

Welcome to
Kindergarten!



**Kindergarten
Handbook
2021-2022**



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Welcome to the Avon School Community!

As we begin to prepare for the start of the 2021-2022 school year, schools across the country anxiously await the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. We are excited about the possible return to normalcy and school days free from masks and shields. New Kindergarten families are particularly interested in what a school day will be like this fall.

Throughout the pandemic, Avon Public Schools have closely followed the guidance put forth by the CDC and The Farmington Valley Health District. We will continue to follow their guidance as the new school year approaches. The exact recommendations for 2021-2022 are unlikely to be shared until this summer. In the meanwhile, we will provide an overview of our current protocols and practices during the Kindergarten Orientation sessions. We hope this will assist new families in understanding what types of health and safety measures could remain in place this September.

With all of that said, we share your enthusiasm and excitement about your child's kindergarten experience. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the kindergarten experience is full of wonder and joy for your child.

Sincerely,

*Jess Giannini
Principal
Pine Grove School*

*Amy Borio
Assistant Principal
Pine Grove School*

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Roaring Brook School*

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PHILOSOPHY

Kindergarten may be your child's first independent step away from home, a milestone in his/her life. It is a year of transition from home to school, a year of new experiences and learning, and a crucial first step in the whole educational program. Activities and experiences are planned and carried out which help to develop intellectual, social, emotional, and academic skills. These activities and experiences are planned in order to ensure a balanced program designed to meet the developmental needs of kindergarten students. The teacher is one key to these programs; family is another. Together we can make kindergarten a meaningful experience.

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THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

The Kindergarten program provides your child with an educational experience that is appropriate to his/her stage of development and which will help him/her build a solid foundation for the years ahead.

Physical Development

Kindergarten children are very active. They like to run, jump, climb, balance themselves, and engage in rhythmic activities. Their large muscles are better developed than their smaller ones. Handedness is generally established in children by the time they reach kindergarten and should not be changed. In most children, eye and hand coordination is not fully developed.

Social Development

Self-control, consideration for the rights of others, cooperation with others in group activities, courtesy, persistence, and responsibility take on real meaning in the interesting experiences of work and play.

Emotional Development

Kindergarten children's emotional backgrounds affect their adjustment to school or to any new experiences. All children need to grow emotionally as well as physically. The children need to develop some independence, to feel secure in their surroundings, and to find some satisfaction in what they do.

Intellectual Development

Kindergarten children are in the process of acquiring a great mass of information, broadening their range of interests, improving their skills, learning the technique of solving problems, and developing their language powers. Simple, brief answers satisfy their curiosity since their attention span is very short. They like to talk about themselves and their experiences.

Language Arts

Through an integrated theme approach, there are many opportunities for your child to develop their language skills: to plan, to question, to explain, to discuss, to evaluate, to create, and to share ideas as they work independently and with others. As an emergent reader in kindergarten, children develop an understanding of concepts of print, make connections between spoken language and written words, and identify letters and sounds. They also develop phonemic awareness skills (rhyming, blending, segmenting, and isolating sounds) and build a basic sight vocabulary in order to begin the reading process. Children are provided with multiple opportunities to make connections between their life and texts read aloud in order to increase their listening comprehension skills.

Reading Readiness

A flexible and comprehensive reading readiness program is an important part of kindergarten. Materials and books used in our program allow your child to progress at his/her own rate in developing pre-reading skills necessary for success in a formal reading program. Your child is taught to recognize the names of the letters of the alphabet. Your child will learn the letter sounds and to identify them when he/she hears them in words. Books, stories, and pictures used in our educational program promote growth in language and an appreciation of reading.

Writing

Writing is formally taught in kindergarten. As an emergent writer in kindergarten, students use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to communicate a message. As a writer, they begin to apply phonetic spelling, capitalization, spacing, and punctuation independently and in shared writing.

Mathematics

In the area of mathematics, kindergarten students learn to count to 100 by ones and tens, write the number and represent the number of objects for 0 – 20, compare two numbers, and solve addition and subtraction problems. Students also learn to describe the measurable attributes (e.g., length, weight) of objects and to compare and classify different objects in addition to describing, identifying, comparing, and creating different shapes.

Social Studies

Kindergarten student's interest in the community and the world about him/her is sharpened through dramatization of home experiences, exhibits, stories, pictures, discussions, and conversation.

Science

Kindergartners observe the world around them. They are inquisitive and curious by nature. Your child will be encouraged to ask, "Why?" and "How?" throughout our science units: *How Objects Move*, *Weather and Climate*, and *How Living Things Survive*. They will begin to think and practice like scientists and engineers as they explore content through a hands-on, inquiry-based approach.

