



**Welcome to Second Grade
at St. Paul's Lutheran School in Kingsville, Maryland
2017 - 2018**

I've anticipated some of your questions, and hopefully have answered many of them on the following pages. If you have any more, just ask! Please review this handbook carefully and jot down any questions or concerns that you may have. We can discuss them at Back to School Night.

Fruit Break: Our class will have a ten to fifteen minute "fruit break" at some point during the mid-morning hours. During this time, your child may have a fruit or vegetable snack at his or her desk. Fruit cups or applesauce cups are fine snacks to have for fruit break. No other snacks will be permitted at this time. (Fruit Roll Ups, Gushers, Pop Tarts, etc. are not considered fruit or vegetables.) Children certainly do not have to eat a snack during fruit break. They may use this time to visit the bathroom, finish class work, or socialize quietly.

H2O: We do encourage our students to keep water bottles next to their lunches so that they can easily get a drink during the day. This practice helps us to stay hydrated so that we are ready to learn. It also helps to alleviate long lines at the water fountain. There are a few more rules

pertaining to water bottles in the classroom which we will discuss as a class on the first day of school.

Grading System: All tests and special projects are graded on a letter grade basis. These are based on the following (school wide) percentages:

A+ : 98-100%	B+ : 90-91%	C+ : 79-80%	D+ : 69-70%
A : 94-97%	B : 84-89%	C : 73-78%	D : 64-68%
A- : 92-93%	B- : 81-83%	C- : 71-72%	D- : 63%
F: 62-0%			

Class work is graded on a less formal basis. This year, I plan to grade most of the students' language arts papers and all of their math class work during school with stamps. The children will be responsible for correcting much of their work in the classroom. I have a new stamp this year that says "SPOT CHECKED". I'll be using this one for many of our SuperKids Word Workbook pages. I will be checking these assignments for general understanding of concepts. Anytime you see a paper stamped with this stamp, it may or may not be perfect, but it will be completed to my satisfaction.

If your child receives a '- 0' (or minus zero), on a paper, it simply means that he or she has completed a perfect paper. (A '-2' means that 2 answers are incorrect, '-3' indicates 3 wrong answers and so on.)

Any class work papers which are not completed satisfactorily will receive a "PC". This stands for "please correct" and requires that the student correct

the assignment and return it to school in the Friday Folder on the following Monday.

Some other notations that you may see on assignments are:

- **T** – A “T” may be written by your child or by me on the top of a paper or next to a particular sentence or problem. It means that the assignment was not completed independently, but with assistance. Sometimes, we do entire assignments together as a class, and at other times children need individual help. (I will not offer individual assistance on tests of course.)
- **PC Neatly** – This is an indication that I am not particularly concerned about the content of an assignment, but rather its general presentation. It may need to be rewritten in neater handwriting, or it may need to be reorganized so that it becomes more “readable”. **I do not expect perfect handwriting since your children are young and those skills are still developing, but I do expect it to be legible.** If I believe that an assignment was not done carefully I will bring this to their attention. Poor handwriting will not affect a subject’s grade unless that subject is handwriting.
- **OK** – I usually write this after an assignment has been corrected to my satisfaction. Sometimes, I may also write “OK” when an assignment like handwriting for example, is acceptable but unremarkable. An “OK” does not affect your child’s report card grade.
- **NCS** – This acronym stands for “Not a Complete Sentence”. We strive to write answers in complete sentences in second grade. This can be a difficult concept for some and that is why we practice it on most of our class work.

· * (**asterisk or “bonus star”**) Most asterisks appearing on papers will be written by your child. They often mean that a particular word, problem, or sentence is worth “bonus points” and is considered to be extra credit. If your child successfully completes a bonus problem, he or she will receive extra points. If he or she attempts a bonus problem and the answer is incorrect, no points are deducted. Sometimes we also draw asterisks to draw attention to especially important information.

Facebook Pages for Parents: If anyone would like to start a Facebook page for parents to communicate that is fine, but please do **not** use our school’s name in its title. I also ask that you not use it to air grievances about anything at all. If you have a concern about something that happened at school it’s always best to contact me rather than another parent. If you have an issue that involves another parent, please follow Matthew 18:15.

