



KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

Kindergarten Philosophy

Because we believe that each child is created in the image of God and is a unique individual that possesses dignity and worth, we seek to offer a Christ-centered education where we teach and train for kingdom values. We have determined that the task of kindergarten is to prepare the total child for entrance into a more formal school life and into our Christian community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT THE CHRISTIAN KINDERGARTEN TRIES TO DO FOR THE CHILD-----	2
WHAT MIGHT BE EXPECTED FROM CHILDREN ENTERING KINDERGARTEN-----	7
HOW MAY PARENTS PREPARE CHILDREN FOR KINDERGARTEN-----	8
WHAT WILL YOUR CHILD NEED?-----	9
AIDS IN PROMOTING YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS-----	10
WHAT ABOUT ATTENDANCE?-----	12
LUNCH AND SOCIAL TIME-----	13
ADMISSION POLICY-----	14
HOW WE WILL DEAL WITH TWO CLASSES-----	14

WHAT THE CHRISTIAN KINDERGARTEN TRIES TO DO FOR THE CHILD

We feel that kindergarten experience meets the needs of each child and provides ways for him to grow socially, mentally, physically, and spiritually.

The following brief statements summarize what the Christian kindergarten should try to do for the child:

1. To impress on the child that "God is love" and love is the best way for living.
2. From Bible stories and memory work he discovers that God is the Creator and He is pleased when we express our praise and thanks to Him.
3. He becomes aware that everything we have is a gift from God; that through the Holy Spirit God is always with us and wants to help us.
4. Through seeing the Bible used, he grows in appreciation of the Bible as a source of information about God and people who obeyed Him, and about Jesus and what He taught.
5. To encourage the child to speak to God in prayer.
6. To help make his adjustment to school happy and wholesome.
7. To help each child become aware of, and have an interest in, the world around him.

8. To give each child many opportunities to work and play cooperatively in a group.
9. To teach the child to act and think for himself - to evaluate and make judgments.
10. To help the child feel at ease when talking in a group.
11. To give the child all kinds of experiences in a stimulating, challenging environment.
12. To help him develop desirable speech habits - to speak correctly and distinctly and to grow in vocabulary.
13. To teach the child to recognize and understand numbers.
14. To teach him the letters of the alphabet and their sounds.
15. To teach him good sportsmanship - to win or lose in acceptable ways.
16. To provide opportunities to work with all kinds of materials for fostering creative expression.
17. To follow the child's progress in all phases of growth through observation, letters, conferences with parents, and semester report cards.
18. To help the child feel a real sense of belonging and full acceptance with adults and with his peers.
19. To help him grow in the courtesies commensurate with his age.

20. To teach him how to live happily with and show concern for others.
21. To teach him to observe a few simple health and safety rules.
22. To teach him to begin to understand himself as a unique individual for whom God has a plan.
23. To help him develop love and tolerance for all people.
24. To help him take his place as a leader or a follower.
25. To develop in him a desire to tell others the story of Jesus and His love.
26. To help him manifest some degree of self-discipline and self-control.
27. To develop in him a sense of pride in his school, church, home, and community.

THE WONDER OF A CHILD'S WORLD is captured in many of the books we read. Books give awareness that the world is larger than the community in which he lives. There are books that teach counting, time, shape, form, and size. Other books teach good character. We impress on the child the enjoyment he can find in spending time with books. Cassette tapes also provide interesting Bible stories to listen to, new songs to learn, music to enjoy, and activities to help the child grow in skills.

Our games and free time toys provide children with many educational opportunities. They develop motor-sensory skills and skills in perception, relationship, and comprehension. They sharpen wits and speed up the thinking process. They also increase the span of attention and the power of concentration. The competitive spirit and the sense of fair play which they cultivate are as equally important as good manners and social grace.

Each day the children are given responsibility of being “Teacher’s Helper.” The Teacher’s Helper is the leader when lining up, counting friends, checking the weather, doing the calendar, picking a prayer to say, and being light switch friend. The child views this as a special way to participate in the classroom.

Field trips will be taken throughout the school year. This is a great experience for learning in the local community.

Dear Lord, I do not ask
That Thou shouldst give me some high work of Thine,
Some noble calling, or some wondrous task;
Give me a little hand to hold in mine;
Give me a little child to point the way
Over the strange, sweet path that leads to Thee;
Give me a little voice to teach to pray;
Give me two shining eyes Thy face to see.
The only crown I ask, dear Lord, to wear
Is this: That I may lead a little child.
I do not ask that I may ever stand
Among the wise, the worthy, nor the great;
I only ask that softly, hand in hand,
A child and I may enter at the gate.

-Author Unknown

"If you want a child to love you -teach him something."

What Might Be Expected From Children **Entering Kindergarten?**

The child should -

1. Know his given name and family name.
2. Know how to take care of his toilet needs.
3. Be able to take care of his outer clothing; scarf, mittens, and boots without assistance, except in difficult situations.
4. Be able to sit somewhat still and to focus his eyes on printed page.
5. Know how to use cleansing tissue properly, and to cover his mouth when coughing or sneezing.
6. Be willing to be away from home for several hours during the day without concern.
7. Be able to carry on a conversation quite freely.
8. Be free from displaying temper tantrums and undue fears.
9. Be able to put toys away after using them.
10. Know how to follow simple directions.
11. Be interested in books and stories.
12. Be able to recognize similarities and differences in symbols, pictures, and sounds.

