



# PRIMARY SCHOOL

## AT A GLANCE

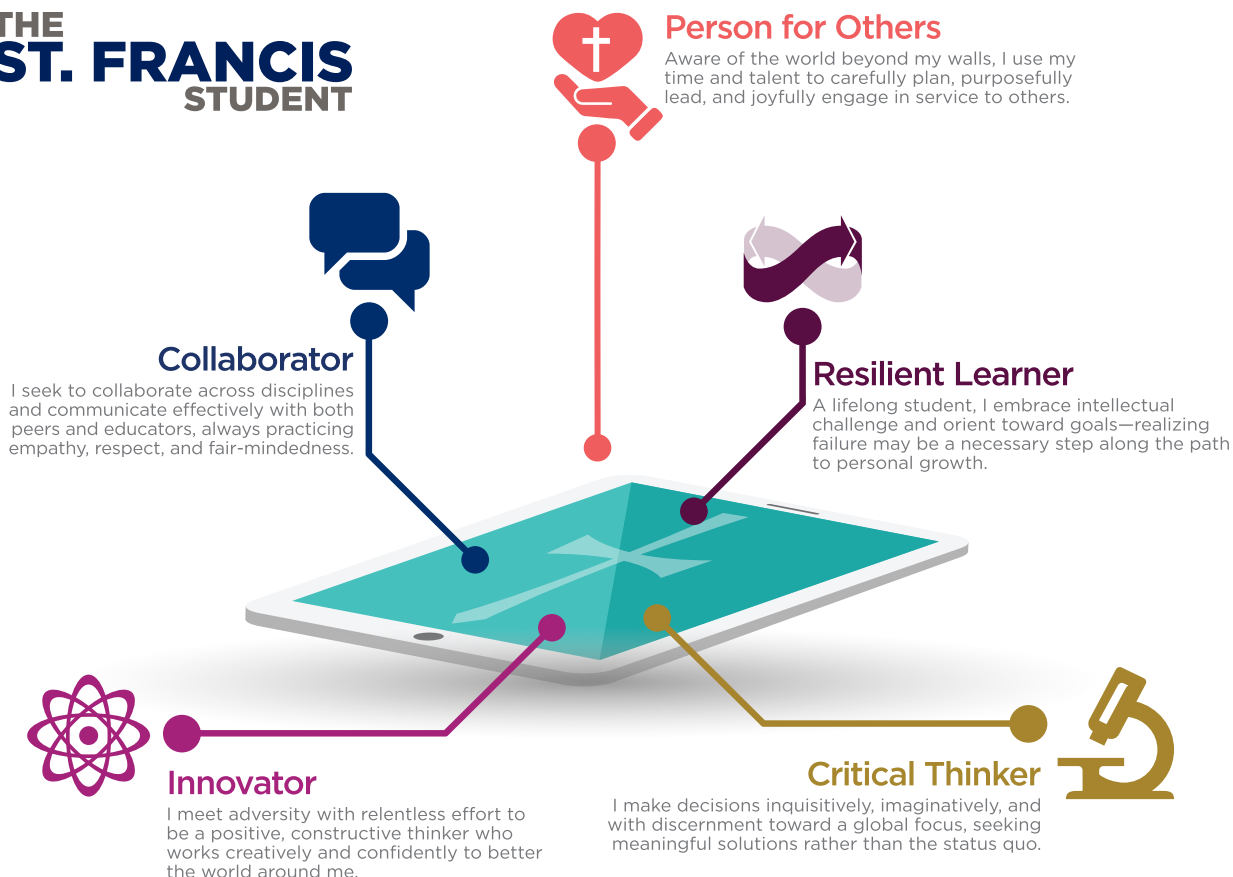
St. Francis Episcopal Primary School is a Reggio-inspired program where children's natural curiosity, creativity, and developing independence are honored and supported. Through meaningful project work, exploration, and opportunities to build valuable relationships, students experience joyful learning in an environment that celebrates childhood.

