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Kindergarten handbook.

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Kindergarten Handbook

FOREWORD

Perhaps no period in the school life of a child is more important than his first experience in school. There the transition is made from family to larger group living. This transition can be both pleasant and challenging if teachers and parents work together to make it so.

The Kindergarten Handbook, prepared by kindergarten teachers of the Madison Public Schools, has been written to lay the groundwork for such cooperation. It explains briefly the activities that go on in a kindergarten; gives some suggestions for ways parents can help; and most important of all, suggests that parents and teachers exchange ideas, information, and viewpoints. This cooperation will bring the mutual understanding and confidence between teacher and parent so essential to the happiness and sense of security of the child.

We hope this book will help you to understand the school point of view and that you will share your thinking with us. Happy and profitable home-school contacts enable each of us to do our most effective work.

ROBERT D. GILBERTS,
Superintendent

February 1963 Revision
Madison, Wisconsin

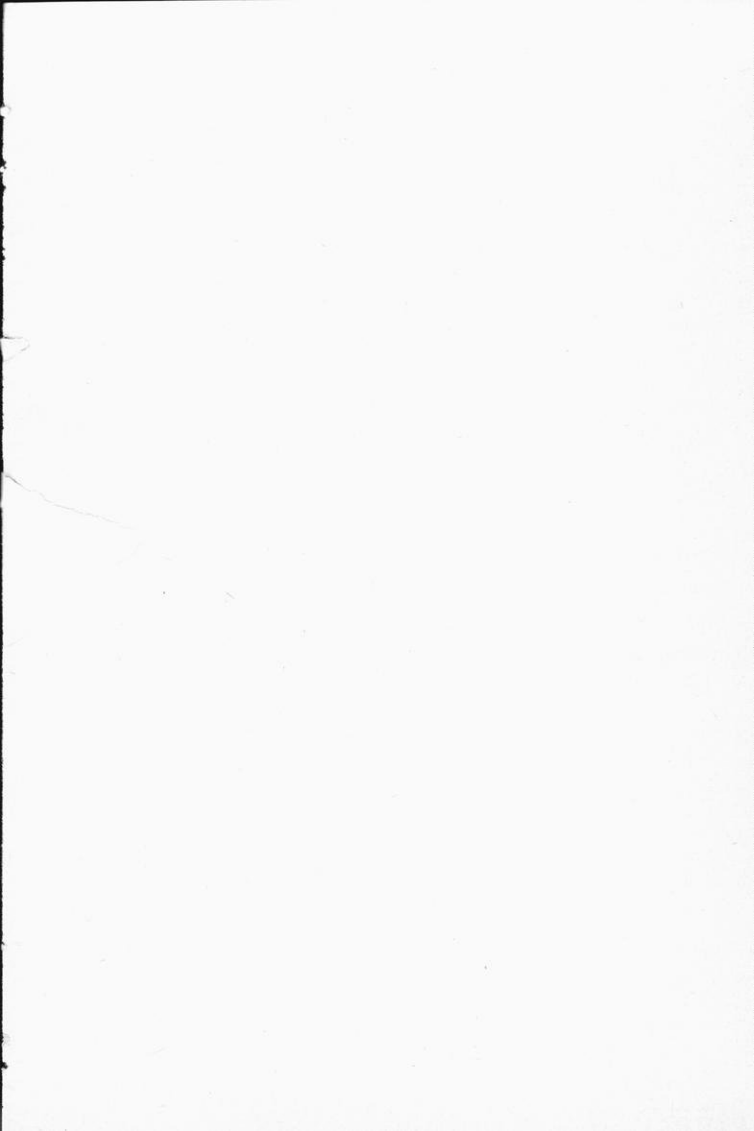


WHAT THE SCHOOL EXPECTS OF YOUR CHILD

Few of us who are grown will ever experience the thrill and, at the same time, the bewilderment which confront the kindergarten child as he leaves the familiar and known background of his home for the new adventures that await him as he enters school for the first time. He is seeking to understand and to gain a working relationship with his environment so that he can make himself a part of it. He is learning to make needed social adjustments and to understand himself.

He will be ready for his new role if he:

1. Knows his own full name, address, and telephone number well enough to repeat them when necessary.
2. Knows the safest way to and from school. (Go with the child over this route until he knows it. Tell why the route has been chosen).
3. Understands the need to walk on the sidewalk and to cross streets only at crossings.
4. Knows the danger of passing cars, of playing in the street, and the necessity of obeying traffic controls.
5. Realizes that matches, electricity, and sharp instruments are dangerous.
6. Speaks willingly and with reasonable clarity.
7. Cares for toys and materials he uses.
8. Plays easily and happily with other children.
9. Is usually poised and happy.
10. Shows control of large muscles in running and skipping.
11. Has learned to dress and undress himself.
12. Shows interest in picture books and enjoys hearing stories.
13. Uses handkerchief and turns away from others when coughing or sneezing.
14. Shows an interest in other people.
15. Is willing to share his possessions.
16. Is willing to help others.
17. Can attend to his toilet and sanitary needs without assistance.



