

Voorheesville Elementary School Kindergarten Handbook

How to Help Your Child Prepare for School

1. Talk about school with your child. Discuss happy experiences that are waiting for him or her.
2. Listen to your child. Discuss concerns that he or she expresses. Encourage your child and be reassuring.
3. Establish good routines for eating, sleeping, and doing school work. Agree upon a school bedtime.
4. Provide a work and study area for your child. This area should be a private place away from distractions and siblings.
5. Establish a communication link with the teacher so that you are always informed about your child's progress.
6. Become an active member of the Parent/Teacher Association and help it to work for all the children.

What Your Child Should Know

Independence and self-reliance are important qualities for school-aged children. Your child should be able to:

1. State his/her name and address.
2. Take off and put on his/her own clothing; boots should be large enough to slip on and off easily; shoelaces should be securely tied, buttons and zippers should be easy to use; and clothing should be comfortable and appropriate for school and the weather.
3. Recognize his/her own clothing; it is helpful if everything that will be removed (hats, gloves, coats, etc.) are labeled with the child's name.
4. Carry a tissue and be able to use it.
5. Go to the toilet without help.
6. Handle objects and return them properly.
7. Follow the instructions given by an adult.
8. Stay with a group of children without family members present

First Week of School

A backpack tag was included with the letter from your child's teacher, which the child should wear through the first full week of school. **Printed on the tag should be: child's first and last name, address, teacher's name, and their bus route numbers AM/PM.**

Please pin this tag to the child's book bag so it is visible during dismissal time.

Kindergartners are expected to come to school alone after their orientation visit. Our teachers will greet the students outside for the first few days of school to assist them with their transition into the school building and learning the way to their classrooms.

EACH CHILD SHOULD BRING THESE THINGS TO SCHOOL: (PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING)

- a. Backpack that your child will carry daily, with **labelled backpack tag**
- b. White oversized T-shirt for art labelled with student's name
- c. Wear a name tag
- d. School Supplies (if not brought on orientation day)
- e. An extra set of clothing in a labelled ziploc bag to be kept in the child's cubby.

Aims of the Kindergarten Program

Kindergarten plays an important role in the educational experience of our children. In kindergarten, the child will build habits and share experiences that will be used throughout life.

During the kindergarten year, we are building a background of readiness for future learning. The kindergarten child is encouraged to work both as an individual and in group situations. Some of the specific aims of kindergarten are as follows:

1. To accept and share responsibilities.
2. To provide varied experiences with music, art materials, books and in creative play.
3. To teach the child more about the world outside his/her family.
4. To develop concepts of size, shape, and numbers.
5. To establish a foundation of letters, letter sound correspondence, print concepts, and sight word knowledge as well as a mathematical foundation.
6. To help strengthen and coordinate both the large and small muscles of the body.
7. To emphasize health through proper rest, food, and safety.

Attendance

The school day begins at 8:45 a.m. and ends at 3:10 p.m. Arrival begins at 8:30 a.m., and students are considered late after 8:40 a.m. Dismissal starts at 3:10 p.m.

If your child misses the bus, and it is necessary to bring him/her to school, please make sure he/she does not arrive at the classroom before the starting time, 8:30 a.m. Your child is now a member of the Voorheesville Central School system. His/her attendance is recorded daily.

Attendance at school is one of the first learning habits or attitudes acquired by your children. You are the teacher in this matter. Your attitude will usually determine that of your child. School attendance is a responsibility that you and your child must accept. Your child's attitudes about this responsibility may influence their attitude toward other responsibilities throughout their lives.

Absentee Call-In Procedure

To report that a student will be absent for any reason, parents should notify the school before 8:40 a.m. by using one of the following communication methods:

- **Send an email** to esattendance@voorheesville.org
- **Call the elementary school** at 518-765-2382 and select 4 to reach the attendance line.

