

The A B C's Of Kindergarten

A Parent's Information Handbook



A

Attendance: Your child's progress, both academically and socially, is influenced to a great extent by daily participation. Many kindergarten activities are hands-on and on most cases the activity will not be able to be made up if your child misses school.

If your child is absent, please call the office and inform us of your child's absence and the reason for it. In addition, please send a note in your child's Communication Folder upon your child's return to school. Only absences due to illness or a serious family emergency will be marked as excused absences.

Aftercare: Country Isles Elementary provides an on-site After School Care Program. The kindergarten students are escorted by an aftercare counselor from the classroom to the aftercare meeting area at dismissal time. You must pre-register for this program. Please call (754) 323-5293 for fee and enrollment information.

Arrival: School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Your child should arrive between 7:45 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. and be **seated** quietly outside his/her classroom. The first bell rings at 7:55 a.m., at which time your child will be allowed to enter the classroom and begin unpacking his/her belongings. The second bell will ring at 8:00 a.m. and your child should be seated and ready to begin the day's activities by that time. Arrivals after 8:00 a.m. will be marked as tardy and you will have to sign your child in through the front office.

It is recommended that if your child will regularly ride the bus to and from school, that he/she ride on the first day of school. School staff will be available to help your child find his/her classroom when he/she arrives at school. They will also assist your kindergartner when it is time to go home.

B

Backpacks: To help your child carry messages and information to and from school please provide him/her with a backpack. In addition, your child will be taking home his/her Poetry Book (a two inch white view binder) at the end of each week. Please make sure the backpack is big enough to fit the Poetry Book and that the backpack is not the kind which has wheels.

Birthdays: We will recognize birthdays in the classroom in unique and special ways to honor the birthday boy or girl. However, please do **not** send food, drinks, or party favors. In order to avoid hurt feelings our policy is to distribute party invitations in the children's Communication Folders **ONLY WHEN THE ENTIRE CLASS IS INVITED**. In addition please do **not** pass out invitations on school grounds. If the entire class is not invited, please mail the invitations. Consider joining the school and/or class directory for this purpose (information is forthcoming from the PTA).

Book Clubs: Every month your child will receive an order form for you and your child to look over. These clubs offer wonderful books at reduced prices--what a great way to build your home library! Ordering through the book club is strictly voluntary, but please adhere to the due date if you will be ordering because the orders are placed on the day of the due date so that the children who ordered can receive their books as soon as possible. Books usually arrive within ten working days from when the order is received.

Breakfast: A school breakfast is served every morning from 7:30-7:55. The menu for both breakfast and lunch can be viewed on the Country Isles Web site (www.countryisles.net)

C

Communication Folder: Your child will bring home a Communication Folder each day. Please review the contents of the folder daily and initial the discipline plan paper. Please return the Communication Folder to your child's backpack each day so that he/she will take it to school the next day.

Conferences: Two conferences are required during the school year. We try to schedule the first conference during the first grading period once we have had ample time to get to know your child and evaluate him/her on some basic kindergarten skills. Your child will not receive a report card until the end of the second grading period so it is important that you attend this first conference. A second conference takes place at the end of the school year and it is usually a student-led conference, however if you or the teacher finds a need to meet additionally during the year, a conference date and time can be arranged at any time. Please send a note in your child's Communication Folder if this is necessary.

D

Discipline: Our kindergarten team believes that children need affectionate care and firm guidance. Catching children doing the right thing is our foremost goal. However, in the real world there are positive as well as negative consequences for our actions. Therefore, once the children have had ample time to become familiar with our classroom rules and behavioral expectations we will begin to implement a behavior plan. The plan focuses on six behaviors that distract students from achieving their personal best in an academic and social setting. The children will receive a ticket if they break a specific rule. Each behavior is identified by a corresponding ticket color. At the end of the day each student will bring home a report in his/her Communication Folder of how many tickets, if any, he/she received. An individual goal may also be established and students who meet the goal will receive a special treat.

Please remember to initial the report on a daily basis.

The following is the ticket color code:

Red = Needs to remember to follow directions the first time.

