**Kindergarten Handbook**

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**Willard North Elementary**

**2019-2020**

**Mrs. Choate**

**Mrs. Wallace**

**The** ABC**’s of Kindergarten**

Welcome to Kindergarten. We are delighted to have your children in Kindergarten this year. Kindergarten is a time of new beginnings, of making friends, and of learning lots of new things each and every day. We hope this handbook will help you and your child answer any questions.

A

**Arrival**

To establish independence, we would like your student to walk to the classroom independently. Feel free to easy into this transition and after a few weeks your child should feel confident enough to find their way in on their own. Students may begin entering their classrooms at **8:20 am** and the tardy bell will ring at 8:40 am. If they arrive before 8:20, they will be sent to the office or Tiger Tales to wait. Students will be dismissed at 3:30pm. Students riding a bus will be dismissed to the bus pick up area at the back of the school. Students being picked up by their families will be dismissed to the side doors (South) or front doors (East) (depending on their grade level) to the parent pickup area. Students walking home from school will be dismissed last to ensure their safety.

**Attendance**

Good attendance is crucial for student learning! Please contact the school office any time your child is absent from school. If your child has been ill, do not send him/her back to school until they have been free of vomiting and/or a fever for twenty-four hours. School starts at 8:40. Please have your child at school on time.

B

**Backpacks**

Your child should bring his/her backpack to school every day. Please make sure your child’s backpack is large enough to hold a 2-pocket folder. Also, please do NOT send backpacks with wheels. The backpack will be used to carry his/her daily folder to and from school. We ask that you check the folder daily for information regarding your child’s progress, as well as important school information. Please send it back every day and we will check the daily folder for important information. **We do not look through students’ backpacks for notes or papers that need to be turned in; it is the child’s responsibility to give these things to the teacher in the daily folder.**

**B.E.E. Books**

Your child will be responsible for transporting their B.E.E. Book to and from school daily. Look for homework, completed work, behavior notes, etc. to be sent home in this book. Notes to us, lunch money (in a marked envelope, please), book orders, and anything else needing to be sent to school should be sent in the B.E.E. book.

**Birthdays**

We love to celebrate birthdays! If you would like to send a small treat for your child’s birthday, please check with your child’s teacher ahead of time so we can tell you how many students we have. Due to health regulations, we cannot have anything homemade.

**Breakfast**

Please let us know if you would like your child to eat breakfast at school. In the past, some parents have been surprised by a breakfast bill. Breakfast costs $1.30.

C

**Communication**

Throughout the year we communicate with you through email, notes, telephone calls, and parent teacher conferences. We encourage you to contact us if you have any questions or concerns. You may contact us before or after school at 742-2597, by email (at michellechoate@willardschools.net, erinmcnabb@willardschools.net, or nataliewallace@willardschools.net), by note, or make an appointment. We look forward to working with you to make your child’s Kindergarten experience a positive one!

**Clothing**

Your child’s safety is of the utmost importance, so please have your child wear **tennis shoes** and play clothes to school. Also, please make sure your child is able to button and zip his/her own pants, as this may help prevent bathroom accidents. Please keep an extra set of clothes in your child’s backpack as well in case of an accident or mess.

**Conferences**

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held at the end of the first quarter and in the spring. If you would like to have a conference at any other time to discuss your child’s progress, please let your child’s teacher know. It is important that we have open communication about your child, so we are happy to schedule a meeting with you any time.

D

**Daily Schedule**

We will send home a copy of our daily schedule during the first week of school. It will change throughout the year as students’ needs and abilities change.

**Discipline**

Your child deserves the most positive educational climate possible for academic growth. We will discuss our discipline plan many times during the first weeks of school, but we would appreciate it if you would review the plan with your child (a copy of the plan is attached). Our goal is to help students become responsible for their behavior choices.

**Dismissal**

Students will be dismissed at 3:30pm (3:00 on Monday). Students riding a bus will be dismissed to the bus pick up area at the back of the school. Students being picked up by their families will be dismissed to the side doors or back doors (depending on their grade level) to the parent pickup area. Students walking home from school will be dismissed last to ensure their safety.

 If your child is leaving early from school (for example a doctor’s appointment) you must sign your child out at the office and they will call to have your child sent to the office for you to pick them up. If you want your child to go home differently (for example to ride home with another parent or student) then you must send a note to school.

