

GRADE 2 OVERVIEW 2018



Dear Parents,

I welcome children and their families to a new year of great learning in Grade 2. At St. Patrick's, the grade 2 program offers a wide range of opportunities for children to develop their full potential in spiritual, academic, and social areas. Programs are in place to ensure that children develop communication, critical and creative thinking as well as personal and social skills. Students will be focusing on "*growing their brains*" by reflecting on their learning, specifically by "*thinking about their thinking.*" With BC's new curriculum focus on developing these core competencies students will be well on their way to becoming future competent, caring and concerned citizens. We will focus on learning these skills from a *Catholic Worldview*. Nurturing students in developing their faith is key to helping them live fulfilling and spiritual lives.

This year our school theme is take from Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si on Care for Everyone in Our Common Home*. Students will explore this theme through biblical scripture, reflection, prayer services, masses, discussions and group activities. They will learn about saints, read about religious people and pray. They will write prayers and journal entries and reflect upon all that God has provided us. Opening ourselves and our students to the Lord requires discipline, time, commitment and faith. Through these activities it is hoped that students will develop a better relationship with God, a deeper understanding of His love for us and the framework from which to live their lives.

Grade 2 is a very special year as children receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Children learn about our forgiving, loving God and the importance of forgiving others' their sins through the sacrament of Reconciliation. An understanding of the body of Christ and the magnificent gift our Lord has given us through the sacrament of Holy Communion will be emphasized during our spring term. Parent meetings discussing the preparation for First Holy Communion will take place in the spring with the elementary and prep teachers as well as with one of our parish priests.

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The grade 2 literacy program includes *Literacy Place*, with an emphasis on small group instruction as well as whole class activities. With the *Reading Power Program* students learn how to make connections, analyze, question, infer and visualize. Students have a variety of books to choose from that are colourful, entertaining, informative and at the students' levels. Students will learn to choose these 'good fit' books so that they are able to develop their reading and comprehension abilities effectively. The *Daily 5* program emphasizes the importance of 5 components for effective reading and comprehension: reading to self, read to others, listen to reading, work on writing, and word work. By October all 5 components are part of the daily literacy program in grade 2.

One of the most important things we (you and I) could ever do for your children is to help them develop a love of reading. A home reading log will go home every night with your child. Please look in his/her book bag daily for a different book. Have your child read to you each night before bedtime (about 20 minutes). Ask them questions about the book, stopping throughout to check your child's understanding of the story as well as his/her thoughts, and opinions. Please sign the home reading log and ensure it is returned the following day to school. There is also a *Home Reading Response Journal* that will be going home. It is designed to engage children in thought provoking activities, reflections and to engage them in creative writing and an expression of ideas.

In the areas of phonics and grammar there will be focused instruction on short vowel sounds, blends, initial, medial and ending sounds of words. The meanings of and applications of nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives are reinforced. An emphasis on grammatical rules such as the uses of past and present tenses, subject-verb agreements, and the proper uses of articles are reinforced. The program for use in grade 2 is *What to Teach and How*.

For **spelling**, a list of 15 words is given as a pre-test (marked but not recorded) every Monday. They have the whole week to practice writing these words through various activities at home and at school. On the Friday of each week, a Post test on the same words is given to them (marked and recorded).

Students will be learning to develop their writing skills through the *Writing Power* program. Each month we will focus on a different trait and the students will learn to incorporate these writing traits in their journal, letter, report, poetry, prayer, and paragraph writing. The traits that will be focused on are: ideas; organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions and presentation.

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Students will be writing in their journals about 2-3 times per week. In addition to journal writing the students will be given opportunities to express themselves through writing across all curricular areas.

In Social Studies, students will learn about types of communities and how they belong to many communities both large and small. They will learn about students' rights and responsibilities and how they can take care of their environment. The science curriculum will focus on learning about the water cycle and the importance of water to plant and animal life. Students will also learn about forces and motion as well as physical and chemical changes in matter. The final term will focus on animal changes and growth. Students will get an opportunity to learn about animal lifecycles and engage in an inquiry based research project on an animal of their choice.

In math, students will learn the place value of numbers to 100. They will focus on mastering their basic addition and subtraction facts as well as learn to work with double digit numbers. Problem solving and "hands on" group work will also be a focus. A focus on developing critical thinking skills and mental math strategies will be a focus for the grade 2's. Students complete various activities in geometry, place value, fractions, patterns, ordinal numbers, skip counting, multiplication and measurement. Our main programs are the "***Math Makes Sense***" program and the ***Creative Mathematics*** program. Students go to the computer centre and the library every Tuesday. There they will engage in educational programs such as *Book flicks* providing the opportunity to read interactive picture books online.

Expectations

Homework Policy

The students are generally given homework including home reading each night. If a student has two or three assignments that means he/she did not finish his/her work at school. Please ensure that homework is done. If your child is having difficulty with the homework please let me know so that I can adjust or modify the quantity and content. Generally, grade 2 students can get about 20 minutes of homework as well as their daily reading each night. If there is little homework or no homework on a particular night, have your child read a book chapter or study for his/her spelling test. Also, we are focusing on the mastery of basic addition and subtraction facts (single digits). Students would benefit from flash cards, card games and math activities that can be done at home to reinforce mental math strategies and critical thinking skills.

Discipline

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The children are given rules and regulations to follow, following the “School Wide” discipline policy in your parent handbook. As a class, we made up some classroom rules and signed our poster, promising each other we would work together and do our best at school. Throughout the year the children engage in social skills training, classroom discussions, and role play activities to learn peaceful, diplomatic solutions to typical school problems that may arise. If students break the rules they will be asked to discuss the problem and come up with a solution as well as a consequence. If the problem persists a parent meeting will be scheduled to discuss further options of solutions.

Student Planners

Please ensure that day planners are signed on a regular basis. It is an effective way to communicate daily and make sure important information is relayed. Please approach me if there are any problems you would like to discuss.

Conference

If you would like to discuss your child’s progress please let me know and we can arrange a time.

Parent Volunteers

If you would like to volunteer as parent helpers on our field trips or in another area of the program, please let me know.

Further details regarding the grade 2 program at St. Pat’s may be obtained by contacting me. I have also provided a link to the parents’ guide to BC’s new curriculum. Just click on

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/support/curriculum-parent-guide.pdf>

to learn more about the changes which have taken effect to the school programs. God bless you and your families as we look forward to an exciting year of faith, learning, and growth.

Sincerely,
Mrs. DiFonzo



Taken from the government of British Columbia’s Education website-curriculum model