

Preparing for KINDERGARTEN



Bear Creek Community Charter School

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Preparing for Kindergarten

Do not let the size of this booklet scare you! Your child already knows many of the skills listed. This booklet is designed merely to help you understand all of the things your child may learn beforehand to make his/her first year at school more comfortable.

You have plenty of time to review this booklet and play with your child so we encourage you to keep it handy and try the suggestions! You are receiving this booklet early because you and your child are going to kindergarten! Your kindergarten teacher is excited to meet you and welcome you into his/her classroom.

Welcome to Kindergarten!

We look forward to seeing you in August!

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Soon your child will be entering kindergarten; this is a new and exciting time and place for both of you. While many parents feel sad that their child is growing up and even leaving home, kindergarten is an opportunity for your child to continue to learn and mature. You can start now working and playing with your child to make sure he/she has some preparation for what to expect in kindergarten. Having a few skills before school begins will help your child understand what the teachers and others are talking about and what is expected of him/her in the classroom. Information can help make the transition from home or childcare to school smoother and more fun.

What does “parent involvement” mean? According to *No Child Left Behind*, the Federal Education Act that provides guidance to school districts, it is a “meaningful, on-going, two-way conversation between parents and schools.” What does it mean to you as the parent? Parent involvement means that you care about your child’s education and will find ways to let her/him and the school know you care. When families send a positive message to their children about the importance of education, children have more success in school. Research has proven that students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, to adjust well to school, to attend school regularly, and to graduate. So talk to your child’s teacher often throughout the school year. Tell the teacher what you know about your child and ask for more ways to help him/her at home. Have conversations with your child about school. Ask him/her to “tell me something about your day at school.”

Tell your child that education is important and that you want her/him to grow up to be a successful person who does their best in school!

- Read together **every day** for at least 15 minutes.
- Talk and/or cut out things you see in magazines and newspapers and glue them on a blank piece of paper to make a book of favorite things.
- Sing songs and play music in your home or car.
- Search for interactive, educational websites.
- Color and draw.
- Play board games together.
- Cook together and talk about how to cook –mix, stir, pour, bake.
- Work with your child’s teacher to help your child succeed.
- Make shopping lists together and read food labels at the grocery store.
- Pay attention to your child’s home work. Is it completed and turned in on time?
- Check your child’s school bag daily for notes from school.
- Attend parent teacher conferences and school events.
- Complete school forms and return them promptly.
- Give your child the school supplies needed- pencil, crayons, scissors, and glue.
- Offer to help at school. Many volunteer jobs can also be done at home.
- Take your child to the library. Ask the librarian to give your child a library card.
- Read road signs and point out things as you drive.
- Visit community events, cultural fairs, museums, parks, and ball games.
- Play catch, jump rope, hopscotch, hide and seek.
- Keep your child healthy with lots of sleep, exercise, and healthy food!
- Limit television. Playing and getting exercise is better for them.
- Have a regular bedtime. 8:00/8:30 PM is good for most young children.
- Dress your child for the weather.

The ABCs Of Reading To And With Your Child

Ask questions while reading together. “What do you think will happen next?”

Buy books for birthdays or holidays.

Chat about what is happening in the book and how it relates to everyday life.

Drop everything and read. Set aside 15 minutes a day during which the whole family reads.

Examine book illustrations in detail. Select books that have large, bright pictures.

Find books that interest your child.

Give hints when your child gets stuck on a word.

Have fun. Smile and enjoy the story. Read with a slow, relaxed and expressive voice.

Invite your child to the bookstore. Take time to lounge in the chairs and browse the books.

Join in on your child’s reading successes. Celebrate every small step with sincere praise.

Kids love to receive mail. Send your child a magazine subscription to an area that interests him/her.

Learn to read *with*—not just to—your child. Read aloud, share ideas, and answer questions.

Model reading. Share with your child, whether you’re reading for information or for entertainment.

Never force your child to read. If you’re both too tired and discouraged to read, take a break.

Offer your child a variety of reading materials, such as books, magazines, cereal boxes, and newspapers.

Predict story elements, draw conclusions, and retell the story with your child.

Quiz your child at the end of a story. Informally, of course!

Reread books to familiarize your child with words and to build their self confidence.

Sing songs and recite poetry to help develop language and listening skills.

Try to help your child understand that it’s okay to make mistakes.

Understand that reading is developmental and that it takes time and practice to become fluent.

