

# **Bryn Athyn Church School**



## **First Grade Handbook**

## INTRODUCTION

The love of God and love of the neighbor are the basis of the First Grade Religion Curriculum. These teachings underlie all other areas of learning, nurturing the children's affections as the Lord instills remains.

First graders love to learn. This delight makes the first grade classroom a special place. This affection for learning is reflected in their questioning the "why" of so many things. They are very accepting of the great truths about the Lord, creation, heaven and charity to one's neighbors.

In order to accommodate to the children's states and needs, we use a variety of methods, techniques and materials.

On the following pages you will find the curricula for the major subjects that we teach. We hope that these, plus the "**Helpful Hints**" at the end of the handbook, will give you some insights concerning life in first grade.

## **RELIGION**

The following units are based on the teaching from AC-5135 which states that by the end of infancy a child should know that:

1. There is one God, and He made all things.
2. Implied in the above, He has all power, and helps those who trust in Him.
3. He rewards the good.
4. There is a heaven.
5. Prayer, daily, with humility
6. The Ten Commandments.

### **Units:**

1. The Lord
2. The Family
3. The Lord made all things
4. The Lord rewards the good
5. The Lord's Commandments (O.T.)
6. The Lord's Prayer
7. The Lord's birth
8. Elijah and Elisha (O.T.)
9. The Lord has all power (miracles)
10. Swedenborg's Birthday
11. The Lord rewards the good
12. The Commandments (N.T.)

13. Easter
14. Heaven
15. June 19<sup>th</sup>

## LANGUAGE ARTS

**Reading the Word** is the focal point of language arts in the first grade. The Word is read daily to the children, and the importance of learning to read the Word individually is stressed. Also, many language arts projects are centered around the Worship stories. Choral work is practiced using recitations and singing.

Some of the **literature** that is read supports the main religious themes, sometimes directly -- sometimes indirectly. For example, The Pomegranate With Seeds of Gold, by Amena Pendleton, supports our unit on the Most Ancient Church and We Go to Church, published by the General Church Office of Education, supports our unit on The Family.

Other stories we use support spiritual and moral concepts on the natural plane. The children hear many stories and share in many discussions relating to the stories - thus developing reading, writing, and oral communication skills.

A large part of the day is spent awakening the mind to the new world that lies behind the printed page. Many children enter first grade with a basic knowledge of letter recognition and the sounds of each letter. Reading and reading skills and strategies are taught in a variety of ways to reach all learning styles. As the children learn the mechanics of reading, we strive to instill an affection for

literature through the use of creative dramatics and projects.

The children learn phonetic and sight reading, structural analysis, and spelling, as well as the use of pictures and word shapes.

**Creative Writing** is nurtured along with reading. The children progress from labeling pictures to writing letters and creating language experience stories to writing their own fiction and non-fiction stories. They learn to critically review their own work and also read it to others.

Children write in journals several times throughout the week to develop their writing skills. A focus is placed on remembering appropriate upper case letters and choosing the right punctuation.

## MATH

The Primary teachers have developed a math curriculum based on the *National Math Standards*. We use the Envision Math series. We also use a variety of hands-on materials to teach math concepts to the children. The children play structured games and use the materials to form a concrete base for understanding abstract concepts.

Some of the concepts covered in first grade:

- A.Counting
- B.More than/ Less than/ Same as
- C.Addition
- D.Regrouping/ Base ten/ Place value
- E. Subtraction
- F. Measurement/Graphing
- G.Money
- H.Telling time
- I. Geometric Shapes
- J. Estimation
- K.Problem Solving
- L. Fractions

We have a program called Rocket Math that helps the students practice their math facts daily. The expectation is that first graders will know most/all of their 100 addition math facts by the end of first grade.

# **SOCIAL STUDIES**

## **A. General Aims**

1. To focus on the Lord as our Heavenly Father.
2. To reinforce the concept studied in Kindergarten of the Lord as The Neighbor in the supreme sense
3. To study the family as the fundamental unit of society, as the neighbor

## **B. General Skills**

1. Acquiring information, through listening and observing.
2. Organizing information.
3. Interpreting pictures, charts, graphs, and tables.

