

HTS Spotlight: Kindergarten

At Holy Trinity School, Kindergarten is cool! In Kindergarten, students learn the fundamental skills necessary to thrive in a school environment. The Holy Trinity Kindergarten is a full-day, faith-based program focused on reading readiness, language development, math, and science concepts. Students also take part in several special classes each week that include music, library, Spanish, art, and physical education. Technology is woven into the program, providing an integrated approach to S.T.E.M. learning.

Kindergarten builds the foundation for reading success. “I enjoy teaching reading the most. If you can read, you can achieve anything,” said Rosemary Walsh who teaches Kindergarten at the Westfield campus. Holy Trinity’s *Treasures* reading program provides lessons to reinforce phonemic awareness, listening comprehension, the alphabet and beginning reading concepts. During the year, reading comprehension skills are developed as students illustrate and write about their experiences. They take home leveled books to reinforce skills and strategies taught at school, part of the Holy Trinity School philosophy of being in partnership with parents.

Students’ language and presentation skills are enhanced through additional activities, such as Show and Tell, Mystery Readers, student readers, and partner reading.



As concrete thinkers, students use materials for hands on learning of basic algebra and geometry concepts as well as simple addition and subtraction. They learn number sense and place value through tallying and skip counting to 100.

As all students do at Holy Trinity School, Kindergarten students actively participate in daily prayer and follow a Catholic-based religious curriculum. One of the favorite Kindergarten activities is the “Blessing of the Pets” in honor of St Francis of Assisi each October.

Christmas is a school favorite. Students learn the true meaning of Christmas during Advent with a Jesse Tree and Advent wreaths, community service activities, a Birthday Party for Jesus, and campus-wide celebrations that include a visit from St. Nicholas on December 6, and a Christmas concert for families and friends.



Kindergarten students are an integral part of the HTS community which fosters respect, kindness, and a sense of responsibility. Jayne Hiel, a Kindergarten teacher at the Mountainside Campus, said, “My goal is to celebrate the uniqueness of every child and foster a sense of belonging.”

The Kindergarten experience is enhanced through field trips, guest presenters such as local firefighters and Captain Super Tooth, and a setting that provides outdoor activities. Kindergartners can participate in school sports and extracurricular activities such as cross country, track, basketball, chess, and scouting.

At the end of the year, students celebrate with a “Moving Up” ceremony to mark their successful completion of Kindergarten. Parents, families, friends, and the school community gather to honor this achievement.



Holy Trinity School has three classes of Kindergarten students with one class at its Westfield campus and two classes at its Mountainside campus. Rosemary Walsh, Noreen Wickwire, and Jayne Hiel have a combined 27 years of Kindergarten experience at Holy Trinity School. Mrs. Walsh grew up in the Scotch Plains/Fanwood area where she attended St. Bartholomew Academy. She is a graduate of Seton Hall University. Mrs. Wickwire is from Long Island where she attended St. John of God School and has degrees and certifications from SUNY Oneonta, SUNY Albany, the University of Sussex, England, and St. Elizabeth College. Mrs. Hiel is from Ogdensburg, NY and is a graduate of the University of Rochester. Mrs. Hiel's three children have all attended Holy Trinity School.

Since 1916, Holy Trinity has provided a quality Catholic education to Westfield and the surrounding communities. A 2011 National Blue Ribbon School, its mission is to educate students to actualize their full, individual potential both spiritually and academically.