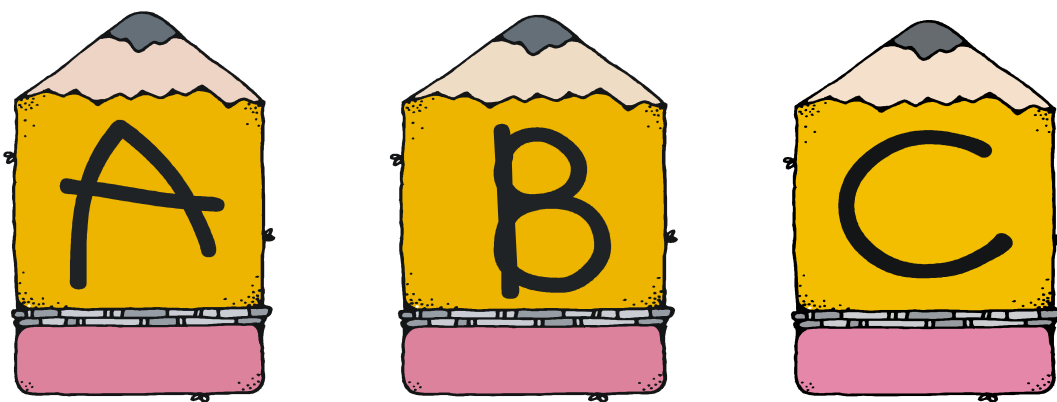
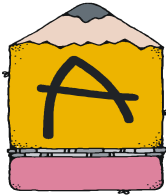


First Grade



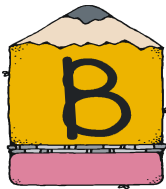
Handbook

Mrs. Chalmers
Sacred Heart School



Absences

Please call the office if your child will be absent any particular day. Even after reporting the absence by phone, the student should bring in a written excuse stating the reason for the absence. The note should be dated, signed by a parent, and brought to school on the day of the student's return.



Bags

Students will take turns bringing in items that will tell us about themselves. Each student will receive a copy of the letter describing the project when it is his/her turn to bring in the bag. The student will have the opportunity to present the items to the class. The class will take part in a shared writing activity where students comment on the contents of the bag.

Behavior Card

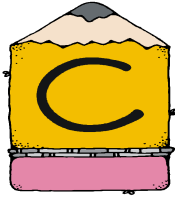
The children will receive a different behavior card each month. If the student does not receive a checkmark for the day, she/he will receive a "punch" on the card. At the end of the month, the children will earn the opportunity to attend the *Good Listener's Club* lunch if they have earned the specified amount of punches. Checkmarks are given when the student continues to break a classroom rule after three verbal warnings.

Birthdays

Birthdays are very special. We would like to celebrate everyone's birthday. If you would like to bring in a special snack for the class, it would be a wonderful treat. If the child's birthday is in July or August, you may want to celebrate before school lets out in June. Please inform me in advance of the date you plan to bring a special snack into school.

Book Orders

The book clubs are a great way to start or add to your child's home library. Book order forms are sent home approximately once a month. You are under no obligation to purchase books from them.



Curriculum

A brief overview of our first grade curriculum follows:

Religion, Reading, Phonics, Language Arts, Spelling, and Math are taught every day. Science and Social Studies topics are taught using learning centers. We rotate Art and Computer classes on Thursday. Gym class is on Wednesday. Music classes are held on Wednesday and Friday. The students visit our school library once a week on Wednesday.

The children will learn the following prayers in Religion class: Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Angel of God, Act of Contrition, and Eternal Rest. Our Religion lessons focus on the following topics: *Jesus Teaches Us About God's Love, We are Followers of Jesus, We Belong to the Church, and We Celebrate and Live Our Faith.*

Each day the students will participate in *Reading Workshop*. During this time, the students will meet in small groups for guided reading, read independently, and work at literacy learning centers. During guided reading, the students will be learning various reading strategies at his/her reading level. There are usually 3-6 students in each guided reading group. After the children meet with their guided reading group, they will be responsible to check our "choice board" and complete the activities specified on the board. Activities include: reading independently, responding to the story from guided reading, buddy reading, reading poetry, word study, or listening center. Throughout the day, the children practice reading as a class, in small groups, with a buddy, and independently.

Our Word Study instruction includes Phonics and Spelling. Phonics is a big part of reading instruction in first grade. The children learn to identify sounds of letters or groups of letters, and how they blend together to form words. This helps the students decode unknown words and helps them to become fluent readers.

