Welcome to School
Your Child’s Year In Kindergarten

Classroom Handbook

Horace Mann Laboratory School
Nancy Farlow – Instructor
Dear Parents,

This week your child will complete one of the most important milestones in his/her life - the first day of Kindergarten! I understand that you and your child may have met this day with excitement or apprehension (or a little of both).

I want to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to Horace Mann Laboratory School and to our classroom. Each new school year is exciting and challenging and I am looking forward to getting to know you and your child.

The beginning of a school year is an exciting time in the lives of children, especially Kindergarten students. I have prepared this packet of information to answer many questions you may have concerning procedures in our classroom and in our school. Please keep this packet and refer to it when appropriate. Let me know if you have any questions.

This year will be a very exciting time in the life of your child. Kindergarten will be a time to build your child’s educational foundation. I am very happy to partner with you on this journey we are beginning. I am looking forward to an amazing year with your child! Don't blink - this year will go by fast!!!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Nancy Farlow
A Message for Kindergarten Parents

K Kindle excitement about Kindergarten. Visit your school and meet your child’s teacher.

I Invite new school friends home to play and help your child build strong friendships.

N Never forget safety. Teach your child safety rules—whether walking or riding.

D Discuss what your child will be learning in school—shapes, numbers, letters, words, etc.

E Explore your neighborhood together. Talk about the world you live in.

R Review the good behavior expected of your child, such as following expectations and taking turns.

G Get involved at your child’s school. Visit often, come to lunch and volunteer in the classroom.

A Answer your child’s questions about school. Reassure your child that school is fun and each day is a new adventure.

R Read to your child daily. Visit the library together.

T Turn every day into a learning experience. Let your child help you with everyday tasks.

E Encourage your child to eat well and get enough sleep. Be healthy and rested for school each day!

N Notice the new things your child is learning to do. Reinforce your child’s progress with praise.
PARENT/TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

A good parent-teachers relationship is necessary for maximum school success. Throughout the school year, I will communicate with you through e-mails, telephone calls, weekly newsletters, report cards, and parent-teacher conferences. I encourage you to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. You can call me at school 660-562-1233 or at home 660-582-3424, send me a note or e-mail me at: nfarlow@nwmissouri.edu

NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters will be e-mailed weekly. There will be a lot of announcements and dates to keep you informed. They will highlight some things that have happened in class that week as well as inform you of monthly events, possible field trips, weekly and monthly curriculum activities, projects and topics, ways to help and contribute to our classroom, etc. Please read the newsletter each week. They will also provide you a means of communication with your child. If you have the “right “questions to ask them, you will get more than just “fine” when you ask them “How was your day?”

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP CHILD

We will not release any child to a person not authorized by a parent! We must have written authorization for changes in this respect. If there is to be a change in the child’s transportation that day, we MUST have written notification before we can allow this change.
WAYS IN WHICH WE MAY BE OF HELP TO YOU

When you enroll your child in Horace Mann, we assume the responsibility of giving you assistance with special needs in relation to your child’s school adjustment and his/her growth and development.

a. Conferences in relation to your child’s progress will be arranged upon request. Parent teacher conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring semester.

b. Your child will be given the maximum consideration as an individual. We will look after his/her health and safety while he/she is at school and present a planned program geared to what we believe to be developmentally appropriate and educationally beneficial.

c. Please feel free to contact me at home or at school any time you have a question or concern.

VOLUNTEERS

The students and I enjoy having our parents come to school to help us learn! If you are interested, please let me know. I will discuss this further in our weekly newsletters. You will be required to sign in each day you come to volunteer in the office. Some years we have enjoyed having volunteers on a weekly basis, other years just for special events. It will depend on our classroom needs, schedule, and your availability. I have had wonderful parent support in years past and I look forward to your support! Your help is GREATLY appreciated!
WHAT TO WEAR TO SCHOOL

Think of your child’s comfort and provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings. Think of messy art materials or other activities and provide washable clothing. Think of our playground and provide sturdy clothing.

Think of the changeable autumn weather (and the fact that even though the sun may be bright and warm at 8 a.m. it might be cold and cloudy by 10 a.m.) and dress your child accordingly. Provide sweaters and jackets even on the first sunny fall days. It is much easier to remove an unneeded item than to put on something you don’t have.

Think of how you would feel playing outdoors in wet, cold and windy weather. For your child’s own comfort, provide hats and mittens when needed.

Finally, think of our collection of unlabeled, unclaimed clothing, and put labels on all outer garments, including hats and boots. Adhesive tape or permanent markers will work well to label items.

We will have recess each morning and afternoon. We will go outside if the weather conditions are appropriate. Please dress your child accordingly. In the winter, we go out for a short recess as long as the temperature is above 32 degrees. Please make sure to send hat and gloves.
SNACK TIME

We will serve a snack each afternoon at school. Parents will be scheduled to provide snacks on a rotating basis. Snacks need to be nutritious and consist of something to eat and drink for each child. Drinks can be milk or juice (no Kool-aid, please).