**2020-21 CORE CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS**



ST. FRANCIS  
Episcopal School

# THE ST. FRANCIS STUDENT



## REGGIO-INSPIRED APPROACH

Research has identified specific skills that our children will need to live and work successfully in our rapidly changing world. These skills include the confidence to ask questions, think critically, solve problems, and work with others. Our instructional approach, inspired by the early education programs in Reggio Emilia, Italy, teaches these skills and more through child-initiated classroom projects. Although the Reggio approach is not new, the depth of inquiry and shared responsibility for learning between the child, teacher, and peers make this approach relevant today.

## PRE-PRIMARY

Our Pre-Primary program gives children their first introduction to a school setting, as well as to St. Francis. With a focus on social and emotional development, young children learn how to be part of a group, share their thoughts and feelings, and begin working on projects that stem from their ideas and interests.

## PRIMARY I

Growing independence and responsibility mark students' transition into Primary I. Children become members of a larger community of learners with abundant opportunities to stretch their thinking and continue to grow socially and emotionally. Students explore and use new materials creatively through expanded time in the studio, project work, and outdoor activity.

## PRIMARY II

Field trips, leadership opportunities, and a focus on the St. Francis Way enhance the Primary II year. Students also continue to develop problem-solving skills through collaborative project work. Time-honored curriculum components, such as Bridges Mathematics and Rice Early Literacy, and expanded literacy experiences help students build confidence in their final year of Primary School.

# 2020-21 CORE CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

St. Francis's developmentally appropriate pre-K curriculum goes beyond state and national standards for independent preschools, offering balanced literacy practices, Reggio-inspired/project-based learning, special programs, and a model spiritual-development program.

## PRIMARY SCHOOL



### RICE EARLY LITERACY

Our Primary School partners with Rice University to offer a literacy curriculum that emphasizes reading, writing, culture, child development, and research. Students learn that their thoughts, ideas, and words are valuable and can be captured as print that can be dramatized and read again and again. All learning occurs through meaningful, authentic activities.

A variety of techniques are used, such as:

- Story telling and story acting
- Adult-authored dramatization
- Name curriculum and alphabetic understanding
- Phonological awareness
- News of the day
- Read-alouds
- Print-rich environment
- Writing center
- Classroom library
- Dramatic play center
- Group story creation
- Stories, poems, and finger plays
- Story baskets



### EMERGENT CURRICULUM

Our emergent curriculum builds upon the interests of the children. Projects are created and become in-depth studies of concepts, ideas, and interests. Students experience learning through play and interaction. While participating in projects and using materials, children learn through exploration of the learning environment.



### ACADEMICS AND ENRICHMENT

Academic skills are taught through a variety of topics. In Primary School, children learn early literacy and math skills, as well as science and social studies concepts. In addition, we have a strong enrichment program that includes motor development, Spanish, drama, music, and visits to the Primary School library.



### ASSESSMENT

Our program is highly individualized to provide for the development of each child at his or her own pace. Primary students are assessed using teacher observations, benchmarks, and portfolios.



### PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are held multiple times each year. Teachers will also conduct a phone conference. Conferences can occur at other times throughout the year at the teacher's or parent's request.

Assessments and portfolios will be shared at the fall and spring conferences. In addition to a short narrative, parents also receive a detailed report with their child's progress in the following areas:

- Social/emotional development
- Language and literacy
- Math and science
- Progress in specific enrichment classes



### PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents have many opportunities to become involved, such as serving as a Homeroom Parent, volunteering for studio and class activities, visiting as a guest reader or through events with our Parents Association. Special days on campus include Mothers and Others, Grandparents and Grandfriends Day, and Fathers and Friends. In addition, parents are always invited to attend chapel with their children.



### LICENSING (PRE-PRIMARY)

St. Francis's Pre-Primary program is licensed through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The school adheres to Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards. A copy of these standards is available in the foyer of the Pre-Primary building and online at [www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Care/Child\\_Care\\_Standards\\_and\\_Regulations](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations).



# CONTACT INFORMATION

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