



ABC's of Kindergarten



A

Absences: In order to ensure that all children arrive safely and promptly at school, if you have not contacted the school explaining your child's absence, the school will call your home the morning of the absence. If it is necessary for your child to be absent for any reason, please contact the school. If you know in advance that your child will not be in attendance, please send a note explaining the reason for the absence. A written note should also be sent the day your child returns to school.

Arrival: Pupils should arrive between 7:50 and 8:15 am. Breakfast will be served beginning at 7:50. Students should not arrive prior to 7:50 am since supervision is not available by the school staff. School begins promptly at 8:20 am and dismissal is at 2:35 pm. Children should come directly to the gym. If eating breakfast, the student should go directly to the cafeteria. Attendance will be taken at 8:20. If the children come in later than 8:20, they should stop by the office for a tardy pass before coming to their room.

Attendance: A successful school experience involves the cooperation of the child, teacher, and parent. Your child's progress, both academically and socially, is influenced by daily participation. Consistent attendance enhances learning. We cover several activities in a short period of time, so regular attendance without tardiness is a key. It is very important that your child attend class unless they are ill or an emergency arises.

Attitude: Thinking they CAN do something is very important to kindergarten children. We want to encourage an "I can" attitude in them. Please celebrate each step they take - even the smallest step. Their attitude is influenced by our attitude, so it is our desire for them to have a positive attitude about school when they enter the door each day and when they leave.

B

Backpacks: Please make sure your child carries a backpack daily to carry his Take Home folder and behavior folder to and from school. Check your child's book bag daily.

Behavior Expectations: It is our desire that each child daily displays the characteristics contained in our pledge daily. If the children try to be their best, learn all that they can, and treat others as they want others to treat them, then they will have success.

Behavior Folders: A behavior folder will be sent home each day and I expect it to be returned the following day. Each month there will be an attached paper that features a monthly character (apple, ghost, Christmas tree, etc.) that the children will color according to their behavior that day. This will indicate how their day has gone. PLEASE INITIAL BELOW THE SHAPE EACH DAY. Your signature assures me that you have seen the folder.

Behavior Report: Any day that children have their card turned to RED or WHITE they will bring home a behavior report explaining why they had their card turned. Please go over this report with your child, and if you have any questions or concerns, please let me know what they are. Please sign the report and return it in the Take Home folder the next school day. Having your child explain his/her misbehavior teaches responsibility for actions taken.

Birthdays: Birthdays are special occasions for young children. If your child wishes, he/she may bring treats for the class. Please send a note a day or two in advance so I can set aside some class time for the treat. We do not allow parents to visit the classroom, as it is not a party. (Prepackaged snacks only.)

Book orders: Every month I will be sending home book order forms for you and your child to look over. Book purchase is optional. The forms will be sent in your child's Take Home folder. (If you want to purchase any books, please send the money or check in an envelope, along with the slip from each book club you will be ordering from, listing your child's name and the amount enclosed.) Checks should be made out to the Scholastic Book Clubs. These books include excellent selections for children that are reasonably priced. What a great way to build your home library and help our classroom earn bonus points for books and CD's that the children can use in the classroom!

C

Centers: The best way for kindergarten children to learn is through active play/work. The children will be learning through math, writing, alphabet, science, blocks, puzzles, housekeeping, games, art, listening, reading, and cooking centers. The planned activities in the centers help develop skills. The children will also have free choice of some center activities where they make choices as to what they do and which area they choose.

Character Education: Having caring, responsible young children is very important at Bethalto East. Each month our school focuses on a character trait. We also talk and write about the monthly concept words. Often times I look for these traits when I choose awards.

Citizenship: My goal as a teacher is to help (side by side with you) teach the children in my care to display good citizenship traits. If I do not display these traits, then I have failed in my commitment. We all have bad days, but my desire is that these "bad days" are not consecutive days. Our daily rules and Pledges that we say each day summarizes what traits good citizens portray.

Clothes: Please label all coats, jackets and sweaters. Many clothes are identical, and various items end up in the lost and found container. If your child's name is on all articles they are more likely to be returned. Many kindergarten activities are messy activities so "dressed-up" clothing is discouraged. We paint, glue, and play actively so comfortable clothing and shoes are appropriate.

Conferences: Parent/Teacher conferences are held in October and February. At the conferences we will be discussing your child's accomplishments, strengths and overall progress. Please feel free to schedule additional conferences any time throughout the year if you feel a need.