Visit your local library. Sign your child up for his/her own library card.

Welcome wordless picture books into your collections. They generate conversation and allow a nonreader to create his/her own stories.

“Xhibit” patience when your child is selecting books. Your support is empowering.

You are the most important person in helping your child develop a lifelong love of reading.

Zealous readers are the result of supportive and nurturing role models.



Handwriting Tips

As educators we know that handwriting is developmental. The hands need to be strengthened to allow your child to be successful with fine motor activities. Please refer to the Fine Motor Activity section to get ideas for activities to incorporate into your child's day.

If your child is showing success with cutting activities, controlling his/her pencil and crayons with a pincer grip, and is drawing lines, shapes, and pictures with success then he/she is most likely ready to begin to learn the formation of their letters.

We strongly feel that any child beginning the handwriting process enter it with ease and praise. This packet includes the correct guidelines (by step number) of how to form the letters of the alphabet correctly. It is very important that your child learn the correct way to form their letters because it has been proven that children who do not learn how to form their letters correctly have difficulty in mastering the technique. The long term advantage is that as your child progresses to writing his/her own

sentences the consistency in the flow of the formation of all their letters will not only allow their ideas to flow but will get their ideas down in a legible manner. Most importantly, learning the correct method does not tire the hand as much as piecing letters incorrectly.

As you work with your child we ask that you begin by pointing out the correct way to make a letter. Choose only one letter at a time and allow your child many opportunities to practice it. Certainly, use the numbers as a guide associated with the correct steps to form the letter. You can highlight the number as a visual reminder for your child to follow if needed. Prior to using his/her pencil, have your child trace the correct steps with their finger until that feels comfortable. Other ideas prior to pencil paper formation are to form the letter using finger paint, pudding, or sand. Trays or wax paper are a life saver for these activities. We suggest you keep this booklet nearby as a guide.

Please notice that we feel strongly that young children can form their letters on unlined paper first and then transfer to large lined paper. It is very important that you do not expect perfection at this age. The most important step is that he/she learns the formation correctly. The perfect letter with regard to size and line formation will come with practice and maturity. Have fun while giving your child a real gift! Remember that praise is the key to all success!!!

How to Help Your Child Become a Writer



Scribbles and letter like symbols are the beginning of writing and these experiments with language are fine!



Put your child's work on the refrigerator or share it with friends and relatives.



Let your child use different materials for writing, such as pens, markers, crayons, chalk, and various kinds of paper.



Set up a writing area with a lamp, dictionary, stationary, and stickers or stamps.



Point out different forms of writing around you: signs, labels, cereal boxes, catalogs, newspapers, and magazines.



Let your child see you write often: grocery lists, reminders, notes, letters, and cards.



Put magnetic letters on the refrigerator to spell out words and messages.



Put notes in your child's lunchbox, book bag, under pillows, in pockets, on the TV, and other surprising places.



Accept your child for their efforts at writing and spelling.



Don't make your child "correct" or recopy something he/she has written for fun. Praise what he/she can do.



Practice will help develop better writers. Spelling and grammar will also improve with frequent opportunities.

Make The First Day A Happy One!

The first day at the “big school” can seem frightening to even the most confident child. Here are some fun ways you can help make their first day a happy one:

- ❖ Be positive. Tell your child that education is important and that you are happy that she/he is going to school to learn so many new things, meet new friends and have fun.
- ❖ Discuss your child’s concerns about school. If he/she has fears, help him/her to know that everything will be okay because his/her teacher and his/her family care about him/her and will help him/her.
- ❖ Make sure your child knows that you, his/her room, his/her favorite toys and friends will be waiting for him/her at the end of the school day.
- ❖ You can visit the school and classroom before the school year starts during “Meet and Greet” in August. Show your child his/her classroom, the lunchroom, and the playground; then it will be familiar on his/her first day.
- ❖ Children sometimes worry about using the bathroom at school. Let your child know that there will be a bathroom available either in the classroom or in the main hallway that they will be able to use with permission when they need to use it.
- ❖ At least one week before school begins, start putting your child to bed earlier so she/he will have an easier transition in getting up early for school. Most children require a minimum of 8-10 hours of sleep per night.
- ❖ Make sure your child knows how he/she is getting to school and how he/she is getting home.
- ❖ Children do their best when they come to school healthy, well rested and eat healthy foods!



