How to Help Your Child Be Successful in...

Keep a weekly routine! A morning routine and an after-school routine will help both you and your child. Set aside specific times for homework/reading and set a routine bedtime!

Introduce yourself to other parents/families! Get to know the families of other students in your child’s class. Then when birthday parties and play dates come around you’ll already be a step ahead!

Notify the school of any changes in phone number/address/work number/health information. Keeping up-to-date records makes it a lot easier to contact you!

Don’t do everything for your child! Let them gain some independence at their developmental level, especially with zipping, buttoning and tying!

Eat together as a family as often as you can. And…no technology during this time – turn off the tv, put cell phones down, etc. Focus on each other!

Read with your child daily. This is one of the best things you can do to ensure your child’s success!

Get involved – in your child’s classroom, the Parent-Teacher group, any way you can!

Ask questions about your child’s school day. Go beyond just “What did you do or learn today?” Be specific in your questions – “Who did you play with at recess?” or “Did you read a story today? What was it about?”

Reinforce what your child is learning at school. Have fun playing rhyming, alphabet or number games in the car or while waiting in lines or at the doctor’s office.

Talk to your child’s teacher and be available if they need to talk to you. They are there to help you and your child!

Encourage your child! Find positive things to say about their work or progress every day! They want to know you are proud of them.

Notice what comes home from school with your child! Many questions are answered by newsletters sent by the school and teacher. Also take time to notice the work your child brings home. Is there anything they are struggling with? Try to help at home!
Nutrition First!
Healthy Snack Ideas...

~ Fruit- bananas, grapes, apple slices, oranges, etc.
~ Vegetables- carrots, celery, cucumber slices, etc.
  ~ cheese & crackers
  ~ graham crackers
  ~ goldfish crackers
  ~ wheat thins
  ~ pretzels
  ~ fruit snacks
  ~ cheese
  ~ muffins
  ~ apple sauce
  ~ yogurt
  ~ granola bars

NOTE: We have a NUT ALLERGY in our school!
Conscious Discipline
(from Dr. Becky Bailey: www.ConsciousDiscipline.com)

THE BASICS:
1) Classrooms where children feel safe (and cared about) improve brain function.
2) Brain function improves further as need for safety, connection, and problem solving are met.
3) Improved brain function increases achievement and school success.

In our classroom,
The teacher’s job is to keep children safe.
The children’s job is to help the teacher keep it that way!

When there is a conflict,
go to the victim FIRST- “Are you okay?” Give care and empathy and then go to the other child- “You wanted the block so you hit him. You may not hit. Hitting hurts. When you want something, you need to say “I want the block. When will you be finished?” I’ll help you! Let’s practice saying it using your BIG VOICE” (practice assertiveness).

Offer two positive choices...
“You may listen or you may sit quietly. You may not distract others

Language to use:
“That was helpful!”
“Are you telling me this to be helpful or hurtful?” (for tattling)
“I noticed…”
“You did it!”
“You get to…” (instead of “Do you want to…” when there is no choice)
“Look at you!”
“Be a STAR!” (Stop, Take a deep breath And Relax)
Kindergarten Curriculum

Reading/Language Arts/Phonics/Writing
- Numerous sight words (T.R.I.C.K.y Words)
- Writing with CVC and T.R.I.C.K.y words
- Writing by “stretching words out”
- Mastering of all letters (recognizing, writing, and sounds)
- Literature that ties in to all other subjects
- Story elements
- Rhyming words
- Syllables
- Poetry
- Writing Journals
- Etc., etc., etc.

Math
- Modeling, counting, comparing, and writing numbers
- Count by 1’s, 5’s, and 10’s
- Addition and Subtraction
- Patterns
- Time
- Shapes
- Place value
- Measurement

Science
- Animals
- Plants
- Weather
- Earth
- Matter
- Life Cycles
- Water Cycle
- Senses

Religion
- God is our Father
- Jesus is our friend
- The Holy Spirit helps us
- God talks to us
- We pray to God
- God protects us
- Jesus tells stories
- Listening to Jesus

Social Studies
- My family
- My school
- Important people and events in history
- Other cultures
- Communities

