

Cary Community Consolidated School District 26

Kindergarten Handbook



Table of Contents

Welcome to Kindergarten/Philosophy	1
September 1st Entrance Age	1
Preparing Your Child for the Transition to Kindergarten	1-2
Readiness Expectations	2
Once School Starts	2-3
The Kindergarten Program	3
Kindergarten Activities	3
Kindergarten Learning Objectives	4-5
What the Kindergarten Teacher Does to Help Kindergartners Succeed	5
D'Nealian Handwriting (<i>see last page insert</i>)	5
Health Related Information	5-6
Clothing and Supplies	6
Transportation	6
Emergency Card Information	6

WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN

District 26 wants your child's transition to kindergarten to be a positive experience. With that goal in mind this handbook has been developed in order to share with you information about the Cary School District 26 Kindergarten Program.

Philosophy

Kindergarten is a special setting designed to help five and six year olds grow and develop. The classroom setting presents many new opportunities and challenges for children as they learn to work and play with their kindergarten classmates. Activities are planned to help children move easily into the school environment. Through group work and guided learning experiences, children increase their vocabularies and expand their knowledge and skills in many areas. Children explore new interests, discover their abilities, develop problem solving and other academic readiness skills. By promoting desirable habits and behaviors, kindergarten begins to establish the foundation for future school success.

September 1st Entrance Age

The school district follows the State of Illinois Office of Education law regarding the age requirement for entrance to kindergarten. To enter kindergarten, a child must be five years old on or by September 1st. Parents must provide a birth certificate to verify their child's date of birth.

Birth date is only one consideration when deciding whether or not your child is ready for kindergarten. Please look at all aspects of your child including social, emotional and academic abilities.

Preparing Your Child for the Transition to Kindergarten

It is important for children to look forward to school with anticipation of lots of new and interesting activities, and many new friends to meet.

Parents can help foster a smooth transition to kindergarten by talking with their child about the exciting and positive experiences that kindergarten will bring. Children need time to talk about their thoughts and feelings. Adults who are good listeners can use these conversations to help their child look forward to school, and can ease any concerns that their child may have.

Here are some things parents can do to facilitate the transition to kindergarten:

- Talk about school in a positive manner
- Read to your child often and let him or her handle books. An appreciation for literature and reading gives children an excellent head start.
- Engage your child in activities that develop fine and gross motor skills. Some examples are playing catch with a ball, putting puzzles together, painting, drawing, cutting, and clay sculpting. Routines such as pouring milk or juice and practice with dressing are also beneficial.
- Give your child the opportunity to participate in simple projects that promote his/her ability to sustain attention.
- Help your child to learn his or her first and last name, address, telephone number, and parents' names.
- Create a routine by establishing a regular bedtime and encouraging your child to set out clothes the night before school.
- Make sure your child is rested and well nourished. Adjusting to a new schedule and environment can make kids cranky and more easily fatigued.
- Teach your child to ask and answer questions.
- Try to find occasions for your child to be away from you for short periods of time during the summer before kindergarten starts. This will help your child develop a sense of independence and ease possible separation anxiety.

Readiness Expectations

Children entering kindergarten should be able to:

- Care for basic needs and take responsibility for possessions
- Feel comfortable relating to and interacting with others
- Listen in both large and small groups
- Deal with frustration and handle conflict constructively
- Adapt to routines and rules of the classroom
- Invest in an activity and stay on task
- Recognize and name 35 or more upper and lower case letters
- Associate 9 or more consonant letters with their sounds
- Have an awareness of words that begin with the same sound
- Listen to a story and answer questions about it
- Print his/her own name
- Able to dress self independently

Once School Starts

During the first few weeks of school, the teacher will be helping your child adjust to the classroom and new routines. After this adjustment period, parents are welcome to visit and volunteer in class. We request that you do not plan on visiting the class for the first few weeks.

Please show interest in and appreciation for the work your child brings home from school. Encourage the effort, even though the result is not perfect. Remember that tremendous individual variation exists among children of the same age. In addition, within each individual child there are often differing patterns of development. For example, language skills and fine motor skills may not be developed to the same level within an individual child. Promote self-reliance and independence in your child. This will help him or her to assume responsibilities in the school setting.

The Kindergarten Program

The Cary School District 26 Kindergarten program combines the skills and content from the academic areas with an informal activity type of organization. The schedule is not built around the traditional subjects of math, reading, science, and social studies, as it is in later school years. Rather, the day is organized around discussion periods, work periods, and play periods. Within these periods, the specific skills necessary for later academic success are taught.