E

**Early Out Mondays**

The Willard School District will be dismissing school 30 minutes early every Monday.

We will dismiss at 3:00.

**Email**

You can contact us through email (at michellechoate@willardschools.net erinmcnabb@willardschools.net nataliewallace@willardschools.net). We encourage parents to contact us through email rather than by phone during the school day if possible.

**Emergency Numbers**

Please keep the office up to date on any changes you may have in phone numbers. It is vital that we are able to contact you.

F

**Family**

We consider ourselves one big family at Willard North Elementary. We welcome you as the newest members of our family!

**Field Trip**

We will take a fall field trip to the Fieth Family Farm.

**Fire Drills**

We will have fire drills frequently so students will know what to do in the event of an emergency. This can be scary for kindergarteners the first few times, but we will reassure them that we just want to keep them safe. If this is a major concern for your child, you may want to talk about it at home as well.

G

**Guided Reading**

Guided Reading is a critical part of our reading instruction. Students will receive small-group reading instruction on their level starting in October or sooner if they are already reading. Groups will change frequently, as all students learn at a different pace. During this time, please look for Guided Reading materials that will be sent home and returned to school on a daily basis.

H

**Help at Home**

We believe the partnership between the teacher and parents is critical for student success. You are your child’s first teacher, and your help at home is so important. We will periodically send homework, games to play with your child, etc. ***We encourage you to read with your child at home every day.***

**Health**

Please let us know if there are special circumstances which may affect your child. These could include medication that makes your child sleepy, a death in the family, etc. Also, please let the nurse, as well as your teacher, know of any allergies your child may have, especially food allergies. We do many activities with food throughout the year to complement our lessons and it would be helpful to know when we are planning activities.

I

**Illness**

Please do not send your child to school if he or she is sick, as it may cause illness to spread. Students **must be free of symptoms** (fever, vomiting, and diarrhea) without medication for twenty-four hours before returning to school.

**Invitations**

If you are planning a party and would like to pass out invitations at school please make sure that **EVERYONE** in the class is invited, or all boys or all girls. If it is just select people, the invitations cannot be passed out at school, as this may cause feelings to be hurt.

J

**Joy of Learning**

Learning should be enjoyable for students! Our intention is to teach skills appropriate to our students' development that will encourage them to become lifelong learners. We want your student to be excited to come to school and learn throughout his/her school career. Let Kindergarten be the foundation for that love of learning.

K

**Kindness**

Students in our classroom are encouraged and expected to treat all members of our class and of our school with kindness and respect at all times. Bothering others, bullying, and interrupting learning will not be permitted.

L

**Leader In Me**

We will learn and model the7 Habits of Happy Kids in our classroom and school.

**Library**

Students have Library once a week. They are allowed to check out two library books each week and keep them in their book box at school.

**Literacy**

Our Communications Arts curriculum reflects a balanced literacy program. Students are immersed in reading and writing throughout the day in a variety of ways, including read-alouds, Shared Reading (big books), phonics instruction, word building, Writer’s Workshop, Guided Reading, etc. One of our most important jobs as kindergarten teachers is to build a strong foundation in reading and writing.

**Lunch**

Your child will receive a lunch card that works like a debit card. Lunch money that you send to school will be credited to your child’s card. When there is a deficit, the school will send a note home. Students will have 25 minutes to eat lunch.

M

**Manners**

Good manners are encouraged and expected in the classroom and in the school. This helps to create a respectful, safe, and comfortable learning environment.

**Math**

Our kindergarten math curriculum provides students with mathematical experiences that help them develop number sense and a positive attitude that will help them throughout their entire school career. We employ a hands-on, problem solving approach. Math games are an important part of our math curriculum.

**Medicines at School**

The students are not allowed to have any medicines in the classroom. If they have a prescription medicine to be taken during the day, you will need to notify the school nurse.

N

**News in the Classroom**

We will update our classroom websites weekly. It will contain important information about our classroom and school events.

O

**Others**

We will help others learn to be leaders in the classroom.

 P

**Parties**

We will have three class parties, a Fall party, Winter party, and a Valentine’s Day party, which will be planned by the homeroom parent(s).

Q

**Questions**

Please feel free to contact us any time!