Teacher/Parent Communication: It’s important that we keep the lines of communication open. I want to work with you to create the best school experience for your child. Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any concerns. I will check my email every afternoon or evening and reply to you promptly. (I am often unable to check it during the day because I’m usually teaching of course.) I may not check it on the weekends until Sunday. If you need to discuss an urgent matter, then you should call the school office and leave a message for me. Also, if your child will be late for school or needs to be picked up early for an appointment on a particular day, please email me of this at least one day prior to that happening. If you cannot do that, then let the office know and they will inform me. (This is because if you email me on the day of, then I may not read that email until after school.) A written note will suffice as well. Just place it in the “Return to School” side of your child’s Red Buddy. Read on to learn about how we use our Red Buddies.

Arrival: Please make every effort to get your child to school on time. This is important because it gives your son or daughter time to settle in. We often have tasks to complete before our day formally begins, and when children need to make that up during the day that can be stressful for them. That said, I certainly understand that there will occasionally be times when you will be late. Everyone has difficult mornings due to behavior, traffic, or forgotten alarms.

Report Card Grades: Your child will receive an academic/behavioral report card at the end of each quarter.

The math, spelling, and reading quarterly grades will be based solely upon your child's assessment grades. Work completed at home does not factor into a quarterly grade unless it is rarely completed.

Red Buddies: Every child in my class will receive a durable red folder at the beginning of the year. We will call these folders our "Red Buddies". (I've borrowed that name from Mrs. Novak.) Red Buddies have four pockets and the two inside are especially helpful. One pocket says "Return to School" and your child will place homework or other forms there. A weekly assignment sheet is also kept on this side and we will change it out every Monday. The other side is labeled "Keep at Home", and should be emptied every night at home. In there you will find BPPs (see final page) and communications from me. This folder is brought back and forth to school **every day** regardless of whether or not your child has written homework. At the end of the day, I always ask the class to check their backpacks to see that they've packed their Red Buddies. Of course, they will be forgotten at school and at home from time to time, but we will keep on practicing.

Homework Policy: The class will have different written assignments on most afternoons. These assignments almost always include a math exercise, and an occasional reading or spelling assignment. (Reading and spelling assignments are called “Backpack Pages” this year.) Some need to be returned to school the next day and others are sent home to provide at home fluency practice. Those pages do not need to be returned. The children will also be reminded to spend time each evening preparing for Friday's memory assessment which will be scripture that I've presented as a lesson on Monday. The children will receive a written copy of the memory verse every Monday.

We will no longer be having a spelling test every Friday. Our SuperKids curriculum has weekly lessons that run for 5 days. If for example, we begin a week on a Thursday, we will have our spelling test on Wednesday. Snow days and field trips and unforeseen events will affect the dates of our spelling tests, but you will be given plenty of notice as to when the test will be given. A list will be sent home on day one and we will practice the words every day as part of our SuperKids daily routine.

Each Friday, a blue “Friday Folder” will be sent home. This will contain most of your child's class work from the previous week. Please review the folder's contents with your child over the weekend. **Any “pc” or “please correct” papers should be returned with the folder on Monday morning. Please do not return any other papers.**

I am planning on implementing “natural consequences” when a child forgets homework this year. If on occasion, your child forgets his or her homework, then that homework will be completed during any free time that he or she has that day before lunch. If forgetting homework becomes a chronic problem, then your child and I will come up with another plan to help correct this. I tell them that there are three parts to completing homework: The first is getting the assignment home, the second is completing it, and the third is returning it to school. If one of the three parts

is missing, then the homework has not been completed. I'll give them tips for keeping their assignments organized to help. I'm often amused when children blame their parents for not placing their homework in the "Return to School" side of their Red Buddies. They will soon learn that is not an acceptable excuse. I want them to know that completing homework is their responsibility.

Your child should complete as much of his or her homework as he or she can independently. However, I certainly recognize and expect that there will be times when your child needs assistance. You'll find that as the year goes on our math assignments have some very thought provoking problems to solve, and I think that it is quite appropriate for you to discuss and work those out along with your child. Homework is usually an assignment given to review and practice skills recently presented in class. If your child finds an assignment especially difficult, please assist him or her and indicate this on the assignment. Please be sure that the work and answers are **written by your child**.

Discipline Policy: One of the joys of teaching in a Christian school is that I am able to incorporate the Gospel as well as God's Law into a discipline plan. We will often discuss forgiveness, tolerance, and Christ like behavior. I will encourage the children to bring their troubles to God in prayer and we will often pray together about such things. While I try to use positive reinforcement as much as possible, sometimes it is necessary to present negative consequences as well.

Each child will have a row of linking blocks attached to his or her desk. I will probably begin the year with each child having six blocks. If a behavior problem occurs, then a block will be removed for the day. At the end of the day, the ultimate goal is to keep all or most of one's blocks. At the beginning of the year, I will give a few verbal warnings before I remove a block. We will discuss this at length during the first days, so that everyone knows that I don't expect perfection and that all is forgiven. If one

or two blocks are removed they should be considered to be reminders, not shaming or punishment.