Celebrity Readers: Celebrity readers are parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, or friends of one of our kindergartners. A Celebrity Reader brings one or two favorite books to read to our class. Your child will soon be our STAR of the Week and may ask a relative to be a celebrity reader for a certain day during that special week.

D

Discipline Policy: My philosophy of discipline is based on the belief that children need affectionate care as well as firm, consistent guidelines. To establish a positive, caring class environment I hope to help children learn self-control by respecting themselves as well as their classmates.

Dismissal: Kindergarten children who are not riding a bus will be picked up in the BACK of the school. Please enter at Trimpe Middle School's parking lot. Duty teachers will help children get in their vehicles.

D'Nealian Handwriting: The children will be taught by the D'Nealian method with "monkey tails" on most letters. Although lines are used when teaching how to form each letter, it is more appropriate for your child to notice uphill, one-space, or downhill placement than touching the model lines. Please encourage your child to print as taught " the school way."

E

Emergency Closing: If school is closed for any emergency, radio stations KMOX (1120 AM) and WBGZ (1570 AM) and ST. Louis TV stations will make announcements beginning at 5:30 AM. If an emergency occurs during the day, the radio will announce dismissal procedures and bus schedules. You may also receive a phone call using SchoolReach. Please be sure your number is updated with the school.

Envelope: When sending ALL money to school, cash or check, please put it in a sealed envelope with your child's name, my name, and the purpose for the money on the outside of the envelope. This insures that the money is used for the intended purpose.

Extra Clothes: It is suggested that each child have a set of clothes at school in case of a bathroom accident or a messy spill. If the extra clothes are at school, we will not have to bother you at work or at home for this "non emergency."

F

Family Projects: To encourage collaboration of themes between kindergarten classrooms, and to promote parent/child cooperation, we ask that each family member help their kindergarten child with a project to be brought to school for display.

- August/September - Kinder-Garden Flower ~All about Me Paper shared during their Star Student Day
- October - Decorated pumpkin
- November - Decorated Indian vest
- December - Gingerbread Man

- January - Snowman
- February - Valentine Holder/Box
- March - Kite
- April - Decorated Easter Egg
- May - End of the Year

Footwear: Please have your child wear shoes that are appropriate for running and active movement both on the playground and in PE class. Cowboy boots or dress shoes, for example, are not good choices for school activities because they are slippery and often cause scuffmarks on our floors.

Friday Newsletter: You will be receiving a weekly newsletter each Friday that will keep you informed of our classroom activities. The newsletter will include homework, book order dates, and other important classroom information.

G

Got a Question?: Since so many of you are new to Bethalto East and kindergarten, I'm sure that you may still have unanswered questions or questions may occur throughout the year. Please feel free to call me at (377-7250) between 7:55 - 8:20 AM or between 2:35 - 3:40 PM. You may also e-mail me at kwooten@bethalto.org. You can also contact me through my website www.mrswootenskq.weebly.com. You can also sign up for my Remind Texting. Text the number 81010 with the message @mrswoot and you're all signed up. Any question or concern is important!

Guided Reading: Guided reading provides an opportunity for a small group of children to meet with the teacher. I will monitor and evaluate each child's progress on various literacy activities that may include working on alphabet recognition, individual children reading simple stories, and teach the children a variety of reading strategies for those who are ready for this step.

H

Homework: Homework will be sent home each week listing activities that correlate with at least one activity we will do in class. Please help the children to be prepared for the day by having them complete the homework and bring the homework to school on the day listed. Parent help is encouraged, but this is their homework and responsibility for having it each morning. This will be listed in a section of my weekly newsletter.

Hands-On Learning: I feel that the best way to help children learn is to make learning fun. Important concepts can be learned by doing meaningful hands-on activities. There are times when seatwork is required and necessary, but for the most part, our classroom will be an active learning environment.

I

I Can Read Baggie: The children will “read” alphabet and simple theme-based books. They will put these books in their homework folder and bring home each day to read to their family. The books should be returned so they can practice reading in class throughout the year. “Reading” at the beginning of the year is not what it will be at the end of the year! After reading each book for a week, I will collect the books and put them in each student’s “I Can Read” baggie at school. Each quarter I will send the baggie home. Please empty the baggie and return to school.

