



A Family's Guide to Kindergarten

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

- Blue Valley's kindergarten program is designed to develop knowledge and skills in the physical, social, emotional and cognitive areas. Our goal is to help children develop skills and strategies that will help them learn and establish a foundation for lifelong success in education.
- Families frequently ask, "Is my child ready for kindergarten?" Children are individuals who are growing, changing and learning constantly. However, no two children progress at the same rate. In spite of the fact that the children are five to six years old, they often display a range of abilities. We welcome all children who meet the age requirements for admission.
- Methods of teaching are varied and goals are set based on the individual child's abilities. Lessons are planned with various developmental stages of the children in mind. Children are given the opportunity to work with peers in activities designed to build upon their strengths and expand their abilities. Teachers understand and adapt classroom plans to accommodate differences among children; each child is unique and learns on his or her own timetable.

General Information

Attendance: Kindergarten meets from 8:40 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Arriving five minutes before is ample time for students to be at school. Kindergarten students will eat lunch at school and may purchase a school lunch or bring a lunch from home.

Transportation: Free bus service is provided for those students who live 2.5 miles or more from the child's home attendance center. Students not meeting this requirement may purchase bus service. Contact Durham School Services at (913) 681-2492 prior to the first day of school for distance from school rates or to arrange bus service for your child. The bus company discounts rates if students are registered prior to July 1. For additional information, go to www.bluevalleyk12.org/transportation.

Medication Procedures: Information regarding Medications and Emergency Medical Care can be found at www.bluevalleyk12.org/health.

Illnesses: A child who is ill, especially one who has a fever, severe cold, vomiting or diarrhea, should be kept home.



If a child becomes ill or injured at school, parents will be notified to pick up their child from school. General criteria for sending an ill child home will be a temperature of 100 or above, complaints of general malaise, vomiting, diarrhea, severe coughing, suspicion of communicable disease or the inability to participate in normal classroom activity. Students will not return to school until symptom-free and fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours.



A child's success in kindergarten is impacted by many factors including language development, fine motor skills and social emotional maturity. You can support your child's development by providing opportunities to engage in play that enhances his or her growth. Working with puzzles, clay, play dough, scissors, crayons and markers will help strengthen the small muscles used for writing. Engaging children with board games, play groups, songs, read-aloud time and conversations will encourage verbal abilities. Families are advised to consider time children spend engaged with media, which may decrease levels of engagement with other learning experiences.

English Language Arts

A balanced English Language Arts program includes activities in reading, writing, listening and speaking:

- Learning about the basic concepts of print (the one-to-one correspondence between the spoken and written word, left to right, top to bottom)
- Learning reading and writing strategies (use of picture and context clues, match letters and sounds, sight words, transitional spelling)
- Listening to stories as a model to more complex language structures, descriptions, story lines, character, plot development and prediction
- Discussions about books and stories to develop higher levels of thinking

- Exposure to fiction, non-fiction, fairy tales and poetry
 - Expressing ideas, feelings and experiences in oral and written form
- There is naturally a wide range of reading abilities in any kindergarten class. Some children may be fluent readers, while others are in the developing stage. Reading and writing develop together as children

gain experience with language and literature. Children will be immersed in a language-rich environment and experience authentic literature, stories and poems. A young child's writing moves from random or controlled scribbling to transitional and conventional spelling. Kindergarten classrooms provide a variety of writing tools to help children.

Social Studies

The social studies program builds on students' natural interest in their immediate surroundings and community by investigating:

- The individual, how to interact with others and the interdependence of self, family, groups and society
- Historical figures, people in groups and the rules that govern them
- The concept of change as it applies to individuals, families and the environment
- Families around the world and increasing their awareness of place, location and how people interact with their environment
- Choices, needs and wants
- Blue Valley Virtues

Learning will occur through literature, sharing, show and tell, group discussion, field trips, dramatic play, guest speakers and special events.

Global Language

All schools in Blue Valley offer Spanish language instruction. Students learn to understand simple Spanish words and phrases, including greetings, farewells, feelings, colors, shapes, classroom items, weather, family and pet vocabulary, and learn to produce simple words and short phrases. Students learn to respond to teacher directions given in Spanish. Songs and games are an integral part of learning a second language during the early years. Additionally, Wolf Springs Elementary and Valley Park Elementary host a Chinese Immersion program in which students receive half of their daily instruction in Chinese and half in English. Students enrolled in the Chinese Immersion program do not receive Spanish instruction. To learn more about the immersion program, visit www.bluevalleyk12.org/immersion.



Physical Education

The physical education program provides a wide range of movement activities. Kindergarteners will:

- Develop body awareness, balancing, running and stretching
 - Manipulate objects such as balls, parachutes, balloons and beanbags
 - Develop rhythm, galloping, skipping, turning, pushing and pulling
- Through movement, students learn kinesthetic awareness, cooperation and safety.

