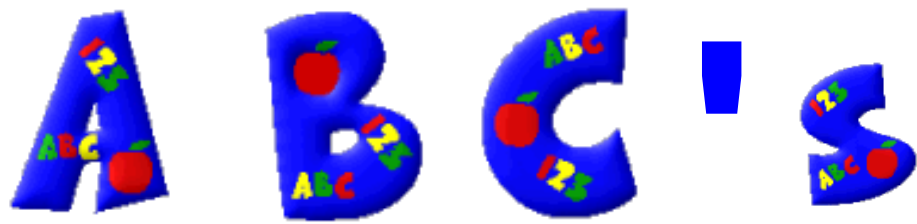


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Kindergarten

A Handbook for Mrs. Errickson's Class



Absence

If your child is ill, please call the office and inform us of your child's absence. This is for your child's safety. A written note is required on their return.



Attendance

A successful school experience is the responsibility of the child, the parent and the school. Your child's progress, both academically and socially, is influenced to a great extent by daily participation. Regular attendance without tardiness is a key.



Arrival and Dismissal

Students should arrive between 7:30 and 8:00 AM. If your child comes to school before 7:30, they should be dropped off in the cafeteria. At 7:30, your child will be brought to the classroom. School begins promptly at 8:00 AM and afternoon dismissal is at 2:20 PM. If you are later than 2:30, your child will be put in aftercare.



Birthdays

Birthdays are special occasions for young children. If your child wishes, he/she may bring a treat for the class (cookies, munchkins, brownies—cupcakes are good too but not the kind with a lot of frosting). I will also be inviting you into our classroom to be a Mystery Reader. Your child's birthday is a perfect day to come in and read to the class. We would welcome the gift of a book to our class library to commemorate the special day (though not necessary). Also, if your child's birthday is in the summer, we will assign them a special day to celebrate their birthday. I will send home a note to let you know which day we will be celebrating.



Book Orders

Every month I will send home a Scholastic Book Club Catalog for you and your child to look over. These clubs offer wonderful books at reduced prices--what a great way to build your home library! If you choose to order, please make the check payable to Scholastic Books.



Centers

During Centers Time, children practice working independently or in a small group on various learning tasks. This is a special hands-on time during the day which reinforces concepts students are learning. The center activities are designed to strengthen letter/sound knowledge, listening skills, oral language expression, rhyme, letter formation, patterning, sorting, reading skills and cooperation—among others.



Class Parents

The class parents' job is to be available for any number of things: to help coordinate parties and activities, to seek volunteers for various events; and to help with fundraisers. Being a room parent is a great way to be involved in your child's school life. Class parents work in conjunction with the Parent's Guild.



Discipline

Our classroom is a small community where teamwork and good relationships are expected. We will spend time learning class procedures and practicing them. Each student is expected to act within our standards of behavior. To establish good order and help the children learn self-control, they will be guided to respect themselves and their companions through specific directions, positive reinforcement, suggested new activities and responsible actions.

Our classroom discipline system includes a “stop light” system. The first time a child breaks a rule, he will be given a verbal reminder. Nothing further will happen as he reflects on whether that behavior was a good “choice.”

Every child will begin the day on green on the Class Stop Light. If the child chooses to break a rule after a verbal reminder, his clip will be changed to yellow. Continued misbehavior will result in the clip changing to red. The student can earn back a “green light” by improving behavior for the remainder of the day. Each day every child will begin with a “clean slate.”

The rules, consequences for the clip changes, and the rewards for following our rules are listed below.

Rules:

1. I will follow the Golden Rule and treat others the way I want to be treated.
2. I will raise my hand to speak.
3. I will listen and follow directions.
4. I will keep my hands and feet to myself and my own property.
5. I will stay in my seat.

Consequences:

First Offense: A verbal reminder as a warning.

Second Offense: Change from green to yellow. Miss five minutes of recess or other fun activity.

Third Offense: Change card to red and miss recess or other fun activity.

Rewards: Those who maintain a green light all week will receive a small treat.



E-mail

You can contact me via my email address: MissPihokker@gmail.com. I check my email on a daily basis. You can also talk to me when you pick your child up from school or through a note. I am not available to meet with parents during the school day but would be happy to set up an appointment with you if you would like one.



