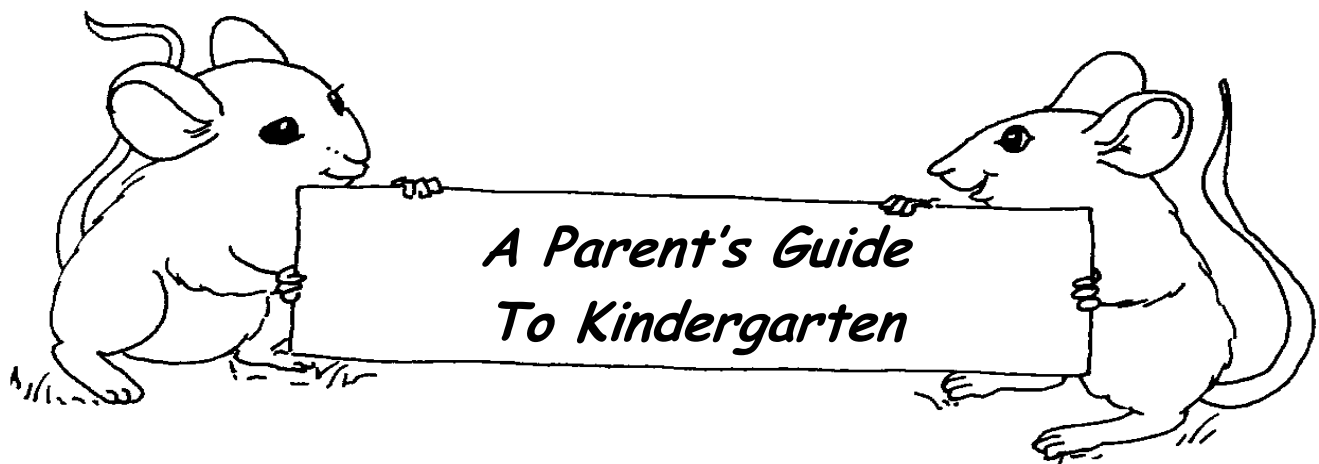


*A Handbook for
Parents of
Kindergartners*





Renton School District

Renton, Washington

Superintendent

Dr. Mary Alice Heuschel

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Renton School District!

We look forward to many years with you as partners in the education of your child. Kindergarten is a first and very important step. We want it to be a positive and enjoyable experience, one in which your child will grow personally, socially, and academically.

Please take some time to read the information and suggestions in this handbook. You can help your child be successful as a kindergarten student by engaging him or her in some early reading, math, and science experiences. Have fun!

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Alice Heuschel
Superintendent



Acknowledgement:

Renton School District Kindergarten Staff

Kindergartners are children who...

Laugh out loud
Walk in the mud
Put chocolate fingers everywhere
Like to be tickled
Scribble in class
Whisper in loud voices
Run and laugh when they fall
Cover themselves in Band-Aids
Slurp their soup
Ask a million questions
Give us sticky, pasty creations
Hug us in a hurry and rush outside without their coats.



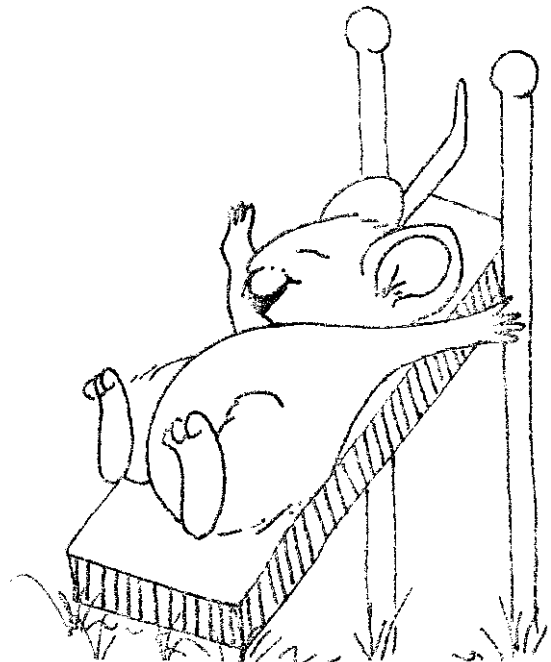
Author Unknown

THANK YOU FOR SENDING US YOUR CHILDREN!

