

The Holmes School Kindergarten Handbook



2017-2018

Save These Dates

- First Day of School

Wednesday, August 23

Dear Kindergarten Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Holmes School kindergarten. We are looking forward to working with you and your child.

We have prepared this handbook to answer some of the questions you may have about your child's entrance into kindergarten. We hope it will help you and your child make a smooth transition into Holmes School.

Sincerely,

The Kindergarten Team
Dr. Zelaya - Principal

Kindergarten Philosophy

Kindergarten offers the opportunity to lay the foundation for a love of learning, a sense of self-worth, respect for others and the development of critical thinking skills.

We recognize that a child's development of attitudes, habits, capabilities and skills begins long before entering a formal educational program. The kindergarten curriculum builds upon this foundation and provides additional experiences that will enhance learning.

An effective kindergarten program involves parents and school personnel working cooperatively to build a partnership between home and school that will support the child throughout the school experience.

We hold these convictions:

- ◆ We believe each child is unique and we recognize the importance of individual differences
- ◆ We believe in the dignity and worth of each person
- ◆ We believe each child can become an independent, creative thinker
- ◆ We believe a love of learning is basic to lifelong learning



Kindergarten should provide a place where:

- ◆ Children experience a planned, child-centered environment that encourages learning through exploration and discovery
- ◆ All the activities are planned to promote a positive self-image and attitude toward school and peers
- ◆ The mental and physical well-being of each child is of paramount importance
- ◆ Different levels of ability and development are expected, valued and accepted. Therefore, children have access to multi-level experiences and activities of varying degrees of complexity.
- ◆ Children learn there is often more than one right answer. Divergent thinking is developed and encouraged through the use of open-ended materials and many informal conversations among the children and with adults.
- ◆ Play is respected for its value as an appropriate way for children of this age to learn.
- ◆ The children's own language, experiences, and stages of development form the basis of reading and writing activities.
- ◆ Children learn to enjoy books and to appreciate literary language through a daily story time, creative dramatics and repeated opportunities to hear and learn simple rhymes and other poems.
- ◆ Children develop mathematical understanding through the use of familiar manipulatives such as blocks, counters and other concrete materials.
- ◆ Children's curiosity about natural, familiar elements forms the basis of scientific observations, experimentation and conclusions. Both planned and spontaneous interaction with real objects such as plants, animals, rocks, soil, water, etc. is considered to be essential.
- ◆ Children participate in daily, planned activities fostering both gross and fine-motor development, including running, jumping, bouncing balls, lacing cards, hammering nails, playing with clay and cutting with scissors.
- ◆ Experimentation, enjoyment and appreciation of various forms of music are encouraged on a daily basis.
- ◆ Many forms of art expressions are encouraged through the use of a wide assortment of media integrated within the daily curriculum. The final product is never as important as the process of creating.

Reading to Your Child

One of the most important gifts you can give a child is a love of reading, and it is never too early to start. Interest in books is very important for success in school. You can help by reading to your child as often as possible. When reading to your child, here are some tips to keep in mind.

- ◆ Show delight and enthusiasm as you read. Never turn reading into a chore.
- ◆ Try to read to your child every day
- ◆ Find a time when you and your child are relaxed and interested in reading
- ◆ Point to the pictures as you talk about them
- ◆ Read or tell a familiar story and leave out words or parts of sentences for your child to fill in
- ◆ Have your child dictate a story to you. Write it down and then read it to him or her
- ◆ Let your child see you reading. This will help show that you think reading is important and fun.
- ◆ Even when your child has learned to read, continue reading to him or her.



FAQs/General Information

What are the hours of attendance for kindergarten?

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday - 7:55-2:55

Wednesday - 7:55-1:55

The first bell rings at 7:55. The tardy bell rings at 8:05, students must be in their seats and ready to start the day.

Kindergarten students line up near the playground. Their lineup spots are marked with the first initial of their teacher's last name, preceded by K.

Students are dismissed to the courtyard, located on the southeast corner of the school. Teachers wait with their students until the children are picked up. Please be prompt in picking up your child at dismissal. If you know you are going to be late, please call the school office - 708-524-3100. Also, if there are changes in your child's pick-up (such as a neighbor will pick them up), please send a note or email your child's teacher before lunch time. If you need to get dismissal information to your child's teacher near the end of the day, please call the school office.

