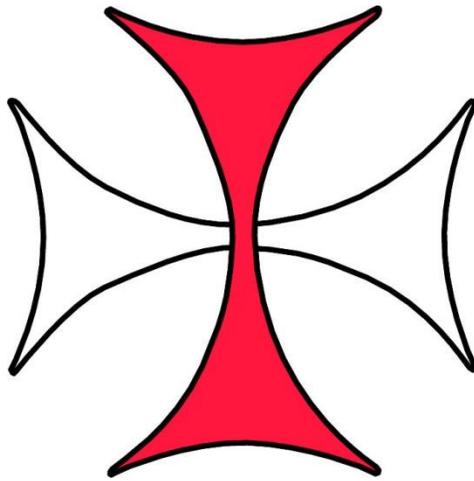


# Kindergarten Handbook



St. Odilia Catholic School  
3495 Victoria Street North  
Shoreview, MN 55126  
651.484.3364

Dear Kindergarten Parents,

We are happy to have your child with us! We look forward to watching your child grow and develop. Family is important to us, and we will work to provide both you and your child with a rewarding, well rounded experience. Good communication between parents and staff is essential. Please keep us informed of your needs, concerns, questions and comments.

At St. Odilia, we also believe each child is a gift from God. At the core of our philosophy is the development of a strong faith foundation. Some of the ways we accomplish this are by: beginning and ending the day with prayer, having our students plan, prepare and participate in all-school Masses, studying the Catholic faith and Christian ideals in religion classes, and participating in monthly service projects. However, at St. Odilia service is more than a “project” rather it is an attitude and a true expression of our faith in action. This solid foundation of faith gained by each child leads to strong moral and character development that lasts a lifetime.

We also believe it is equally important that each child receives an excellent academic education. Kindergarten is a time of both social and academic growth for children. Here at St. Odilia we teach each child by individualizing the curriculum to meet each student’s needs. Every child is given what they need while the learning outcome is being met. Small class sizes allow teachers to give students individual attention. Learning stations throughout the classrooms include materials that appeal to various learning styles and abilities. We focus on multi-sensory learning, using phonemic awareness programs, while realizing that little minds learn best when they feel safe, loved, and engaged in experiences that are relevant and interesting.

Finally, we believe that young minds learn best in a safe, nurturing, and fun environment. We achieve this through play, discovery, and creativity by engaging students in daily hands-on activities, songs, stories, rhymes, actions, finger plays and art projects to make learning new skills and concepts fun! Our goal at St. Odilia is to provide students with a year full of challenges and learning experiences that will enhance the whole child.

Our strong test scores and the success of former St. Odilia students can attest to this academic excellence. But do not just take it from me, you will see the difference a St. Odilia education can make when your child comes home with a smile on his/her face every day, telling you all the wonderful topics discussed and lessons learned that span beyond the 3R’s but include the 3C’s; Compassion, Character, and Christ.

You will be receiving additional information, as well as paperwork, to complete in the coming months. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact the school office at 651-484-3364. Thank you for choosing to send your child/ren to St. Odilia School and know we look forward to having your entire family be a part of our school community.

Sincerely,

Vicki Marvin  
Principal

## Introduction

The Kindergarten Handbook has been created to acquaint you with the major components of Kindergarten at St. Odilia. Please keep this as a reference guide for the entire year.

### St. Odilia Mission Statement

It is the mission of St. Odilia School to educate the whole child: spiritually, academically, emotionally, socially and physically. Each child will develop a clear Catholic identity, an understanding of the Gospel's call to service, and an appreciation for the larger community. Our faculty, staff and curriculum promote a love of learning and a respect for self and others.

### St. Odilia School Philosophy

We believe Catholic education is based on the premise that every child is a child of God. Each child has received the life and love of the Creator and is called into a relationship with Jesus Christ. We strive to foster an environment in which each child will advance in spiritual maturity while achieving knowledge and skills in the academic disciplines, the humanities, the arts, and Catholic Christian living in his/her search for truth.

We recognize that parents are the primary educators of their children. The work of St. Odilia School is to assist and share with parents the responsibility for the development of each child in light of Christian principles. Those entrusted with the ministry of education must give witness to the integration of faith, culture, and living by the knowledge they impart and the relationships they foster.

St. Odilia School strives to help each child receive the message revealed by God and proclaimed by the Church. Each child is encouraged to become an active member of the Faith community by participating in the Sacramental life of the Church. Our school environment and learning program offer each child the opportunity to develop his/her gifts and talents to be of service in the world community. We are committed to instilling Catholic Christian values in each child in order to assist him/her in developing a sense of moral responsibility.

## Starting the Kindergarten Year

### Kindergarten Readiness

At St. Odilia, we want all children to be successful and enjoy school when they start Kindergarten.