The kindergarten teachers of the
Renton School District

A day in kindergarten may include

- Reading to, with, and by students
- Language activities and center time
- Small group instruction
- Large group discussion
- Math activities
- Science and nature activities
- Creative work - painting, drawing, working with clay, or paper cutting
- Sharing time
- Music and rhythm experiences
- PE and active games that develop cooperation and coordination
- Story time
- Creative dramatics
- Assemblies
- Field trips
- Class visitors
- Outdoor and indoor play
- Library time



You can help your kindergartner

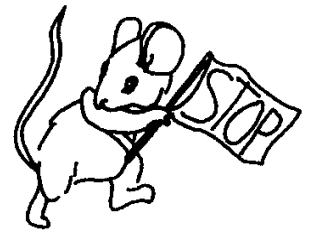
You can help make your child's kindergarten time happy and productive by:

Teaching your child self-confidence

- Encourage your child to play with other children.
- Help your youngster be self-reliant. Teach him or her how to put on coats, hats, sweaters, and raingear and how to tie shoelaces.
- Give your child plenty of rest. A kindergartner needs 12 to 13 hours of sleep each night.
- Visit your child's classroom. Nothing makes a kindergartner happier than introducing the family!

Being aware of school rules

- Teach your child to attend school regularly.
- Have your child arrive on time.
- Explain absences to school office staff. If your child is absent for any reason, please call the school office and send a note to school giving the reason for the absence when your child returns to school.
- Teach your child to go directly to and from school unless you have given permission to stop on the way. Send a note to the teacher if your child is going home with a friend or if he/she is following a different route home.
- Teach your child his/her full name, address, and phone number.
- Pick your child up personally for early dismissal.
- Read all the notes that your child brings home or the school mails to you. If a reply is requested, your child's teacher will appreciate a prompt answer.
- If you wish to send food or favors to school for a party, please check with the teacher first.
- Please call or come to the school if any questions or concerns arise.



In kindergarten your child will learn to...

- Work and play in large and small groups, sharing and taking turns
- Follow simple directions
- Think problems through to find the best solution
- Be responsible about small tasks, such as putting materials away
- Listen to stories and poems, and to one another
- Accept and respect adult leadership and school rules
- Develop an increasing awareness and knowledge of letters, sounds, words, numbers, ideas, and other concepts that will help in developing reading and mathematics skills
- Enjoy a variety of outdoor experiences through field trips and science activities
- Develop large muscle skills through such activities as running, hopping, galloping, skipping, climbing, and ball handling
- Develop small muscle skills through such activities as coloring, cutting, and writing
- Participate in music, art, and literature activities

Kindergartners learn reading and language arts...

Kindergarten children enter the classroom wanting to read. Our kindergarten program capitalizes on this eagerness so every student's first experience with reading instruction is successful.

Kindergartners will build a foundation of reading skills through rich language experiences and by working with basic concepts about print, book covers, title pages, and left to right Patterning.

Students will be introduced to instruction in reading with practice related to phonemic awareness, phonic skills, selected vocabulary, and sight words. The teacher will help students develop comprehension skills such as prediction, cause and effect, interpretation, inference, and retelling.



- Students will be encouraged to try their own writing to express their ideas (beginning with imitative, age-appropriate writing). They will move towards writing letters and words and illustrating their writing.
- Students will be encouraged to communicate ideas orally using appropriate vocabulary and will work towards expanding their knowledge and use of words.
- Students will learn environmental print, sight words, and vocabulary words for reading.
- Students will progress toward making letter shapes correctly and mastering the proper writing of their first names.

Reading and language activities to do at home

- Talk, listen, and read with your child.
- Plan unhurried trips to the public library allowing time to browse.
- Play word games. For example, ask your child to name words starting with the same letter sound (tire, toy, top). Ask your child to give you rhyming words (bat-sat).
- Have your child notice and identify logos and other "everyday" print they encounter (Target, Pepsi, McDonalds).
- Encourage your child to respond in complete sentences when appropriate.

And math.

Math is great fun!

Your kindergartner will be learning many math concepts and basic skills by using familiar items such as ceramic tiles, buttons, and beads, and also math manipulatives, such as unifix cubes, pattern blocks, and geoboards. Using these materials encourages students to develop their mathematical thinking through play and hands-on experiences. Students gain skills through repeating and creating patterns; building number sense (providing the basis for learning addition and subtraction facts); practicing sorting and classifying; using measurement; recognizing, comparing, and contrasting shapes and solids; and making and interpreting graphs.

Mathematics is more than just counting, adding, and subtracting. It's looking for and finding patterns, asking questions, gathering information, and exploring the world. All in a day's work for your busy kindergartner!



Math activities to do at home

- Play games that give your child the opportunity to count spaces and items (one-to-one correspondence), match and name shapes, classify objects, and find and repeat patterns.
- Discuss comparisons such as big/little, tall/short, high/low, and wide/narrow.
- Involve your child in making pancakes or cookies. He/she can enjoy the experience of measuring and counting, and the fun of

Kindergartners like art

Kindergartners do a lot of artwork!