Language

It is important for your child to have clear speech and use words in a way that will help teachers and others understand what he/she needs. If you are concerned about your child's speech, discuss your concerns with your child's teacher and/or an administrator. He/she should have enough words in his/her vocabulary so that he/she understands what the teacher, bus driver, cafeteria workers, friends and others are saying to him/her. If English is not your child's first language, he/she may get extra help.

Here are some suggestions for words your child needs to know to make school easier for him/her.

- Before your child begins school he/she should know:

First and last name

Age and Birthday- e.g., 5 years old, May 10, 2004

Sex- boy or girl, male or female

Home telephone number

Address or street he/she lives on

What his/her house or apartment looks like

Foods he/she **cannot** eat (food allergies)-nuts, seeds, milk, orange juice



- Know the names of family members and how they are related

Father's name – first and last name

Mother's name – first and last name

Brother or sister's names – first and last names

Grandparents' names

The difference between friends and family



- Know the names of body parts:

Hair – and what color

Head

Face

Eyes – and what color

Nose

Mouth

Ears – how many

Chin

Knees

Toes – how many

Neck

Cheek

Arms

Hands

Fingers – how many

Stomach

Back

Legs

Feet

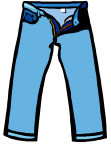
Ankles



- Know how to tell someone that he/she has a pain or is hurt.



- Should understand “good vs. bad” touching.
- Know the names of all her/his clothes. You can name clothes while dressing.



Sweater	Coat, Jacket
Shirt, Blouse	Shoes, socks, boots
Undershirt	Dress, skirt
Underwear	Hat, scarf
Pants, shorts	Mittens, glove



- Know words for placement and time. Have your child look for hidden objects.

near	far	in front of
under	over	behind
up	down	above
bottom	top	below
soon	now	under
early	late	over
morning	afternoon	middle
first	last	left
never	sometimes	right
day	night	out
high	low	In
on	off	

- Words about differences and opposites:

Color – (light, dark), (white, black), (shiny, dull)
 Size – (large, small), (tall, short), (wide, narrow)
 Comparing – (same, different), (empty, full), (cold, hot)

Other words a child should know:

1. Furniture – chair, table, desk, couch, dresser, stool
2. Things around the house – garbage or trashcan, window, door closet, ceiling, hallway, toilet, sink, curtains, rugs, utensils
3. Things around the school – shelf, books, cubby, bins, chalkboards, computer, restroom (bathroom)
4. Things used for cleaning – sponge, rag, mop, broom, dustpan, vacuum
5. Names of animals – cat, dog, cow, pig, horse, or zoo animals
6. Foods they eat – bread, fruit, vegetables, meat, cheese, milk, juice

7. Words for feelings – scared, happy, excited, disappointed, angry, sad, upset, confused, embarrassed, mad, “hurt my feelings”
8. Touch words – rough, smooth, wet, slippery, soft, hot, sticky, cold, slimy
9. Names of neighborhood places - post office, sidewalk, playground, street, corner, school, hospital, doctor’s office, fire station, police station, yard, library
10. Moving Words – stop, go, come away, fast, slow, quickly, turn, run, jump, walk, crawl, reach, lift, raise your hand, and line up

Communication – can your child ...

1. be understood by others when he/she speaks?
2. understand others when they speak?
3. understand and answer simple questions?
4. tell others how he/she is feeling?
5. ask for what she/he wants? (bathroom, help, etc.)
6. tell a simple story in the right order (beginning, middle, and end) and about something that happened recently in his/her life?



Social/Emotional Readiness and Self-Help Skills

When children are ready for school, they understand what school is about and why they are going there. They are happy to be going to school and curious about learning new things and making new friends. Children come to school with different skill levels. Your child will learn the following skills while attending kindergarten.

▪ Your Child will learn how to:

1. Wait her/his turn
2. Be away from his/her family without being too sad
3. Follow the teacher's directions and do what is asked
4. Understand that others have feelings and rights
5. Know how to follow rules
6. Share items, work on projects with other children, be helpful
7. Ask for help when she/he needs it
8. Use his/her manners: say "please, thank you, excuse me, I'm sorry, can I play with you?"
9. Sit quietly for 15 to 20 minutes while working independently
10. Use words to settle disagreements
11. Eat snacks and lunch neatly, use a fork and a spoon
12. Continue to work on an activity for a short time even when she/he gets bored, it gets difficult, or when it takes a while to finish
13. Finish one activity, clean it up and put it away before beginning another
14. Put on and take off jackets, mittens, shoes, and hats
15. Hang up coat and hat on a hook
16. Open juice boxes and clean up lunch and snack wrappings
17. Go to the restroom, flush, wash hands and manage clothing



helpful



Motor Skills

Children have two different types of motor or movement skills. One is called *gross* motor or large muscle movements. These movements include running, jumping, climbing; activities that use arms and legs.

