraments and connecting scripture, symbols, rituals and the lives of saints to each of us. Our text is **We Believe Grade 5**, published by Sadlier. It is a wonderful resource centering on the Person of Jesus Christ. Supplemental sources will be used, as needed, particularly regarding the lives of the saints and Mary, the Blessed Mother.

All students will lead daily prayers, participate in liturgy and paraliturgy celebrations, and learn the required prayers and religious curriculum taught. As God is the center of our school life, religious instruction will be integrated across the curriculum.

There is a special place for parents in the religious education of children. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that: “. . . family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith.” It is by participating in the faith formation of your child that he/she can truly see the daily witnessing of what Christ calls us to be. By working together, parents and teachers, we aim to help all students to “discover their vocation as children of God.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church- par. 2226)



Family Life

Through this program, your child will have an opportunity to develop healthy attitudes and moral values of Catholic family life. We will learn about the physical changes involved in becoming an adult. Focus will include the concept of sexuality being more than just anatomical changes. Respect for life, individual differences, and the different gifts we have received from God will be emphasized. Material is discussed in a secure and respectful environment. A student text will be sent home for you to review the material and sign a permission slip before we begin this curriculum.



Literature/Language Arts:

This is an umbrella term, which includes reading, composition/grammar, spelling and handwriting. Listening and speaking are also emphasized. We utilize the Houghton-Mifflin English program, which includes a text and a student workbook. The series focuses on writing as well as many grammar skills that are required for excellent communication skills, both written and oral. The students are also furnished with a reading textbook, **Reading Street Common Core** supports higher levels of reading and writing. Every lesson is finely tuned to teach the Common Core State Standards (CSSS). Reading Street increases text complexity in reading, provides accessible rigor, balances fiction and informational texts, builds content-area knowledge, emphasizes close reading, focuses on informative/explanatory, argumentative/opinion, and narrative writing, implements performance assessments, and integrates media and 21st century

skills. We also have new **Accelerated Reader (AR)** software, which is a tool for monitoring the independent practice of reading. AR assesses a student's reading level, suggests titles of books at that level, and then assesses whether a student has completed reading the book by asking a series of questions. This software tool allows teachers to easily monitor and manage students' independent reading practice. **Four book reports will be required.**

Several times during the year we will break away from the text and complete an in-depth novel study. Literature skills will be highlighted and lessons will include a variety of student products as evaluation tools. Deep thinking and individual student reflection will be an integral part of each novel study.

Vocabulary words come from the **Sadlier-Oxford Vocabulary Workshop**. Weekly units consist of definitions, word use, and applications. These words will be assigned and tested on a weekly basis.

The skill of writing is a progressive one, and we will focus on writing for different purposes and in different styles. The major skill of this year is learning the five-paragraph essay form. Proofreading for content and mechanical errors will be strongly emphasized, and students will be graded on their proofreading ability. A high standard of penmanship is required on all assignments. Penmanship skills will be refined with practice using the **Universal Publishing** handwriting series.

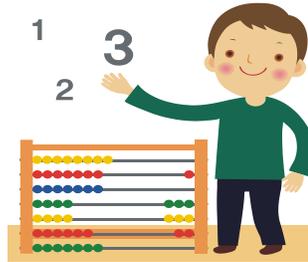
The spelling program will consist of 20-25 words per week (20 list words and up to 5 challenge words from other subject areas). Students will be expected to consistently master both sets of words. All students will be given the Scott Foresman Spelling workbook. The spelling report card grade will be based upon test scores, weekly assignments, and accuracy across the curriculum .



Mathematics

This year we will be using the text **California Mathematics**, published by Scott Foresman. The series introduces different ways of problem solving, which give students a variety of strategies to choose from when trying to solve problems. This series is based upon the content standards in mathematics adopted by the State of California. At the beginning of each chapter, there is a note to parents and students outlining the particular standards addressed in the unit. Parents are strongly urged to review these expectations for performance not only at the beginning of the chapter, but also to evaluate your child's study needs during homework sessions.

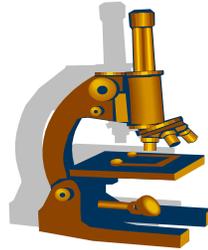
Math homework will be used to reinforce the current lesson, or to review past concepts. Only neat and organized work will be accepted. **All math homework is to be completed in #2 pencil and all answers highlighted in yellow.** Unless specifically instructed to do otherwise and will also have the student's class number, name, date of assignment, subject and page number listed at the top right hand corner of the assignment page.