Estimation Station

Estimating is an important and sometimes difficult concept for kindergarteners to work with. During the year, students will have the opportunity to fill our estimation jar. The jar will be sent home on Friday and should be returned to school on Monday. We will practice estimating and counting by ones, twos, fives and tens on Friday after we have had the chance to observe our estimation jar during the week.



Emergency Closings

If schools are closed for a snow day or any emergency, our class parents will give you a call to let you know.



Health



Please let me know of special circumstances which may affect your child. These could include medication that may make him sleepy, a death in the family, etc. Also, please let me know of any allergies your child may have, especially food allergies. We sometimes cook or do food activities to complement lessons in kindergarten and it would be helpful to know when I plan our recipes.



Help at Home

Please help your child by checking their homework each night. If you feel your child needs more help with a specific concept, please feel free to write a note or talk to either Mrs. Farinola or me about it so that we can all work together so that your child reaches their fullest potential.

Here are some important skills you can work on with your child:

- Full name -Address -Telephone number
- Parents' names -Basic colors -Counting to 20
- Printing first name beginning with a capital letter and the rest in lower case
- letter name recognition -letter sound recognition -Shape names
- Birthday (month & date) -Identifying numbers to 20 -Tying shoes

Your extra help at home really makes a difference!



Home Reading Program

Please read to your child each night and note the book you read on the Monthly Booklist Sheet that I send home. As you read with your child, or your child reads to you, help them to identify the sight words they are beginning to learn. You can also work on letter sounds with them. This time will prove to be wonderful practice in building reading fluency.



Homework

Homework will be sent home every night (except Friday), the schedule for the week will be sent out on Monday. Homework is to be completed in the Red Elephant notebook your child brings home each day or in some cases, on the sheet sent home that night. Your child should complete this work by himself, under your supervision, and return it each day. Completing and returning homework helps build a sense of responsibility and prepares him for the homework he will have to complete in later school years. Homework should be your child's best work. Please remind your child that it is important to complete work neatly and keep a watchful eye out to ensure your child is forming letters correctly.



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. This helps to make them more comfortable and prevents others from becoming ill. 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 independently. Sufficient time and appropriate materials are necessary to develop and strengthen reading abilities. By giving the children time to read both at school and at home, we can work together to provide a literature-rich environment and a life-long love of reading.



Journals

One strategy that will be used to help convey the vital concept that “print conveys meaning” is the daily use of journal writing. In these journals the kindergartners combine their emerging writing skills with their drawing skills. As the children are exposed to a variety of phonics and reading experiences, journal entries will move from drawings and “inventive” spellings that we refer to as “Kid Writing” towards more conventional writing. Please encourage any attempts your child makes at writing and remind them to listen for the sounds they hear as they attempt to write.



Lunch

We will eat lunch from 12:00-12:30 each day. Children may bring a packed lunch from home or you may sign up for a school lunch which you select from the lunch menu and order in advance. If you send your child to school with a packed lunch, make sure they will have enough time to eat it and they know how to open it. When sending in drinks, **PLEASE DO NOT** send in Capri Sun-type drinks, large (16oz) water bottles, or cans as they are difficult for children to open and can cause quite a mess. Drinks with pop-tops or Rubbermaid reusable containers with the straw are best as they are easy for children to open and can be closed so they don't spill over.



Newsletter

Our monthly newsletter will keep you informed about what is happening in our class—the skills we are learning, special activities and upcoming events. I will be posting each month's letter on our class website: <http://stfrancisacademy.com/kinder/>. If there is something you would like to see on the website, please feel free to let me know and I will see if I can accommodate your request.



Parent Involvement

Your support of school activities makes your child feel important and sends the message that you value school! We are always happy to have your help for special activities in the classroom. I will try to let you know at least a week ahead of time if I need help. Requests for help will be published in our weekly newsletter or through notes home. I hope that you can come and join in the fun!



Parties & Celebrations

There are three main parties each year---Halloween, Christmas and the 100th Day of School, Valentine's Day, Easter and our End of the Year Celebration. The class parents, along with Mrs. Farinola and I, will help to organize these events and coordinate volunteers and donations. Your help is always appreciated!



Prayer

Prayer is an important part of our day. We pray in the morning as we begin our day, before meals, and at dismissal, as well as at various other times throughout the day. We have a half hour religion class each afternoon as well.