There are no specific consequences for losing a certain number of blocks. Instead, I intend to implement more individualized strategies unique to each child or behavior. (I've never done this before, so that may change as the year progresses.) What I'm planning to do is implement "natural consequences" as I mentioned under the homework section of this handbook. If for example, a student repeatedly interrupts, then that student may need to be removed from the group for a short time. If there is a problem at recess, then a brief amount of recess will be taken away. If aggression occurs or unkind words are spoken, that will involve counseling by me or an administrator.

Any lost blocks will be returned to students at the end of the day so that they all begin with six each morning.

There may be occasions when I decide to implement a (blue) "Problem Solving" sheet. This is basically a simple checklist for students to complete to assess their own behaviors. This paper will be sent home and should be returned to me the next day with a parent's signature.

Second Grade Assignment Sheet Abbreviations

(Please keep this at home to use as a reference.)

As my students enter the classroom each morning, one of their first tasks will be to copy their homework assignments for the day on their assignment sheet. Every Monday, a new assignment sheet will be issued, and the boys and girls will soon learn to copy their homework each day. Miss Ruth Ann or I will sign their sheets each morning to ensure that each day's assignments are copied correctly. I don't require that parents sign them but you may want to check them with your child each night so that you are aware of exactly what has been assigned and what is coming up.

Our spelling and math curriculums are written in such a way that students often have homework on Friday evenings. There will also be days when we don't have homework at all. Spelling tests can be administered any day of the week after we have had five days of lessons preparing for the test. I try not to schedule spelling tests on Mondays, but sometimes that cannot be avoided.

I always assign a memory verse on Monday, and ask that the children say it orally for me on the following Friday (or Thursday if it is a short week). I have not assigned a memory verse for the first week of school.

The math homework abbreviations that your children will write do not correspond exactly to the titles on the math worksheets so here are explanations of each one:

GP: stands for "Guided Practice" - I've shortened this from the title you will find on side A of this page called "Guided Class Practice". We complete side A in class. Your child is assigned side B for homework. GPs will be assigned most nights and will include a lesson number.

FP: stands for "Fact Practice" - I've shortened this from the title that you will find on side A of this page called "Class Fact Practice". We complete side A in class. Your child is assigned side B for homework. FPs will also be assigned almost every evening and include a lesson number.

LW: stands for "Lesson Worksheet" - As the name suggests, I use this to introduce a lesson which may be skill based, or it may be about a new set of facts to practice. LWs are not to be returned. If they cover new facts, then I want you to keep those new facts at home so that you know which facts will be tested on the next fact test.

Our Math series requires that I administer 2 math tests after every fifth lesson. One is a quick fact assessment that will cover the facts that we have practiced that week. When that happens, I will have them write "Fact Test tomorrow" on their assignment sheet. We practice for this in school daily, and you can help at home by doing the same. (Actually the FPs are a great way to practice facts and are assigned almost every night.) I'll also give what is called a "Written Assessment" after every fifth lesson which covers the concepts that we've studied earlier.

There is no need to study for this test at home. If your child participates in daily lessons and completes the the GP sheets at home and at school, he or she will be very prepared for the test.

It is absolutely fine with me for you to assist or check your child's homework each evening. Your child should do as much as he or she can independently, but feel free to call on you if help is needed.

(As an aside, please know that Saxon Math may appear to be much too easy for your child early in the year. Saxon is a program that is all about repetition leading to success, and so students will practice facts and skills over and over again before they are tested. The program will become more challenging as children master the content. I find it to be an excellent, and comprehensive program.)

Here are the abbreviations that I use for our spelling homework:

BPP: stands for Backpack Page - **These assignments list the spelling words for the week and should be kept at home so that you have a spelling list. We will write the test date for those words on the first BPP for the week.** Other BPPs will be completed in class to practice our spelling/memory words. They will come home in the Friday Folder as part of your child's class work.

Other Backpack Pages are copies of a recent story from our decodable reader. These are sent home weekly so that you may practice reading them at home with your child. They are excellent for building fluency and confidence in young readers who may struggle with reading smoothly and with expression. A few parents reported to me last year how much their child was helped by practicing with these often. Even though they are not to be returned, please know that they are important.

SP: tomorrow: This means that a spelling test will be given on the next day.

MEM: tomorrow: This is our abbreviation for our memory verse and will also indicate that I will be listening to memory on the next day.