How May Parents Prepare Children **For Kindergarten?**

Begin now to give your child small responsibilities at home. Have a place for toys to be neatly stored when not in use. Be consistent in seeing that he or she "picks up" when finished playing. Have coloring books, large crayons, large sheets of plain paper and pencils within reach for drawing. Other responsibilities, whether boy or girl, could include dressing themselves, getting the button through the button hole, pulling up zippers, always hanging up outdoor clothes or night clothes, washing face and hands before meals, setting the table neatly for lunch or supper, feeding the pets, or caring for a younger brother or sister. Daily scheduled responsibilities should be carried out to completion without continual reminders from parents. A child is not ready for the challenge of group living that includes politeness, courtesy, sharing, listening, or taking turns, much less learning numbers and letters, if he has not first been introduced to responsibility.

Children should wear clothes which allow them to participate in activities without fear of spoiling their clothing. Gym shoes that have ties or Velcro, so they can be fastened securely on the feet, are best for practicing skills in the gym.

What Will Your Child Need?

Your child will need a blanket of some sort to use during the rest period which is an important part of each day's routine. You may bring one blanket to lay on and another for your child to cover with. Most of them like to have a small pillow. This keeps the child clean and provides a small space specifically reserved for his use while resting. Mark clearly and permanently the child's name on blankets and pillows to insure identification.

Painting is an enjoyable activity. We have an assortment of paint smocks.

Your child must have a lightweight backpack for papers and craft items. Be sure his or her name is clearly visible on the outside of the backpack. This is very important for the child to get his work papers home to you and also to assure delivery of newsletters and the monthly schedules. Please pack an extra set of clothes in back pack in case of any mishaps.

Aids In Promoting Your Child's Progress

It is very important that the teacher and parents of the child work in harmony to guide the child into being all he can be. Parents are urged to confer with the teacher if they have any questions or suggestions concerning their child or the kindergarten program.

OBSERVING IN THE CLASSROOM -Parents are welcome to observe in the kindergarten at any time. Please notify the teacher one day in advance of your visit, but do come, share our fun, and talk things over.

The interest you parents show in your child's school work is the greatest incentive to learning.

Through the year there will be special programs given by the children for parents and friends. Advance notice of these programs will be sent to you.

Appreciate work done by your child at home or at school. Ask your child what they have done or brought home each day. Display painting, art work, or worksheets. It will

be helpful to display the jingles that are used in learning the alphabet and the sounds.

Be generous with your praise.

A calendar will be sent home each month. This is very important to have this paper handy. It will have on snack friends, show and tell topics, birthdays, and other special events coming up that particular month.

The first week of kindergarten is an adjustment of new places and people. If you bring or send your child, introduce the child to the teacher and leave as soon as possible. We realize you want to see what happens but this usually makes problems for the teacher and the child. Make kindergarten a true school experience the first week and your child will soon be well adjusted.

“Show and Tell” is a special activity that will be on Thursday and Friday of every week. Look on the calendar of the month for topics to help make show and tell a fun learning experience.

Show and tell gives the ability to express himself well in front of a group and is a necessary skill for your child

throughout his school career and in life. "Show and Tell" is designed to help children improve their speaking ability, develop poise, learn to take turns, listen, and ask good questions. It also helps the child to use sequence and helps to overcome stage fright. So parents, throughout the year, help your child find meaningful items for "Show and Tell". Please make arrangements with the teacher before sending pets.

What About Attendance?

Regularity in attendance is very important to the progress of your child. However, in case of illness, it is much better for the child and for the group as a whole that he remains at home. Excuse cards are not needed for kindergarten. The school will recognize perfect attendance at the end of the year.

Lunch and Social Time

In the middle of the morning session we take time for a snack and to talk over happenings of the day, coming events, or just visit.

Please bring in something simple but nutritious for snack time. Frozen fruit juice will be prepared at school. I will put the child's name on the calendar to help remind parents of their upcoming snack.

Birthdays are very important to the kindergarten child. If your child's birthday falls on a school day you may send special cookies, cupcakes with birthday candles, or other special treats for snack time if you desire. I will put the birthday child on for snack that particular day. If a birthday comes during the summer months a certain school day may be chosen to celebrate. We celebrate all summer birthdays on a day near the end of school.

Children will need to carry their lunches. Milk and orange juice may be purchased at school.

Admission Policy

Gehmans Mennonite School uses three general criteria for children entering kindergarten:

1. Must be at least five years old by September 1st.
2. Results from a Readiness Test given in March.
3. Student's individual readiness (social, emotional, physical, and academic) as determined by teacher and principal.

How We Will Deal With Two Classes

Our kindergarten class is normally divided into two sections, Group 1 and Group 2. These groups will be arranged primarily with equal numbers of boys and girls and busing considerations in mind. They are not grouped according to age or intelligence.

You will receive a September schedule for your child before school starts and a monthly schedule as each month approaches.

Group 1 will come on Monday and Thursday and Group 2 will come on Tuesday and Friday. Wednesdays will be used for either group as the monthly calendar designates. Once in a while there will be a double day. This means that both groups will be here for some special happening such as a program practice, the Thanksgiving Feast, check-ups by the school nurse, picture taking, etc.