Will my child ride the school bus?

Students who live more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from Holmes are eligible to ride the bus. As a general guideline, students who reside south of the train tracks are eligible for bus service. Students are assigned to buses by our bus company, Lakeview, based on their address. There are four bus routes for Holmes.

We know that having your child ride the bus is a concern for parents. We have found that children learn the bus routine very quickly and enjoy the experience of riding the bus. At the beginning of the year, fifth grade students are assigned to be "bus buddies" to help the students get to their bus for the ride home.

Students are dropped off and picked up from the school bus on Woodbine Avenue, the street to the west of the school grounds. School staff members are at the bus stop before and after school to assist children.

Does Holmes provide before and/or after school care?

There is no before or after school supervision in the school or on the playground.

The following organizations offer before or after-school programs in the area.

Apollo - after school program on school grounds - 855.543.7277

Concordia University - k-2nd grade only - transportation provided - 708.771.8300

First Baptist - before & after school - transportation provided - 708.383.1190

Hephzibah - after school program in the multi-purpose room - 708.649.7140

Oak Park Park District - Clubhouse After-School Program - transportation provided - 708. 725.2110

West Cook YMCA - school bus service - 708.434.0231

How do I pay my child's school fees?

School fees for the 2017-18 school year can be made online beginning July 1st. The mandatory District 97 school fee for kindergarten is \$160. Payment can be made through the district website, or by check sent to the school office. If you wish to pay by credit card, but don't have access to a computer, please call Annette Bennett at the district business office at 708-524-3133.

To utilize the district web store:

- ◆ You will need to know your child's student ID number. Call the school office for this information
- ◆ Point your browser to the district web site: www.op97.org
- ◆ On the right under "Quick Links" click on the "Web Store".
- ◆ In the left hand pane under "Browse" click on "Holmes"
- ◆ Choose the fees you need to pay and add them to your cart.

What medical information do I need to provide?

The role of the school nurse is to meet the immediate and special health needs of students while working with our Holmes team to provide appropriate resources and a safe and healthy learning environment.

Dental exam: Due no later than May 15, 2018

Illinois State Law requires all kindergarten, second grade, sixth grade, and new students to have a dental examination on file in their health records. This report must be submitted to school by May 15 of the required year, and **must have been completed within 18 months of the May 15 deadline.**

Holmes school will be offering dental screenings that will fulfill this requirement.

http://www.op97.org/hr/documents/dental_form_proof.pdf

Doctor's exam and Immunizations (Child Health Exam Form): Due August 23, 2017

Forms must be completed on the IL school health forms which can be found on our district web page

<http://www.op97.org/hr/documents/IllinoisPhysicalExamForm2012.pdf>

NOTE: Your child will not be allowed to start school if this form is not submitted.

The District 97 health requirements are outlined in the District Handbook/Calendar. All *preschool, kindergarten, 6th grade, and new students* must have a physical examination on file in their health record. The physical examination is documented on the Child Health Examination Form.

Illinois State Law requires all students to be immunized to attend school. All students must have current immunization dates on file. The nurse will notify you if more information is needed or if your child needs additional immunizations. Please respond promptly to any notices you receive from the school nurse.

Eye exam: Due by October 15, 2017

Illinois law requires that proof of an eye examination by an optometrist or physician who provides complete eye examinations be **submitted to the school no later than October 15** of the year the child is first enrolled. The examination must have been completed within one year prior to October 15 of the year the child enters an Illinois school.

Medication during School (this includes over-the-counter medications):

Written parental permission and doctor's orders are required for medication use at school. For the safety of all students at Holmes School, please see the school nurse for individual advice and further instructions whenever your child needs to take medication during school hours. The District 97 policy for medication use in school is outlined in the District Handbook/Calendar.

Students with health concerns:

If your child has been diagnosed with a health condition, or if there is a change in your child's health status, please contact the school nurse to develop or update the health plan. Examples of such conditions include asthma, allergy, diabetes, seizures, and any other diagnosis that requires the child to take medication or need health accommodations at school.

Vision & hearing screening:

Students in preschool, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, special education, and new students receive a hearing screening. Students in preschool, kindergarten, second grade, special education, and new students receive a vision screening. The nurse also does screenings as requested by teachers or parents. You will be notified if your child fails a screening at school. You will be given instructions and resources for follow-up.