The unit system of teaching is frequently employed. For example, the "Five Senses" unit provides opportunities for children to develop language, number, social, and physical skills, in addition to concepts about the five senses.

Kindergarten Activities

- To explore new things and ideas
- To express him/herself with words, clay, paint, crayons, music, etc.
- To plan what we will do next
- To listen to stories and directions
- To look at books and learn how to use them
- To use new words learned from live experiences and from books, pictures and other media
- To spot differences in colors, sizes, shapes and sounds
- To care for self and belongings, tending to bathroom needs, hanging up clothes, putting toys and other materials away
- To write by dictating words for the teacher to write down
- To try to spell phonetically
- To count and learn numbers
- To identify letters of the alphabet and their sounds
- To print letters of the alphabet
- To work and play cooperatively with classmates

Kindergarten Learning Objectives

Language Arts

By the end of kindergarten, student should be able to:

- Recognize and name all 26 upper case letters
- Recognize and name all 26 lower case letters
- Know all consonant sounds (beginning and ending)
- Demonstrate correct directionality of print (i.e., top/bottom, left/right)
- Use picture clues for word recognition and comprehension
- Predict what will happen next in a story
- Retell a story
- Recognize rhyming words
- Learn kindergarten level high-frequency words
- Use letters and sounds to express ideas in written form
- Write simple sentences
- Use attentive listening behavior
- Follow three step oral directions

Fine Motor

By the end of kindergarten, student should be able to:

- Print his/her name in D'Nealian letters
- Print upper and lower case letters in D'Nealian form
- Print numerals from 0-20
- Cut on a line
- Work neatly

Math

By the end of kindergarten, student should be able to:

- Name colors and shapes
- Group objects by size, shape and color
- Understand 1-1 correspondence
- Count by rote to 100
- Recognize numerals from 0-20 out of sequence
- Recognize and extend an AB and ABC pattern
- Understand the concepts of addition and subtraction

Social Emotional

By the end of kindergarten, student should be able to:

- Accept responsibility for behavior
- Respect others and their property
- Demonstrate problem solving skills
- Develop the social skills of giving, receiving and sharing
- Exhibit good work habits
 - Stay on task
 - Work independently
 - Complete tasks in a resonable amount of time

What the Kindergarten Teacher Does to Help Kindergartners Succeed

- Creates a safe, positive climate for learning
- Provides activities to help students develop as sense of the class as a cohesive learning community
- Provides a rich, experiential learning environment
- Demonstrates sensitivity to the individual student's needs and provides for different learning styles
- Uses consistent classroom management strategies
- Encourages children to develop self-discipline
- Helps children overcome fears
- Teaches turn taking and cooperation
- Works in partnership with parents

D'Nealian Handwriting

District 26 uses the D'Nealian Handwriting Program. Instead of circles and sticks, the child forms whole letters at once using continuous strokes instead of straight up and down lines. The children learn to write slanted manuscript letters, leading naturally to cursive writing.

(A sample of the D'Nealian handwriting technique is located at the back of this handbook)

Health Related Information

Hearing and Vision screening tests are given annually to all entering Kindergartners. If any further testing is indicated, parents will be notified by the school nurse.

In the best interest of your child and others, it is wise that he/she stay home at the first sign of a cold or illness. All children suffering from contagious skin diseases, such as scabies, impetigo, ringworm or head lice must be excluded from school until non-contagious.

Please contact the school office if your child is ill and will not be attending school on a particular day. Your child should bring in a written excuse upon returning to school.

Clothing and Supplies

Since kindergarten involves many activities using messy, hands-on materials, we encourage you to dress your child in play clothes. Also, please make sure that any winter clothing articles, including boots, are easy for your child to put on and take off independently. Before school starts, please give your child plenty of opportunities to practice buttoning, zipping and tying. Also, please practice with winter clothing before the first snow.

A list of school supplies needed for kindergarten will be sent home to you in June. These supplies can be purchased over the summer and be brought to school on Orientation Day.

Transportation

Please notify your child's teacher and our transportation office if there is going to be a change in transportation arrangements on a particular day.

Emergency Card Information

When completing the emergency card, be sure to include names of people who have your permission to pick-up your child from school. District 26 will not release your child to anyone who is not authorized by you.



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