

REDEEMER LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY (K-GRADE 4) HANDBOOK

WELCOME . . .

Dear K-Grade 4 Parents:

A new school year is upon us! Our elementary school is a place where the love of Jesus is evident in word and action. A place where parents share the precious gift of their child with teachers who love their Lord, and dedicate their professional lives to our school. We are committed to making decisions as a faculty, based upon prayer, and we are honored that you chose us to assist you in raising your child in a Christ Centered environment.

Our theme this year is "Every Knee Shall Bow!" based on Philippians 2:10-11, "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father". Bringing God's Word to our students brings Jesus to them. It is our prayer that the Holy Spirit will work through the Word so members of the RLS family will learn to believe and trust Jesus for their salvation, and bow their knee in His presence.

This handbook is a guide for us to better assist you. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email. We pray that together, we can build up champions for Christ ready to make a difference in the world for their Lord.

Serving Him in Love!

The RLS Elementary Staff

Mrs. Gail Holzer, Administrator

Mrs. Stephanie Stubenbort, Education Administrator

Mrs. Emily Root, Kindergarten Teacher

Mrs. Jennifer Loewe, Kindergarten Teacher

Miss Megan Daugherty, First Grade Teacher

Mrs. Cayce Johnson, Second Grade Teacher

Mrs. Terri Humphrey, Third Grade Teacher

Mrs. Amiee Daugherty, Fourth Grade Teacher

OVERVIEW . . .

Redeemer Lutheran School's Elementary program is an educational program steeped in developmentally appropriate practices specifically designed to meet the unique needs of early childhood learners. It is a comprehensive program that addresses the spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and intellectual, needs of the students. The major goal of the elementary program at Redeemer is to establish a curriculum and learning environment that maintains a balance between the introduction, development, and practice of learning skills, the acquisition and application of knowledge, and the spiritual and personal development of the student.

Key elements of the Redeemer Lutheran Elementary program are:

1. A focus on the total spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of each student.
2. A curriculum planned around the needs and interests of each individual learner, utilizing best practices to help students reach their potential.
3. A variety of learning experiences with an emphasis on "hands on" and active learning.
4. The introduction, practice and development of skills for continuous learning.
5. The promotion of the physical well-being of all students.
6. An orientation to the community and the world surrounding the student.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

Students may arrive at school between 7:45 - 8:15 AM. Students arriving at this time should report directly to their classroom. School begins promptly at 8:15 AM for K through Grade 4 with morning announcements and devotions following. In order for students to complete their morning procedures, and be ready for their day, it is important that they arrive by 8:05. Each classroom teacher will establish their own specific procedures.

ASSIGNMENT NOTEBOOKS

We want all of our students to experience success. To help students accomplish this, students in grades 1-4 will be using an assignment notebook throughout the year. This planner is intended to help develop better work habits and to help students complete assignments on time. Students will be required to write down all assignments in their assignment book and take it home daily. Parents are asked to check the notebook regularly and are required to sign the book each day.

BIRTHDAY TREATS

Redeemer Lutheran Elementary recognizes that birthdays are special days for students. Due to the increasing number and variety of food allergies in students, we would ask that you be sensitive to and try to provide a snack that is safe for all students in the class. We would also encourage parents of children with severe allergies to make us aware of the allergy and to maybe keep a few allergy free items on hand at school so that your child is able to have a snack if the one provided is not a good choice. We are required by our participation in the federal lunch program to ensure that healthy snacks and drinks are provided anytime children are eating at school. Fruit, vegetables, cheese, and yogurt are some suggestions to consider adding to a sugary birthday treat. This will keep our school in compliance with federal regulations.

BUILDING USE

To ensure the safety of all students we will practice the following procedures:

- Walking at a safe pace in the building.
- Asking permission from their teacher before leaving the classroom.
- Moving, as a class, to and from the classroom quietly and in good order. Students will walk in a single file and to the right in the hallways and on the stairs.
- Receiving permission from a teacher to use any room or area of the school other than their assigned location, as an individual or as a class.