Green = Needs to remember to do his/her best work, stay on task and allow others to stay on task.

Purple = Needs to remember to take care of others on the inside and outside.

Yellow = Needs to remember to listen attentively to teacher lessons and other presenters.

Orange = Needs to remember to show respect and responsibility for classroom, school, and materials.

Blue = Needs to remember to walk in a quiet and orderly line.

Additionally, students are expected to adhere to all policies and procedures in the Country Isles Handbook and Broward County Student Code of Conduct Book.

Dismissal: Dismissal is at 2:00 p.m. (Except on Early Release days in which dismissal is at 12:00 noon). Please be prompt (or early) as five-year olds tend to become anxious if they have to wait. If you are picking your child up by car, place the car sign that you received at Meet and Greet on your dashboard. (If you did not receive one or misplaced it, simply write your child's and teacher's name with big letters on a sheet of paper and place it on the dashboard of your car.) This will help the teachers get your child to you quickly and safely. Please wait for a teacher to take your child to your car. For the safety of the children **never** call your child or any other child at the car loop. If there are any changes in the way your child goes home you must inform the teacher or office **in writing**.

Please do not wait for your child by the classroom door or the back gate. Children who are car riders or who walk home with a parent will meet with their teacher at a designated spot in the back car loop against the back wall of Pod B (Facing the Country Isles Park field) at dismissal time. Please do not take children from the line as we walk to the spot or take the children from the spot without letting the teacher know. Please advise anyone authorized to pick up your child of this very important safety rule.

Bus riders and Country Isles Aftercare are dismissed at 1:55 p.m. and are picked up by school staff to be taken to their designated meeting areas. Please do **not** ask older siblings to pick up your kindergartner from the classroom.

E

Early Release: Several times a year we will have an Early Release day. Students will be dismissed at 12:00 p.m. instead of the usual 2:00 p.m. Dismissal procedures will be the same as usual unless we receive a **written** note in your child's Communication Folder regarding dismissal changes.

Students will still eat lunch, but at an earlier time, during Early Release days. Therefore, a separate snack time will not be scheduled. There is no need to send in a snack on Early Release days.

Emergency Card: Please complete and return the emergency card promptly. If your home, cell, or work phone number change at any time throughout the year, please inform the office **and** classroom teacher so you can be located quickly if an emergency occurs.

F

Field Trips: We plan field trips that are both fun and educational for the children. Please return permission slips on or before the due date found at the bottom of the permission slip. Late forms and payments will not be accepted after the due date, and your child will be unable to participate in the field trip.

G

Grades: Kindergarten students do not receive reports cards during the first grading period. At the end of the second grading period a report card will be sent home. The students will receive grades of 1, 2, or 3.

*1 = The student has mastered the skill(s) independently.

*2 = The student is learning the skill(s) with assistance.

*3 = Area of concern

The number grades do not translate to letter grades in any way. Most kindergarten students are learning skills with teacher assistance through out the school year. If your child is experiencing difficulty with any skills despite teacher assistance, you will be notified mid-quarter with an interim report or conference prior to receiving the report card.

H

Handbooks: Remember that these guidelines are an overview specific to the needs of kindergartners and their families. You can learn more about school wide policies and procedures in our Country Isles Handbook and district policies and procedures in the Broward County Student Code of Conduct Book (both are sent home in every student's first day of school packet.)

Health: Please let your child's teacher know of special circumstances which may affect your child. These could include medication that may make your child sleepy, a death in the family, etc. Also please notify your child's teacher **in writing** of any allergies your child may have, especially food allergies. We sometimes cook or do food activities to complement lessons and it would be helpful to know when we plan our recipes.

Homework: Kindergarten does not assign written homework on a daily basis. However, children should read and/or be read to for at least 15 minutes daily. A reading log will be sent home at the beginning of each month and must be returned to school at the end of the month. In addition, your child will take home instructions on a family project to complete each month. Please remember that it is a family project, but it is primarily your child's project and he/she should be able to participate in the assembly and completion of the project and be able to share with the class how the project was completed and which materials, if any, were used.