Report Cards

Report cards will be given out at the end of the marking periods and progress reports will be given out halfway through the marking period. These reports reflect the progress your child has made toward various kindergarten objectives and uses a grading system that reflects developmental nature of kindergarten learning. Please take the time to meet with me to discuss any concerns you may have with your child's progress throughout the year, when reports are given out, and at any other time a situation may arrive. On the days report cards are given out, the children have a half day of school so that parents can meet with teachers to receive report cards. If you cannot attend during the afternoon or evening session for some reason, you must make an appointment with me to receive your child's report card.



Restrooms

Have your child use the restroom shortly before coming to school. Please make me aware of any medical problem that might require more frequent restroom trips.



Science

The focus of the kindergarten science curriculum is on developing an awareness of the world in which we live. Through scientific inquiry, concepts will be presented in the life and earth sciences, including the study of animals and plants, the five senses, general health and the four seasons. These areas will be explored utilizing a literacy based, hands-on approach.



Shared Reading

Shared reading is an interactive process used with the whole class. As the teacher reads a story, children join in on phrases or words that they know. During subsequent re-readings, children read more and more of the text, until they are able to read the story independently. Shared reading is an opportunity for the teacher to model conventions of print and the use of reading strategies.



Show and Tell

Show and tell will be on Fridays. A schedule will be sent home during the first few weeks of school. Have your child put their show and tell item in a brown paper bag and help them think of 3 clues to describe the item. Please do not send in anything that is breakable.



Snack

We will have snack everyday from 10:15-10:30. Please make sure the snack you provide is healthy and can be eaten in 15 minutes. Please send your child with 4 napkins a day (or two reusable cloth napkins which you can wash once a week). We use 2 of these napkins as placemats to keep our work space clean and catch crumbs and 2 napkins to wipe our mouths. Please remind your child that the same good manners they use while eating at home should also be used at school.



Social Studies

The kindergarten social studies curriculum focuses on the students and how they relate to others in their families, classroom, school, and community. Holiday celebrations will also be highlighted. Activities will help the children engage their natural curiosity for the world around them.



Supplies

The children will need the following supplies for kindergarten.

- 2 boxes of Lysol/Clorox disinfecting wipes
- 3 rolls of paper towels
- 2 boxes of tissues
- 1 dispenser of hand sanitizer
- 2 thin black dry erase markers
- 1 box of Ziplock baggies (boys should bring in quart size and girls should bring in gallon size)
- a smock or old shirt (with initials inside)



Special Classes

- Music class is on Monday from 9:00-9:30
- Art class is on Tuesdays from 10:30-11:30 with Mrs. Giallombardo.
- Computer class is on Wednesday from 9:00-10:00 with Mr. Pensoy.
- Library is on Wednesday from 11:30-12:00 with Mrs. Levendusky.
- Kinderdance is on Thursday from 1:00-2:00. Please have your child wear the gym uniform.
- Gym is on Friday from 9:00-9:30. Please have your child wear the gym uniform.



Toys

Bringing toys to school is discouraged because they distract the children from learning. If a toy is accidentally lost or broken, feelings will be hurt. Students may bring in books that are clearly marked with your child's name.



Uniforms

Please be sure your children wear the proper uniform each day—we encourage students to bring their sweater each day to leave on the back of the chairs because it can get cold in the air conditioned classroom at times. On Thursdays (Kinderdance) and Fridays(Gym), student should wear the gym uniform. **Please make sure your child's name is clearly labeled on the inside of each article of clothing (including jackets)!**



Visitors

We welcome and encourage family involvement. Throughout the year at various times, we will ask volunteers to come in and help us with certain activities or come in as a Mystery Reader.



Website



Our class has a website which can be accessed at <http://stfrancisacademy.com/kinder/>

Check in regularly to find information about curriculum, special events and school news. I will be featuring photos of different activities and welcome any pictures you have your children at school functions--it's the next best thing to being in our classroom each day! Please promptly return the web permission form, which permits me to include your child's photo and first name on our website.



Writing

Our writing program builds on what each child already knows. Writing begins with scribbles and proceeds to lines and circles, random strings of letters, words and spaces and eventually sentences. Your children will be encouraged and praised for all attempts and accomplishments in writing. Providing a risk-free environment is paramount to your child's progress in writing. If possible, please provide your child with writing tools, such as pencils, crayons, markers and paper at home.



Zzzzs

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