## **C. Units**

1. The Family
2. Family Life in the Most Ancient Church
3. Thanksgiving
4. Patriotism
5. The Inuit
6. China
7. Africa
8. Heaven

# SCIENCE

## **A. General Aims:**

1. To focus on the Lord's loving care of His creation.
2. To study some of the wonders of the Lord's creation.
3. To reinforce the concept begun in kindergarten of our responsibility in caring for His creation, specifically as it applies to ourselves and a little as it applies to the world around us.

## **B. General Skills:**

1. Acquiring knowledge through observation, experimenting and listening.
2. Organizing information.
3. Interpreting experiments, pictures, and charts.
4. Organizing and setting up experiments.

## **C. Units:**

1. The four seasons, their changes and weather
2. Creation of the earth as a home for man
3. Trees
4. Light, rainbows, and prisms
5. Animal adaptations – How the Lord created a variety of animals. Family pets.
6. Gold and pearls

7. Health - overview of: Safety, Posture, Cleanliness, and Mental Health (charity to the neighbor).
8. Energy in Motion/Simple Machines
9. Spring Gardens

## **HOMEWORK**

First Grade is your child's first experience with formal homework. We try to provide homework that is appropriate to the child's developmental state. The homework is designed to enrich and provide practice for work that the children have been introduced to during class time.

In first grade, homework should take no longer than **15 minutes**. We hope this will also be a fun, relaxing time for the children and for you. Feel free to help your child with anything that may be difficult. We ask that you assist your child by listening to them read and by helping them when they request help. The purpose of this sharing time is to help encourage an affection and enthusiasm for learning. They will need support in remembering to do their homework and in remembering to return it to school.

As the children progress in their skills, they will bring home their own choice of literature from the classroom library for reading homework. These books may take more than one day to finish and need not be returned until completed. If you find that the book your child has selected is too difficult, return the book unfinished.

Developing positive homework habits and practices early will benefit your children throughout their school careers.

### **LIBRARY**

The students go to the library once a week. They will be able to take home books. Books are due back in two weeks but most students like to return books the following week and take out new books.

### **COMPUTER AND IPADS**

We attend computer lab weekly. It is a chance to learn basic computer skills and reinforce our reading and math concepts. We also have a few laptops and iPads in the classroom that the children use to practice their skills in reading, writing and math.

### **CLASS MEETINGS**

Students meet to discuss how to be a good friend. This is part of the program, Olweus, being done by the entire school to acknowledge and help prevent bullying and unkind behavior in our school.

## HELPFUL HINTS

### Arrival Time

The children should not arrive at school before 7:45 a.m. and no later than 8:00 a.m. Exceptions are made for bussed children.

Late or sick - Email the following **before** 7:55am.

(Remember to state reason for the absence or lateness.)

[Natalie.lambertus@bacs.org](mailto:Natalie.lambertus@bacs.org)  
(secretary)

[Firstname.lastname@bacs.org](mailto:Firstname.lastname@bacs.org) (teacher)

[Kathy.McQueen@bacs.org](mailto:Kathy.McQueen@bacs.org) (nurse)

Regular attendance is very important in first grade. Children tend to feel left behind if they miss even a few days.

## **Snack Time**

Your child should bring a good, nutritious snack to school every day. It is too long a morning to go without some nourishment before lunch.

## **Lunch Time**

Monday thru Thursday your child will need to pack a lunch. Please pack lunches that do not need to be refrigerated. We do have a microwave available in each of the classrooms for quick heating of lunch items. Please keep heat up lunches to one minute or less.

## **Birthdays**

First grade loves to celebrate birthdays in school. The children do not bring treats to school but we will celebrate with a crown, special card and singing!

We ask that you not hand out party invitations in school unless it is for the entire class. Often it leads to sad feelings when other classmates or first graders do not receive an invitation.

## **Home and School Working Together Makes for a Successful Year**

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

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**WE HOPE YOUR CHILD HAS A VERY HAPPY  
YEAR IN FIRST GRADE!**