“Kindergarten Readiness” is a term we often use to talk about children entering Kindergarten. The indicators listed below will help parents understand what their child may need to work on before entering Kindergarten.

If you have questions or concerns about your child or Kindergarten, please contact your child’s teacher.

#### Social Behavior

Participates in group activities  
Interacts easily with a familiar adult  
Keeps hands and feet to self  
Moves through routines and transitions smoothly  
Plays or works cooperatively with peers  
Takes turns

#### Reading/Writing/Math

Beginning to recognize letters  
Counts objects to 5  
Beginning to understand letters with sounds  
Counts to 10 or higher  
Identifies colors and shapes  
Prints first name  
Has experience with writing tools (pencils, crayons, etc.)

#### Listening and Speaking

Uses words to communicate needs and wants  
Listens to stories for 5-10 minutes without restlessness  
Follows two-step directions  
Recalls stories and events

#### Fine/Gross Motor Skills

Cuts on line or patterns  
Can run, jump, hop and march

#### Self-Help Skills

Takes care of bathroom needs independently  
Organizes his/her belongings  
Shows *progress* toward tying shoes, zipping, buttoning, etc

### Prep for School Day

There will be a Prep for School Day the week before school starts. This is an opportunity for your child to explore their classroom and for you to hear from your child's teacher about the curriculum used in the kindergarten classrooms.

### School Supplies

Included in this mailing is your school supply list for Kindergarten. We ask that you bring these supplies with you to Prep for School Day. The only supplies that need to be labeled are the rest time items and headphones. All other supplies are communal and do not need to be labeled. You can preorder school supplies to be ready and waiting for you at school. Just go to [www.1stdayschoolsupplies.com](http://www.1stdayschoolsupplies.com) and place your order by June 30.

### Label, Label, Label

Please write your child's first and last name on personal items brought to Kindergarten. For example: coats, sweatshirts, sweaters, hats, gloves, boots, shoes, backpacks and lunch boxes-just to name a few!

## Our School Day

### School Hours

St. Odilia students will be in session each day from 9:25-3:55. Students arrive between 9:05-9:20 (PLEASE do not arrive before 9:05). Morning all-school prayer is at 9:25. Afternoon all-school prayer is at 3:50.

### Attendance & Absences

If it is necessary for your child to be absent, please call or e-mail the school office before 9:00 a.m. at 651.484.3364 or [attendance@stodilia.org](mailto:attendance@stodilia.org), or use the absence reporting form on the school website homepage (click 'late/absent/early dismissal' icon at bottom of the homepage). As a protective measure, if the parent has not called the school, the school will call the home, or parent's place of employment.

### Arrival & Dismissal

If you provide transportation for your child to and from school your child is known as a "walker." Students who are dropped off should not arrive before 9:05. Teachers are often in meetings or in the workroom and are unable to safely supervise children. At dismissal, "walkers" are dismissed in three groups according to the first letter of their last name: A-I, J-Q, and R-Z. They are walked out by older children and you will meet them on the sidewalk outside the front entrance. Please be prompt to avoid confusion and anxiety.

### Early Dismissal

If you need your child dismissed from school early, please call or e-mail the school office at 651.415.3364, e-mail [attendance@stodilia.org](mailto:attendance@stodilia.org), or fill out the form on the website (bottom of homepage, click on the Late/Absent/Early Dismissal icon). For safety reasons, parents are required to sign their child out at the security desk when picking them up early. Your child's teacher will have your child wait in the office until you arrive.

### Busing

For information regarding busing, please visit the school website under the parent resources > busing. If you have specific questions, contact Mrs. Nikki Giel at 651.415.3333 or [giel@stodilia.org](mailto:giel@stodilia.org). Please remind your child to walk to the bus stop, remain seated on the bus, listen to the bus driver and walk when leaving the bus. At dismissal, kindergartners are walked to their bus in a group led by an older child who also rides that bus.

### Knight Watch-Before and After Care

Knight Watch before-and-after school care provides a safe environment from 7:00am to the start of school and after school to 6:00pm for St. Odilia School students. Registration forms can be downloaded from website under student life > Knight Watch. If you have questions, please call 651-415-3332 or email [knightwatch@stodilia.org](mailto:knightwatch@stodilia.org)

### School Closings

Parents will be notified via text message if there is an unexpected school closing. Weather related school closing typically follows Mounds View and Roseville, Districts 621 and 623.

## Communication

We welcome communication with our families. Please feel free to call or email your teacher at any time with any question or concern. We are here to help your child *and* your family throughout the school year.