BIRTHDAYS

I know how special birthdays are for you and your child. We celebrate birthdays in the afternoon. If you would like to have a “birthday party” for your child’s birthday, please schedule it with me at least two or three days prior to the date. This gives me a chance to make special preparations. (cupcakes and or cookies are fine for birthday snacks. This is a special day!)

If your child is having a birthday party and you would like to invite children from the class you must send in enough invitations for every child in the class. If there are not enough for everyone, then I will have to send them back home for you to mail or distribute. Please do NOT place invitations in the mailboxes without letting me know.

Please take into consideration all children’s’ feelings. If you are not inviting all the children in the class or all of the girls or all of the boys, please do not pass these out at school. This saves a lot of tears and hurt feelings.

TOYS FROM HOME

Except for toys that are needed in the very opening days of school to help ease your child’s transition from home to school, we ask that you leave your child’s toys home. If an item is brought to school, we cannot be responsible for it. It must be shared and it must have the child’s name on it. If you have a book that may be of interest to all
of the children, we will appreciate this being shared with the class to read during story time. We also appreciate special songs/stories for curriculum enrichment. NO GUNS, WAR TOYS, OR OTHER TOYS OF VIOLENCE, PLEASE!

SHARE AND LEARN
We will have “share and learn” each day after snack. The Classroom Assistant will take the “share bag” home with them at the end of that day. They may fill it with one item that they would like to share with the class the next morning. Please encourage your child to bring interesting things for share and tell time. Things pertaining to the season, to the holiday, to the topics we are studying, and to experiences you and your child have had with your family will be excellent choices. I discourage toys for share and tell; most children have seen the toys that are on the market. If it is an unusual toy, something that goes with our units of study or something special from vacation, this will be fine. Thank you for your help with this. There will be a special form in the bag to fill out when you have the share bag. Please encourage your child to do as much as possible by him or herself.

ARRIVAL
School hours are from 7:50-3:15. Bearcat Club is available for students that need to arrive before 7:40. The school opens at 6:15. Students that arrive before 7:40 will go to Bearcat Club. If you are not using Bearcat club, please try to arrive between 7:40-7:50.
ILLNESS AT SCHOOL
If children become ill at school, we will isolate and make them as comfortable as possible until you can come for them. We are unable to care for children when they are ill. We suggest that you have a backup care provider. Please do not return your child to school after an illness until they are symptom free for 24 hours.

EMERGENCY CONSENT
An emergency consent form must be signed by the parents or guardian of each child. This form indicates at least three telephone numbers where you or other designated persons can be located. If we are unable to contact you or those indicated, we need permission to obtain any treatment necessary for your child.

FIELD TRIPS
Throughout the course of the year, we will be taking several field trips. Some of these may be walking trips on campus or in our community. Others may require bus transportation. You will always be notified in advance of any planned field trips. We will always need parents to accompany us on these trips. If your schedule permits, please plan to go with us whenever possible.

MEDICINE
We highly recommend that all medications be given to children at home; however, we realize that special situations warrant the administrations of medicine. Written directions (form available from the nurse) must be provided before any medication will be dispensed. Please do not leave any type of medication (including cough drops and chap sticks) in your child’s cubby or backpack; please leave it with a teacher or the school nurse.
INSURANCE

The University carries liability insurance. Parents are expected to carry sufficient medical and personal insurance to cover injuries or illness.

PARENT VISITATIONS

Parents are strongly encouraged to visit the classroom. It is not necessary to call ahead; feel free to drop in the classroom at any time. Please make sure that when you are visiting the classroom, you check in with the secretary before coming on down! When delivering or picking up your child, please be certain the teacher sees both of you. Please do not take your child without signing him/her out of the Horace Mann office.

PARENT PARKING

Parents bringing or picking up children in the Kindergarten are permitted to use the circle drive behind the Horace Mann School. Parking in this area must be limited to 15 minutes because of congestion and safety. The Horace Mann School has arranged with Campus Safety to issue parking permits to parents. Permits are available in the Horace Mann office.

SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUBS

I'm sure you all can relate to the excitement we all experience when we crack open the spine of a new book. That excitement is amplified for our new readers! Each month, I will send home a catalog from Scholastic Book Clubs. This program provides an inexpensive way
to add books to your children’s home libraries while benefiting our class. With each purchase, our class earns Bonus Points, which can be exchanged for books for our classroom. Take a quick tour of our classroom library and you will see for yourself how beneficial this program has been for our classroom over the years. Please keep in mind that you are under no obligation to purchase materials from Scholastic Book Clubs.

THE DAILY PROGRAM

When your child enters the classroom in the morning, a variety of activity awaits him/her. During the morning your child will be given the freedom to explore the various learning activities and interest centers that have been prepared before his/her arrival. These centers are changed from week to week, day to day, and sometimes hour to hour. Paint, clay, blocks, books, water, sand and special things are some of the things provided. And each day is a special day! There are enough interest centers and activities going on at one time that the child is motivated by knowing that they are there; always something new or some way that it’s new. But, always enough things remain the same to provide the security and comfort of familiarity. Learning centers are not arranged for ease of movement and convenience of use, but rather for maximum challenge to the body and mind.

