

BLUE VALLEY SCHOOLS

A FAMILY'S GUIDE TO KINDERGARTEN

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

- Blue Valley's kindergarten program is designed to develop knowledge and skills in the physical, social, emotional and cognitive areas. Our goal is to help children develop skills and strategies that will help them learn and establish a foundation for lifelong success in education.
- Families frequently ask, "Is my child ready for kindergarten?" Children are individuals who are growing, changing and learning constantly. However, no two children progress at the same rate. In spite of the fact that the children are five to six years old, they often display a range of abilities. We welcome all children who meet the age requirements for admission.
- Methods of teaching are varied and goals are set based on the individual child's abilities. Lessons are planned with various developmental stages of the children in mind. Children are given the opportunity to work with peers in activities designed to build upon their strengths and expand their abilities. Teachers understand and adapt classroom plans to accommodate differences among children; each child is unique and learns on his or her own timetable.



A child's success in kindergarten is impacted by many factors including language development, fine motor skills and social emotional maturity. You can support your child's development by providing opportunities to engage in play that enhances his or her growth. Working with puzzles, clay, play dough, scissors, crayons and markers will help strengthen the small muscles used for writing. Engaging children with board games, play groups, songs, read-aloud time and conversations will encourage verbal abilities. Families are advised to consider time children spend engaged with media, which may decrease levels of engagement with other learning experiences.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Attendance: Kindergarten meets from 8:40 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Arriving five minutes before is ample time for students to be at school. Kindergarten students will eat lunch at school and may purchase a school lunch or bring a lunch from home.

Transportation: Free bus service may be provided for students who meet the distance criteria. Students not meeting the requirement may purchase bus service. Contact Durham School Services at (913) 681-2492 prior to the first day of school for distance from school rates or to arrange bus service for your child. The bus company discounts rates if students are registered prior to July 1. For additional information, go to www.bluevalleyk12.org/transportation.

Medication Procedures: Information regarding Medications and Emergency Medical Care can be found at www.bluevalleyk12.org/health.

Illnesses: A child who is ill, especially one who has a fever, severe cold, vomiting or diarrhea, should be kept home. If a child becomes ill or injured at school, parents will be notified to pick up their child from school. General criteria for sending an ill child home will be a temperature of 100 or above, complaints of general malaise, vomiting, diarrhea, severe coughing, suspicion of communicable disease or the inability to participate in normal classroom activity. Students will not return to school until symptom-free and fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Blue Valley's English Language Arts instruction is rooted in a body of research known as the Science of Reading. Structured literacy principles inform our approach to teaching literacy skills for reading, writing, speaking and listening. In kindergarten, students will:

- Learn about the basic concepts of print (words go left to right and from top to bottom on a page; words are separated by spaces and can point with one-to-one correspondence).
- Recognize that our spoken words are represented in writing with specific letter sequences.
- Separate individual sounds in words; blend individual sounds to pronounce whole words; and identify the position of different sounds in words.
- Identify all upper and lowercase letters.
- Learn the letter names and basic sounds for all 26 letters.
- Begin to read decodable texts that support instruction.
- Develop vocabulary through listening to a variety of literature and nonfiction passages.
- Identify the main characters, setting and major events in a story and in informational text.
- Begin to express ideas in written form through combinations of letters, words and pictures.

Reading and writing develop together as children gain experience with language and literature. Children will be immersed in a language-rich environment and experience authentic literature and nonfiction text. Kindergarten classrooms provide a variety of opportunities for children to explore our oral and written language.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The social studies program builds on students' natural interest in their immediate surroundings and community by investigating:

- The individual, how to interact with others and the interdependence of self, family, groups and society.
- Historical gestures, people in groups and the rules that govern them.
- The concept of change as it applies to individuals, families and the environment.
- Families around the world and increasing their awareness of place, location and how people interact with their environment.
- Choices, needs and wants.

Learning will occur through literature, sharing, show and tell, group discussion, field trips, dramatic play, guest speakers and special events.

SCIENCE

Kindergarteners learn through discovery and inquiry. Science introduces children to the skills of observation, description, problem solving, seeing relationships, logical reasoning and inference. Students will investigate:

- Characteristics of objects
- Characteristics of living things
- Properties of earth material
- Objects in the sky
- Weather
- Healthy habits

MATHEMATICS

The mathematics program uses a hands-on approach to teaching math, which is organized around:

- Problem solving and reasoning
- Number sense and whole number computation
- Algebra (patterns and relationships)
- Geometry (spatial sense and measurement)
- Data and statistics

Math lessons are designed to provide children with many concrete experiences to help them develop a good foundation toward abstract math concepts. Lessons are planned to help children see relationships and to build mathematical skills.

ART

Art is an expressive and intellectual process taught through hands-on discovery. To enhance students' learning, our art curriculum is often integrated with other subjects, such as thinking critically, solving problems and personal expression. Kindergarten children will explore and use a variety of materials to draw, identify, paint and create dimensional products. Art can make a significant contribution to children's learning and development, as well as prepare students for the future.

