Welcome Children and Parents

Welcome to the Allen ISD Kindergarten Program. This is the beginning of an exciting experience for you and your child. It is important for the school staff and the parents to work as partners in the cooperative effort to provide the best education possible for your child. Texas law states that a child must be 5 years old by Sep. 1 to be eligible for Kindergarten.

This booklet has been prepared for you as a supplement to the Allen ISD Student Handbook. It contains important information about our kindergarten program. Please keep it as a handy reference during your child’s kindergarten year.

Allen ISD Where Eagles Soar!

Kindergarten Philosophy

The mission of kindergarten is to nurture the intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth of all children. Our responsibility, as parents and educators, is to create developmentally appropriate educational settings that prepare all children for success.

During these important early years, a child’s intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth is supported within the home, school and community. Children learn and develop at different rates.

Developmentally appropriate early childhood and elementary education focuses on the principles and stages of child development. It fosters individual interests and understanding, recognizes the social nature of learning, and values cultural and linguistic diversity. Effective early childhood and elementary programs expand opportunities for learning – enriching the curriculum, enhancing instruction, and extending learning time to accommodate each child’s culture, language, learning style and pace.

Developmentally appropriate early childhood education is based on the principle that children construct knowledge from active experience with their physical and social environments. Early childhood programs engage each child in a multidimensional learning environment that combines instruction and play to create a foundation for future academic and personal success. Elementary education builds upon that foundation. Young children show a growing sense of independence, exploration and have increased cognitive abilities that include critical thinking, problem solving and creativity.
The Kindergarten Child

Developmental Characteristics

It is important to know the developmental characteristics of kindergarten children. These characteristics should determine the appropriateness of learning activities. Developmentally appropriate learning activities are those that address the social, emotional, physical and intellectual nature of the child. Successful achievement of these activities forms the basis for success with subsequent activities.

Research (Freud, Piaget, Erickson) has indicated that young children learn best through play. It is a natural way for children to explore ideas, solve problems and release emotions in a pleasant, non-threatening way. Each child develops at his or her own pace and has the opportunity to learn from peers.

We believe that school should begin as a pleasant place where children are actively involved in the learning process. By facilitating a positive, productive, and exciting environment, we help pupils develop and/or maintain an interest in learning, expressing their ideas, and enjoying both written and oral language. This beginning will form the basis for successful academic and social school experiences.
Kindergarten Child Characteristics

Intellectual Characteristics
- Listens to a story without interruptions
- Is highly imaginative and creative
- Communicates using words and sentences
- Learns through active participation and direct, concrete, hands-on experience
- Enjoys being read to
- Is interested in experimenting with new concepts
- Is interested in the printed word and in learning to read
- Is interested in writing
- Recognizes name in print

Emotional Characteristics
- Needs to feel secure
- Has strong family ties but can separate from parent
- Is developing self-control, accepting directions from adults
- Is becoming aware of self
- Is unique
- Verbally communicates own needs & wants

Physical Characteristics
- Experiences rapid growth
- Works in short bursts of energy, but tires easily
- Is developing an increasingly longer attention span
- Controls large muscles better than small muscles
- Has developed hand dominance
- Eye-hand coordination is improving
- Prefers to run, not walk; climb, rather than sit
- Is susceptible to colds and communicable diseases
- Cares for own toileting needs without assistance
- Ready to care for personal belongings

Social Characteristics
- Enjoys new experiences
- Seeks friends
- Eagerly participates
- Shares and works with others
- Ready to follow classroom routines
Developmentally Appropriate Education

There are four dimensions of developmentally appropriate education:

1. It is age appropriate – focusing on the ways children grow and develop
2. It is individually appropriate – fostering individual students’ interests and understanding
3. It is culturally and linguistically appropriate – valuing the rich variety of languages and learning experiences children bring with them to the classroom
4. It supports the social nature of learning – providing abundant opportunities for teacher and student interaction
   - Active student involvement in learning
   - Relevant, engaging and meaningful content
   - Organized learning around student experiences, strengths and individual goals
   - Flexible grouping occurs across age, ability and achievement levels
   - Continuous evaluation using multiple assessment methods

School Hours

To help ensure the safety of your child, we request that students arrive and be picked up on time.