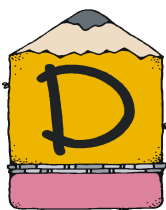
The children will be given a Spelling list each week. The students will be tested every Friday. We take a "practice test" on Thursday. If a student receives a 100% on the practice test, he/she does not have to take the test

on Friday. There are times when the regular Spelling list is too easy for some children. When this happens, a challenge list is available.

We will be doing lots of writing in first grade to help the students make the reading-writing connection. Writing Workshop is one of the favorite activities in first grade. The children write daily. There will be a variety of mini-lessons where different strategies for writers will be discussed and practiced. The "Six Traits of Writing" will be introduced and practiced. Learning about the traits of writing—ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions—is important as students build a foundation for writing. We have a "word wall" in the classroom which displays high frequency words that the students learn to identify on sight. These words are always on the board and the students are expected to spell them correctly when they use them in writing. In addition to the word wall, each student has a "reference sheet" in his/her folder which may be used to find common words used by beginning writers.

To encourage the students to expand their writing skills, they are asked to "stretch out" words they do not know and write them down the way they think they should be spelled based on what they have learned about letter/sound relationships.

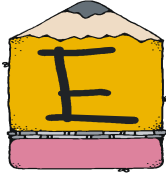
The first grade Math curriculum will cover the recognition and order of numbers 1 to 100, addition and subtraction of numbers up to 18, place value (ones and tens), addition and subtraction of two-digit numbers without regrouping, shapes, simple measurements, simple fractions, identifying and counting coins up to the value of \$1.00, and telling time to the hour and half hour. The students are allowed to use counters and other manipulatives for addition and subtraction until they understand the concepts, but they are encouraged to learn their math facts as we go along. All of the children will be tested at the beginning of the year. If they have mastered the basic first grade skills, more challenging work will be given.



Dismissal

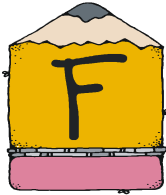
Dismissal time can be very chaotic for first-graders. Students are dismissed in various ways: those who take the bus, those who are picked up by a van, those who go to day care, and those who are picked up by a family

member. If your child is usually dismissed one way and you change it for even a day, please send me a note in the morning to let me know.



E-mail

You may contact me at my e-mail address: schalmers@sacredheartepri.com
Please write *First Grade/Sacred Heart School* in the subject line the first time you send an e-mail.



Family Craft Night

Our class has a Family Craft Night in December. We gather to make Christmas crafts and get to know one another!

Field Trips

We usually try to plan at least two field trips during the year.

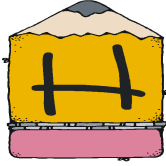
Flat Stanley

Our year-long Flat Stanley project is an exciting way to learn about all the different places in the world. Each child will make his/her own Flat Stanley and send him to various destinations around the world. A separate packet will be sent home explaining the project.



Good Listener's Club

Each month there will be a Good Listener's Club lunch for all students who earn enough "punches" in their behavior card. I usually take the number of days of school during the month minus five days. The children who are eligible enjoy eating their lunches in the classroom. They choose prizes and enjoy ice cream sundaes!



Handwriting

We use the Zaner-Bloser manuscript model in class. The children are expected to have neat handwriting on all of their papers.

Hermit Crabs

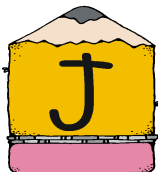
Our class pets will need "weekend lodging". Each child may bring the hermit crabs home if they have permission from their parents. Please let me know if you would not like your child to participate in this activity. The hermit crabs are easy to care for and there are instructions in their "overnight bag"!

Homework

Homework will be given Monday through Thursday. During the first two trimesters the homework will be listed in the weekly newsletter. All homework will be due by Friday. In addition to the written work, a monthly reading log will be assigned. During the third trimester, the children will learn how to copy down homework assignments in a homework notebook, and the assignments will be due on the following day.



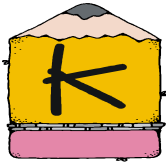
Your child is *important* to me!



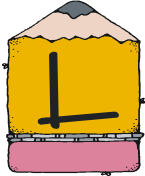
Journals

The children write in their journals daily in addition to our Writing Workshop. Journal entries can be about anything—likes, dislikes, favorite activities or sports, etc. My expectations for the content of the journal

entry increase as the year goes on. My guidelines for grading will be explained in the weekly newsletter.