Science

The science curriculum is aligned with National Science Standards in conjunction with the guidelines of the California State Science Standards. Students will explore the following topics: Structures of Plants and Animals, Interaction of Living Things, Earth and its Resources, Climate, Properties of Matter and Energy and Motion. Each unit focuses on inquiry process skills.

Science homework may include additional reading, writing on science topics or simple at-home experiments. Assignments will always correlate with the unit of study in class. Parents are encouraged to connect the material being studied with real life relevance.



Social Studies

The geography and history of the United States is our focus in social studies. We will be using the Houghton-Mifflin social studies program for the 5th grade, **History-Social Science**. History will be presented chronologically, beginning with the first settlers after the Ice Age (American Indians), and continuing through the Great Explorers, Colonial America, the Westward Movement, and some coverage of the Civil War. Students will also be expected to identify and name the fifty states of our country and each state's capital. We also supplement our study with various other resources including the **National Geographic Map Essentials** program for intermediate grades. Major projects (i.e., explorer project & state report) will be assigned which will require research outside of class.



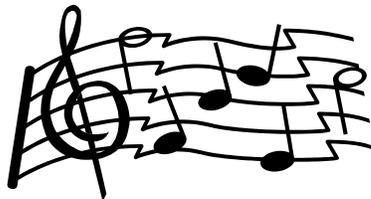
Computer

Students will receive formal instruction, in a small group setting, on the computer for one period. The students will learn practical applications that help them to present quality work directly related to the curriculum. Students are guided through the use of the Internet as a research tool, and the ethics involved in Internet use. A signed Internet permission form is required for students to use the Internet at school.



Music

Students will attend music class for two periods. The curriculum comprises a study of music theory, music appreciation, and song. Students also receive instruction on the recorder.



Library

Students attend library for one period and will have an opportunity to check out books and research topics for class projects.



Art

We will be studying various techniques, artists, art appreciation, analysis, and interpretation of art in numerous forms. Art will be two periods a week, but will also be incorporated throughout the curriculum.



Physical Education

Our class will have P.E. two periods a week and students are required to bring their P.E. uniforms to school on those days.



Study Skills

Study skills are of primary importance in fifth grade. Students will be taught a variety of techniques to help them acquire the essential study habits. Students will be expected to apply these techniques to their academic subjects. Skills taught will include (but are not limited to) note-taking, outlining, mnemonics, graphic organizers, and imagery.

Homework Policy

Homework is a very effective tool in reinforcing what your child has studied during the day. In addition, it keeps you informed of where we are in the curriculum, as well as giving feedback about how well your child understands the material. Please look over the homework, but do not correct it. If you see errors, please ask your child to look it over carefully; do not point out mistakes. Leading the child to the text or instructions is another way of helping without doing it for him/her. Parents may attach notes to homework or write in the assignment planner to let me know that your child is having difficulty with the assignment. I will then evaluate the situation and provide additional support. **Homework should consist of approximately sixty minutes plus and additional thirty minutes of AR reading per night**, so please have a regular time and place set for your child to work on home assignments. Remind your child that a major 5th grade organizational skill is to plan and schedule homework throughout the week. There will be some long-term projects/reports that will require work over the weekend, including the need to access reference materials from the public library or the Internet.



Testing

Chapter tests will be administered after a period of review, and students will always have adequate notice of an impending test. At times, there are unavoidable interruptions to the day, which interfere with test time. In this case, the test will be postponed to a more appropriate time; however, it is considered that proper notification has already been given, and that students should be prepared to take the test.

Tests are administered in the following ways:

- Two part tests: one part given as a take-home and the additional portion is given as a closed-book test.
- In-class tests: may be open or closed book.
- Pretests are given to help students identify areas that need further study for mastery and concept development.
- Quizzes (with or without prior notice) will be given to assess degrees of competence in recently studied material.