After the first few days of class, please allow your child the responsibility of entering and leaving the building alone. Please wait outside for your child after school at the designated areas. Refer to your school handbook for inclement weather procedures and additional information.

Also, if you need to pick up your child early, please go to the office to sign your child out. The office staff will call your child to the office to meet you. This is for your child’s safety.

Parent Conferences/Report Cards

Communication and partnership with parents are important. To communicate your child’s progress, a report card is sent home after each nine weeks of instruction. The teacher will schedule a formal conference to review your child’s progress for the first nine weeks grading period. You will be notified by your child’s teacher to schedule this parent/teacher conference.
Major Kindergarten Objectives

The following lists are some examples of the many things that kindergarten students will learn based on the Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills (TEKS), available at www.tea.state.tx.us:

**Language Arts Skills/Oral Language/Listening**
- Listen to stories from a variety of genres
- Develop good listening and speaking skills
- Express self in complete sentences
- Tell a summary of a text after listening
- Talk about characters, problems and events in a story
- Identify letters and sounds of the alphabet
- Write capital and lowercase letters
- Write name using capital and lowercase letters appropriately
- Develop ideas for writing
- Sound-spell words and sentences
- Acquire new vocabulary

**Science Skills/Concepts**
- Conduct classroom and outdoor investigations safely
- Develop ability to ask questions and seek answers
- Develop scientific problem solving skills
- Observe properties and patterns of objects
- Understand how energy, force, and motion relate to everyday life
- Identify recognizable patterns in the natural world and sky
- Examine basic needs of plants and animals
- Recognize organisms basic structures and processes

**Social Studies Skills/Concepts**
- Understand that people and communities make rules and solve problems
- Name community occupations and identify their role
- Recognize globes and maps as representations of real places
- Locate commonly used areas in the classroom, school building, neighborhood
- Identify significant symbols, stories, and historical figures connected with the United States
- Identify ways in which his/her family are the same and different from other families
- Understand words and phrases related to chronology and time (now, long ago, before, after, etc.)

**Math Skills/Concepts**
- Recognize numbers up to 20
- Count to 100 orally
- Count to 100 by 10’s, 5’s
- Write numbers at least to 20
- Match objects and numbers to 20
- Add and subtract up to 10
- Compose and decompose numbers to 10 (i.e. 8+2, 6+4, etc. = 10)
- Identify basic two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes
Social Development & Work Habits

Social/Emotional Development

• To make the transition from home to school smoothly
• To gain a feeling of security and sense of belonging in a group
• To encourage the child to develop desirable social habits, such as self-control, fair play, courtesy toward others and consideration for their rights
• To instill desired habits of behavior through frequent repetition of social experiences
• To set examples of fairness, honesty and integrity for child to emulate
• To give each child recognition for efforts and accomplishments
• To provide opportunities for the child to succeed, avoiding frequent failure by matching task to ability
• To encourage the child to express his/her ideas freely without fear of rejection or ridicule
• To help the child create a favorable self-concept

Physical Development

• To assess the child’s physical abilities and provide continuous opportunities for his/her physical growth
• To provide adequate space and equipment for the development of the child’s gross motor skills
• To provide opportunities to develop fine motor skills
• To encourage the children to develop correct habits of healthy living

Advice For Parents

For the protection of your child, the teacher must be notified IN WRITING if there is a change in the way your child will be going home. Our children work very hard on their school projects and are very proud of their work. It is important to send a standard-size backpack (not mini-size) with your child everyday. This will ensure that you will receive all of our notes and share in your child’s efforts that day. Please check your child’s backpack daily.

Please label all coats, sweaters, bags, and hats with your child’s name. We do our best to return items to their rightful owner, but labeling them is the only way we can be sure that your child gets home with his/her possessions.

In order to volunteer in the classroom or join us on field trips, you must complete a volunteer application online at www.allenisd.org. This report will remain in the Human Resources office and is confidential. A new volunteer application must be completed each school year. Volunteer applications require approximately two weeks to process. If you are scheduled to assist in class or on a field trip, be sure to submit your background check well in advance.
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