From Illinois State Health Regulations

"Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report from indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous twelve months. That form must be on file at the school. Hearing screening may also be waived if an audiologist has completed and signed a report indicating that an exam has been administered within the previous twelve months and that evaluation is on file at the school."

Food Service**Breakfast Times**

7:15 - 7:55 a.m. daily. Students should not be dropped off before 7:15. There is no supervision. All students can arrive early for breakfast.

Lunch Times

Lunch/recess is 55 minutes, with the time being divided between eating and recess.

Daily options include a hot meal, salad or sandwich. Milk is included with all lunches.

Breakfast and lunch menus are posted on the digital backpack monthly. Many families keep the monthly calendar in a convenient place and go over it weekly choosing which days the students will sign up for school lunch or bring a lunch from home. Each morning, students will submit their lunch order for the day.

Payment

Families wishing for their children to have school lunches must deposit money in advance into a lunch account by cash or check sent in a **sealed envelope labeled 'Lunchroom'** with the student's name written on the outside of the envelope and on the check or on a note with cash. Food service payments can also be made online at the District 97 website: www.op97.org by selecting the Mealtime option, under the payment heading. The student's district ID number is required for online payments.

The lunch account operates like a debit card with amounts subtracted via a scan card as the student participates. When the balance reaches \$7.00 you will be notified of the low balance. Students whose balance falls below \$2.00 are asked to bring a lunch from home until further funds are deposited. Negative balances are not permitted.

Daily cash payment for hot lunches or milk only is not an available option.

Milk Purchase

All school lunches include a choice of skim, 2% white or chocolate milk. Families wishing that their children have milk with a lunch from home also deposit money into the School Food Program account and purchases are charged daily through use of a scan card. Milk and meal accounts are the same.

Lunch from Home

- ◆ Children bringing lunches to school will store them in the designated classroom storage area
- ◆ Lunches should not require refrigeration or heating
- ◆ Each lunch bag or box needs to have the child's name on it. This prevents confusion at lunch time and allows lost lunch boxes to be returned to the correct child. Bag lunches must be stapled or taped shut to avoid items falling out.
- ◆ Please use only unbreakable food and beverage containers
- ◆ Due to concerns about food allergies, students eat only their own food. Food items should not be traded or shared. Our lunch room has a labeled peanut-free table that we encourage students with peanut/tree nut allergies to use during lunch time.
- ◆ Nutritious, healthy lunch and snack food is requested as this helps students perform their best during the school day. Do not send gum, candy or high sugar content foods and drinks to school.
- ◆ Food is not permitted on the playground.



Should students bring snacks?

Classes have a snack break in the morning or afternoon, depending on their lunch schedule. Due to the number of students with severe food allergies, both peanuts and tree nuts are not permitted in the classroom. Your child's teacher will notify you if there are other foods not permitted in the classroom due to allergies. Packaged and unpackaged food must contain ingredient labels and be approved by the classroom teacher. Any item that is labeled to have peanut or tree nut (including coconut) as an ingredient or states that the product "may contain peanuts or tree nuts or is manufactured on shared equipment with peanuts and/or tree nuts means the snack is not safe to bring into the classroom and will be sent home with a reminder note.

What kinds of clothing should my child wear at school?

When purchasing school clothing, try to picture your child wearing the item while painting, gluing, or sitting on the floor. Is it appropriate? Is it comfortable? We suggest that your child wear play clothing rather than fancy clothes because we find that the children feel more able to participate fully in school activities when they are not worried about getting their clothes dirty. Remember that your child will be responsible for him or herself. Be sure that buttons, zippers, and snaps are easily managed by your child. For playing safely on the playground, your child should not have any pull strings on jackets or sweatshirts.

What kinds of shoes would be best for kindergarten?

Sturdy shoes that slip on, tie, or fasten with zippers or Velcro are all appropriate for school wear. Closed-toe shoes are recommended. Sandals or clogs can be dangerous on the playground. If your child wears these shoes to school, he or she should have gym shoes to change into for outdoor play. Snow boots cannot be worn in the classroom, so be sure to pack a pair of shoes when your child wears boots to school. On gym days, your child must wear gym shoes to participate in the activities.

Are the children allowed to bring toys to school?

