

# Central Bucks School District



# Kindergarten Program

## Welcome to Kindergarten

Kindergarten is one of the most important years in school. Although many children come to kindergarten following a year or two of nursery school, kindergarten is a child's first experience with the public school system. As the start of the child's formal schooling, the kindergarten year should be a joyous introduction to a lifetime of learning and growth.

The kindergarten program in Central Bucks is based on the premise that every human being has unique strengths, needs, and characteristics. It recognizes that children's intellectual, emotional, and physical need are interrelated. It takes into account that growth in these areas occurs unevenly, at different rates, and in a definite developmental pattern.

Central Bucks offers a half-day kindergarten program with children attending either in the morning or the afternoon. Sessions are not switched at mid-year. One-way transportation is provided for children eligible for busing. Morning session children take the bus in the morning and are picked up by parents at lunchtime. Afternoon session children are brought to school by parents and are bused home.

### Admission Requirements

To attend a Central Bucks kindergarten, children must be five years old before September 1st. No exceptions will be made for children with fifth birthdays later than August 31<sup>st</sup>.

### Skills Children Should Bring to Kindergarten

Central Bucks kindergarten teachers recommend that before entering kindergarten, children should be able to do the following things:

- ◆ Say first and last name and telephone number.
- ◆ Print name.
- ◆ Count aloud to ten.
- ◆ Recognize and name colors.
- ◆ Tie shoe laces.
- ◆ Be able to separate from parents.

### How Children Learn

Kindergarten children learn in many different ways. Some children learn best through sight or sound while others respond to tactile cues or to movement activities. Kindergarten teachers use a variety of techniques to reinforce learning.

In general, kindergarteners require active learning through hands-on experiences. The teacher is a facilitator who guides young learners as they explore, discover, manipulate, observe, express and experiment. Children also learn from each other, both individually and in groups, as they question and explore their world.

Children come to kindergarten with many individual differences. Not only are some twelve months older or younger than the others, children also range widely in maturity, temperament, personality, experience, abilities, and interests. To the teacher, these differences emphasize the importance of a thorough understanding of child development to provide a basis for meeting individual needs.

The kindergarten curriculum moves sequentially from concrete to abstract concepts. In turn, children learn to deal with the concrete (counting three blocks), the representational (marking three X's on a work sheet), the symbolic (recognizing that the numeral "3" stands for three), and the abstract (understanding what is meant by: *My brother is three. I have three pennies. School is over at three.*)

The kindergarten program provides children with opportunities to develop:

- „ Communication skills, using language, symbols (words and numbers), sounds, and movement.
- „ Cognitive skills, including logical thinking and problem-solving techniques.
- „ Curiosity and interest in learning.
- „ Creativity through play, art, music, literature, drama, and movement.
- „ Physical skills and coordination.
- „ Positive self-image.
- „ Independence, self-control, and responsibility.
- „ Social skills.
- „ A better understanding of the world and how it works.

## The Academic Program

Kindergarteners receive instruction in the same basic subjects as all other student: reading, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, library skill, and physical education.

Language arts include skills in listening, speaking, writing, and reading. The kindergarten program involves children in literature, sustained silent reading of self-selected books, oral and written composition, study of language structure and word meaning, and handwriting. The kindergarten reading program uses children's literature and the "shared reading" approach, in which the teacher models the reading process for beginning readers. Stories spark children's interest and become the basis for the teaching of beginning reading skills. The kindergarten math program is part of the Everyday Mathematics program and uses manipulative materials with a hands-on approach. Science and social studies units are project-oriented.



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