Welcome to Kindergarten

Information for Parents and Guardians

Guilford Public Schools is committed to providing high-quality learning experiences for all students.

- Supports young children to learn in the context of relationships and language
- Reinforces the importance of cultural contexts with young children and families
- Provides opportunities and time for active exploration and creativity
- Develops language experiences and activities that are relevant and integrated through the school day
- Offers time for teachers to know students and families well and address individual needs

Teachers in full day kindergarten classrooms had more flexibility – they had more time for one-on-one instruction and spent less time in large-group learning. Children in full day programs also spent more time in learning activities of their own choosing.

James Elicker, Purdue University
An Introduction to Kindergarten

The German word *kindergarten* means “a child’s garden.” This year will be filled with opportunities to plant seeds of learning for your child.

Kindergarten Developmental Profile

Children in kindergarten must master important developmental learning tasks to be ready for the more advanced learning required of them in the primary grades. Oral language and social interactions are strong influences on children of this age. They need to learn in a social context and be allowed to explore with support from responsive adults.

Kindergartners enjoy repetition of games and stories. They seek adult approval and learn best through exploration of concrete materials and dramatic play. Engagement with others encourages children to be active learners and problem solvers, and lays a foundation for internal motivation. Consistent guidelines help them feel safe as they are learning.

As students grow throughout the kindergarten year, they become ready for more independence and may display different behaviors at school than at home. They need time to experiment with their own way of doing things. It is a time of reasoning, logic, and understanding cause and effect.

Morning Meeting – This is the time of day when the children come together to help build a class community. The students begin the day by greeting each other and sharing, followed by an activity that enhances working together cooperatively. This is also a time when students practice their listening and questioning skills.

Readers’ Workshop – This is when students spend time exploring and reading print materials that interest them and provides opportunities to talk about their reading. It provides a supportive environment to help children develop strong literacy skills through direct instruction, modeling, shared reading, read-alouds, conferencing, independent reading, paired reading and literature responses.

Writers’ Workshop – Students begin to understand that their drawings, letters, and words convey meaning. They learn to write about their own experiences, what they read and know about, and develop opinions about what they read.

Math – One of the most important skills is the ability for kindergartners to add and subtract small numbers and use addition and subtraction to solve problems. This will rely on gaining some fundamentals early in the year, such as counting objects to tell how many there are, comparing numbers, and breaking numbers into smaller parts. Students will also begin to identify, describe, compare, and measure shapes based on their features. Math skills are also integrated throughout the day.

Social Studies / Science – In social studies, students learn a sense of self, of family, and of diverse communities including their holidays and traditions. Students will focus on what it means to be a citizen of a “school community.” In science, they will study properties of objects, characteristics of living things, daily and seasonal weather, and the difference between man-made and natural materials.

Related Arts – Every day, students participate in art, music, library media, or physical education lessons in or out of the classroom and often with certified specialists. The related arts may be integrated with other subjects or treated as a separate class.

Social and Emotional Development – Learning social skills is an important aspect of a kindergartener’s day – how they learn is as important as what they learn. Throughout their day, children will learn routines and how to develop relationships with adults and peers at school. They will also begin to understand their emotions and how to regulate them. In the Guilford Public Schools, students will demonstrate the characteristics of kindness and restitution through school wide positive behavior programs.

A Typical Daily Schedule* will include:

- **Morning Meeting** ~15 minutes
- **Snack, Recess and Creative Play** ~15 minutes
- **Readers’ Workshop** ~45 minutes
- **Writers’ Workshop** ~45 minutes
- **Shared Reading and Read Aloud** ~15 minutes
- **Daily Lunch and Free Play** ~45 minutes
- **Math** ~60 minutes
- **Science and Social Studies** ~45 minutes
- **Related Arts** ~30/60 minutes

*All times are approximate and will be adjusted throughout the year. At the beginning of the year, shorter periods of time for activities will be allotted with emphasis on a smooth transition from one activity to another. Physical, creative, and social learning may be integrated in all subjects.

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“*All I really need to know... I learned in kindergarten.*”  - Robert Fulghum