HOW PARENTS CAN HELP THE SCHOOL FUNCTION BETTER

1. Label or mark the name of your child on all wearing apparel. Buy rubbers and overshoes large enough so that the child may pull them off and on easily.
2. Label or mark toys, books, dolls, etc., which children bring to school. (Use tape which takes ink readily and which can be sewed or stuck on coats, caps, rubbers, and toys.)
3. If your child brings home articles which are not his own, you can help correct the error by notifying the school immediately.
4. In order that the kindergarten teacher may be given uninterrupted opportunity to help your child adjust himself to the school group, you are requested to defer visiting school until after the opening month. After that you are invited to visit frequently. However, days preceding a holiday or vacation are not good visiting days.
5. Your child will need a smock or shirt to protect his clothing when he paints. He will also need a small rug or pad for resting. Both should be labeled.
6. Clothing should be *simple* to allow the child to dress himself, attend to his toilet needs, get into his outdoor things easily; *comfortable* to allow freedom of action with no binding about arms, legs, crotch, or waist; *durable* to permit him to enjoy activities; *easily laundered* for cleanliness.
7. During the year your child will be asked to bring money to school for various things—milk, fees, trips, etc. You will be notified through the school when this occurs. It helps a great deal if you send the exact change, taped to a paper and enclosed in an envelope marked with the child's name, teacher's name or room number, and purpose for which the money is sent.
8. Except in case of illness, try to see that your child attends school regularly and arrives promptly. If he is late to school or misses a few days he is apt to experience a feeling of strangeness which inter-



feres with steady progress. A note to the teacher explaining the absence is requested. It will help her know how to help him readjust to the group.

9. The celebration of a child's birthday may be a worthwhile experience, eagerly anticipated, but it is suggested that the teacher be consulted before specific plans are made.
10. Your name and telephone number and that of the family physician should be on file in the principal's office in case your child becomes suddenly ill or meets with an accident. It might be well to notify the school if you plan to be out of town for a day.
11. You can assist your child by becoming a member of the school mother's club or parent-teacher association.

YOUR CHILD IN KINDERGARTEN

What He Learns

A kindergarten child has an interesting time in school. While he is enjoying himself, he learns many different things in many different ways. He has a variety of materials with which to work—large crayons, paper, scissors, paste, puzzles, blocks, toys, musical instruments, doll house furniture, balls, wheel toys, books, aquaria, magnifying glasses, and the like.

Since the young child has spent most of his time playing alone or in small groups, the kindergarten day provides an opportunity for that kind of activity and also introduces brief periods of large group activity—listening to stories, singing together, and playing simple games. Active play is alternated with quiet occupations in a daily routine worked out by a teacher who understands these needs.

As teachers and children live and work together, interests are discovered which can provide the foundations to enlarge knowledge in many fields—social understandings, number, spoken and written language, and science. Teachers will organize experiences for the children dealing with such subjects as holidays, seasonal changes, the school, home, pets, health and safety, the store, transportation, or other areas which seem pertinent.



Throughout these experiences, understandings will be developed which broaden the child's appreciation of how people live and work together in the various areas close to the child's own every day living.

A beginning is made in science, too, through consideration of such matters as what makes up the world we live in—lakes, rivers, rocks, soil, stars, sun, etc.; the different kinds of weather and how they affect us; what plants and animals need and how they contribute to our welfare; or perhaps some experiences with simple machines, such as wheels and pulleys, or with magnets, light, or sound.

Number is used in his daily experiences. He counts children for the attendance record or for games. He learns to recognize numbers on the calendar or clock. He becomes aware of relationships such as less, more, half, all, several and learns such forms as square, circle, triangle. He comes to realize that there are many ways of expressing numerical ideas—thermometers, scales, calendars, and the like.

Spoken language comes naturally as children work and play. They speak to be understood, and language is developed as they relive their experiences in dramatic play, explain to others an experience they have had or a toy they have brought to share. Vocabulary is devel-

oped through all the planned activities of a kindergarten. Careful listening, a prerequisite for all good learning and conversation, is encouraged.