Illness: The question of when to keep your child home from school is often a difficult one, especially when decisions must be made first thing in the morning. It is important, however, to keep your child home if he/she is ill. Keeping them at home helps to make them more comfortable and prevents their classmates from becoming ill, also. Children function more effectively in the classroom when they are healthy.

Independent Reading: Because children learn to read by reading they need plenty of opportunities to read by themselves. “Kindergarten reading” includes talking about the pictures, summarizing what they have heard an adult read, approximating what sentences say, than actually reading word for word. Sufficient time and appropriate materials are necessary to develop and strengthen the children’s reading abilities and desire to read. By giving the children time to read both at school and home we can work together to provide a life-long love of reading.

J

Journal Writing/Kid Writing: The children will have numerous opportunities to write “their way.” There are many stages of “kid writing” as well as developmental levels of the children in our room. During writing times the children will combine their emerging writing skills with their drawing skills. As we work this year with a variety of phonics and reading experiences, many of the children’s writing will move from phonics - based or “kid writing” spellings towards more conventional writing.

K

Kindness: All children in my room are encouraged and expected to treat everyone at our school with kindness and respect. Hitting, fighting, name-calling, and making fun of others will not be permitted without a consequence.

L

Library Books: All children who have returned their library responsibility paper will be allowed to check out class and school books for a maximum of one week. The books must be taken home and returned in a Zip-loc bag. The children may choose another book after the return of the previous one checked out. Keep track of all library books read! It is assumed that you are responsible for replacement cost if the book is damaged or lost.

Literacy Centers: During Literacy centers children practice reading and writing skills while the teacher works with small guided reading groups. These center activities are designed to strengthen letter/sound knowledge, listening skills, oral language expression, rhyme, letter formation, etc.

Lunch: Children may bring lunch from home or purchase a school lunch. A monthly lunch menu will be sent home with each day's meal choices listed for you to discuss with your child. Any child who qualifies for free or reduced lunch will have a plastic card with their numbered account exactly like those who add money to lunch accounts. You will receive notification when the account becomes low.

M

Math: We will use *My Math*, by McGraw-Hill for our math curriculum. It is a digital platform where most instruction is shown on the projector. It is a hands-on series that provide experiences with the use of manipulatives such as unifix cubes, geoboards, pegboards, counters, and graphing and sorting materials. Mathematical concepts taught include, numeral recognition, printing numerals in sequencing, counting sets, measurement, graphing, geometry (2-D and 3-D shapes), and addition and subtraction readiness.

Memory Book: With my phone, I will take numerous pictures of the children doing various activities this year. I will keep these pictures and other projects and writings in a binder, so at the end of the year the children should have an organized selection of memories. **It would help immensely if each family purchased a prepaid gift card at Walgreens**, so I can purchase digital pictures for these memory books.

Music: Our music teacher is Mr. Raymond who will be teaching the children the basics of music education and will be sharing many wonderful songs with them. We are scheduled for two twenty-five minute periods per week.

Morning Meetings: We sit together on the carpet for our Morning Meeting. This is a time to greet each other, sing songs, listen to a good book, and talk about the day's activities.

Morning Messages: In the beginning of the year, I write a morning message to the children on the board. We read the message together and look for specific letters and words. We count the number of words in each sentence. We also talk about capital letters and punctuation. Students listen for beginning, middle, and ending sounds of words. They learn to stretch words to hear letter sounds and chunks. This activity also gives the children an opportunity to see the teacher model writing.

N

Notes to/from Home: I encourage communication. I realize sometimes it is hard to reach someone on the phone, so please feel free to write me a note. I will try to contact you the same day I receive your note. I will also write you notes individually on occasion. Oftentimes, especially concerning behavior issues, I will expect you to sign and return the note the next

day. I check the children's folders first thing in the AM, so please send notes back in their daily folders.

Nurse: Our nurse, Mrs. Sherri, will be at Bethalto East a portion of each school day to dispense medication, take temperature, clean scratches and scrapes and to make decisions concerning more serious injuries and illnesses. Please make sure we have current contact numbers on file in case Mrs. Sherri needs to get in touch with you.

O

Outside Recess: The children will have an AM 15-minute recess and a 30-minute lunch recess each day. Please keep this in mind when helping your child select clothing for the day. We have district criteria concerning winter wind-chill on whether the children go out or stay in - wind chill of 15 in AM, 20 at lunch.

