

## Second Grade Curriculum

**Social Skills/Classroom Management** Second graders learn that they are in charge of their behavior and choices throughout our day. I try to make it easier for them to decide to make good choices. (“Your ticket to recess” is getting your work done. “If you play during work time, you will work during play time”.) Here are our classroom expectations:

- Love God, Love Others; Serve God, Serve Others
- We respect ourselves, others and others’ property
- We exercise self-control
- We follow directions
- We learn from our mistakes

*Kelso* steps are used to solve problems so that little problems do not become big problems. Big problems are ones where safety or injury may soon or already have occurred. Little problems we can solve on our own without adult intervention. The *Second Steps* curriculum teaches empathy, impulse control/problem solving and managing anger. In our new curriculum mandated by the Archdiocese: *Talk about Touching* kids learn appropriate behaviors on their and others’ part.

**Religion** This is a big sacramental year with our First Reconciliation and Eucharist. We learn to respond in Mass, which will be changing somewhat in our new liturgical year in December. Each grade level brings new prayers which are posted on my school webpage. Our *Blest Are We* curriculum has many ways to learn content areas: acting, singing, drawing, reading, rehearsing, whatever we can that makes learning about our faith alive and engaging. It is vitally important that you and your child not only attend mass weekly, but also actively participate in all responses, prayers and actions. They are old enough to listen and pay attention. We go over the Sunday readings on Friday during what I call “Sunday Summary”. I try to explain the mass readings in kids’ language. When they come to church on the weekend, they will be able to further deepen their understanding of those readings and compare my analysis with the homily.

**Reading:** There are ten ways to become a better reader: 1) read 2) read, 3) read, 4), read...

Good readers use effective strategies before, during and after reading. Fluency does not necessarily mean comprehension. Our strategy emphasis is on phonics and decoding (word attack), predicting and inferring from the text, monitoring and clarifying, questioning, and summarizing and evaluating after reading. If you use these same strategies at home, you will see growth in their reading. Our Basal reader is Houghton Mifflin (HM). There are lots of activity options from which students can choose to further practice reading and writing skills.

**Writing** includes penmanship and spelling. Writing is developmental. Students will learn and use correct sentence structure, conventions such as capital letters, punctuation, a lot of grammar work and spelling patterns. Penmanship counts in publication, not in free-flow of ideas. We do writing activities for different audiences and purposes. We also use *Step Up*, and elements of *Six + 1 Traits* to improve writing fluency and organization. Expect to see lots of friendly letters this year as well as working our way into topics with multiple paragraphs.

Spelling, like reading and writing, is developmental. We use our HM curriculum with the Fry list of most common words used in kids’ writing. You will get misspelled words each week in their assignment books. Do practice spelling at home. Memorizing for a Friday test doesn’t mean they have learned their spelling patterns if they cannot spell or recognize incorrect spellings of those words in their own connected writing.

Penmanship is the art or style of handwriting. It is important to use good posture, positioning, and the letters in their words show good spacing, size, shape and slant-except when they write on the floor using their clipboards.) Don’t be surprised if their penmanship takes a nose-dive when they start really writing on their own. We want that free-flow of ideas. Legibility will return when they get more experience and confidence in their over-all writing.

**Art:** integrated in curricula

**Math big ideas:** We will start with patterns, then into place value before we do addition and subtraction strategies. *Automaticity of basic math facts is crucial for future math learning.* It is important for students to see the relationship between numbers. Fact families and strategies for adding larger numbers in their desired mode of learning as well as seeing how others solve problems all lead to automaticity of facts. Students have mastered math facts when they can respond to a simple addition or subtraction fact in under three seconds. We do a lot of problem solving using math and talk about how we use math in our world. We explore place value (numbers to 1,000), construct and read graphs, learn to use non-standard and standard measurement, telling time, counting money, explore shapes in our world through fractions and geometry, plus the foundation of repeated addition for multiplication.

**Science:** Weather and Air, Solids and Liquids using Foss science kits with hands on, guided inquiry. I also do Sciencing™. This is a self-directed exploration and discovery using materials such as “liquid substance” (water), droppers, magnets, and microscopes—very exciting. A few students are selected to share their discoveries and the other “scientists” can ask them questions. They learn to do very sequential writing so others can try to replicate their work.

**Social Studies:** part is integrated in our basal reading series. We follow our state Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) which include civics (how we work together in our community), history (local-Edmonds), geography (map skills) and economics of our local area.

**Technology:** Students in second grade can identify computer hardware components and manipulate icons, the mouse and the keyboard. We will be integrating technology into what we are learning in the classroom. If someone has a really good question we can Google, we will do so. We can also enter data in math to do surveys, make charts, and draw conclusions visually on spreadsheets. We can publish stories with assistance (dictation). The Promethean whiteboard, overhead projector, microphones, and calculators are also part of the technology we use in school. Second graders even often help me compose emails to parents. We have the interactive K-8<sup>th</sup> Power with work assigned for kids to do at home.

**Field Trips:** Fairbanks Farm (Tuesday, October 25) the Frye Art Museum (TBD) and the Seattle Children’s Theatre production of “Frog and Toad” (Date not yet verified).

**Grading:** For monitoring progress and report cards, we use *Power School*, an on-line program that allows parent to access their child’s grades. Look at the comments box to see what essential learning is to take place. Not all assignments are graded in second grade. There are pre-assessments to determine instruction, assessments while learning to monitor understanding, and assessments of learning at the end of a unit of learning. These last assessments weigh more heavily on the report cards. You will know when these unit assessments are coming up so you can work with your child on the skills we together will determine they need.

**Homework:** the purpose is reinforcing and stretching our thinking on learned material, not new material. You will receive information from school and on my website that give you ideas on how to extend the classroom learning at home. Our only homework over weekends is attending Mass. Kids always should also read, read, read. There is an AR reading list on the HR website under Library. Check out [Blestarewe.com](http://Blestarewe.com) for religion activities, K to the 8<sup>th</sup> Power, and lots of free learning activities on line. Share if you find some good ones!

**Take Home Folders a/k/a Take Home and Bring Back** We write our homework in our Student Planner (a/k/a Assignment book) and place any worksheets or instructions in the assignment book. All work is returned in that book. The Take Home folder is for other papers sent home. Some may need to come back but most won’t. Their folder should be emptied nightly and returned to their backpack with or without anything in it. Assignment books do not go home on Fridays as no homework (see above).

Thank you for your support,