

Ms. Elizabeth Falls and Mr. Yo' Tucker's PreK-Kindergarten Classroom

Parent Information/Classroom Rules and Guidelines

August 9, 2018

Dear Parents,

We hope you are having a very nice summer! Welcome to our class and to Orientation Day!

The first few weeks of school are very important in making a smooth transition for everyone; students, parents, and teachers. In order to achieve this, it is important that some simple guidelines be stipulated. We would like to briefly highlight some of them for you and we would like to encourage you to carefully read the MMS Parent Handbook that will be available on our school's website. For information pertaining to our school and classroom, go to www.millhopper.com.

Here is a collection of some important parent information regarding our classroom:

Arrival/Dismissal and Healthy Separation:

On Monday, August 13, 2018 drive-through services will begin. We are asking that returning MMS families use the drive through service. If you wish to walk your child in, then please arrive during non-peak times (8:50-9:05 am is peak drop-off time) and limit the amount of time you remain on campus, allowing a quick turn-around time for available parking spaces.

It is very important that your child arrives on time. Our class will begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. Routine is very important and our class begins each day with a line time. This is a very important part of your child's day. When children arrive late to line time, they often miss the teacher explaining the activities that will occur that day. When a child is late for our work cycle, they often miss valuable lessons and precious time to develop socially and emotionally, as well as to get acclimated before their day begins. Children who come in late take longer to adjust and often accomplish less on that day than do children who arrive on time.

The first day of school is an exciting day. It may be a day filled with many emotions! If your child is new to the school, or if you or your child is anxious about separating, this is OK, and here is what we suggest:

1. We strongly recommend the use of drop off drive-through. This service begins at 8:40 a.m. and lasts until 9:05 a.m. Drive-through drop off ensures every child's safety, helps to ease separation anxiety, and encourages independence on the part of your child.
2. Allow your child to carry all their things (lunchbox, etc.) and place them in their cubby. This promotes independence.
3. Do not force an emotional goodbye. It is common for children to almost push their parents aside to get into the classroom because they are so excited to go to school. We have found that a short and positive goodbye is easiest for the child. A secret goodbye sign and/or the blowing of a kiss may help make the transition special and easier for all. We do not recommend parents bringing their child into the classroom. The prolonged goodbyes often make the separation

these skills at home as well. Have your child completely dress themselves in the morning. This is a great way to practice and learn Practical Life skills!

Clothing should be comfortable “play clothes”. Girls should wear shorts under dresses or skirts. We do a lot of art projects and food preparation in our class. Although we take measures to protect the children’s clothing, accidents and spills may happen.

1. Please supply us with a complete change of clothes, including socks and underwear. Please place these items in a zip-lock storage bag labeled with your child’s name.
2. Please put your child’s name on all their clothing, especially sweaters and jackets, as well as on/in their lunchbox.
3. Please send your child to school with a minimum of accessories (e.g., jewelry, watches, etc.). These items cause distractions from work and often get lost in the classroom or on the playground. Children may be asked to remove these items and place them in their cubby at the teacher’s request.
4. Please have your child wear only rubber-soled sneakers, no dress shoes or boots. This is important not only for inside the classroom, but extremely important on our playground. At this age, children are developmentally ready to learn to tie their shoes. Therefore, tie sneakers are recommended. We will be giving lessons and providing the materials to teach this skill in the classroom. Please reinforce this skill at home by allowing your child to tie their own shoes. Our goal is for all Kindergarteners to know how to tie their shoes by the end of this school year. Shoe tying is an excellent tool for increasing finger/hand dexterity, which is so necessary in all aspects of life!
5. All prescription and non-prescription medications (e.g., Tylenol, etc.) need to go through the front office.

Lunchtime:

Lunchtime will be from 12:00-12:30 p.m. We would like to stress the importance of nutritional lunches. Please do not send “Lunchables”. Have your child help pack their lunch. It has been our experience that this cooperative effort increases the chances that the entire lunch will be loved! As part of our **Grace & Courtesy** curriculum, lessons in using good manners are emphasized while eating. Please pack a cloth napkin to be used as a placemat, as well as a paper napkin. Please do not send in any glass containers. We will assist the children in opening any items they may need help with.

Birthday Celebrations:

Birthday celebrations are integrated into the normal classroom day. The Birthday Walk is a simple but special event honoring your child’s birthday and the years they have spent on Earth. Parents are invited to attend. Here are some guidelines for your child’s birthday:

1. We suggest that you and your child assemble a small and simple timeline of their life, with a photograph from each year of their life.

Reading Folders:

When your child is ready to start bringing home beginner reader books, they will be provided with a Reading Folder. If your child is a reader, but started reading from a different teacher or at a different school, I will assess their reading level before providing a reading folder. Please read with your child and have them read to you several times for fluency and accuracy before returning the book(s) to class. Learning to read is just like practicing playing a musical instrument: practice leads to mastery.

Reading folders will begin coming home soon for return students. For students new to the class, they will be beginning to come home after a short assessment of their current reading level.

Curriculum:

Your child will receive small group and large group lessons throughout the year in the areas of Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language, Science, Geography, and Cultural Activities (Art, Music, Movement, etc.). In all of these areas, we are careful in teaching your child; we are careful to balance our attention to emotional and social growth, as well as meeting your child's academic needs. A complete outline of this year's curriculum will be handed out at our Preschool/Kindergarten Parent Orientation on Thursday, August 23rd at 6:30 p.m. This meeting is for parents and teachers only. Child care will NOT be provided. At this meeting, I will be discussing our philosophy and curriculum in depth and will be able to answer any questions you may have.

Kindergarten Mid-Year Testing:

In March, the Kindergarteners will take the ITBS (IOWA) Standardized Test. This is a standardized test (more information will be sent home closer to this time) that takes approximately three days (in the morning only) to complete. **Most of the children enjoy this test and it teaches practical life experience they will encounter throughout their educational years. A Parent-Teacher conference can be scheduled to discuss the results.**

Special Friend!

Throughout the year, I will be sending home a "special friend" (a stuffed animal) and a journal to spend a few days and nights visiting your home. Your child can draw pictures, take pictures, etc., to place in the journal. This is a fun activity that promotes responsibility and creativity (writing and drawing in the journal).

Volunteering:

Due to the many special and small/large group lessons at this age level, we do not have regular in-class volunteers. However, if you have special expertise that you would like to share with us, or if you would like to work on projects (e.g., preparing material for the classroom) at home, please let us know. For example, you may be a police officer or firefighter interested in talking about being safe. For special events, we will post a sign-up sheet on our classroom door.