MUSIC

Blue Valley's music programs include creating, performing and responding to music from a variety of cultures and backgrounds. Kindergarteners will:

- Identify and develop singing, speaking and shouting voices.
- Differentiate and demonstrate basic musical functions, such as:
 - High vs. low sounds
 - Loud vs. quiet sounds
 - Fast vs. slow sounds
 - Smooth vs. separated sounds
- Perform basic rhythms with a steady beat via body movement, voice, various classroom instruments and technology.
- Compose basic musical ideas from various sound sources.
- Evaluate various styles of music based on expressive qualities and personal preferences.



GLOBAL LANGUAGE

All schools in Blue Valley offer Spanish language instruction. Students learn to understand simple Spanish words and phrases, including greetings and introductions, family and pet vocabulary, likes and dislikes, interests and activities and learn to produce simple words and short phrases. Students learn to respond to teacher directions given in Spanish. Songs, games and rich cultural exploration are an integral part of learning a second language during the early years. Additionally, Wolf Springs Elementary hosts a Chinese Immersion program in which students receive half of their daily instruction in Chinese and half in English. Students enrolled in the Chinese Immersion program do not receive Spanish instruction. To learn more about the immersion program, visit www.bluevalleyk12.org/immersion.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The physical education program provides a wide range of movement activities. Kindergarteners will:

- Develop body awareness, balancing, running, stretching, jumping & landing and moving in personal space.
- Manipulate objects such as balls, parachutes, balloons and beanbags.
- Develop rhythm, locomotor & non-locomotor movements, turning, pushing, pulling and jumping rope.

Through movement, students learn kinesthetic awareness, cooperation and safety.

LIBRARY/MEDIA

The library media program provides opportunities for children to select books, listen to stories, participate in oral language activities and be introduced to basic information literacy skills. Kindergarteners will:

- Develop strategies for selecting their own literature
- Develop an appreciation of literature
- Develop foundational research and information literacy skills
- Develop technology skills

Early experiences in the library help establish reading readiness, foster an interest in reading for both enjoyment and learning and teach digital citizenship skills.



ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Age Requirements: The Blue Valley School District adheres to Kansas State Law 72-3118 regarding the minimum age for entrance to school. There are no exceptions and no testing for early admission. Any child who will attain the age of five years on or before the last day of August shall be eligible to attend kindergarten. Any child who will attain the age of six years on or before the last day of August shall be eligible to attend first grade. See Board Policy 3112 at www.bluevalleyk12.org/policies.

Birth Certificates: Kansas law requires the student's legal name to be on all school records. Families must bring a valid registered birth certificate to school before a child can be legally enrolled in kindergarten; this must be on file within 30 calendar days from the date of admission. The child's birth certificate may be obtained from the Bureau of Vital Statistics, Division of Health, at the state of the child's birth. A hospital

certificate is not acceptable. The school will make a copy of the birth certificate to be retained in the student's file. For more information, see Board Policy 3111 at www.bluevalleyk12.org/policies.

Immunization and Health Assessment Requirements: Families are required to have their child fully immunized prior to school entrance. Immunization guidelines are subject to change based on updated information from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHEKS). For most current information, go to <https://www.kdhe.ks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/21273/2023-2024-Blank-KCI-PDF>

For additional health assessment information, see Board Policy 3113.1 at www.bluevalleyk12.org/policies. For additional immunization information, see Board Policy 3113.2 at www.bluevalleyk12.org/policies.

BLUE VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Aspen Grove Elementary (913) 456-2500
www.bluevalleyk12.org/AGE

Blue River Elementary (913) 239-6000
www.bluevalleyk12.org/BRE

Cedar Hills Elementary (913) 239-3300
www.bluevalleyk12.org/CHE

Cottonwood Point Elementary (913) 239-6100
www.bluevalleyk12.org/CPE

Harmony Elementary (913) 239-6200
www.bluevalleyk12.org/HES

Heartland Elementary (913) 239-6300
www.bluevalleyk12.org/HRT

Indian Valley Elementary (913) 239-6400
www.bluevalleyk12.org/IVE

Lakewood Elementary (913) 239-6500
www.bluevalleyk12.org/LKE

Leawood Elementary (913) 239-6600
www.bluevalleyk12.org/LES

Liberty View Elementary (913) 239-7700
www.bluevalleyk12.org/LVE

Mission Trail Elementary (913) 239-6700
www.bluevalleyk12.org/MTE

Morse Elementary (913) 239-6800
www.bluevalleyk12.org/MOR

Oak Hill Elementary (913) 239-6900
www.bluevalleyk12.org/OHE

Overland Trail Elementary (913) 239-7000
www.bluevalleyk12.org/OTE

Prairie Star Elementary (913) 239-7100
www.bluevalleyk12.org/PSE

Stanley Elementary (913) 239-7200
www.bluevalleyk12.org/STAN

Stilwell Elementary (913) 239-7300
www.bluevalleyk12.org/STIL

Sunrise Point Elementary (913) 239-7500
www.bluevalleyk12.org/SPE

Sunset Ridge Elementary (913) 239-7400
www.bluevalleyk12.org/SRE

Timber Creek Elementary (913) 239-7800
www.bluevalleyk12.org/TCE

Valley Park Elementary (913) 239-7600
www.bluevalleyk12.org/VPE

Wolf Springs Elementary (913) 624-2400
www.bluevalleyk12.org/WSE



For more information please call (913) 239-4082 or visit www.bluevalleyk12.org



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