P

Parent Involvement: Your support of school activities makes your child feel important and sends the message that you value school. I encourage parent involvement both in and out of the classroom. Oftentimes I will mention special class activities where helpers are needed in the newsletter. You do not need to commit to a weekly schedule. We are flexible, and the children love to have extra hands and ears in the classroom. So do I!

Principal: Our school's principal is Mrs. Racheal Leckrone.

Parent/Teacher Club: We have an active parent/teacher organization that welcomes new members. Dues are \$1.00 and this membership allows you to vote on issues. Our Parents' Club has bought many things to benefit our school and also provided many fun activities. Come be a part of decision - making this year! Please try to attend!

Parties and Celebrations: We have Parent's Club sponsored Christmas and Valentine's Day parties. The room parents usually organize these events, coordinate volunteers, and ask for donations. All are welcome to participate in our celebrations! Our class will also have special behavior celebrations that may be coordinated by parent volunteers.

PBIS-Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports is a school-wide behavior plan that provides practices and strategies for all students to increase academic performance, improve safety, decrease problem behavior, and establish a positive school culture.

PE: Mr. Page is our PE teacher. The children will learn many skills and new games. We have two twenty-five minute classes each week. The children are asked to wear tennis shoes on PE days.

Q

Quiet Time: In the beginning of the school year when the children are getting used to a busy schedule they rest for a 20 - 30 minute period each day. The children must lie quietly and rest as music is playing. They are not expected to go to sleep, but oftentimes they do. Small towels are perfect resting mats because they are easy for the children to fold and fit well in the small lockers.

R

Rainbow Math: We will begin this math incentive program in December. We have four tests for each level. The children receive a certificate for each test passed as well as a certificate and small prize for each level passed. We will send information before we begin the program.

Reading Program: Our district has adopted the Wonders Reading Program. The components include shared reading of big books, poem, phonemic awareness activities, (listening for syllables, changing sounds, beginning and ending sounds, filling in missing sounds or words and segmenting sounds), beginning and ending sound, picture sequencing, reading of small books, and learning to read sight words. The teachers and students can access this program online.

Report Cards: We will issue report cards four times per year. The first report card will be shared during Parent/Teacher conference in October. The first quarter report card is a checklist that targets skills learned during the first 6 weeks of school. The report cards will correlate with Common Core Standards.

Restrooms: The children are encouraged to go to the bathroom before school begins, before lunch, and again after lunch recess. At all other times they are free to go to the bathroom as the need arises.

Room Parents: The room parents' job is to be available for many activities: to help coordinate parties and activities; to seek volunteers for special events; and to give new ideas to the Parent's Club.

S

Science: The focus of the kindergarten science curriculum is on developing an awareness of the world in which we live. Through scientific inquiry, the students will be exploring various topics. Our units will be designed by the Next Gen Science standards.

Shared Reading: Shared reading is exactly what it says - sharing the reading of stories with the whole class. As the teacher reads a story children joining in on phrases or words that they know. During re-readings (and some books we read many times), children read more and more of the text until they may be able to read the story themselves.

Snack: When your child is Star Student during the beginning of the year I would like for your child to provide snacks for the entire class. The snacks should be prepackaged. Drinks are

optional. (A gallon container is sufficient for the entire class.) Please send napkins, cups, or any other needed items for the snack. We also have one day designated for snack day during your child's STAR of the Week.

Social Studies: Our social studies curriculum focuses on the students and how they relate to others in their families, classroom, school, and community. Activities will help the children focus their natural curiosity for the world around them.

Special Monthly Activities:

- October through March - Pizza Hut Book-It program, Dairy Queen Six Flags 600 minutes reading program later in the year
- November: Mickey Mouse Celebration, Thanksgiving Activities
- December: All-school musical program at CM High School, Rainbow Math begins; begin planning for young Author books.
- February: 100th Day, Young Author Reception
- March: Dr. Seuss Day
- May: End of the Year Kindergarten Celebration

Star Student: We will begin the year by focusing on learning each other's names. We will cheer the Star Student's name, interview them, and make a picture for their Star Student book to be taken home. The Star Student will bring snack for us that day.

Secretary: Our school's secretary is Mrs. Val Smith and Mrs. Shannon Petersen.

T

Themes: Expanding a child's knowledge base is very important at his young age. We try to incorporate language arts (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), math, art, social science, and science activities into our theme units. We encourage the children to research on their own information to share with the class by bringing items or books that correlate with what they are learning in class.

