



Welcome to Kindergarten!

We are going to have an exciting year! I am looking forward to working with your child in Kindergarten. Here is some important information you will need to know.

CURRICULUM

As in all grades, the Kindergarten curriculum follows the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks. A full day program allows learning to occur through developmentally appropriate activities. Educational research confirms that young children learn best through play. Most kindergarten activities are hands-on. The emphasis is on process, rather than product. So, do not expect a daily collection of worksheets or fancy projects, especially early in the year. Do ask your child about his/her day. Hopefully, you will hear about the fun he/she had at school. You can learn about your child's day by reviewing the papers and projects that do go home and by asking questions. Our reading series, Pearson Scott Foresman, provides a newsletter called "Family Times." One will be sent home each week. It tells about the story we are reading and the skills, phonics, and sight words we are working on. It also includes suggestions for home activities to support your child's learning. Our Math Series, Addison Wesley, provides information for parents at the bottom of each workbook page. Occasionally, an issue of "Math Soup" will come home with more math ideas. Additionally, you will receive newsletters, calendars, and notes. Please convey questions or concerns you may have. I will provide more information about the kindergarten curriculum at our open house on September 24.

In addition to reading, writing, math, science, and social studies, your child will have a forty minute period each day with a music, art, or physical education specialist. We will

also have a weekly library period at which time students may select a book to take home for one week. The borrowed book must be returned before another book is taken home. Volunteers are needed to help shelf the books and to check out new books. Our time will be Fridays at noon. Please let me know if you are able to help us then or another class at a different time. Every third Thursday kindergarten students are scheduled for a period in the computer lab at 2:00. Volunteers would also be appreciated at this time. I will send home a calendar each month to help you keep track of specialists and events.

VOLUNTEERING

You can also learn about kindergarten by volunteering. Parent (and grandparent) volunteers are welcomed and appreciated in kindergarten. Help is needed daily in the classroom for small group activities and occasionally for special projects. Volunteers are welcome to join the children in the cafeteria for lunch. Occasionally, there are materials to prepare. There will be field trips, too. As previously mentioned help is needed in the library and computer lab. All volunteers must have a completed CORI check, with a photocopy of your driver's license, on file at the office. If you are interested in volunteering, please fill out a volunteer form and a CORI form.

SELF HELP

Children will need to be able to tend to their own toileting needs. It is very important that your child wears pants that he/she can get up and down by himself/herself. That may mean not wearing a belt or jeans that have difficult snaps or buttons until your child masters the skill. **We cannot fasten and unfasten pants.** If your child is prone to accidents, you may want to send a change of clothes to be kept in his/her backpack. You can put the clothes in a plastic bag. The nurse will call you to bring in dry clothes when an accident occurs, unless your child has some spare clothes on hand.

Your child should also be able to put on and zip, snap, button, or Velcro his/ her own jacket. Tying shoes is also an important skill for kindergarteners to master.

The whole class goes to the bathrooms in the hall before lunch and before snack. There is also a bathroom in the classroom if needed.

DAILY SNACK

We have a snack every afternoon. You need to send one small **nutritious** snack and drink each day. Students are not able to purchase a snack at school.

Suggested snacks include fruit, crackers, cheese, carrots, yogurt, pudding etc. Please **do not** send candy, cookies, cupcakes, potato chips, soda, etc. All snacks should be in a bag or lunch box labeled with your child's name and the word "snack." It is most helpful to separate the snack from the lunch so that your child doesn't eat his snack at the wrong time.

LUNCH

Children may either bring their lunch from home or purchase a lunch at school. Lunch presently costs \$2.00 Ice cream is an additional \$.50 - \$.75. Milk may also be purchased separately for \$.50. If you choose, you may pay for several lunches in advance so that you do not need to send in money each day. All money **must** be sent in a small change purse, wallet, or envelope, labeled with your child's name. Your child will need to select his/her lunch choice upon arrival at school. It would be helpful if you went over the day's lunch selections at home so that he/she will be ready to order. You will receive a lunch menu, listing lunch options, each month. Applications for free or reduced lunch are available. Parent volunteers who wish to stay for lunch may bring one from home or purchase one for \$3.50.

