

Primary Orientation



Holland Road
Elementary School

A BIG STEP

Your child is about to take a big step --- starting school. Important attitudes about school and learning, as well as feelings about self, are formed in this first year.



We at school want the best for your child.

We have prepared this booklet to answer some of the questions that parents frequently ask about school and to suggest ways in which you may help your child make a smooth transition from home to school.

Good communication between home and school will be of benefit to us all.

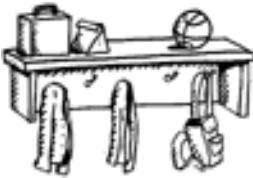
The Communication Folder, and/or calling the school (860-4170), is a great way to get messages to us.

WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW BEFORE STARTING PRIMARY

Independence and self-reliance are important skills for school-age children.

It would be helpful if your child:

- State, print (using a capital for first letter only) and recognize his/her first and last name, and be familiar with parent's names.
- Take off and put on their own indoor and outdoor clothing. Boots should be large enough to slip on and off easily. Buttons and zippers should be easy to use and clothing should be comfortable and appropriate for school and the weather.



Velcro or slip-on sneakers they wear indoors, unless your child is able to tie independently.

- Recognize his/her own clothing. It is important that **EVERYTHING** that will be removed (hats, gloves, boots, sweatshirts, and coats) is labeled with your child's name.
- Support your child developing good personal hygiene habits. (i.e., toileting, flushing, hand washing, and using tissues).
- Printing, cutting, gluing and coloring experiences are important skills.
- Children should be able to zip and pack school bags and lunch bags independently.
- Your child's backpack should be big enough to hold a 3-ring binder.

WHAT WILL THEY LEARN?

Children develop an appreciation of self and others through...

- Learning to work and play cooperatively in groups (i.e., sharing, turn taking, problem solving)
- Learning to follow the everyday rules and routines of the classroom and school
- Listening to other children's ideas and offering ideas of their own
- Learning the conventions of social language within a classroom (i.e. active listening, turn-taking, raising hand and waiting in order to contribute)
- Developing responsibility and respect for their belongings, others belongings and school property
- Sharing their own art, writing, and other abilities.

AFTER YOUR CHILD STARTS SCHOOL

Reinforce what your child is learning at school.

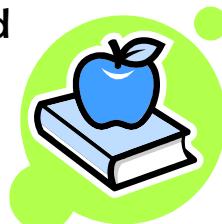
- Ask **specific** questions about what he/she did at school (i.e. What was the story about today? Sing me the song you learned in music.)
- Review work brought home and have him/her explain it to you.
- Check your child's schoolbag and Communication Folders DAILY for work, notes, and announcements.
- Send your child to school at the proper time: not too early (before there is supervision) and not late – the duty bell rings at 7:40am! Classes start at 8:00am!
 - Establish frequent and open communication with the school. Call the teacher or write in the Communication Folder if you have any questions.
 - Ensure he/she returns school items promptly and in good condition. Lost/damaged books need to be replaced in a monetary fashion.



LITERACY EXPERIENCES

Literacy activities in the primary classroom enable children to participate in a variety of experiences which will help them develop the strategies they need to read the words, as well as the ability to make sense of the message contained in the print. Reading activities take place throughout the entire day in all areas of the program.

Daily reading experiences for the child will include guided reading sessions, which match students to appropriate leveled reading materials, shared and choral reading, literature circles, “Readers’ Theatre”, book buddies and

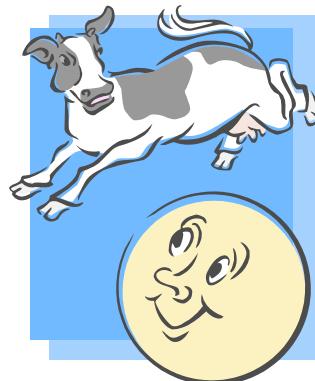


stories read aloud. These activities enable children to build an awareness of the print/meaning relationships. Most children will be reading independently at their level at the end of the year.

Reading at home with your child is essential to building and supporting their reading development. Children will be encouraged to do this by taking home appropriate level books to share with their families. As well, they will take home books from the library and, although many of these can't be read independently by your child, it helps them to develop their comprehension strategies.