I

Ice Cream Day: Wednesday is ice cream day! Ice cream is sold in the cafeteria during lunchtime. Please place ice cream money in a separate labeled envelope or baggie. Please label it: (name)'s ice cream money. You may even draw a simple ice cream cone on the envelope or bag so that your child does not use this money for lunch.

J

Join: Join PTA! We will have several fundraisers throughout the school year. Please make every effort to participate and attend the PTA meetings. Help support our school!

K

Kindness: Students at Country Isles are encouraged and expected to treat all members of our school family with kindness and respect. Hitting, biting, fighting, name-calling, and making fun of others will not be permitted. Students will receive purple tickets for first time minor offenses. However, if the offense is serious and/or dangerous to any child or teacher, the student will be referred to the administration and sent to the office. Parents may be contacted by phone or in writing regarding concerns affecting kindness.

L

Library Books: When the children check out a book, the book may be kept at home until the next time they go to the Media Center. If your child wishes to return his/her book before that time, he/she may return it by putting it in their classroom's Library Book Box.

Lunch: The students will have a thirty minute lunch period each day in the cafeteria. Students may bring a nutritious lunch from home or purchase lunch at school. (If your child forgets his/her lunch please do not bring in fast foods such as McDonald's, Burger King, etc.) If your child will be buying lunch on a regular basis, PLEASE consider pre-paying by the week, month, or longer. The money will be automatically deducted from the lunch account each time he or she buys lunch. Unused days will be carried over so you won't lose any money if your child is absent or brings lunch from home on certain days. Please keep in mind there are other items that can be purchased for an additional cost, such as bottled water, double food portions, Icees, etc.

You can pay for your child's lunch by check made out to the school or with cash. Checks are always a better way though, just in case your child misplaces the money envelope. When writing a check for lunch, please write your child's lunch account number on the memo portion of the check.

Whenever sending money to school, please send it in an envelope or baggie with your child's name, teacher's name, and purpose for the money and place it in your child's Communication Folder.

Lunch menus can be downloaded from the Country Isles web site.

Students are expected to be seated at all times while in the cafeteria, to talk in quiet indoor voices, to keep their hands, feet, food, and eating utensils to themselves and to keep their eating area as neat as possible. Please reinforce proper eating etiquette at home with your child.

M

Money: As already stated, whenever sending money to school, please send it in an envelope or baggie with your child's name, teacher's name, and purpose for the money and place it in your child's Communication Folder.

N

Notes: Please check your child's Communication Folder daily for any notes or forms. You may also send in a note by placing it in your child's Communication Folder.

O

On Time: Another reminder to please make sure that your child arrives in school on time and is ready to begin work at 8:00 a.m. Tardiness disrupts your child's morning routine, as well as interrupting teachers at work and the concentration of other students.

Open House: During the first month of school parents are invited and encouraged to attend an Open House in their child's classroom. This is a night for **parents only** to meet the teacher as a group and learn pertinent information such as policies, curriculum, and teacher expectations. Please make every effort to attend this meeting. Information as to the date and time will go home in your child's Communication Folder and can be found on the school web site.

P

Phone Number: Know the school phone number (754) 323-5250 and keep it with you at all times. (Hint: Put a copy in your wallet, in your vehicle glove box, and program it in your cell phone.)

Q

Questions: Since so many of you are new to the Country Isles Family this year, you may still have some unanswered questions. Please feel free to call your child's teacher at school between 2:15-3:00 p.m., or send a note in your child's Communication Folder.

R

Recess: The children will play outdoors for approximately 15 minutes each day. Please keep this in mind when selecting shoes for your child to wear to school. Sneakers or closed-toe shoes with a back are best. Clogs, flip-flops, and shoes without a back are not allowed for safety reasons.

Report Cards: Kindergarten students receive a report card at the end of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, quarter.

Restrooms: Kindergarten classrooms are equipped with restrooms. Children are free to use the restroom as needed, but must notify the teacher if they are going to the restroom. Please make your child's teacher aware of any medical problems that might require frequent restroom trips.