BREAKFAST

The cafeteria begins serving breakfast at 8:00 A.M. The breakfast menu is listed on the back of the monthly lunch menu. The cost is \$1.50. Buses do not arrive in time for children to participate in the program.

TOYS, PENCILS, AND CRAYONS

Please have children leave all toys at home. Cell phones, video games, and other electronics are not allowed in school. Also, please do not send in pencils, crayons, or other school supplies. Such personal items can cause disruption when they are misplaced or not shared fairly. If you would like to contribute to supplies to supplement classroom materials, donations of drawing and construction paper(for our Art Center), thin dry-erase markers, Ziploc bags (all sizes), liquid soap, and facial tissues would be appreciated.

CLASS RULES

One of our class' first asks will be to generate a list of class rules which students feel are important. Usually the list includes such things as sharing, taking turns, using kind words and actions, respecting school property, etc. Our rules will be recopied, signed by everyone, and posted in our classroom. Because everyone makes mistakes, students will be given two "warnings" before being asked to leave the group. An exception to the usual "Three strikes, you're out" policy may occur in the case of dangerous, aggressive or destructive behavior.

All students will recite the "Peace Builders' Pledge" each day. The tenets of this program also help form classroom behavior expectations. This pledge includes giving praise, giving up "put-downs," seeking "wise people," noticing "hurts," righting "wrongs," and building peace at home, school, and in the community. You will receive information about this program from your child and in newsletters from Mrs. Lucas. All grades participate in the Peace Builders Program.

ATTENDANCE

Good attendance is very important to your child's success in school. We begin classroom activities promptly at 8:40. Arriving late in a busy classroom can cause anxiety for a young learner. If your child will be absent, please call the school (508 979-4058) by 10:00. A note explaining the absence is appreciated upon your child's return to school. Please keep your child home if you suspect that he/she is not feeling well. You know your child better than I do and our school nurse is very busy. An ill child can be disruptive and make other children sick. I will save work for absent children to complete at home.

DISMISSAL

To avoid confusion at dismissal, please have your child wear his/her foam name tag for the first couple of weeks.

Kindergarten children who are not taking the bus are dismissed before the other grades' walkers, at 2:45. Please be on time to greet your child outside at the side door, facing Route 6. Please walk forward to greet your child so that we are sure an adult is there. If you are late arriving, your child will have to wait in the Principal's Office as teachers have other responsibilities at that time of day. If you are also picking up an older child, the two of you will need to walk to the main front doors.

Buses are loaded one at a time with kindergarteners boarding first. An administrator escorts each bus load when that color bus has been announced over the loud speaker. An older sibling or neighbor will be allowed to board the bus with a kindergarten child for the first couple of weeks.

If for any reason your child will not be going home the usual way, please send a note in with your child. A late afternoon phone call or "surprise" change causes confusion for children and staff.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHER

Communication between home and school is very important. Each child will be given an inexpensive home-school pocket folder. Please check the folder each night for class work, calendars, messages, and other handouts. Send the folder back each morning inside your child's backpack. Your child will put the folder in a special rack upon arrival in the classroom. I will check folders each morning for forms, permission slips, completed work, notes from home, or any other information you wish to share with the school. I am sending a form which I downloaded from *Family Fun* magazine. You do not need to use this form, but I thought it might be helpful if giving parents an idea of the kinds of things teachers need to know. Your child does not need to keep the original folder I give him/her. Sometimes children enjoy having a folder with a favorite character

or design on it. The important thing is that your child arrives each day with a folder!
Children retrieve their folders by themselves from the special rack and put it back into
their backpacks when snack is finished.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Bancroft