World Language: Spanish

Learning another language has been shown to improve our native language, to promote curiosity and understanding of the world around us, as well as opening many doors in the future. With this in mind, we've developed a curriculum that will allow your child to reap these benefits by starting the language learning process in Kindergarten. Your child will learn fundamental Spanish vocabulary this year through songs and movement regarding parts of the body, greetings, colors, the alphabet, shapes, and much more.

Art

Using a variety of materials, Kindergarteners are encouraged to explore and express themselves in the Art room. During these foundational years, art activities are designed with an emphasis on process rather than product. Students are introduced to the work of other artists through an exploration of design elements such as color, shape, line, and texture. Projects establish coordination between visual and motor activities and help students to develop skills as they learn to care for and use their art supplies safely and responsibly. By focusing on a broad range of subject matter kindergarteners are encouraged to make meaningful connections between themselves and their artwork.

Music

Music activities can give children emotional release as well as joy. Your child will learn songs about the seasons and animals. He/she will learn to carry a simple tune. He/she may play an instrument in a "rhythm band" to become familiar with the tones of different instruments, to learn to keep time, and to share the fun of playing music in a group.

Wellness

Movement education is a central focus of the wellness curriculum. Movement education establishes an environment in which your child learns to analyze his/her body movements through guided problem solving tasks and free exploration. Your child will participate in a progressive continuum of activities ranging from the development of gross motor skills to the development of fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. He/she will learn dodge concepts, directionality concepts, and participate in rhythmic, spatial, and bodily awareness activities.

Computer Instruction

Computer software is used to enhance the teaching of curricular areas such as reading, writing, and mathematics. Your child will be assigned a Chromebook to be used at school and in certain situations (e.g., remote learning, hybrid learning) the device may go home. All of the classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards.

Library

Kindergarteners engage in a dynamic Library curriculum on a weekly basis. During this time your child is introduced to the skills necessary to develop and satisfy their curiosity through engaging literacy-based lessons as well as collaborative, hands-on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) experiences in the Makerspace. At various points throughout the year, students also participate in learner-appropriate coding and robotics activities.

CONFERENCES AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Your child's success in school depends upon close cooperation between the home and school. Conferences are conducted twice a year (usually in November and March), affording an opportunity for teachers to share information and receive information from you about your child. This information about his/her early development - physical, social, emotional, intellectual - will help us understand your child better. Knowledge of your child's interests, abilities, and personality will enable the teacher to become aware of his/her special needs and to plan an effective program to meet these needs.

You will receive a progress report three times a year advising you of your child's development. Your child's teacher may also communicate with you throughout the year via phone calls, email, informal conferences, and written notes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Children whose 5th birthday falls on or prior to January 1, 2022 are eligible to attend kindergarten in the 2021-2022 school year.

Avon utilizes a two-step online registration process. To begin the process, please go to the Avon Public Schools website and click on the *Enrollment Express Registration Form* link on the Registration page. Complete and submit the initial pre-registration form for your child(ren). Once this form is received, you will be contacted via email with a login and password for PowerSchool. Through PowerSchool you will upload the proof of your child's identity, upload proof of residency, and complete the Enrollment Packet.

In order to register your child, you will need the following documents.

Proof of child's identity:

- original US birth certificate, or
- current US passport, or
- foreign original birth certificate with a current passport

Proof of residency:

- items must show parent(s) name(s) as well as current address
- current signed lease and utility bill, or
- mortgage statement and utility bill, or
- warranty deed/title and utility bill

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Registrar's Office at 860-404-4720, or by email at APSRegistrar@avon.k12.ct.us. Once your child is registered, school personnel will be available to answer your questions.

Kindergarten parent orientation meetings will take place for Roaring Brook School and Pine Grove School on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.. More information will be distributed closer to the date.

WHEN WILL I FIND OUT WHO MY CHILD'S TEACHER WILL BE?

Mid-August, your child's school will mail you a letter which includes the name of your child's teacher and information about the child's orientation program.

SCHOOL HOURS AND SESSIONS

The Kindergarten day starts at 8:50 a.m. and ends at 3:25 p.m.

STUDENT ABSENCES

Current issues of child safety prompt us to ask that all parents/legal guardians notify the school early in the morning if your child is absent for any reason. The secretary will then review the absentee list and you will be called if we have not received notification. If you and your child plan to be out of town, please contact the school or send in a note prior to leaving.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS, DELAYED OPENINGS, AND EARLY DISMISSAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements regarding school cancellations, delayed openings and early dismissals are sent via email to parents as well as announced on local radio and TV stations (WTIC 1080AM; WFSB Channel 3; WTNH Channel 8; WVIT Channel 30; and WTIC Channel 61). The District website www.avon.k12.ct.us also provides information regarding weather related changes to the school day. Phone calls will be made to parents/guardians only if a decision to alter the school day is made after 6:30 a.m.

In the event an unexpected dismissal is made after school has started, parents/guardians will receive a phone call as well as email. All children will be dismissed utilizing a half day schedule unless announced differently.