A teacher is always nearby to lend support when needed—to help the child when he/she momentarily loses control of materials, equipment or even emotions. A teacher is always nearby to answer a question, offer a challenging statement or make a suggestion in keeping with each particular child’s current level of achievement, interest, ability and needs.

Perhaps through a story, or quiet music, a gradual approach to a rhythmic blowing like the wind or going outside to run, jump and climb.
Time to grow. Kindergarten is a time to explore, time experiment, to discover, time to play.
TIME TO BE A CHILD. This is all part of Kindergarten!

HOMEWORK
As children enter Kindergarten, they are eager and ready to learn. Kindergarten homework lays the foundation for good work habits in later years. Furthermore, positive homework helps establish the home-school connection and involves parents as partners in their child’s daily learning experiences. Kindergarten homework directly relates to experiences and activities going on in the classroom. I will be sending homework with the children periodically. This will relate to and build upon what we are learning at school.

THE YEARLY PROGRAM

Reading/Language/Writing
The Kindergarten program provides appropriate activities that foster each child’s emergent literacy. Emergent literacy does not refer to any specific reading skills. Emergent literacy in a broad sense refers to an over-all attitude and therefore our approach toward literacy and the development of a communication system. Literacy is not a product but includes the dynamic process of inter-relating thinking/view, listening, speaking, writing and reading. We believe this is the best approach for preparing your children with the language background needed for the refinement of reading and writing in grades 1-6.

In Kindergarten, we learn to writing by writing. Each child will pass through a variety of stages at different times as they are developmentally ready to move to the next stage. Stages consist of the scribbling stage, random lettering, copying, letter strings, and then
to developmental spelling. You will see your child pass through several of these stages this year in Kindergarten. We will be writing every day. One of our main goals in the Kindergarten program is to build a strong foundation for the continued development of reading and writing.

MATH OUTLINE FOR THE YEAR

Our math curriculum is aligned with the Missouri Learning Standards. Weekly topics will be covered during our math time as well as the meaningful hands-on experiences that will be integrated into topics and literature throughout the day. Math concepts will be taught through small group, large groups, projects and stations each week. The following skills will be taught through the Kindergarten math curriculum this year.

A) Numbers 1-10
B) Numbers 1-20
C) Shapes (geometry)
D) Positions
E) Sorting and classifying
F) Comparisons
G) Number words correspondence
H) Counting and writing (0-10, 10-20, p) more or less 20-100, working toward 100)

i) basic fractions
j) addition
k) subtraction
l) graphing
m) problem solving
n) ordering
o) one-to-one
CURRICULUM
The kindergarten curriculum is taught through many topics, studies and projects which integrate all subjects. Through these studies and projects, the subject areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies are integrated into developmentally appropriate units and activities.
Some of these topics may include nursery rhymes and fairy tales, apples and pumpkins, seasons, human body, health and nutrition, animals, ecology, oceans, and other topics which are generated by the children's interests.

KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN
In the Kindergarten classroom the children will be writing our expectations within the first week of school. We will be spending the first few weeks of school working to develop our classroom community and family. When the children establish the expectations for the year, they take ownership and pride in their classroom.

At Horace Mann:
Students are Responsible
Students are Respectful
Students are Safe
Students help each other
Students are Courteous to each other
Students challenge themselves—work to make yourself smarter!

Basic Kindergarten expectations that will be included in the children's list:
1. Listen and follow directions
2. Keep your hands and feet in your own space
3. Raise your hand to talk so not to interrupt others
4. Move safely from place to place
5. Safe and proper behavior is expected in the halls and stairways.

What a teacher will do if misbehavior is noted:
1. Stop and look at the child misbehaving
2. Say something nice to good listeners
3. Give a verbal reminder: “I am waiting for all my friends to be good listeners.”
4. The teacher will say “Why don’t you take some time to think about what your job is right now.”
5. Consequences of behaviors will depend on severity of choice. Child will be asked to leave group and go to a quiet space to think about the choices he needs to make.
6. If Severe: Go to Mrs. Kings’s office!

A GOAL DIRECTED PROGRAM
In our classroom you will see:
--no lines to stand in, only games to play
--no elementary school games, only Kindergarten games
--many materials with which to create and explore
--no complicated abstract meanings the child cannot comprehend, only ideas and things to talk about, to relate, compare, match, fit, reinforce, invent, discover and enjoy. Yet all the time the child is continuously challenged by specific learning goals we have for him/her.

TO OUR PARENTS
--We want you to know, to understand, to discuss with us our goals.
--We want you to look often into our busy, happy, noisy, creative classroom and see your child at play.
--We want you to realize the validity of that play and the importance of what they are learning.
--Parents and teachers together can help each develop full human potential.

TOGETHER WE CAN HAVE A GREAT YEAR!!

Nancy Farlow

Play, Learn and Grow... Together!