Science

Kindergarteners learn through discovery and inquiry. Science introduces children to the skills of observation, description, problem solving, seeing relationships, logical reasoning and inference. Students will investigate:

- Characteristics of objects
- Objects in the sky
- Characteristics of living things
- Weather
- Properties of earth material
- Healthy habits

Mathematics

The mathematics program uses a hands-on approach to teaching math, which is organized around:

- Problem solving and reasoning
- Number sense and whole number computation
- Algebra (patterns and relationships)
- Geometry (spatial sense and measurement)
- Data and statistics

Math lessons are designed to provide children with many concrete experiences to help them develop a good foundation toward abstract math concepts. Lessons are planned to help children see relationships and to build mathematical skills.

Art

Art is an expressive and intellectual process taught through hands-on discovery. To enhance students' learning, our art curriculum is often integrated with other subjects, such as thinking critically, solving problems and personal expression. Kindergarten children will explore and use a variety of materials to draw, identify, paint and create dimensional products. Art can make a significant contribution to children's learning and development, as well as prepare students for the future.

Music

Music experiences in kindergarten are designed to be exciting and fun. Active participation is the means by which students discover their singing voice, develop listening skills, experience percussion instruments and move to the pulse and moods of music. Music students learn:

- Singing alone and with others
- Recognizing rhythms and patterns
- Use of musical instruments



Library/Media

The library media program provides opportunities for children to select books, listen to stories and participate in oral language activities. Kindergarteners will:

- Develop strategies for selecting their own literature
- Develop an appreciation of literature
- Develop technology skills

Early experiences in the library help establish reading readiness and motivate an interest in reading for enjoyment and learning.

Admission Requirements

Age Requirements: The Blue Valley School District adheres to Kansas State Law 72-1107 regarding the minimum age for entrance to school. There are no exceptions and no testing for early admission. Any child who will attain the age of five years on or before the last day of August shall be eligible to attend kindergarten. Any child who will attain the age of six years on or before the last day of August shall be eligible to attend first grade. See Board Policy 3112 at www.bluevalleyk12.org/policies.

Birth Certificates: Kansas law requires the student's legal name to be on all school records. Families must bring a valid registered birth certificate to school before a child can be legally enrolled in kindergarten; this must be on file within 30 calendar days from the date of admission. The child's birth certificate may be obtained from the Bureau of Vital Statistics, Division of Health, at the state of the child's birth.

A hospital certificate is not acceptable. The school will make a copy of the birth certificate to be retained in the student's file. For more information, see Board Policy 3114 at www.bluevalleyk12.org/policies.

Immunization and Health Assessment Requirements: Families are required to have their child fully immunized prior to school entrance. Immunization guidelines are subject to change based on updated information from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHEKS). For most current information, go to www.kdheks.gov/immunize/download/KCI_Form.pdf.

For additional health assessment information, see Board Policy 3113.1 at www.bluevalleyk12.org/policies. For additional immunization information, see Board Policy 3113.2 at www.bluevalleyk12.org/policies.

Blue Valley Elementary Schools

Aspen Grove Elementary . . . (913) 624-2500 www.bluevalleyk12.org/AGE	Liberty View Elementary . . . (913) 239-6200 www.bluevalleyk12.org/LVE	Prairie Star Elementary. (913) 239-7100 www.bluevalleyk12.org/PSE
Blue River Elementary (913) 239-6000 www.bluevalleyk12.org/BRE	Mission Trail Elementary . . . (913) 239-6200 www.bluevalleyk12.org/MTE	Stanley Elementary (913) 239-7200 www.bluevalleyk12.org/STAN
Cedar Hills Elementary (913) 239-3300 www.bluevalleyk12.org/CHE	Morse Elementary (913) 239-6800 www.bluevalleyk12.org/MOR	Stilwell Elementary. (913) 239-7300 www.bluevalleyk12.org/STIL
Cottonwood Point Elementary (913) 239-6100 www.bluevalleyk12.org/CPE	Oak Hill Elementary. (913) 239-6900 www.bluevalleyk12.org/OHE	Sunrise Point Elementary . . . (913) 239-7500 www.bluevalleyk12.org/SPE
Harmony Elementary (913) 239-6200 www.bluevalleyk12.org/HES	Overland Trail Elementary. . (913) 239-7000 www.bluevalleyk12.org/OTE	Sunset Ridge Elementary . . . (913) 239-7400 www.bluevalleyk12.org/SRE
Heartland Elementary (913) 239-6300 www.bluevalleyk12.org/HRT		Timber Creek Elementary . . (913) 239-7800 www.bluevalleyk12.org/TCE
Indian Valley Elementary (913) 239-6400 www.bluevalleyk12.org/IVE		Valley Park Elementary (913) 239-7600 www.bluevalleyk12.org/VPE
Lakewood Elementary. (913) 239-6500 www.bluevalleyk12.org/LKE		Wolf Springs Elementary (913) 624-2400 www.bluevalleyk12.org/WSE
Leawood Elementary. (913) 239-6600 www.bluevalleyk12.org/LES		



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