



# Pre-K Handbook

Teacher: Mrs. Megan Smith

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School's Phone Number: (605) 236-5237

## Pre-K Philosophy

The Mt. Vernon School District Pre-K strives to offer children an opportunity to develop in an environment planned with their physical, mental, social, sensory and emotional needs in mind. The program provides experiences with the intent of meeting the needs of all attending preschoolers. It is a language-based, developmental preschool. This means that activities are implemented with attention to different needs, interests and developmental levels of individual children as well as the group. Research indicates that preschool aged children learn best through a multi-sensory approach. As examples, preschool activities may include playing with play-dough, water, sand, shaving cream, rice, games, puzzles, and lots of reading. Music and singing are important elements to the preschool curriculum, as the children learn listening and language skills through these activities. Phonemic awareness is taught through repetition and familiar patterns heard in routines and everyday experiences.

## Pre-K Age Requirements

Child must be 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Children are required to be potty-trained and able to use the bathroom independently.

With the offering of a 5 day, full-day preschool program, we will have a better idea of if children are prepared for the rigor of the Kindergarten classroom. Pre-K is a kindergarten readiness program. There will be great learning and development happening throughout this year. We assess your child multiple times throughout the school year to give us a better scope at how your child's learning, development, and emotions are progressing. There is much more expected from today's Kindergarten students than when many of us were young, which means it is crucial your child is prepared both academically and socially/emotionally. It is best to give students time to grow and mature in Pre-K before sending them on to kindergarten. Your student's kindergarten readiness will be discussed with Mrs. Smith during the March Parent-Teacher Conferences.

## Class Schedules

Preschool will meet Monday-Friday from 8:10-3:30. Every Friday will have a 2:00pm Dismissal. Students typically come down to the classroom around 8am. Prior to that, students may wait in the commons area and have the option to eat breakfast, which is

served at 7:45. With the offering of full-day preschool, students may eat breakfast or lunch at school. Your child will need to have an account set up in the office if they will be eating school breakfast/lunch. You may also choose to send a lunchbox to school for your child that is packed at home. **The first day will be Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>**. Attached is a day-to-day schedule of the activities and routine.

### **Take-Home Folders**

Each night your son/daughter will come home with a take-home folder containing completed work, teacher communication, and letters from school. Activities and work will vary between paper/pencil and hands on activities. Some days will produce more paperwork and some days will have less, just depending on the types of activities designed for that day. **Please sign the calendar on the back of the folder each night** as a form of communication between parent and teacher. This way I can ensure I am effectively communicating all school needs each day. If there are any changes to your child's routine: pick-up or appointments, etc. please send a dated note in your child's folder so I can be sure your child's after school routine is correct each day.

### **Contact Information**

If for any reason you need to get a hold of me, you can call me directly at school, e-mail, or send a message on DOJO. Contact information is on the top of this handbook.

DOJO account logins will be sent home with you the evening of Open House. If you do not receive information from me that night, please email or call the school to let me know ASAP. DOJO is an online communication tool that I will be using to send out class wide notices, photos of activities, and any emergent information.

### **Show and Tell**

Occasionally we will have show and tell. Your child will be responsible to bring an item for Show and Tell. Sometimes Show and Tell will be free choice and other times it will follow a theme. This will be communicated in the weekly newsletter. For instance, if we are studying the letter M, students may need to bring an object that begins with the letter M. *Please try to remember* to bring an item each time. Please only bring ONE thing. Do not feel that you must buy something new for your child to bring. Books, games, toys, insects, rocks, photographs, etc. are all examples of items that your child may bring on their day. Please have them choose an item that fits in their backpack. It is hard for the little ones to tote bulky, heavy things to school and back home!

Please do not send any toy guns or other toys that simulate various types of weapons.

Please do not send valuable or highly breakable things to school. During show and tell, your child learns about questioning, critical thinking, problem solving, and many other language skills.

### **School Attire**

Please dress your child for school activities. We exercise, play, and paint, students can end up very messy by the end of a day. Be sure to send your child in clothing that is ok to be stained. Children need comfortable clothing and shoes that are weather appropriate. We will be going outside for recess every day, even during winter months, unless windchill is below a certain temperature. Please label all jackets/winter items worn to school with your child's name. Also, **please send a gallon sized Ziploc bag with an extra set of clothing** in case we would need a change of clothes.

