

# KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

## *Philosophy*

The Wake County Public School System's kindergarten philosophy focuses on the individual child and that child's development. The kindergarten program is based on the following beliefs:

- Each child is an individual with unique learning styles and potential.
- The young child is active and vigorous; touching, feeling, and moving are vital and important parts of a child's life.
- A child learns by watching and noticing what is going on around him. He learns by handling and experimenting with materials, by discussing his thoughts and feelings, and by questioning what he sees and does.
- For the young child, the process of doing a task is as important as accomplishing the task.
- Learning is inherently intertwined with self-concept. One aspect does not progress without the other being affected.
- How and what a child learns is directly related to how that child develops as a person.

## **Entrance requirements/ registration**

By state law, children entering kindergarten must be five years old on or before October 16 of that year.

Kindergarten registration is held in February each year. The specific date(s) is publicized through the news media in January.

Newcomers moving to the area should register their child at their base school as early as possible after having proof of residence.

If, for whatever reason, parents are unable to register their children during kindergarten registration in February, they may register at any point prior to the opening of school in August. However, it is important that registration be completed as early as possible. Schools are staffed 12 months a year so there is no need to wait until August to register.

To register for kindergarten, go to the school the child would be assigned to based on the parent's or guardian's residence. If you are unsure of the base school assignment, call a nearby school, or the Office of Growth Management (850-1921), and ask them to check.

You may also check on our Webpage, [www.wcpss.net](http://www.wcpss.net). Children do not need to be present for registration.

Parents should take the following items to the school for registration:

- Proof of residence** Examples include a rental agreement, a housing contract, electric bill, or gas bill; telephone and cable bills are not acceptable. A driver's license will not be accepted.
- An official birth certificate** Official birth certificates may be obtained from the county or state health department where the child was born. Copies of birth certificates will not be accepted.
- Immunization records.** Medical evidence of the following immunizations must be submitted:
- Diphtheria-TetanusPertussis (DTP or DtaP) Vaccine:** 5 doses. If the 0 dose was given on or after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, the series is complete.
- ✓ **Polio Vaccine:** 4 doses of oral polio vaccine (OPV). If the 3<sup>rd</sup> dose is given on or after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, the series is complete. Two doses of Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) may be substituted for 2 doses of OPV.
- ✓ **Measles Vaccine:** 2 doses received at least 30 days apart one dose on or after 1st birthday and a second dose before enrolling in school (k1) for the first time. (Commonly given as MMR.)

- School hours** – Vary. Contact your school.
- Assigned school** – Students are assigned to a school based on their parent's or guardian's address. Students must be registered at their base school.
- Transportation** – School bus transportation is provided for all students who live at least one and a half miles from the base school. Parents/guardians will be notified of bus stops prior to the beginning of school.
- Progress reports** – Kindergarten report cards are issued at the end of each semester. Individual parent/guardian conferences are held at the end of the first nine weeks of each semester. Parent/guardian teacher conferences may also be held at other times of the year.

#### Curriculum

The young child entering school does not separate experiences into specific subject areas. A child's world is not comprised of specific subjects called math, reading, science, etc. In the young child's world, things connect one to the other and are interrelated.

As a result, the kindergarten curriculum reflects a comprehensive introduction to learning. The child can study and explore beginning at any place which is meaningful to the child.

Effectively planned learning centers are used as a means of organizing curricular activities to involve learners through concrete manipulation of and direct interaction with their environment. Centers provide children with a wide variety of active learning materials, encourage the development of self-direction in the learner, provide for individual differences, and foster the development of a positive self-image. A variety of learning opportunities is provided for each child to ensure a rich and challenging experience.

- ✓ **Rubella Vaccine and Mumps Vaccine:** 1 dose of each on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday. (Commonly given as MMR.)
- ✓ **Haemophilus Influenza type b Vaccine (Hib):** 1 dose at or after 1<sup>st</sup> birthday or the complete series. Hib is not given if the child is 5 years or older.
- ✓ **Hepatitis B Vaccine (HBV):** 3 doses (children born on or after July 1, 1994).

**Note:** Some children may have received Tetramune Vaccine which includes the DTP and Hib vaccines.

- ✓ **Varicella:** 1 dose on or after **1** birthday (children born on or after April 1, 2001).

**Failure to meet these requirements, as set by the North Carolina Immunization Laws, requires the school principal to EXCLUDE a child from attendance unless the child is in the dose waiting period.**

- ✓ **Health Assessment Form.** North Carolina law requires a kindergarten health assessment (physical examination) before a child can enter kindergarten. This health assessment shall be made no more than 12 months prior to the date of school entry. Proper forms are available at Wake County schools, the Wake County Department of Health, and area doctors' offices. An exam can be obtained at the health department if you have no physician or health insurance.

#### General Information

- Meals** – A breakfast program and a well-balanced lunch are provided in the school cafeteria each day, or students may bring their own lunches. The prices for school meals are determined annually by the Board of Education. Some children qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

Contact your school for details.

#### Kindergarten Screening

All Wake County kindergarten classes use an initial screening process to provide teachers with information about each child so they can design an appropriate program of instruction. Teachers use the results of an initial assessment to provide an academically stimulating program for all kindergarten children. Your child will attend only one full day during the first week of school so that teachers can conduct the assessment during these staggered entry days.

The goal of the initial screening is to promote student success through early identification of developmental needs and styles. All incoming kindergarten students will be screened in five areas: language and literacy, mathematical, social-emotional, fine motor, and gross motor development. Screening instruments and observations will define a profile of a child's development. The child's teacher can then tailor instruction, recognizing a child's strengths and needs.

#### Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to become knowledgeable about the kindergarten program and to become actively involved with their child's education. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and/or work with their children at home.

**For more information about Wake County Schools' kindergarten program, contact your base school or call the Kindergarten Program office at 850-1854**