LISTENING AND WRITING EXPERIENCES

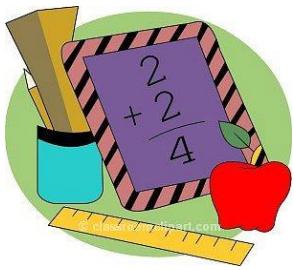
Writing experiences are a regular part of the primary child's day-to-day language activities. Just as children learn to read by reading, they also learn to write by writing. Developing an understanding of letters, sounds, words, and sentences enables the child to develop an increasing awareness of how the components of written language are organized to convey meaning. Most primary children can spell a few words upon arriving in September-usually "mom", "dad", "love", and their own name. We start writing on the very first day. They go from "drawing a story" in September, to writing stories independently by April. Any writing at home reinforces what they are doing in school. Collections of your child's early writings are fun for you to keep.



Listening to good quality literature, with both teacher and parent, is an important activity. Demonstrating that they can listen to content, as well as instructions, is an essential skill.

Singing or saying the poems and jingles we learn at school is an important first step in literacy development.

MATHEMATICS



The Mathematics program in Primary is designed to help children learn a wide range of concepts understanding of numbers and number concepts and to develop problem solving skills. This program is based on current research evaluating the most effective ways to teach young children Mathematics. The children become actively involved with concrete materials and make many discoveries using patterns blocks, unfix cubes, collections of buttons, 2-sided counters, etc., as well as a variety of measuring devices for comparing mass, volume, and length.

Through the course of the year, the children will work on outcomes based on number concepts, patterns and relations, shape and space - measurement & geometry, and data analysis. Activities are done in small groups to enable children to share ideas through conversation and develop cooperative learning skills. During these activities, the teacher works with small groups and observes how children interact with each other and the materials, and provides support. Children are encouraged to describe their observations using newly acquired mathematical vocabulary.

Here are some activities you might enjoy doing at home which would reinforce your child's math experiences.

- Encourage your child to make collections: stamps, shells, rocks, nuts and bolts, buttons, or seeds. Talk about the collection; compare the colors, shapes, size and textures. Put them into small groups of objects such as the small/big ones, or the round/square ones or the smooth/rough ones, etc. Encourage them to describe the qualities of each pile.
- Select three or four objects and show them to your child. Describe one of them to your child. Ask him/her to show you which one is the object you were describing.

- Use dice or games involving numbers like Trouble, Candy Land, Dominoes and Hopscotch.
- Find “I Spy” shapes or numbers in the environment.
- Draw attention to numbers in the environment, such as at the gas station, road signs, grocery store, or phone numbers.
- Explore your home for all the places one might find numbers; i.e. phone, microwave, etc.



LIBRARY



Each week the children go to the library. They may borrow and return books on the assigned day. If all students return their books on time, the class gets a certificate and a book for the classroom. We are constantly making additions to our shelves. There is an excellent selection of picture books and fine examples of good children's literature both fiction and non-fiction.

Please try to read the stories brought home by your child. Sharing books with your child creates a love of literature in your child as well as a desire to learn to read. Books are also an excellent means of helping to extend a child's language, both oral and written.

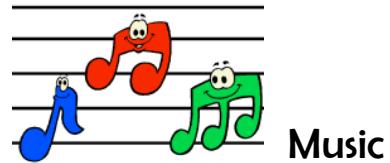
Our library program is coordinated by the generosity of parent volunteers and new parents are welcome to get involved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Children participate in Physical Education twice a week and children should wear loose and /or stretchy clothes. Short sleeved T-shirts are best. Sneakers are a must for each gym period. Shorts, if desired, should be worn under street clothes to facilitate ease of changing at gym time. Hoodies are not permitted. Velcro closures or slip-ons are wonderful for small children, allowing them to be independent when putting on sneakers. Please be sure that your child's clothing is comfortable and easy to run and jump in, on all days, not just Physical Education days.

MUSIC

Music is a wonderful way for students develop intellectually, physically, and emotionally. The program provides opportunities for children to gain experience, knowledge, and an appreciation for the many aspects of music. It is intended to develop skills in listening, singing, and movement through a variety of activities.



All students have two 30-minute classes each week. Schedules for Physical Education, Music and Library will be sent home in September.

BEFORE YOU CHILD COMES TO PRIMARY

Helpful Experiences:

- Cutting straight, curved and zigzag lines
- Gluing with glue stick and liquid glue (including proper recapping)
- Printing their name
- Putting crayons back into original container
- Capping markers
- Holding pencil with proper 3 point grip
- Differentiating between numbers and letters
- Differentiating between a letter and a word
- Recognizing and naming the letters in their name
- Coloring a shape (for the most part within the lines)
- Painting
- Rolling “snakes” from Playdoh™ or clay
- Saying the alphabet and counting to ten
- Bus safety rules (Stock Transportation runs a program in the summer.) Contact Stock Transportation for information at (902) 481-8400.
- Reciting a complete nursery rhyme
- Doing jigsaw puzzles