### **Book Orders**

Each month I will send home a packet of book orders. The easiest way to order is online with the class code attached to the book orders when I send them home. If ordering online isn't an option and you wish to order, you can return the form to school with cash and I will take care of the order online for you. Feel free to order or not order as you please. This is a FANTASTIC way to increase our classroom library and gain new literacy activities!

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are very important in your child's life and may be celebrated at school. On your child's actual birthday or the closest school day (if it falls during the school year), we will celebrate it in our classroom. Feel free to send a special snack/treat to pass out if you wish-this is completely optional! Summer birthdays will be celebrated toward the end of the school year.

### **Behavior Policy**

We will begin the year discussing Social-Emotional learning, how we go about the school day, cope with new feelings, emotions, and ways to regulate during difficult moments throughout our day. School is a brand-new world to all Pre-k children; we want to give them all the proper tools and to provide them with strategies that help them feel the most successful in our classroom. We will be learning about regulating, taking a break in the calm down center, learning how to describe our feelings and what our choices will be going forward from any incidents. If there are any major concerns throughout the day, I will be sure to communicate with you directly via their take home folder. Just remember that most days, no news is good news! If any emergency incidents should happen, I will be happy

to discuss issues further based on the needs of each individual incident. If needed, we can be sure to set up a conference time with our school principal as well.

### **Drop- Off/Pick-Up**

**Students dropped off prior to 8am should wait in the commons area.** Breakfast is served at 7:45am-this is optional and if you wish for your child to eat, set it up in the office. They will wait in the Commons Area with their class and supervision until the bell rings at 8:00. It is more than ok to walk your child down the first few weeks or so of school, after that we need to be saying our goodbyes in the commons area where they meet with their classmates. Just like any other time of drop off, the quicker the better! If we get into that routine, your child will gain independence and begin to thrive as their own little person in a school setting. **Please have students arrive on time every day,** as late arrivals can cause anxiousness and disrupt school routines. These littles thrive on routine and being on time allows us to keep on schedule, ensuring everyone has a good start to the day!

### **Lunch**

We welcome parents to eat lunch with their children throughout the school year. If you ever want to eat lunch, please check in at the office, then wait in the hall by our door around 10:55. We will be heading out around that time to wash up! The preschool class will eat lunch around 11am.

### **Homework**

I recognize that kids at this age do not need homework. Homework is a great way for students to show parents what skills we have been working on, what units we are on, etc. Just a great way to connect parents to the student's schooling. Therefore, I send home something every Monday for them to complete. They have all week to complete it and it is not due back until Thursday or even the following Monday is acceptable. Send it back whenever you get it completed. I usually attach a little "sweet treat" so they know I appreciate the responsibility it took to complete it and send it back. This is completely optional; however, the students look forward to showing you what they can do!

### **Snack Time**

A snack will be served every afternoon prior to afternoon recess. Afternoon snacks are stored in my snack cupboard and are stocked up usually at the beginning of the year and then again throughout the year when it gets low. I will put a message on DOJO and a reminder in the newsletter when we need a replenishment of snacks.

Examples of snacks: goldfish, pretzels, animal crackers, teddy grahams, fruit snacks, granola bars, cereal (Cheerios, Fruit Loops, Trix, Honeycomb, etc)  
THANK YOU IN ADVANCE!

**Daily Schedule** (This is tentative and may change from day-to-day!)

**8:00-8:15 Morning Tubs/STEM bins**

**8:15-8:30 Circle Time**

**8:30-8:50 Table Work**

**8:50-9:55 Centers/Clean-up**

**10:00-10:15 Recess**

**10:20-10:50 Whole Group Activities: Storytime/Table time/Large Motor Skills**

**11:00-11:20 Lunch**

**11:20-11:35 Read Aloud**

**11:40-12:00 Recess**

**12:00-1:00 Rest time (may include an educational movie, calming music, etc.)**

**1-2 Centers/Specials/Journal/Fine Motor/Etc.**

**2-2:15 Snack**

**2:15-2:30 Recess**

**2:35-3:10 Science/STEM/Craft**

**3:10-3:30 Folders/Pack Up**

**3:30 Dismissal**

We do have three "specials" that students will attend throughout the week. These include Library, Guidance, and Music.