- Welcome to God’s family
- My Parish
- Special leaders in the Church
- What happens at Mass
- Family Celebrations
- We pray
- Everyone has rules
- God blesses us
- Showing kindness
- God forgives
- Seasons of the Church
- We celebrate with Saints
- Getting ready for Jesus
- All creation Welcome Jesus
- Gifts for Baby Jesus
- Jesus is welcomed
- Jesus dies
- Jesus is alive
- I am with you always
- The spirit of love
- Advent
- Christmas
- Lent
- Easter
**Tricky Popcorn Words** – These are commonly used sight words that your children will be learning this year. We call them “Tricky Popcorn Words” because they “pop” up all over our reading! The more Tricky Popcorn Words your child knows, the better reader they will become.

**Homework** – You will see a huge difference in your child from September to June both developmentally and academically. What we do in class is important, but just as important is establishing good study habits and reinforcing skills at home. Please read to or with your child at least 15-20 minutes each day and have them finish any work that might not have been completed in class.

**One more thing**...Please have your child use the restroom right before coming to school. Once one has to go...they all have to go! 😊

I am looking forward to a wonderful year in kindergarten!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Birney
empty the contents each morning when they arrive at school.

**Transportation** – Please send a note in the event there is a change in transportation for your student or if you will be picking them up early.

**Snack and Water Bottle** – Please send in a healthy snack and water bottle with your child each day.

**Rest Time** – Kindergardeners will have a short rest time each afternoon. Please have your child bring in a blanket (in a plastic bag) that will come home every Friday to get washed.

**Birthdays** – We love birthday celebrations! The day your child came into the world is a special day! If you are bringing in a treat, please know that there are 18 students in class. Please make sure the treat is ready-made and not too messy! 😊

**Family Picture** – Please send in a 4 x 6 size family picture for the “Our Families” wall on the first day of school.

**Scholastic Book Orders** – Each month you will be receiving a Scholastic Book Club order form. Scholastic offers wonderful literature and literacy activities at reasonable prices. They make great gifts!
Classroom Procedures and Information

**Discipline Policy** - Our classroom rules are posted in several areas of our room.
~Helping Hands
~Ears Listening
~Quiet Voices
~Eyes Looking
~Walking Feet

We will go over and over and over them again to assure a good understanding of the classroom expectations. In my experience, there is not a one-size-fits-all discipline plan. Therefore, I use a combination of Dr. Jim Fay’s, Love and Logic (natural consequences) and Dr. Becky Bailey’s, Conscious Discipline. Every child should feel that the classroom is a safe and secure environment; free from all threats of physical and emotional harm. In addition, it is important for each child to develop self-discipline, good social skills, and to resolve conflicts peacefully. We will learn correct behavior by focusing on learning to live out our St. Patrick School mission of Reverence, Respect, and Responsibility.

**Take Home Folder** – Each child will have a green Take Home folder that should accompany them to and from school everyday. This folder will contain homework, completed work, and school information. Please empty the folder each night and send any homework/notes for me back to school the next day. I will have the students
St. Patrick School – Kindergarten
Teacher – Mrs. Christine Birney
Phone: (810) 229-7946 ext. 258
Email: cbirney@stpatschool.org

Dear Kindergarten Parent(s),

My name is Christine Birney and I am SO excited to be part of the St. Patrick School family! More importantly, I am THRILLED to be your child’s teacher. I would love to tell you a few things about myself as you embark on this kindergarten journey.

I was born and raised in Birmingham, MI and I am the youngest of three children. I graduated from Marian High School and went to Central Michigan University. I have a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education; my major is Child Development and my minor is Reading. I couldn’t wait to graduate and start teaching as I knew from a very young age that I wanted to be a teacher! I taught in a classroom for seven years in both the first and second grade before I chose to be a stay-at-home-mom.

I am married to a wonderful man, Jim, and we have been blessed with six children: Erin(24), Molly(22), Anna(21), Jimmy(19), Sara(17), and Amy(7.) My oldest three girls are all in college studying to be teachers, so I must have passed on my love of teaching to them! We were a homeschooling family for 14 years and then they chose to finish off their high school education at Brighton High School.

I believe that a partnership must exist between school and home. You are the first and foremost educator of your child and no one knows your child better than YOU! I hope we can work as a team to educate and nurture your student.

Sincerely,
Christine Birney