KINDERGARTEN TRANSPORTATION

Kindergarten children are transported to and from school with other elementary school children within their neighborhood. Every effort is made to develop a bus schedule that will pick up or drop off kindergarten children close to their homes, although some children may have to walk a short distance to their homes or bus stop. Parents are asked to assist their children during this formative school year by walking to and waiting with their children at the bus stop. Children may not go home with another child on a different bus.

In compliance with state law, we are required to provide transportation for school children to and from the school in their attendance district. In the event that a responsible adult is not at the bus stop to meet the child, the bus driver will inform Specialty Transportation and continue their route. Specialty Transportation will notify the parents. If time allows, they will return to the stop. If it does not, they will return the child to the school.

As an accommodation to working parents, we do transport children to the large daycare centers in each attendance district. At Pine Grove School we transport to *A Place to Grow Too*, *Avon Nursery School*, *Educational Playcare*, and *Tender Care Learning Center*. At Roaring Brook School we transport to *Tender Care Learning Center* and *Educational Playcare*.

Children are transported to and from one location only. There is no splitting of transportation by days of the week. We attempt to accommodate as many working parents as possible within a reasonable framework of transportation.

SCHOOL PERSONNEL WHO WORK WITH KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

The Kindergarten Teacher

The kindergarten teacher is professionally trained to interact with young children. The teacher's background, training, and experience are all focused upon these important developmental school years.

The School Principal

The Principal is the chief administrator in the school building, supervising teachers and other school personnel in the building. The Principal assists teachers in planning curriculum and meets with parents, teachers, and students whenever necessary.

The Assistant Principal

The Assistant Principal works with the Principal in the supervision of staff in the building. The Assistant Principal also assists teachers in planning curriculum and meets with parents, teachers and students whenever necessary.

Special Area Teachers

Special Area Teachers are those who provide instruction in art, music, wellness, World Language, and the library.

Support Teachers and Staff

Support teachers may visit your child's room for short periods, either to direct particular lessons or to consult in planning special work for the kindergarten teacher. Some of these support teachers may include: reading and math interventionists, speech and language pathologists, special education teachers, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers, and teaching assistants.

Other Special Personnel

In every school there are several other people with whom your child should be familiar such as the school secretary, school paraprofessionals, cafeteria personnel, and the school custodian.

Pupil Services Personnel

The following people are available for evaluating and working with children who have been referred to them by parents or other school personnel as a result of experiences, learning difficulties, or other problems affecting their school life:

- School psychologist
- Special education resource teacher
- Speech, language and hearing therapist
- Occupational therapist

Consultation and evaluation services are also available through referral for physical therapy.

The School Nurse

There is a registered nurse in each of our five school buildings. The school nurse works in your child's building throughout the school day. If your child becomes sick or injured, the nurse will provide emergency care and notify you, your physician, or the emergency contact person you have designated.

STUDENT HEALTH INFORMATION

Emergency Information

Emergency information collected via E-Collect is kept on file in the health room for every child and is updated annually. This information includes special health information, emergency telephone numbers, and an "Authorization for Administration of Standing Order Medication". Parent/legal guardian authorization is required for your child to receive "standing order medication" in school, such as Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Benadryl for allergic symptoms. These medications are authorized by the school medical advisor to be administered if considered necessary and appropriate by the school nurse. A completed and signed emergency information form is important in the event that the school should need to contact you for dismissal or referral of your child for medical care.

Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication

Should your child require prescription/non-prescription medication at school, please be aware that there are very specific health regulations. The school nurse may not give medication to a student at school without a written order from a licensed physician and written parent/legal guardian authorization. Forms for this purpose are available in the health room of each school and on the APS website.

All medication must be in a pharmacy prepared container. It must be labeled with the name of the child, the name of the drug, the strength, dosage and frequency, along with the physician's or dentist's name. Whenever possible, try to give your child his/her medication at home. If the medication needs to be given at school, ask the pharmacist for a school container as well as a container for home. The pharmacist will supply a second container for administration in school.

All medication must be brought to school by the parent/guardian and delivered only to the school nurse. It must be picked up in the same manner. Students are not allowed to carry or take medication in school unsupervised.

Health Problems

If your child is under a physician's care for a health problem, or if you notice a change which may affect his/her school day, please inform the school nurse or teacher as appropriate. After an illness, your child should remain home until fever free for 24 hours without medication or 24 hours after an episode of vomiting. Please refer to the "Stay at Home" guidelines on the APS website.

Health Assessments

Students who enter kindergarten must have a health assessment (physical examination) completed within twelve (12) months prior to the first day of school. The physical examination must be documented on a "State of Connecticut Department of Education Health Assessment Record" form and immunizations must be up to date. The information should be submitted prior to the first day of school.