Grading

The Diocesan Grading Policy is as follows:

A	93% - 100%
A-	90% - 92%
B+	87% - 89%
B	83% - 86%
B-	80% - 82%
C+	77% - 79%
C	73% - 76%
C-	70% - 72%
D+	67% - 69%
D	63% - 66%
D-	60% - 62%
F	59% and below

This is my system that I will use for all tests and large assignments. Quarter grades will be based upon the total points possible for the period, and will follow the Diocesan policy.

Acceptable Work

I will accept assignments that show neat and careful work, with the proper page heading (see classroom example). Acceptable work will be in ink, except for math, which must be in pencil. Assignments will receive full credit if complete and on time. Late assignments will result in receipt of a lower grade. Students who are absent due to illness will have the number of days equivalent to the absence to make up missed work. It is advisable for each student to have a buddy's phone numbers for homework support.

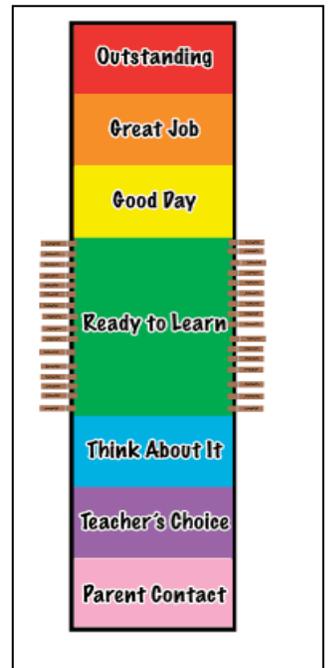
My Classroom Discipline Plan

Jesus has taught us to love each other unconditionally. We start with love, made manifest to each other by the respect and empathy we can share with each individual person we meet. However, we don't always make the right choices, and if we are to learn from our mistakes, we must accept that the consequences of actions are a result of individual choices. For this reason, we will post and follow these classroom behavior expectations:

- Be prepared and on time.
- Be attentive.
- Be safety conscious.
- Be respectful of others and yourself.
- Be loving.
- Be courageous.
- Be your best.

Consequences

- Think about It
- Teacher's Choice
- Parent Contact



We will be using a simple "Clip Chart" discipline strategy to promote positive behavior in the classroom. During the course of the day, the clothespins travel up the chart based upon each student's behavior. Every student will begin their day in a neutral spot and attempt to work their way up the chart. If they're making good choices, it's going to be moving up. If not, it's going down. Any student who has been asked to move their clip down a level or two has the opportunity to improve their behavior and see their clothespin rise to a better level. We would like to encourage each student to be a responsible, productive student who makes good choices.

School Discipline Plan

In addition, school policy allows for the following actions: probation, suspension and expulsion. Please review the school handbook for more information.

Student Threats to Commit Harm

Any student who hears, or has heard of, a threat to harm another student, or if someone has threatened to hurt him/herself, must report the threat to a teacher. Any and all threats of harm will be taken seriously and reported to the principal immediately. Please review school handbook for the complete policy.

Cheating/Plagiarizing

Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing on their first offense, will receive a "0"/"F" for that assignment/test and will need a parent signature on the assignment/test. Please review school handbook for the complete policy.

General Guidelines

Remaining on School Grounds

Students involved in after school tutoring, play practice or any other after school activity must be in the designated classroom by the 2:45 P.M. bell.

The parish hall, church, and offices are considered to be off school grounds except for school activities under the supervision and guidelines of faculty/staff.

Parent Volunteers

Parent and/or any other volunteers who have direct contact with children in the classroom, playground, fieldtrips, or otherwise must undergo a TB test, be fingerprinted through the Live Scan process and watch the Safe Environment Video. (Per directive from the Diocesan Office for Schools).

Uniform

The school uniform must be clean and neat at all times. (The full policy is in the school parent handbook.)

Textbooks

All textbooks must be covered. Any type of self-stick paper may **not** be used. Please do not attach covers to books with tape. Students may not write in or on hardbound or softbound non-consumable books. Books must be kept in neat, tidy desks in such a manner as to maximize the life of the text. Defaced or lost books will be replaced at the family's expense.

School Supplies

Because of the size of our desks, personal supplies will be kept in a plastic shoebox-sized container in a designated cabinet. Students are responsible for making sure they have all materials needed for class, every day. Any student missing basic supplies (pencil, paper, pen, scissors, etc.) will be considered not prepared for class, and will be subject to my classroom discipline policy.