Mrs. Nicole Johnson	<a href="mailto:nicole.johnson@stodilia.org">nicole.johnson@stodilia.org</a>	651.415.3379
Mrs. Julie Ruzynski	<a href="mailto:ruzynski@stodilia.org">ruzynski@stodilia.org</a>	651.415.3383
Ms. Kayla Mertes	<a href="mailto:mertes@stodilia.org">mertes@stodilia.org</a>	651.415.3363

### Take Home Folders

Your child should bring a folder to school every day. Communications and schoolwork will be placed in the folder during the school day. Your child will bring their folder home each night.

### Weekly Classroom/Teacher Updates

The majority of communication that will come from your teacher about homework, important dates, reminders, photos, and updates will be posted on your child's teacher page. These pages are updated on a weekly basis and include important information. Details on how to access this information will be given closer to the start of the school year.

### School Web Site

<http://www.stodiliaschool.org> is always a great place to start for information! Teacher and administrative emails are available as well as the school calendar, weekly handouts, lunch menus and pricing, the student handbook and much, much more! Parents are also able to notify the school of student absences, late arrivals and early dismissals through the website. St. Odilia School has an app! Download the app to easily access this information on your smart phone.

### Knightly News & Weekly E-handouts

Most of the information you need to know comes through email, so make sure you read everything! The Knightly News is a newsletter sent out via email once a month. The Knightly News will fill you in on new and exciting events going on in our wonderful school along with telling you important information. Each Wednesday you will receive an email with links to the week's handouts/flyers.

### Online School Directory

We offer an online accessible School Directory, via an app called Membership Toolkit, it is a convenient way to access and view contact information for our school families. A personalized e-mail will be sent at the beginning of the school year with directions on how to Opt-In to this great resource.

## School Uniforms

All students, K-8, are required to wear uniforms on school days, with any exceptions announced school-wide or through teacher e-mail communications. **The full uniform policy can be found on the school website; Parent**

**Resources>Uniforms>Uniform Policy.** Please also closely review the shoe policy. Athletic tennis shoes (non-light up) are the best option for kindergarteners and required for Phy Ed class.

Donald's Uniform is the only acceptable vendor that has been selected for consistency of appearance, color, and quality. Donald's has two store fronts, one in St. Paul and Eden Prairie. Online and phone orders are also accepted. Donald's will hold a sale from June 1-30 with 10-20% off nearly everything in the store. They are also kindergarten & new student coupons that can be found on our school website along with an updated uniform price list.

We also recommend attending the Swap Sale in June. It is an opportunity to purchase gently used uniforms at a discounted price.

Please also clearly mark uniforms and personal belongings with student name and/or initials for easy identification.

## Meals at School

### Snack Time

We have a daily morning snack. A carton of milk is provided free for each child every day. If your child is unable to drink milk, we are able to offer other options if a doctor's note is provided. The students take turns bringing in a snack for the whole class. Your child's snack day will be assigned to them on a monthly snack calendar that is sent home with each child in advance. Parents are provided with our approved snack list to make our snack as safe as possible.

### Lunch

Your child will have a few options for lunch each day. If your child wants to have hot lunch, the cafeteria usually offers two lunch choices. They may choose the hot lunch they prefer when they arrive in the classroom. If your child brings a lunch from home, you may either send a drink with them or have them purchase a milk in the lunch room to have with their lunch from home. During the summer, you will receive information instructing you how to sign up for a lunch account.

## Student Health

### Illness

Your child's health is a matter of importance to all of us. A child who shows symptoms of illness during school hours will be sent to the health office. The health assistant will call a parent or authorized person who may be asked to come and pick up your child. The child will be made as comfortable as possible and will be supervised at all times. Many students and parents are frequently concerned about when students should stay home or attend school. The following information is intended to help with this decision:

#### General practice:

- If student has a fever of 100.4 degrees or more, the student should stay home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal and remains normal without fever reducing medication.
  - If student has respiratory symptoms not related to asthma or seasonal allergies, the student should remain home until 24 hours after the symptoms have started improving.
- If student has vomited or had diarrhea, the student should stay home until 24 hours after the last episode.
- If student has had any rash that may be disease-related or the cause is unknown, check with the family physician before sending the student to school.

**At this time, we do not know what COVID-19 guidelines will look like in the fall. Please see the school website for the most updated information about current policies and procedures.**

- If student is ill, please call the school at 651.484.3364 or use the “Late/Absent/Early Dismissal form” found on the school websites homepage.

If you have any questions regarding the above information or your child’s illness, please call the school nurse or family physician. **REMEMBER** – children with an infectious disease can spread the disease when they are in contact with others in the family or in the community.