Your communication regarding absences will assure us that your child is safe at home. If we have not received notification from home, parent(s) of absent children will be contacted by the school for verification

Please include the following information when reporting an absence:

- Student name
- Date(s) of absence
- Reason for absence (be specific)
- Parent or Guardian reporting the absence

In instances of communicable illness, parents may choose to report contagious symptoms such as vomiting, fever, pink eye, etc.

If a student needs to be absent from school, a written excuse is also required. Please provide the following information on a note and send to school on the day the student returns:

- Student name
- Date(s) of absence
- Reason for absence (be specific)
- Parents' or guardians' signature

If a student is absent for two or more days and is able to work at home, parents should make arrangements for work to be brought to them or picked up at school. Work can be provided for excused absences only. Unexcused absences or vacations do not warrant work to be provided by a teacher. Completing this work will enable the student to feel more successful and not as overwhelmed upon his/her return.

Late arrivals and early dismissals must be signed in or out at the office. No student will be dismissed directly from a classroom. Students arriving **after 10 a.m.** or leaving **before 2 p.m.** will be noted as a half-day absent.

Reporting the Child's Progress

Kindergarten children receive report cards three times a year. A parent conference serves as the first report card. Parents may visit the class during the year and may have additional conferences with the teachers after school, upon request. Each September, "Parents' Night" is held for kindergarten parents. This provides an opportunity for the parents to meet the teachers and to learn about the kindergarten program.

Snack Time

Each day, the children have snack time. The classroom teacher will provide specific information when school begins. Please be aware that we are an allergen-aware school, and some instructional spaces will be designated allergen-free for safety reasons.

Lunch/Recess

The 2025-2026 Executive Budget amended New York State Education Law by adding Section 915a ***Universal Free School Meals***.

Beginning in the school year 2025-2026, New York State School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the Federal school lunch and/or breakfast programs are required to provide reimbursable school meals at no cost to all students.

Families can find detailed monthly meal menus, free and reduced meal application forms on our website at: <https://www.voorheesville.org/departments/food-services/>

Kindergarten students will have recess at approximately 10:50 and will eat lunch at approximately 11:20.

We suggest that, for the first day, you pack your child's lunch so that we may go over the procedures of how to move through the line. Additionally, it is important that your child can open and close all of his/her food containers and packages, insert straws into drinking containers, and clean his or her area at the table.

We prefer to take students outside as often and as much as possible. Please make sure your child is appropriately dressed for the northeast weather (particularly in the winter). Generally students will go outside for recess if it is twenty degrees or above outside. Let your child wear play clothes to school, and as the weather gets cooler, dress him/her as you would for outdoor play at home. The teacher will inform your child when snow pants and boots are needed for outdoor play.

Expenses

At times during the year, it **MAY** be necessary to ask you to help cover the cost of some kindergarten expenses. This might include: 1) school pictures, 2) field trips, etc. If extra money is needed, a note will be sent home.

Health and Safety

- a. The children should be taught to care for his/her own toilet needs.
- b. The children should know the proper use of a handkerchief.
- c. Covering the nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing.
- d. Good eating habits.
- e. The ability to dress oneself. Coats should have buttons or zippers, and the child learned to manipulate them.
- f. Brushing teeth regularly.
- g. Washing hands before meals and after using the lavatory.

If your child shows symptoms of illness, keep the child home for his/her own protection and for the protection of other children. We ask parents to notify the school nurse as soon as they know their child has a communicable disease (ie, strep, pink eye, COVID). The school nurse can then take the proper precautions.

Provisions of New York State Education Law Regarding Administration of Medication during School Hours:

Precise procedures must be established to protect the individual concerned and all other pupils. Any medication left in the classroom or carried by an individual is a potential source of danger to the entire school population.

There are distinctly different circumstances when, under specified regulations, a medication prescribed by a private physician may be administered to a pupil during school hours. Requirements for the administration of internal medication are as follows:

- a. The school nurse must have, on file, a written request from a physician in which (s)he indicates the frequency and dosage of prescribed medication, as well as the reason for giving it.
- b. The school nurse must have, on file, a written request from the parent to administer the medication as specified by the physician.
- c. The medication should be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent. No medication should be sent to the school nurse by a child. The temptation to share a single dose or multiple doses is a real danger.
- d. Medication should be brought to school in a labeled container. The medication will be kept in the school nurse's office in a locked cabinet.
- e. New York State Education Law applies to over-the-counter medications as well as prescription drugs. Cough drops, Tylenol, and cold remedies cannot be given without the proper documentation.