This is because:

- Art activities are a wonderful way to develop creativity and self-expression. They foster an appreciation of artistic media in the world around us.
- Art projects provide a variety of materials for children to experiment with: chalk, clay, finger-paints, scissors, and more.
- Art can be an exciting part of reading, math, science, and social studies.
- Art gives children an opportunity to learn to listen and follow directions. It's a way of learning good work habits.
- Artwork helps children develop and strengthen small muscles.
- Art gives children an opportunity to share and to verbalize about their own artwork. They gain in the appreciation of their own efforts and the efforts of others.



Art activities to do at home

- Encourage your child to use pencils, glue, scissors, crayons, clay, and paint.
- Show interest in your child's work and let him/her know that you think it is important.
- Go for a walk and teach your child to appreciate the beauty of the surrounding area.
- Visit an art museum.
- Help your child notice art in various public settings.

Kindergartners learn science

What type of cloud is that?

Will a ball float?

Will a plastic spoon float?

Will a metal spoon float?

What are some ways that two items are alike and different?

These are some of the questions your curious kindergartner will discuss during the coming year.

Kindergarten science is fascinating. Children weigh, poke, touch, sort, observe, question, and experiment.

In science we learn about objects and their properties. We study three science units:

- Discovering Air and Weather
- Sink and Float
- Your World, My World



Science activities to do at home

- Discuss the weather. Watch the TV weather reports with your child. Keep a chart of sunny, rainy, and cloudy days.
- Experiment in a sink or bathtub to see whether particular objects sink or float.
- Talk about seasons, morning, night, tomorrow, and yesterday.
- Help your child observe the environment as it changes.

They have fun with music and physical education (PE)...

Music is more than singing (although kindergartners are enthusiastic singers and do a lot of singing). Musical activities include listening, learning rhythms, and participating in creative movements.

These musical experiences give children a wholesome outlet for thoughts and emotions as well as helping them develop their creativity. They also help children in other areas. For example, listening for rhythms helps children learn to identify patterns and listen for detail.



Physical education activities help children increase their physical strength, fitness, and coordination. There is emphasis on sportsmanship, a positive attitude, and cooperation. They run, hop, jump, and skip. They learn balancing activities and ball skills. They take part in group and individual games.

Music activities to do at home

- Teach your child songs and encourage him/her to "sing a solo".
- Encourage your child to listen to records, tapes, and CD's, and to sing along.
- Encourage rhythm activities: clapping, beating a drum, tapping rhythm sticks.
- Encourage your child to make up songs about his/her daily life.

PE activities to do at home

- Teach your child to skip, gallop, hop, and jump.
- Toss and catch a ball with your child.
- Encourage activities to strengthen upper body large muscles: climbing a tree or rope, doing chin-ups, etc.

And social studies.

Activities in social studies center on your child's life at home and in school. We'll explore the reasons we are special, how our family and friends work and play together, what the rules are for family and school, how families have needs and wants, and much more.

Stories, discussions, films, field trips, and hands-on experiences will help your child learn about his/her own world and how to be a cooperative, contributing member of society.

In social studies we introduce children to critical thinking skills: how to use ideas and information, how to evaluate ideas, and how to invent solutions. We work on listening to others and appropriately communicating feelings.

- Students are exposed to various world cultures.
- Students increase social awareness by comparing and contrasting other cultures and examining them in relation to their own.
- Students will learn to respect, accept, and celebrate uniqueness and differences in themselves and others.



Social studies activities to do at home

- Increase your child's awareness of family and cultural traditions.
- Take your youngster to the supermarket, gas station, drug store, and other interesting places. Talk about what you see and hear.
- Let your child help around the house.
- Encourage your youngster to take responsibility for his/her choices.

Kindergartners stay safe and healthy

Kindergartners gain an important sense of self-worth from learning self-help skills.

Throughout the year we will be learning about:

Hygiene

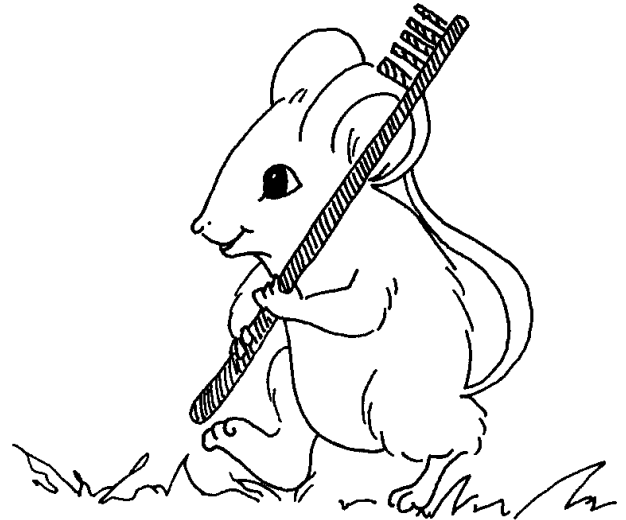
Dental care

Poisons

Traffic Safety

Personal Safety

Decision Making Skills (to stay
safe and healthy)



The school nurse says

Kindergarten may be one of your child's first experiences in playing closely with a large group of children his/her own age. With this exposure, it seems he/she catches every cold or virus going around. Please keep your child at home at the first sign of illness and for at least one day after a fever returns to normal. Always provide current emergency phone numbers.