### Medication Policy

Whenever possible, parents should give medications before and after school. If medication is prescribed during school hours, the following guidelines will be used for the safety of your child. The health office must be provided with written permission from both parent and physician in order to administer prescription medication. See form location below. Please be sure to include any information about possible side effects and send the medication its original bottle. If your child will require over the counter medication, please print the OTC medication parent authorization form from the above website and include with the medication. Also be sure to label any medicine with student’s name. Please inform your child’s teacher that your child is bringing medicine to school and that it should be brought to the health office. The prescription and OTC medication authorization form may be obtained from the health office or through the school website (click parent resources tab > health office > scroll down to access Health Forms via the Mounds View district website).

### Allergies

If your child has a severe allergy (such as bee stings or nut allergies), please fill out the “severe allergy medication authorization” and the “severe allergy information form” available through the health office or on the St. Odilia website (click parent resources tab > health office > scroll down to access Health Forms via the Mounds View district website). Please have the medication(s) to treat an allergic reaction in the health office with the above forms **by the first day of school.**

### Asthma

If your child has asthma and may need access to an inhaler at school, please fill out the asthma parent/guardian questionnaire and have your child’s physician complete the asthma action plan form. These forms can be obtained from the health office or through the St. Odilia website (click parent resources tab > health office > scroll down to access Health Forms via the Mounds View district website). Please have inhaler and completed forms in the health office **by the first day of school.**

## Conferences & Report Cards

Conferences are scheduled times for you to discuss your child’s progress with his/her teacher. Conferences are held twice a year: once in the fall and once in the spring. Specific dates will be on the school calendar. The report card reflects the student’s skill development in:

- ❖ Personal growth (listening, attitude, respecting others, participates)
- ❖ Reading readiness (likenesses/differences, letter recognition, sounds, rhyming)
- ❖ Math readiness (numeral recognition, counting, patterning, graphing, sorting)
- ❖ Fine Motor

## Special Events & Volunteering

### Approved Volunteers

Parents are welcome and encouraged to volunteer in their child’s classroom. Kindergarten will have many opportunities to volunteer for a number of activities and events throughout the year. Archdiocesan policy requires background checks, VIRTUS training and a signed Archdiocesan Volunteer Code of Conduct for all

volunteers at St. Odilia School. This information is provided in this mailing. We recommend you start this process as soon as possible to ensure your ability to volunteer at school.

### Security

All visitors to the school are required to have a photo on file at the security desk, sign in and wear a badge when visiting during school hours. This desk is staffed by a security professional. All other doors are locked during the school day and not accessible without an issued PIN number. We also have video monitoring throughout the building that is monitored by security personnel. The school also practices fire, tornado and lock-down drills in accordance with Minnesota law.

### Birthdays and Half-Birthdays

We love to celebrate birthdays. Having a birthday is a special event when you are in Kindergarten. We try to make the school day a special day for the celebrant, but also keep it calm. You are invited to come and read a story on your child's birthday. Often the child will pick out their favorite book for his/her parent to read to their friends at school. In keeping with Archdiocesan policy for all Catholic Schools, in order to spend time in the classroom, you must be an approved volunteer. Please do this as soon as possible so that when your child's birthday comes around, you are prepared to come in and read. If your child's birthday falls on a weekend or over a school vacation we will celebrate on the closest school day. If your child has a summer birthday, we will schedule this for their half-birthday. Please note that we do not pass out any treats or gifts, and the snack that day still needs to come from the approved snack list. Please call or email your child's teacher to schedule your child's day. We look forward to celebrating with your child! Unless you are inviting the entire class to a birthday party for your child, please do not send invitations or thank-you cards through school to avoid hurt feelings.

### Field Trips

We plan our field trips well in advance, so you will be notified at the beginning of the year of field trip dates. We welcome all parents on our field trips who are approved volunteers. For some field trips, you will be asked to pay a small amount to cover the admission charges and/or bus cost. You will receive an informational letter and permission slip for each field trip.

### Holidays & Class Celebrations

Kindergarten at St. Odilia School is indeed special. You will be able to sign up to help at events during the school year following the parent meeting held in the fall. A few events of note that you will hear about from your teacher are:

- Halloween is an exciting day for kids-especially kindergartners. Kindergartners can wear their costumes to school and keep them on the entire day. A special Halloween surprise in the morning involves the parents, so find a great costume and clear your calendar. You will get more details from your child's teacher in October.
- We have two student holiday parties in Kindergarten. Room parents help plan and run the Halloween and Christmas parties. The parties typically include stations involving crafts, games, and snacks.

### Lunch Visits

We welcome you to eat lunch with your child. Please follow these steps when you join your child for lunch:

1. Email your child's teacher to let him/her know you're coming.
2. Check-in at the security desk when you arrive.
3. Meet your child by the cafeteria entrance. If the courtyard is available, you & your child may eat there.