

## At Northside Catholic

**Academy**, students acquire the skills and faith they need to navigate today's complicated world.

- ❖ We provide an opportunity for parents, educators and students to collaborate in the educational process.
- ❖ We practice a student-centered approach to teaching and learning.
- ❖ We value children, faith and the diversity of ideas and individuals in our community.
- ❖ We prepare students to think and act critically, creatively and collaboratively; to work to the best of their ability; and to develop self-awareness, responsibility and curiosity
- ❖ We promote a love of learning, respect for truth and sense of compassion.
- ❖ We promise to have and to cultivate faith in our children.

## NCA's History

In 1993, six parishes on Chicago's north side came together and united their efforts to form Northside Catholic Academy. The formerly individual schools at St. Gertrude, St. Gregory, St. Henry St. Ignatius, St. Ita, and St. Jerome parishes combined students, faculty, resources and facilities to create the new school. Owned by the Archdiocese of Chicago and operated by a Board of Pastors in conjunction with a School Board, the school currently occupies two campuses (St. Gertrude and St. Ita) and has approximately 500 students in preschool through eighth grade.

## The NCA Curriculum

Schoolwide learning expectations in each content area unite the Northside Catholic Academy curriculum. This means that at graduation, students will have received instruction, experienced activities, and demonstrated competencies in each of the schoolwide goals. Each grade level's curricular outline delineates specific, age appropriate skills that ultimately lead to the achievement of the major outcomes. As a result, at every grade level students work in a progressive manner to acquire knowledge and learn skills which are inter-related and which build upon one another. This grade level brochure, therefore, is a companion guide to be used in conjunction with NCA's "Expected Schoolwide Learning Results: An Overview."

## First Grade Philosophy

First graders experience an academic environment in which interdisciplinary units create a climate of immersion. Teachers use hands-on, student-centered activities to enhance students' independent learning skills and to meet the developmental needs of each child. Cooperative learning activities nurture each child's socialization skills and help them to grow in their ability to productively work in groups.

## Religion

Unifying each day, religion lessons allow the students to celebrate God's love and to understand their relationships with each other.

- *Learn the stories of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection, and how we celebrate them today.*
- *Learn the Sign of the Cross, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Glory Be to the Father as well as class-written and personal prayers.*
- *Tell and re-tell stories about Jesus' life and ministry;*
- *Act out Bible stories;*
- *Do service projects for the poor and those in nursing homes;*
- *Work at peacemaking in all school activities.*

## Language Arts

In first grade, students develop from beginning readers to become independent readers. As students learn to read, they practice writing skills and apply their new knowledge about consonant and vowel sounds when they build words, sentences and stories.

By the end of first grade, students will demonstrate the following skills at a proficient level or better:

- *Predict outcomes;*
- *Decode words through context and picture clues;*
- *Read with expression and emphasis;*
- *Express reactions to a story;*
- *Keep writing journals;*
- *Dictate stories and experiences;*
- *Publish their writing;*

- *Speak and write in complete sentences;*
- *Write a story with beginning, middle and end;*
- *Write a rough draft and edit it;*
- *Practice correct manuscript printing;*
- *Form plurals and apply endings to root words;*
- *Correctly use capital letters;*
- *Use periods, commas, question marks and exclamation points.*
- *Identify words listed in alphabetical order;*

## Mathematics

First grade mathematics emphasizes counting, investigating place-value of whole numbers, learning addition and subtraction facts and problem solving. In addition, students will work with collecting, organizing and displaying data as well as exploring 2 and 3 dimensional shapes. Students use tools to measure length, capacity, weight, temperature and time.

By the end of first grade, students will demonstrate the following skills at a proficient level or better:

- *choose between addition and subtraction to solve a problem;*
- *make and interpret real, picture and bar graphs of every day objects and events.*
- *answer questions, make predictions, and analyze data.*
- *recognize and name plane and solid shapes (i.e., square and cube, circle and sphere, triangle and cone, rectangle and box cylinder).*
- *construct and compare plane and solid shapes.*

- Measure time on the hour and half hour;
- Measure length in inches and centimeters;
- Measure capacity of cups, pints and quarts;
- Identify fractions of 1/2, 1/3, 2/3, 1/4, 3/4;
- Read and interpret temperatures and thermometers.
- Count and write to 100 by 1's, 5's, 10's;
- Identify numbers to 100 as groups of tens and ones;
- Recognize and build patterns with manipulatives and numbers;
- Begin to estimate and check;
- Apply counting patterns to count coins to 99 cents;
- Predict and interpret probability;
- List probable outcomes of 1-stage experiments (e.g., flipping a coin or rolling a die).

## Social Studies

In social studies, first graders develop an awareness of the geographical world. They learn about cultural identities and contributions. First graders study the characteristics and contributions of the earliest Americans – the Woodland Indians of the Northeast.

By the end of first grade, students will demonstrate the following skills at a proficient level or better:

- Recognize all land and water images on maps and globes;
- Identify characteristics of Earth such as mountains, plains, and oceans;
- Locate the U.S., Illinois and Chicago on a map;
- Follow directions on a simple map.

- Recognize themselves as members of family, parish, neighborhood, city and national communities.
- Identify customs and traditions related to holidays;
- Recognize effect of geographic conditions on inhabitants of rainforest and ocean areas.
- Know cultural and economic value of money;
- Distinguish basic needs from wants;
- Identify basic characteristics of woodland Indians of the northeast, first Thanksgiving, Johnny Appleseed and George Washington;
- Identify U.S. leaders Abraham Lincoln; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and the current president.

## Science

First grade science continues to develop the child's awareness of the world. Students use their senses to investigate properties of objects around them. In addition, students study a variety of animals and their different needs. In the earth science unit, students observe different earth materials and learn about fossils and their formation.

By the end of first grade, students will demonstrate the following skills at a proficient level or better:

- Formulate questions on a specific science topic and choose the steps needed to answer the questions;
- Collect data for investigations using scientific process skills including observing, estimating and measuring;
- Construct charts and visualizations to display data;

- Sort and classify objects according to their properties;
- Explain classification systems.
- Describe the characteristics of rocks, soils, water and the interaction among them;
- Identify basic characteristics of fossils and describe their formation;
- Identify components and describe diverse features of the Earth's land, water and atmospheric systems;
- Identify and explain natural cycles of the Earth's land, water, and atmospheric systems;
- Explain the importance of specific environments to animals they study;
- Describe and compare characteristics of living things in relationship to their environments;
- Describe properties of materials and relate the properties to the material's purpose;
- Describe contributions men and women have made to science and technology;
- Demonstrate ways to reduce, reuse and recycle materials;

# Northside Catholic Academy



## Grade 1

Chicago, Illinois