If your child becomes ill with a communicable disease, contact your health care provider and inform your child's school principal or school nurse.

By state law children must have required immunizations before school starts. See the following page for details. Also consider a complete health exam, as well as a professional vision exam, even though it is not required.

If your child has any diagnosed life-threatening health condition, please alert your school nurse immediately.



Immunization Requirements

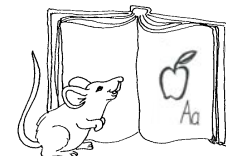
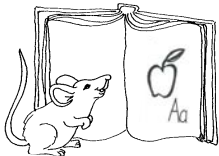
Children must meet immunization requirements upon entry to school, or claim an exemption. Please pick up a copy of the current immunization requirements from your school office. Immunizations are available from your health care provider or at the Seattle-King County Health Department, 3001 NE 4th St., Renton, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Call for an appointment or contact your health care provider for this information. Parents should bring completed immunization records to school at the time of kindergarten registration.

Children who have had the usual "baby" shots should have a D.P.T. booster, polio booster, and a second M.M.R. If measles, mumps, and rubella injections (commonly called M.M.R.) or any part of the three-shot hepatitis B series has been missed, these must be completed in order to meet the requirements for entry.

In addition, there is a NEW Immunization Law requiring children:

19 months of age and up, including kindergarten entry to school in 2006-2007, must have a **varicella (chickenpox) vaccine** prior to school entry or notify the school that your child has a history of the chickenpox disease and provide an approximate date or age at the time of the disease.

Disease	Incubation Period	Exclusion from School
Chicken Pox	14–21 days	Until free of symptoms and until all vesicles have crusted (usually 5 days from onset of eruptions)
German Measles	14–21 days	While symptoms are present and until rash fades (at least 5 days)
Measles	9–12 days	Nine days after onset of symptoms or five days after onset of rash or until all abnormal mucus discharge has disappeared
Mumps	12–26 days	While fever or visible swelling is present
Streptococcal Infection		While fever or other signs of illness are present
Scarlet Fever		While fever or other signs of illness are present
Impetigo and ringworm treatment,		After children are taken to the doctor and/or are under they may return to school



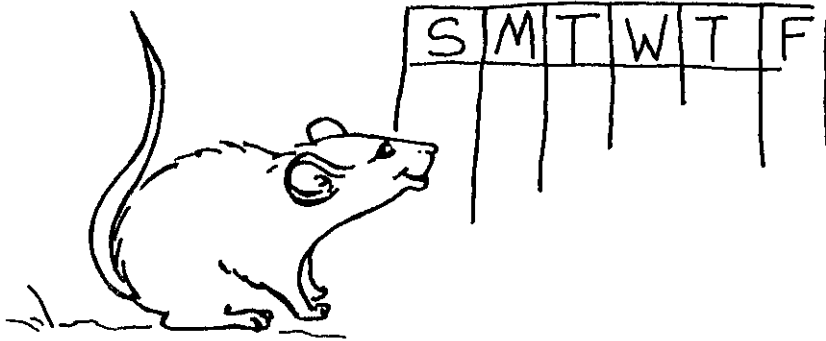
Volunteering

If you would like to volunteer at school, please talk to your child's teacher or principal for information. Please note: all volunteers must pass a Washington State Patrol background check before they can volunteer at their child's school.

Schedule

Starting times for kindergarten vary from 8:40 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. for the morning session and from 12:30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. for the afternoon session depending on the school your child attends. If you have questions, please call your school. Sessions are approximately two hours and 40 minutes in length.

Children who ride the bus to school should arrive at the bus stop five minutes early. If your child walks or is driven to school, have him/her arrive at school not more than five minutes before class begins.



Conferencing and Reporting

Parent-teacher conferences are the foundation for developing partnerships between school and home. Conferences can be scheduled throughout the year at the request of parents/guardians or the teacher in addition to those shown in the schedule below:

- **Group Orientation Conference**

Early in September an evening meeting will be held to explain the kindergarten program for the year and answer general questions.

- **Fall Reporting (November)**

Individual parent-teacher conferences will be held. These are usually about 20 minutes in length. The parent/guardian and teacher will share information about the child, and a written report will be given to parents/guardians.

- **Spring Reporting (March)**

A written report will be sent home to parents/guardians.

- **End of School Reporting**

A written report will be sent home to parents/guardians. In selected instances, a second individual parent-teacher conference will be held.