CHAPEL

Chapel is held each Friday morning at 8:20. These worship services are designed to give the students training in Christian worship as well as to provide an opportunity to worship together as a school family. Through these worship experiences students are drawn closer to Jesus, thus strengthening their faith in Him as their only hope of salvation. Students in K-4 are paired with an older student who will act as their "Chapel Buddy", sitting with them during worship and helping them follow the service.

Offerings are collected at these services and will be used for various mission projects throughout the year and noted on the monthly calendar. Chapel envelopes will be sent home in the home folder each Thursday. Chapel offerings provide an excellent opportunity for students to learn the importance of mission work in the world and to develop God-pleasing stewardship habits. Having your child do extra chores or giving some of their allowance as their offering is good training in stewardship.

Parents and friends of Redeemer are invited and encouraged to attend chapel whenever possible.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

"Show proper respect to everyone!" 1 Peter 2:17 This verse captures our beliefs as we work to glorify God by letting His Holy Spirit fill our lives with love and respect. Respect for God, self, other people, and property is the principle to be followed by the students at Redeemer Lutheran School.

Teachers will model and build respect in their classrooms with their individual system of discipline. We want to help children reach their fullest potential; therefore, we will use methods of discipline that will not hinder the development of confidence, feelings of self-worth and interpersonal relationships. We will promote methods of discipline that will enhance values, development, and self-control in our children. Consequences will be used when it is necessary to remind students that their behavior does not follow our expectations. Each classroom will have a set of rules, a positive response system for compliance, and consequences for infractions.

To help our children know they are a loved, valued child of God, we will work to create a positive classroom environment. When children are cooperative, acknowledgment, praise, and incentives will be given to reinforce Godly behavior and good choices. Some children may need to have an individual plan written to target specific behaviors for change, and to reinforce improvements in their behavior. Teachers and parents will work together as a team to develop a behavior plan that will lead a child to compliance.

Staff members will demonstrate and model positive behavior by treating the children, their families, and their belongings respectfully. Parent support is extremely important in reinforcing respectful behavior.

"Now we ask you to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18

CLASSROOM JOBS

It is our hope to instill a sense of community in each classroom. In order to be responsible citizens, and take pride in their classroom, students will be assigned classroom jobs. Assigned jobs will change weekly. Each teacher will determine the jobs for their own classroom.

COMMUNICATION

Teachers are committed to returning phone calls and emails on the day they are received. We request that you ask your child's teacher about any concerns you have about your child or the school. If you need more information or are not satisfied with the answer given, you may then contact the administrator.

Teachers meet for devotions at 7:30 AM each morning and often have meetings or after school activities. Faculty members are not always available before or immediately after school to talk with parents. Parents who would like to discuss a concern with the teacher are encouraged to schedule a time with the teacher so that they can give you their undivided attention. Teachers will read email first thing in the morning, but at 7:45 their attention is turned to the arrival of their students. If the teacher does not reply by 7:45, do not assume they have read the email before the start of school. If there is something that is imperative for your child's teacher to know, please call the office, or write a note to place in the home folder.

The home folder may also be used for written communication from the teacher. Weekly newsletters, monthly calendars, and the class website provide information about the activities in the classroom. Grades 1-4 will also use their assignment books to note homework assigned by their teacher. Educate, our online grading tool, is a great tool for tracking your child's progress in grades 1-4 as well. Passwords will be given to each family, if you do not have one, please ask in the office.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum is updated by the administration and faculty yearly according to the curriculum review schedule. Textbooks are chosen based on the curriculum philosophy. Curriculum philosophy, goals and objectives are available upon request in the school office. The Christian faith is integrated throughout the curriculum.

Students in the elementary grades will receive instruction in the following subjects:

Biblical Studies, Language Arts (reading, phonics, grammar, spelling, writing), Math, Science, Social Studies, Music, Art, Physical Education, Computer Application

Subject Areas

Biblical Studies introduces students to both Old and New Testament people and events, with practical applications to encourage the student's spiritual walk. Early church history and the Reformation will also be introduced. The objective at every level is that the students know Jesus as their loving, personal Savior. Memory work includes various Bible verses, parts of Luther's Small Catechism, and various hymn verses which are practiced at school and should be practiced at home as well.