There are special days when the children may bring a toy or game to show the class. The rule is that no toys should come to school unless it is a special toy day, or a show and tell day. We will let you know in advance when these days occur. We feel that we have plenty of toys and activities in the classroom to entertain your child. If your child attends another program after school which allows him/her to bring toys from home, we ask that these toys remain in the backpack while at Holmes School.

How will you celebrate birthdays in kindergarten?

We look forward to your child's special day in kindergarten. At Holmes School, students have their name announced during the morning announcements and they receive a certificate and pencil from the office. In the classroom, we celebrate by giving the student a birthday crown. Children who have a summer birthday can choose to celebrate their half birthday or we can celebrate their birthday in May, near the end of the school year.

Food is not included in birthday celebrations in kindergarten. We do not pass out cupcakes, cookies, or other snacks as part of our birthday recognition. However, if you would like, you can honor your child's birthday by donating a book to the classroom library. We are happy to have you come and read to the class on your child's birthday.

We prefer that you NOT send birthday party invitations to school for your child to pass out. Frequently, these invitations are lost or misplaced.

Do you take field trips?

Yes, we take several field trips during the school year. We take walking field trips in the neighborhood. We also take bus field trips that center on a theme that we are studying. We always ask for parent volunteers to accompany us. Field trips are a special activity for kindergartners - younger siblings are not allowed to attend bus field trips.

Is there homework in kindergarten?

Every Monday, we will send home a weekly homework sheet with 9 suggested activities. We hope that students will complete 4 activities and return the sheet to us on Friday (they can do one activity each night, Monday - Thursday). We also encourage you to read with your child every night.



How to Help Your Child Get Ready for Kindergarten

Talk with your child about all the fun things he or she will do in kindergarten. Remind your child that all the children will be new at school and the teachers are here to help everyone get used to the routines. Holmes School looks big but before long, the boys and girls will know their way around the building.

Take a walk or drive to see Holmes School this summer. Have fun playing on our playground.

Visit the library and check out books about school. Read to your child and talk with him or her about the stories. Read some rhyming books, such as books by Dr. Seuss or nursery rhymes.

Give your child opportunities to draw and write and cut paper with scissors. Practice counting.

Help your child develop independent skills. In kindergarten, children are expected to take care of their backpacks, lunches, and jackets. All kindergarten classrooms have a bathroom and students should be responsible for their own bathroom needs, including washing hands when finished.

Establish a bedtime routine and, near the end of the summer, help your child get used to waking up on time for school.

Have a positive, encouraging attitude towards this upcoming change in your child's life. Listen to any worries or concerns that your child has, but reassure him or her that the teachers at school are there to make sure everyone is safe and has fun. Focus on the positive things that will happen when kindergarten starts—the chance to make new friends and learn new things.

Yes, I Can

Here is a readiness checklist for you and your child to use at home.

Oral Language

I can tell you the following

- ◆ My name
- ◆ My address
- ◆ My phone number
- ◆ I can say the alphabet
- ◆ I can identify rhyming words

Fine-Motor Skills

- ◆ I can print my name
- ◆ I can hold my pencil correctly
- ◆ I can cut with scissors

Reading Skills

- ◆ I can recognize my name
- ◆ I can spell my name
- ◆ I can recognize the capital and lower case letters

Math Skills

- ◆ I know four basic shapes—circle, square, triangle and rectangle
- ◆ I can count to 20
- ◆ I can recognize numerals 1-10
- ◆ I can count 10 objects



Kindergarten Supply List

Backpacks should not have wheels. Wheeled backpacks do not fit in our lockers.

There may be additional items requested by your child's teacher. Check with him/her at the start of the school year for detailed information.

(Please DO NOT label supplies other than clothing/smock)

Backpack large enough to hold library books and daily folder which is 9" x 12"

One package Crayons (24 ct)

One package washable markers

1 pack of Expo dry-erase markers

Children's scissors

Twelve yellow #2 pencils

Three pink erasers

Six large glue sticks

Two large boxes of tissue

Ziploc Bags

Jan-Apr birthday - gallons sized

May-August birthday - quart sized

Sept-Dec birthday - sandwich sized

One pack of baby wipes

Three containers of GREEN WORKS Clorox biodegradable cleaning wipes

One set of inexpensive headphones - **no ear buds**

One old shirt or smock for painting-please label

One clean sock to be used for cleaning dry-erase boards

Change of clothes to be kept at school, including shoes. Please label all clothing items.