Children are not taught to write in the kindergarten but they do have the experience of seeing their own names in print many times. Teachers write names on things children make and in other ways use written symbols. The letters used are called the manuscript alphabet and are based on circles, half circles, and straight lines. Research has proved manuscript writing an easy one for little children to learn. It would help if you, too, would use this alphabet in writing for him.

Many music experiences are provided, singing in unison, in small groups and alone; listening to piano or recorded music; marching, skipping, and hopping to the rhythm of music; and using the instruments in a rhythm band.

Each child is encouraged to express his own ideas with art materials. Painting is fun when done with fingers or brushes. Construction is important, be it a Christmas gift or an accessory for dramatic play.

Physical activity is important. Opportunity is provided for running, jumping, skipping, and for more organized ways for a child to get the activity his body needs.



Reporting to Parents

Throughout all of these experiences, the teacher is looking for not only the development of the skills we have mentioned but also for qualities in the child which make possible successful learning in a group situation. She asks herself such questions as: "Is he happy, self-confident, desirably independent, and curious?" "Is he willing to try something new and see it through to completion?" "Does he follow directions and accept suggestions for improvement?" "Is he willing to share his belongings?" "Does he help willingly with the tasks to be done and appreciate the contributions of others?"

Your child's report card, issued four times during the year, reflects these goals, at first considering only the child and his individual growth in them. The last report will compare his achievement with what is commonly achieved by children of his age.

The importance of personal conferences between the teacher and parents cannot be overemphasized since to a great extent the success of your child's experience is dependent upon close cooperation between parent and teacher. You are invited to talk with the teacher on any question of common concern. Appointments for conferences may be made through the school office.



ENTRANCE AGE

A birth certificate is required when registering a child. The policy of the Board of Education is to admit children who have reached their fifth birthday before November 30. Children whose birthdays fall between November 30 and December 31 are considered for entrance at the request of parent and principal. The latter will refer the child to the Child Study Department for study and recommendation.

Children whose birthdays are after December 31 are admitted only after special application to the superintendent of schools. Since Madison has no kindergarten facilities for four-year-old children, it is only rarely that a child whose birthday is after December 31 is recommended for admission. The welfare of the child is the prime consideration in all cases.

A child who is younger than his classmates, physically, intellectually, emotionally or socially, is likely to be under a serious handicap. In this exciting new venture it is important that the child feel good about himself and equal to what is expected of him.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

The school recognizes that each kindergarten class is composed of as many individual personalities as it has members. Just as some children are tall, some short, some blonde, some brunette, some skilled in motor coordination, and some clumsy, so there is great variation in less visible characteristics. Some children are shy, some find making friends easy. Some express themselves well in words, some show their feelings by facial expressions, aggression, or withdrawal. Some are curious and confident, some a bit fearful of new experiences. Some are patient, some overactive. Some are persistent, some unused to seeing an activity to completion.

Your kindergarten teacher will welcome your analysis of your own child—and you might enjoy speculating about how the children in this photograph differ from each other.