Tentative Theme Schedule:

- August - Rules, Me, Colors
- September - Shapes, Counting, Nursery Rhymes, Apples
- October - Fall (Pumpkins, Spiders, Bats, Fire Prevention)
- November - Five Senses, Thanksgiving, (Pilgrims/Indians) Mickey Mouse Day, Family, Election
- December - Christmas/Gingerbread Man, Friendship
- January - Arctic Animals (Bear & Penguins)
- February - 100th Day, Valentine's Day, Presidents, Weather/Seasons
- March - Dinosaurs, Seeds, Planting
- April - Farm, Eggs, Zoo
- May - Oceans

Toys: Bringing toys to school is discouraged and is not allowed on the playground. If a toy is accidentally lost or broken, feelings will be hurt. The children may bring books, however. Make sure books are clearly marked with your child's name.

Transportation: If you plan to pick up a child that normally rides the bus, or if you wish for your child to ride a different bus than usual, you must send a written note. Do not rely on your child to tell us this information, because children often become confused and relay information incorrectly. **If no written note is received, your child will be sent home by his/her usual method of transportation.**

Treasure Box: Students can earn a trip to our Treasure Chest at the end of each month by remaining green for the entire month. I buy small toys and trinkets for our Treasure Box. If you would like to donate to our Treasure Chest, it would be greatly appreciated!

U

Unique: Kindergartners will learn that they are special and unique. They will have opportunities to describe how they are alike as well as different from others.

V

Visitors: Our school has a policy that ALL GUESTS (including familiar faces) are required to check in at the office to receive and wear a badge. We welcome and encourage family involvement, and the presence of a guest badge will help identify you to all faculty and staff. It is important to remember that while this may seem inconvenient to frequent visitors, it is our goal and responsibility of our school to create a safe learning environment.

W

Website: My classroom website is mrswootenskg.weebly.com

Wish List: Throughout the year we sometimes need supplies above and beyond our classroom materials. I will post these needs in the class newsletter. If you can help provide them, I will be most appreciative. Extra items that you think we might be able to use are always welcome!

My Wish: I would like for each child to enjoy coming to school each day. It usually takes a month or so for them to get accustomed to expectations and routines, however. I want them to develop that attitude of "I think I can I think I can . . ." even when I ask them to do things that they think they can't. I tell them we have erasers and the ability to say, "I'm sorry", but we can't make mistakes unless we try!

Writing: Our writing program builds on what each child already knows. We will be using Lucy Calkins writing curriculum. Writing is a developmental process that begins with scribbles and

proceeds to lines and circles, random strings of letters (most of which are found in their name), words and spaces, then eventually, to sentences. Your children will be encouraged and praised for all attempts and accomplishments in writing. Our goal is for all children to write for a variety of purposes.

Word Wall: We will begin the school year and add every student's name to our word wall. We will also add popcorn/sight words to our word wall and many other sight words that students will use in their writing.

X

EXperiences: Kindergarten is such an exciting time! We are learning about the magic of books, letters, numbers, poetry, songs, science, social studies, art, music, p.e., computers, and oh, yes....school rules! Enjoy this year and let your kindergartner know how important school is to you.

Y

Young Authors: Our district participates in this writing program that encourages children to enter their best book writing efforts. This effort will require cooperation between the children, teacher, and parents. I will send information when we get closer to beginning this project.

Yearbook: You can purchase a yearbook closer to the end of the school year.

You!: You can help to make your children feel successful this year by reading each night with them. This encourages them to become good readers. Remember to discuss the school day with kindergartners. Ask questions like, "What did you do in centers today?" or "What did you learn today?" Ask about new friends, Music, PE, Library, or Art.

Z

ZZZZZZZZs: Make sure your child gets plenty of rest. Setting and keeping a bedtime schedule is a wonderful gift you can give your child. Plenty of sleep will help them to be alert and ready to learn each day!

ABC Parent Summary

- Check your child's bookbag and folders **daily**
- Read ALL school notices
- Read the newsletter
- Send money in a sealed, labeled envelope
- Volunteer to be a Room Helper
- Donate supplies
- Listen to your child read
- Make sure your child is well-rested.
- Attend PTO meetings
- Call, write, or come in if you ever have a question or concern
- Provide a good reading and writing environment for your child
- Read aloud to your child daily
- Be Patient! They each learn at their own rate.