Language Arts includes reading, phonics, grammar, writing, and spelling.

- **Phonics/Spelling** includes a systematic approach beginning with phonemic awareness skills and progressing to letters and sounds and reading of words. Grade level phonics and word analysis skills are taught in order to decode words. Spelling rules are also taught in the curriculum. Grades 1-4 will be given weekly spelling lists and also have weekly spelling tests.
- **Reading** includes both literacy skills and comprehension. The elements of a story and vocabulary development are also important components in the curriculum. Different skills will be introduced at each grade level.
- **Grammar/Writing** includes the introduction of the parts of speech, and the use of the writing process; prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing are introduced in order to develop written communication skills.

Mathematics instruction includes numbers and operations, measurement, geometry, algebra, statistics, data analysis, probability, problem-solving strategies (word problems), mathematical reasoning, math facts and real world connections. It is a ‘hands on’ approach using math manipulatives to reinforce skills.

Social Studies curriculum for K- grade 4 includes history, geography, economics, government, citizenship, and culture of the United States as well as the world. Different aspects are introduced at each grade level.

Science curriculum, includes Life, Physical, Earth and Space Sciences. Life Science focuses on animals and ecosystems. Physical Science focuses on properties of matter, magnetism and electricity, energy, and light and sound. Earth and Space Science focuses on the solar system, rocks and minerals, erosion and pollution. Again different aspects are introduced at each grade level .

Physical Education involves all students weekly. Habits for lifelong fitness and exercise are encouraged, as well as an awareness of maintaining wellness. Participation, sportsmanship, behavior and attitude are all important. A variety of sports/game skills and rules are also introduced.

Art is taught by an art teacher and introduces different aspects and modes of art. Art projects are also assigned across the curriculum as part of projects and reports. Art classes are held weekly.

Computer skills are taught in order to provide valuable tools to enrich and enhance student learning. Each classroom has a few computers and the computer lab is also available for grades 1-4.

Music includes both vocal and instrumental music. Kindergarten receives vocal music only.

- **Vocal Music** - Students explore the elements of music consisting of dynamics, tone color, tempo, duration (rhythm), pitch, texture, form and style. Students perform in the annual Christmas concert.
- **Instrumental Music** – In addition to vocal music, Grades 1-4 will also be introduced to instrumental music. Grades 1-2 will learn to play keyboards, Grades 3-4 will learn to play recorders. All instruments and music books are provided for each student.

DAILY HOME PROCEDURES

Please be sure to check backpacks and empty home folders each day. Important and often time sensitive information is sent home in the home folder. K students will also have their homework sheets and assignments in their home folders each day. Grades 1-4 will also need assignment books checked and signed each day.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Each teacher will determine specific dismissal procedures for their classroom. Dismissal announcements will begin at 2:50 PM. Everyone should be packed up and silent so that they can hear the announcements. At the close of announcements students will line up and go to their designated transportation area. All students should be picked up by 3:15 PM.

DRESS CODE

Just a reminder that K-4 students must adhere to the school dress code. Solid colored polo shirts are required for both boys and girls. Solid colored pants or shorts are required for boys. Girls may wear solid pants, shorts, skirts or jumpers. Jeans or jean shorts in good condition are permitted. In addition during cooler weather, long sleeved solid crew neck shirts may be worn under a polo shirt, or solid crew neck sweatshirts or sweaters may be worn over the polo. Solid cardigan sweaters are also permitted. Dress shoes, tennis shoes and sandals (no flip flops, for safety reasons) are all permitted, but tennis shoes must be worn for PE.

Special consideration is to be given to attire on Chapel days (Friday). Attire helps to set and reflect a reverent and worshipful attitude. Boys are to wear a collared shirt, with or without a tie, and dress slacks. Girls are to wear a skirt and blouse, dress, or dressy pants outfit. Jeans are not appropriate for Chapel.

