

Welcome to Kindergarten!



An Informative Guide for Parents and Caregivers



NEWINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Elementary Schools

Ruth L. Chaffee School

160 Superior Avenue
Newington, CT 06111
Beverly Lawrence, Principal
Telephone: 860-666-4687

Elizabeth Green School

30 Thomas Street
Newington, CT 06111
James Marciano, Principal
Telephone: 860-666-3394

John Paterson School

120 Church Street
Newington, CT 06111
Michael Gaydos, Principal
Telephone: 860-666-4657

Anna M. Reynolds School

85 Reservoir Road
Newington, CT 06111
Jason Smith, Principal
Telephone: 860-521-7830

Dear Parents:

The world of kindergarten that your child is about to enter contains as many different four and five year olds as there are children in the class. True, there are many general similarities among kindergarten age children the world over: they learn best by doing, they are physically active, spontaneous, exploring, and growing in independence and responsibility. Recognizing these likenesses in children, it is extremely important to also remember that each child is a unique individual. Growth proceeds in the same sequence for all children, but each child is not at the same stage of development at the same time during the kindergarten year. Children develop physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually at their own rate.

The kindergarten program recognizes the individual and unique needs of all children. Learning is planned based on each child's level of development. A child must be helped to learn individually in ways that ensure success. By the time children come to kindergarten, they have had a multitude of different experiences and have already learned many things. Learning at school should be a continuation of learning at home in close association with parents and friends.

We welcome you and your child to the Newington Public Schools and look forward to working with you in ways that will be beneficial for your child.

Sincerely yours,

Pamela S. Muraca

Pamela S. Muraca
Interim Superintendent of Schools

KINDERGARTEN VISITATION

Purpose

The purpose of the Kindergarten Visitation is to gather basic information on all entering kindergarten children. Such information will enable school staff and parents to make decisions and plan learning programs designed to meet children's needs.

Goals of the Spring Kindergarten Visitation

- To acquaint parents with the school and the kindergarten program
- To provide a positive introduction to school for children
- To identify individual strengths and needs

Children's Activities

Children meet in small groups with kindergarten teachers and support staff to participate in activities that are built around a theme, such as Jack and the Beanstalk, bears, etc. These activities are designed to provide opportunities for school staff members to observe language development and social, emotional, and physical readiness. They may include a story time, a tracing and cutting project, coloring, cooperative play, etc. Children will also have a light snack.



Parent Orientation

While children are in the classroom, parents meet with members of the school staff. These may include the principal, school nurse, school psychologist, and the reading/language arts consultant.

This meeting is the beginning of a parent/school partnership where the school staff discusses the kindergarten visitation activities, the kindergarten program, and other pertinent information.

Parent questions will be entertained. If any parent wishes an individual meeting with the principal or nurse, this can be arranged.



IMPORTANT GENERAL INFORMATION

Schedule

8:40 a.m. – 3:25 p.m.

Early Release Day Schedule

8:40 a.m. – 1:55 p.m.

All-Day Kindergarten

8:40 a.m. – 1:35 p.m.

Conference Days Only



Bus Transportation

The Board of Education policy permits all enrolled kindergarten children to be transported to and from school. Parents will be advised of the specific bus assignment and bus stop during the summer.

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is very important for kindergarten children who change and develop at a rapid rate. If your child is going to be absent, please call the school prior to the start of the day. Leave a message on the Voice Mail with your child's name, his/her teacher's name, and reason for the absence.

Health

Medications cannot be dispensed by school personnel unless the proper form has been completed by a physician, signed by the parent and returned to the school. The medication must be in the original container or bottle with the pharmaceutical label on it.

All kindergarten children are routinely screened for vision and hearing. A referral is mailed home for anyone not passing the normal requirements of these screenings.

Home/School Communication

Parents and teachers have many opportunities to meet during the school year. Scheduled conferences are held in September, December, and March to discuss progress. Additional conferences may be arranged by either teacher or parent request.

Newsletters and written notices provide parents with information about school events and policies. These are sent home with the children and should be read carefully.

In August, each school has a Kindergarten Bus Orientation Program. At that time, the children go for a bus ride and the parents meet with the principal and/or kindergarten teachers for an overview of pertinent school information and an opportunity to ask questions.

In September of the school year, each family of a kindergarten student is given access to an elementary school handbook (electronically or hard copy), which provides the parent with detailed information about the school. Open House is also in September. At Open House, all parents meet with their child's kindergarten teacher. School programs and procedures are discussed.

Rapid Notification System

In the event of a school closing, early dismissal, special event, or urgent situation in the school district, parents may be called by the automated system. This system can call your home, work or cell phone. When you pick up your phone, you will hear a recorded message detailing the school closing, event or special situation.

Supportive Services

To help some children with their development, each school has a speech clinician, a psychologist, a reading/language arts consultant and a special education teacher on staff.



GETTING STARTED IN KINDERGARTEN

The kindergarten classroom provides the place for your child to gain new insights and skills. The kindergarten teacher works with your child individually, in small flexible groups, and as part of the whole class. The materials and activities are too numerous to mention.

In your child's kindergarten classroom there will be activities designed to:

- Build self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Build pre-reading and writing skills.
- Develop skills in speaking, listening, and viewing.
- Develop vocabulary.
- Gain experiences.
- Show differences in sound, size, shape and color.
- Increase interest in books, numbers and people.
- Learn basic math concepts.
- Improve coordination.
- Develop fine and gross motor skills.
- Introduce new ideas.

.....and much more!



You can be sure that your child will be learning to:

- Work independently and with others.
- Share and take turns.
- Explore and expand abilities and interests.
- Express thoughts, ideas, and listen to others.
- Develop work habits.

Your child will feel more comfortable in school if he/she can:

- Put on and take off outer clothing independently.
- Zip, button and snap clothes worn to school.
- Use the bathroom properly, washing hands.
- Keep track of personal belongings.



Excerpts from:

All I Ever Really Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten

By Robert Fulghum

Most of what I really need to know about how to live, and what to do, and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain, but there in the sandbox at school.

These are the things I learned: Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you. Live a balanced life. Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon. When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands, and stick together. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the plastic cup – they all die. So do we.

And then remember the book about Dick and Jane and the first word you learned, the biggest word of all: LOOK. Everything you need to know is there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all, the whole world, had cookies and milk about 3 o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankets for a nap. Or if we had a basic policy in our nation and other nations to always put things back where we found them and cleaned up our own messes. And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.