R

**Rest and Read**

We do have a resting time in kindergarten. We call it Rest and Read. After some quiet time, we allow students to look at a book. Kindergarten is very busy and Rest and Read is needed by all. Please send a resting mat to school (no sleeping bags or blankets please) for your kindergartner to use during rest time. Please remind your child that toys are not allowed at school and should not be brought for Rest and Read (this includes stuffed animals).

**Recess**

We have at least 30 minutes of recess each day. Please be aware of the weather and help your child dress appropriately. We will be going outside unless the wind chill is below thirty-two degrees.

**Restroom**

We will take a few restroom breaks throughout the day. Students may also go to the restroom by themselves unless the teacher is teaching a lesson. Please let your child’s teacher know if your child must use the restroom very frequently, or if your child has accidents often. Some parents choose to have their children keep extra clothes in their backpacks just in case of an accident, especially at the beginning of the school year.

**Report Cards**

Report cards will be sent home four times during the year. At the end of the first quarter, we will have a Parent-Teacher conference in the fall and spring to discuss your child’s report card.

S

**Shoe Tying**

Please help your child practice tying his/her shoes at home. It takes a lot of practice, so keep working at it! We have a very rigorous curriculum, so we will not spend class time learning to tie shoes.

**Shoes**

Tennis shoes or closed-toe shoes are strongly encouraged every day! It is difficult for students to run and play safely at recess in flip-flops and sandals.

**Snacks**

We will have a brief snack time towards the end of the day. Snack will NOT be provided so please send a small, quick, and nutritional snack with your child every day. Some ideas would be: fruit, granola bars, cheese stick, pretzels, etc. Candy is not allowed as a snack.

**Supplies**

You have been given a list of supplies we use in kindergarten. Supplies that are not on the list will be sent home. We may request other supplies during the year as we run out of things. You do not need to write your child’s name on the folders or any other supplies.

T

**Toys**

Children are **not** allowed to bring toys to school. If a toy is accidentally lost or broken, feelings are hurt. Toys that are brought to school will be confiscated by school staff.

U

**Unique**

Kindergarten is a unique experience. It is the foundation for success, and every child deserves to be successful. That is our intention for this school year. There will be A LOT of learning going on this year, and young children learn through active, hands-on experiences and through play.

V

**Visitors**

For the safety of our students, **all** visitors must sign in at the office and wear a visitor pass.

**Velcro**

If your child is not able to tie their shoes, Velcro is appreciated, but not required. While we do want to support and develop students in all areas, it can be very time consuming tying and retying the shoes of 20 or more students throughout the day. ☺

**Volunteers**

You are welcome to become involved in whatever way is possible for your family. All volunteers will need to pass a background check before working around children. We are always in need of donations to help with our learning.

W

**Web Site**

We have classroom web sites. On our sites, you will find important information about the happenings of our class, class photo galleries, school events, and more. It will be updated weekly.

**Writing**

We use the Writer’s Workshop framework in our classroom. This format honors where all students are on the writing continuum, and allows students to learn the process of writing in a risk-free environment. Students will have independent writing time each day. We will also teach students in one-on-one writing conferences and small assisted writing groups. This allows the teacher to scaffold each student as an emerging writer. Students begin with drawing pictures that tell a story, and eventually begin to write letters, words, and sentences to represent a message. Encourage your child by providing paper, pencils, crayons, etc. Let him/her see you writing. Writing serves a purpose, and purposeful learning is the most powerful learning of all!

X

**Extraordinary Learning**

We have a year of extraordinary learning experiences ahead of us!

Y

**Younger Siblings**

We love having parent volunteers in the classroom for special activities. It is in your child's best interest to have our parent volunteers available **without** younger children. This will allow you to be focused on the class and have some special time with your kindergartener. Thank you for making childcare arrangements for your child's younger sibling(s).

Z

**ZZZZ’s**

Make sure that your child gets plenty of rest. Setting and keeping a routine at bedtime is a wonderful gift you can give your child. This will allow your child to be alert and ready to learn at school each day.

Contact Information

School Information

Willard North Elementary

Mrs. Amanda Hambey, Principal

409 South Farmer Road

Willard, MO 65781

417-742-2597

Teacher Information

Mrs. Michelle Choate

417-742-2597

Email: michellechoate@willardschools.net

Website: http://mrsmichellechoate.weebly.com/

Mrs. Natalie Wallace

417-742-2597

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