DUPLICATE INFORMATION

Duplicate information such as evaluations, conference notices, forms and newsletters may be requested through the classroom teacher.

EMAIL CONTACTS

School Office/Mrs. Wilshire jwishire@redeemer-oakmont.org

Mrs. Holzer gholzer@redeemer-oakmont.org

Miss Stephanie stubenbort@redeemer-oakmont.org

Mrs. Emily Root eroot@redeemer-oakmont.org

Mrs. Jennifer Loewe jloewe@redeemer-oakmont.org

Miss Megan mdaugherty@redeemer-oakmont.org

Mrs. Johnson cjohnson@redeemer-oakmont.org

Mrs. Humphrey thumphrey@redeemer-oakmont.org

Mrs. Amiee Daugherty adaugherty@redeemer-oakmont.org

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Students will be properly prepared for class each day. They will have the necessary learning materials and will have their homework completed and ready to hand in.
- Students are expected to use good study skills in school and at home. To gain the most from each class, they will want to exercise good listening skills and give their full attention to learning activities. They will properly follow directions, whether written or oral.
- Students will exhibit Christian behavior in class, in the halls, in the restrooms, and on the playground. Pushing, shoving, cruel teasing, bullying, and “put-downs” are unacceptable behaviors and therefore are not tolerated at Redeemer. Such negative behaviors will not build a strong school/classroom community. Consideration, kindness, and compliments will!
- In Physical Education classes, students are to be dressed for physical activity. Tennis shoes must be worn for gym class.
- Supply lists are available to students before the start of school. Students should be sure to replenish supplies (i.e. glue sticks and pencils) as they are consumed.
- All hardcover books must be covered, and remain so throughout the school year.
- Assignments will reflect the student’s pride in their work. They will be done neatly and properly. All work will be done in pencil, unless specified by the teacher. Students are expected to do their best work on every assignment.

GUM

Gum is not to be chewed in school, on school property, or on field trips.

GUIDELINES FOR SENDING CHILD HOME FOR ILLNESS

- Temperature greater than 99.6°
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Persistent cough, congestion, or muscle aches (signs of influenza)
- Sore throat – appears reddened and swollen
- Unidentified rash that is spreading or getting worse over time
- Communicable disease such as strep throat, chickenpox, scarlet fever, pink eye, head lice

GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN TO RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER ILLNESS

When a child has missed school due to illness, it is important to know when that child may safely return to school. We ask that the guidelines below, be followed:

- **Fever:** Child must be fever free for a period of 24 hours prior to returning to school. Usually, fever is a sign that the body is fighting off an infection or a contagious disease. This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen).
- **Persistent cough and congestion** must be resolved.
- **Medication:** If receiving an antibiotic, the child must be on antibiotics for a period of 24 hours prior to school.
- **Vomiting and/or Diarrhea:** Child must be free from vomiting and/or diarrhea for a period of 24 hours after the last vomiting/diarrhea episode. If a child vomits during the night, but seems better in the morning, please keep your child home that day.
- **Rash:** Child must have a written note from his/her doctor before returning to school stating rash is not contagious.
- **Communicable Disease:** Parent must notify school in the event their child has a communicable disease. Parent must follow instruction from their physician before returning to school.

Our experience has shown that parental judgment is invaluable. If the child does not look or seem well, an extra day at home may make all the difference toward full recovery. Children recovering from illness are susceptible to other infections because their immune systems may not be operating at full capacity. Both well and recuperating children benefit from following these guidelines for school attendance.