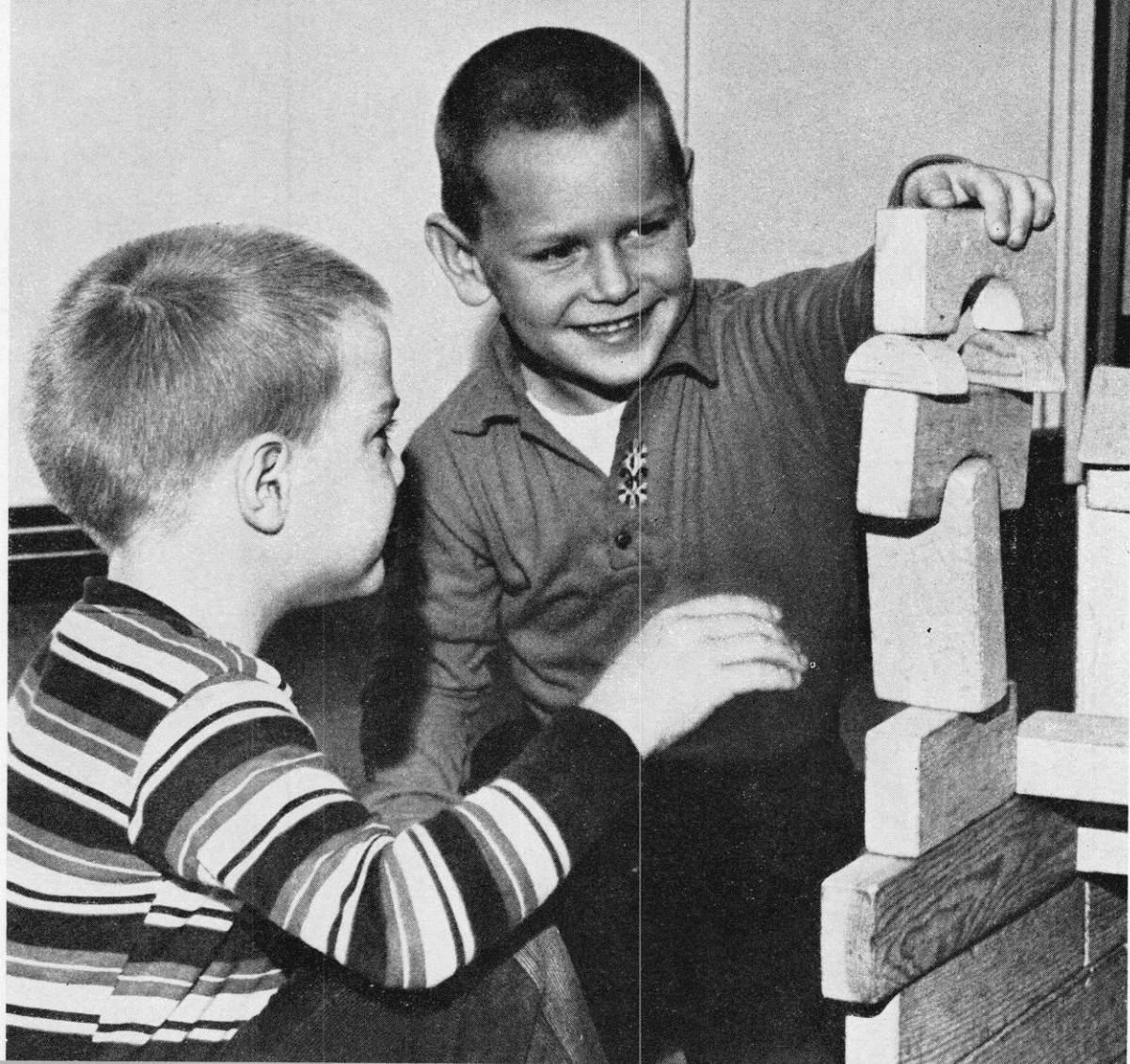
HEALTH GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. One of the fundamental factors for happiness and success in school life is good health.
2. Before your child enters kindergarten have him examined by your family physician and dentist, and have his hearing and vision tested. Correction of health problems before school entrance is facilitated by having his examinations during the summer months. Forms for these examinations are distributed at kindergarten registrations in the spring.
3. The City Health Department recommends that children be immunized for diphtheria, whooping cough, polio, and tetanus, and be successfully vaccinated for smallpox before entrance into kindergarten. For children who had these immunizations early in life, the health department recommends a booster immunization for diphtheria, whooping cough, polio, tetanus, and revaccination for smallpox before school entrance.
4. Inspect your child before he leaves for school each morning and keep him home if he shows any abnormal symptoms, such as:

An abnormal running nose
Flushed face indicating temperature
Swollen glands
Any skin eruptions
Sores
Inflamed eye
Discharging ear
Sore throat
Headache
Upset stomach

5. Plan for your child to have 10–12 hours sleep in a well ventilated bedroom. It is well to have the period just before bedtime be calm and relaxed so that going to sleep is easy.
6. Outdoor play each day is desirable.
7. Providing your child with plain wholesome food, plenty of time in which to eat it, and maintaining a cheerful attitude at meals helps set the stage for normal, wholesome activities the rest of the day.





READING LIST FOR PARENTS

Books may be borrowed from the Public Library or from the Curriculum Office Library. If from the latter, the books may be obtained through your kindergarten teacher. Many of the school libraries have these books on a parents' shelf.

Child Development

Child Behavior. Ilg and Ames

Growth and Development of The Young Child.
Breckenridge and Murphy

Human Development and Learning. Crow, Lester
and Alice

Parent-Child Relationship

How to Help Your Child in School. Frank, Mary
and Lawrence

New Ways in Discipline. Baruch, Dorothy

Off to a Good Start. Black, Irma

Understanding Your Child. Hymes, James L.

Preschool Child

Babies are Human Beings. Aldrich, C. A. and Mary
Child From Two to Six. Alschuler, Rose

Guide for Parents. Fox, Brogan and others

Nursery School. Read, Katherine

These Are Your Children. Jenkins, Gladys and others

Reading to Your Child

Bequest of Wings. Duff, Annis

Children and Books. Arbuthnot, May

A Parent's Guide to Children's Reading. Larrick,
Nancy

Unreluctant Years. Smith, Lillian

We also call to your attention that community resources such as libraries, museums, churches, and parks, have many things that are profitable for both parent and child.