I will *keep* you up-to-date on your child's progress throughout the year!

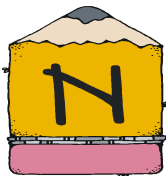


Lunch Money

Each month the hot lunches will be posted on the school calendar. Please send in the correct amount in an envelope marked with the child's name and indicate what your child is buying. At the beginning of the year, I collect the money from the students' envelopes. Later in the year, the children will pay for their own lunches (with my assistance!).

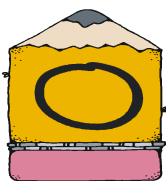


We will learn so *many* new things this year!

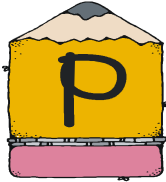


Nativity Presentation

The first graders participate in a Living Nativity Presentation at our school Christmas Mass and at the 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass at Sacred Heart Church. All of the costumes are provided, and the children do not have to memorize any lines. More information will be provided right before the Thanksgiving break.



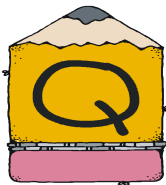
Grade *One* students are wonderful!



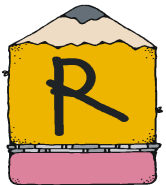
Poetry & Song Folder

The children will use a Poetry & Song Folder. This folder is a vital part of our reading program, in that it contains the poems, songs, and rhymes we will learn in class. The children will add new pieces to the folder throughout the year. By the end of the year, your child will be able to successfully read this collection.

Your child may take the folder home occasionally for reading pleasure and practice. It would be helpful if a family member could read the poem or song as needed. That way your child can hear the flow of the language, and will be better able to predict unknown words. There may be a homework assignment to complete using a poem or song. Your child should complete the assignment and return the folder on the following day. Please be sure that the folder is returned in good condition.



Please do not hesitate to ask *questions!*



Report Cards

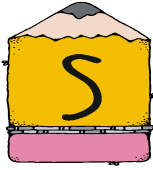
The year is divided into trimesters. In addition to the Weekly Work Report, Progress Reports will be sent home four weeks prior to the report card.

Rules

We have five rules in our classroom.

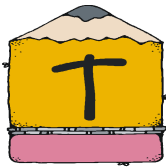
1. Be a kind friend.
2. Be a good listener.
3. Be a hard worker.
4. Be a quiet walker.
5. Be a soft talker.

The rules are posted in our classroom, and we will work very hard to follow them throughout the day. If a rule is broken after three verbal warnings, the child will receive a checkmark on the Weekly Work Report.



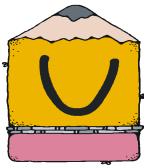
Supplies

Students are expected to have the following supplies at all times: pencils with erasers, glue sticks, crayons or colored pencils, markers, scissors, and a pencil box/pouch. Please replenish these supplies as needed.



Tardiness

Students are expected to be in their seats and ready to begin the day at 8:20 a.m. If they come in after that, they have to go to the office to get a late slip.



Uniforms

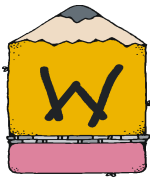
The regular school uniform should be worn on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Gym uniforms are worn on Wednesday. When there is a field trip, please check the permission slip for the attire.



Volunteers

There may be times throughout the year when I will ask for volunteers. I will always notify you in the weekly newsletter.

Our class is lucky to have two volunteers, Ms. Marian and Ms. Norma. They visit our classroom every Tuesday to help with Reading and Math.

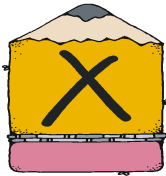


Weaver Library Visits

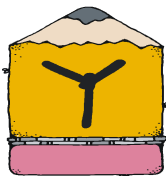
We will walk to Weaver Library on Grove Avenue to enjoy stories and work on special projects throughout the year. I will always let you know the week before our visit and may ask for chaperones.

Weekly Work Reports

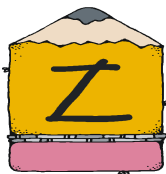
The children will bring home a Weekly Work Report every Monday. Each day they will be given assignments in the categories listed on the report. The report gives the children feedback about their daily work and it keeps parents informed about how their child is progressing. Parents should review the report and the papers in the folder. The report and the papers should be kept at home, and the folder should be sent back on the following day with the form that is enclosed. Comments and questions are always welcome.



We'll learn so many *eXciting* things!



We are going to have a very good *year!*



I hope this booklet answers all of your questions from
A to *Z!*