HOMEWORK

While the amount and the nature of homework assignments will vary, completion of assigned work is a necessary component of a child's education. K homework sheets will be sent home in the home folder, while an assignment notebook will be used by students in grades 1-4 to keep track of required homework and help with organization and communication with parents. Homework is important because it is a valuable aid in helping students make the most of their experience in school. Homework reinforces what has been learned in class, prepares students for upcoming lessons, extends and generalizes concepts, teaches responsibility, and helps students develop positive study habits. In the lower grades homework will not be as extensive or take as much time as in the upper grades. Extra time to practice reading aloud at home is important at the primary level. K-1 students should be spending 10-15 minutes on homework each night and should be reading to or with parents for at least 20 minutes. A general guide for homework time is 10 minutes per grade level. For example, 1st grade=10 minutes, 2nd grade=20 minutes, etc . Homework should take students no more than 45 minutes to one hour to complete each night, not including studying for tests and long-range projects. Advanced notice will be given for tests, and all assignments will be written in the student's assignment book. Homework requirements will vary according to the teacher. If you have questions please consult your child's teacher. Parents are the key to making homework a positive experience for their children. Please make homework a priority by providing necessary supplies, a quiet work environment, a designated daily homework time, and praise and support. Contact the teacher if problems arise. Please assist students in learning, but do not do the homework for them.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area is located in a bin in the conference room. Small items such as jewelry are kept in the school office. Items not claimed will be donated to a charitable organization.

PETS

We realize that pets can cause some children to have an allergic reaction. We know that some pets can react adversely to numerous people in a closed environment. For the stated reasons, our school will ensure that parents are aware of the presence of pets and animals in the school. If any child in that classroom is allergic or has an allergic reaction to the pet, the pet will be removed from the classroom environment. Classroom teachers must approve a show and tell pet activity in advance.

PHONE CALLS

Our phone system is designed to serve the needs of our school families and our staff. One of our highest priorities is to maintain classroom environments that are free from unnecessary interruptions. For this reason, we do not allow telephone calls directly to the classrooms during the school day. Messages for students and teachers will be taken by our school office. To reach the school office, please call 412 793-5884.

PLAYGROUND USE

RLS has several playground areas that are used by various classes and grade levels throughout the day. During regular school hours, students and classes take precedence for use of the playground areas. When playground areas are not in use by students or outside of regular school hours, children may play with adult supervision and at your own risk. If you are playing on the playground, please follow the playground rules listed below:

- Go up the stairs and down the slides.
- Go down the slides with feet first.
- Do not allow children to climb on the outside of the play equipment.
- Do not allow children to climb on the fence.

OUTDOOR PLAY AND CLOTHING POLICIES

Our school promotes outdoor play whenever possible. In winter, children need adequate warm clothing for outdoor play. Snow pants, boots, gloves, and hats are required for playing in the snow. Children without proper clothing at any time of the year will be required to stay inside the building. During spring, it is important that students wear suitable clothes for the unpredictable weather.

PROPERTY CARE

We are very thankful for a beautiful building and campus. Students are asked to cooperate in maintaining this facility. Careless disposal of paper, cans, marking on walls, scratching and denting, together with a general attitude of disrespect for property, contribute to low morale and unnecessary expenses. Please cooperate in the care of our school property.

ROOM PARENTS

Each classroom will need at least one room parent. Room parents will be given the class list of parents and what they are able to assist with. Classroom teachers will meet with the room parents before each of the classroom celebrations: Jesus' Birthday Party and Valentine's Day. Room parents and other parent volunteers are to plan and lead the celebrations which are to be approximately 1 hour long. If receipts are kept and turned in, there is a \$2/child allotment for parties in the activity fee. Snacks are allowed, but must include healthy snacks such as fruit, veggies, or cheese. Classroom teachers may also ask room parents to assist with end of year picnics or other special events.

SNACK

Parents of students in K-grade 1 may choose to purchase milk for their child's snack. Families will be billed for the milk in two payments, one in September and one in January. All students K-4 may bring their own snack. We would ask that it be a nutritious snack. Grades 2-4 will eat their snack while they are outside at recess

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS IN THE BUILDING

All visitors entering the school building must report to the school office and sign in. Visitors will receive a visitor's badge. If there is a person without proper identification in the building, please notify the school office immediately.

There are many opportunities to volunteer in the classrooms as well. The classroom teachers may ask for assistance with a special project or invite you to present to the class, or have lunch with your child, and you are also asked to stop in the office for a visitor's badge for any of these types of activities.