When any member of the school staff observes a pupil carrying or taking a medication, that individual has a responsibility to refer the pupil to the school nurse. The school nurse will contact the parent and set up the proper procedure for the administration of medicine.

Health Appraisal

Education Law requires that each child furnish a health examination prior to entrance to kindergarten, first, third, seventh, and tenth grades, and if the child is new to the district, upon registration. If your family physician cannot make this appraisal, the school physician will perform this service.

Photo Policy

There are a number of instances throughout the school year where there are opportunities for photographs of school events. They may be taken by a student teacher who is working on a portfolio or a classroom teacher documenting projects or field trips. Photos may be children working through a process with a visiting artist or children participating in a school day activity.

At times, we may use these photos for educational purposes to highlight in district publications or social media the many wonderful things that go on in our school. We will not specifically identify students by full name in the photographs (e.g. Bugler) or on the district website. On occasion, a photographer from a news organization may be here for an event. Where they would like to identify students for the newspaper, we will ask for permission specific to the instance.

If you have objections to having your child's picture in publications or on the website, please submit the No Picture Request form that can be found on our website.

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School Bus Safety

- a. The children should be taught to respect his/her school bus driver and follow all bus rules and directions.
- b. The children should sit quietly on the bus. They must not stand or yell while the bus is in motion.
- c. When crossing in front of the bus, the child should be out ahead far enough so the bus driver can see him/her. This is practiced during bus drills in the beginning of the year.
- d. Teach your child his/her bus route numbers -both the bus that takes him/her to school and the one that brings him/her home.

Students are expected:

- to be at their assigned bus stop and ready to board at least 5 minutes prior to their scheduled pick up time
- to remain seated while the bus is in motion
- to use kind and appropriate language, and refrain from using profanity, insults, teasing, or harassment.
- to listen to and follow the driver's directions
- to keep the aisles clear and keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- to enter and exit the bus quickly and quietly when it is their turn to do so.

We will stress the above points at school, and it will help if the parents stress the same points.

Bus Permits

No child attending Voorheesville Elementary School is permitted to leave school on a bus other than his/her regular assigned bus. Only recurring schedules for daycare/ alternative family care are permitted. If you have any questions, contact us at transportation@voorheesville.org or 518-765-2382, ext. 521.

Classroom Representatives/Room Parents

Classroom representative(s)/room parents are selected from the parents in each class in the elementary school. The classroom representative has the following duties:

- a. Assists the teacher with classroom parties and field trips.
- b. Represents the class at meetings of the classroom representative organization. This organization is a PTA function.
- c. Assists with class projects.
- d. Coordinates parent volunteers in the classroom.

Parent-Teacher Association

The PTA affords the opportunity for parents and teachers to meet socially and to discuss the school program and education in general. The PTA provides many useful services to the school. We urge all parents to join this worthwhile organization.

Birthdays – Please contact the teacher to arrange your child's birthday celebration. Since we are promoting healthy habits, our celebrations will be food-free. Parents are encouraged to donate a book in the child's name

to the classroom to share with classmates or plan an activity-based celebration. More information will be given by your child's teacher during parent's night. The birthday child's parent(s) and younger siblings are invited to attend the celebration.

At some time during the year, your child may have the opportunity to provide a snack for another occasion. This will be discussed at Parents' Night in the fall.

Parking

Parents visiting the school are to use the parking lot across Vly Creek and use the foot bridge leading from the parking lot to the elementary school. **Please do not park next to the school building or along the roadways!** Parents can always park at St. Matthew's Church on Mountainview Street if the school lot is full. Please sign in at the main office upon entering the school.