The other is called *fine* motor or small muscle movements. These movements include writing, putting small objects into openings, stacking blocks, turning pages, and other activities that use fingers and wrists.

Gross Motor Development

The fine motor strength, coordination and stamina skills necessary for handwriting, drawing, cutting, and coloring actually start with a strong large motor base from the core of the upper body extending out through the shoulders, arms, hands and out the fingers. This means activities developing the upper body may actually help your child's fine motor development. **Please have your child engage in plenty of climbing, bike riding, swimming, monkey bars, and tumbling.** Inside, try some actions that require weight bearing on the arms such as crawling, push-ups and the wheel barrel. Clapping overhead and other reaching activities also build strength in the shoulders. Keep activities safe, fun and short in duration. Be creative!

<u>Down, out, nose up back & up</u>	<u>Imagination Transportation</u>
Starting in a standing position, touch toes, walk forward with arms, hold nose down and up, walk back, stand – repeat.	Move from place to place in your home as various animals or vehicles: bears, crabs, snakes, train, jet etc. or by using various body parts: “Can you come to dinner with only one hand and one foot touching the floor?”

Fine Motor Development

There are actually many fun ways to help enhance fine motor development without working with pencils. Many of these may activities may be done with items found around your home. Some may be practiced in the car.

<u>Coin Turnover</u>	<u>Pick Up</u>
Place 10-15 coins in a line. Count forward as you turn each over using only the pointer finger and thumb . Count backward as you turn the coins back over. Practice coin skills as you do this by counting by 5's for nickels and by 10's for dimes. Repeat several times. Try with both hands.	Using only the pointer finger & thumb of one hand, pick up as many pen buttons, M&M's, pieces of cereal or other small items as can be held. Repeat several times trying to beat the previous count. Repeat using the opposite hand. Repeat using both hands simultaneously.
<u>Hand Band</u>	<u>Bubble Wrap pinch & Pop</u>
Place a hair band or rubber band around the fingers on one hand. Using on the banded hand, try to remove the band. Repeat several times. Once successfully done, try to put it back around the fingers. Try it with the opposite hand. This is not as easy as it seems 😊	Cut bubble wrap into squares about 3"x3". Using only the fingers of one hand, pinch and pop the bubbles and manipulate the plastic until all bubbles are popped. If this is too difficult, use the fingers of both hands to pinch & pop. Discard when finished!
<u>Shaving Cream Creation</u>	<u>Squeeze Please</u>
Using shaving cream on the bathtub wall to finger paint a large area. Encourage large circular movements, draw shapes or play tic tac toe. Let your child be the X. Wash off using a turkey baster, spray bottle or squirt gun to further enhance finger/hand development.	Soapy sponges, play dough/clay/silly putty, bread dough, hole punchers or stress balls.
	<u>Picker Upper</u>
	Use ice, salad, food tongs, tweezers & pliers to pick up small items.

Sensory Use

Children use their whole body- eyes, nose, ears, fingers, and mouth to learn new things. These are our 'senses' and they allow us to know if things are alike or different. Reading, science, and mathematics are based on these skills.

- Children entering kindergarten should be able to know same and different in:
 1. Size – (i.e. smaller and larger)
 2. Colors – (i.e. red and green)
 3. Shapes – (i.e. square and round)
 4. Touch – (i.e. soft and hard)
 5. Sounds – (i.e. loud and quiet)
 6. Smells or odors – (i.e. sweet and stinky)
 7. Tastes of foods – (i.e. sweet and sour)

Around the age of four, your child will begin to understand what is “real” and what is “pretend”. For example, cartoons are not “real”; they are pictures that have been made to walk and talk. Actors in a movie are “real” people, but they are pretending as they act out a story.

By the time your child enters school, the differences between real and make believe should be fairly clear in his/her mind. You can help with this concept by watching television with him/her and pointing out what is real and what is not. When reading books or magazines, point out pictures and talk about the differences between photographs and drawings. Ask your child to name the pictures and say whether they are “real” or “pretend”.