S

Snack: We will schedule approximately 15 minutes daily for students to take a snack break. Please provide your child with a small, healthy snack and drink. Please do not send any snacks that come in glass containers or that are difficult or dangerous for children to open independently. Students will not be able to use the refrigerator to store their snacks and teachers are unable to prepare any snacks that need to be heated for the students. In addition, we ask that students do not bring soda, fruit roll-ups, or pudding/yogurt in a squeeze bag.

Please send the daily snack in a disposable labeled snack bag. If your child is bringing lunch to school, **lunch must be in a separate bag or lunch box.** Remember to label the bag SNACK and include your child's name on the outside of the bag. Also, if your child requires a spoon, fork, or straw to eat or drink the snack please provide one in the snack bag as we do not have these items available in the classroom.

T

Toys: Students are not allowed to bring toys to class other than for the purpose of special activities on designated days. This includes trading cards and stuffed animals. If a student brings a toy for an after school care activity, it must remain in the backpack at all times. The first time, the student takes a toy out of the backpack he/she will receive a verbal warning. The second time the item will be taken away and not returned until a parent comes to pick it up personally between 7:45 and 7:55 a.m. the following morning.

U

Unified Dress Code: Country Isles has adopted a mandatory school unified dress code. (*Exemptions request forms must be submitted within the first 10 days of the school year.)

<u>Tops</u>	
<p style="text-align: center;">All students: Polo shirts with collar in the following colors: red, white, navy, light blue, and gray.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Any top sold by PTA and the Kindergarten Class T-Shirt</p>	
Bottoms	
<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
<p style="text-align: center;">Shorts or long pants navy, khaki, and black. <u>NO</u> denim.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Shorts, long pants, skorts, capris, or jumpers navy, khaki, and black. <u>NO</u> denim.</p>
<u>School Spirit Days</u>	
<p style="text-align: center;">School Spirit T-Shirts and the Kindergarten Class T-Shirt may be worn with denim on Fridays. Denim bottoms are allowed to be worn <u>only</u> on Fridays.</p>	

V

Visitors: Country Isles policy is that ALL guests (including familiar faces) are required to check in at the school office to sign in and be issued a visitor's identification label or badge. Kindergarten teachers encourage and welcome family involvement for Mystery Readers, special activities and celebrations of learning. It is important to remember that while this may seem an inconvenience to frequent visitors, it is the goal and responsibility of the school to create a safe learning environment.

Volunteers: PTA will have a volunteer meeting during the first four weeks of school for parents and family members that are interested in volunteering in the school. Please check your child's monthly calendar for the date of this meeting. Every volunteer will need to fill out a volunteer application by visiting the following website:

<http://www.getinvolvedineducation.com/>

Every person interested in volunteering will need to fill out the on-line volunteer application each year even if one has been filled out in a previous school year. When you come to volunteer, please follow the visitor's rules as stated in the

above section and remember to log in the hours that you spend in school volunteering in the log located in the front office.

In order for teachers to establish a routine and relationship with their kindergarten students we will not be allowing volunteers in the classrooms for the first three or four weeks of school. In the mean time, if you would like to help the kindergarten team putting materials together, please let your child's teacher know when you are available to help out and we will send work home or arrange a time for you to complete the work in our school's workroom.

W

Website: The Country Isles Elementary website is www.countryisles.net
Check in regularly to stay up to date with school happenings.

X

"X" Marks the Spot: Children who are car riders or who walk home with a parent will meet with their teacher at a designated spot in the back car loop against the back wall of Pod B (Facing the Country Isles Park field) at dismissal time. **Please do not take children from the line as we walk to the spot or take the children from the spot without letting the teacher know.** Please advise anyone authorized to pick up your child of this very important safety rule.

Y

You: You are your child's first teacher. We welcome you to the Country Isles Kindergarten Family and look forward to working with you to prepare your child to be a life-long learner.

Z

Zzzzzs: Make sure that your child gets plenty of rest. Setting and keeping a bedtime is a wonderful gift that you can give to your child. It will help them to be alert and ready to learn each day!