



# Goldwood Primary School

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**Jennifer Norman, Principal**

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Dear Parents,

Starting kindergarten is a major milestone for your child—and for you. The role you play in this turning point in your child’s life is a very important one. Understanding the world of kindergarten and its objectives is the first step toward helping to make the most of this introduction to formal education.

The general purpose of our kindergarten program is somewhat different than that of upper grades. Its goal is to emphasize social and emotional development and expand students’ knowledge of their environment, as much as it is to teach academic skills. It acts as an introduction to the structure of school, to learning cooperation and interaction with peers, and to mastering new concepts and exploring new worlds.

Today’s kindergarten is actually more academic, and more challenging, than programs of the past. While it is still based upon an atmosphere of play, it is a kind of serious play that teaches children to think, solve problems, share ideas, and more.

This may seem quite ambitious for a group of 5 and 6 year olds. These concepts are fostered through activities like building with blocks, modeling clay, counting beads, and writing stories. Students hardly notice they are working hard--and learning so much. They learn the way they learn best: through interactive, hands on activities at their own pace.

Because students come into the kindergarten classroom with very different backgrounds and levels of “educational” preparation, many of the activities are individualized to accommodate the unique needs of each child. While some students come to the classroom with very little interactive experience outside of the family environment, some have been involved in highly structured preschool or daycare programs.

Reading and writing skills are encouraged for each student. For some, this is done by reading stories to them or writing down tales they tell, and for some it means working on letter recognition, printing, or reading the words in books. The emphasis is on *readiness* for reading (most students actually start to read in the first grade).

Sorting, grouping, and graphing activities are a hands-on approach designed to familiarize students with math concepts. Science and social studies classes talk about and explore seasonal events, environment, and a study of various countries.

Here are some suggestions from the Goldwood family:

- ❖ Teach your child to print his or her name using an upper case letter for the first letter and lower case for the rest. Children get confused when they are taught at home to print their names in all upper case and then are told to print their names a different way in school.

- ❖ Read to your child. This will increase his/her vocabulary and listening skills. Reading will also expand general knowledge and develop your child's appreciation of reading. Discuss the story with your child.
- ❖ Count aloud with your child. Also, you may wish to work on number recognition from 1-10. Use math in everyday life. For example, have your child count out six spoons to set the table or seven nails to build a birdhouse.
- ❖ Playing games, involvement in sports, coloring, cutting, painting, drawing, and singing are all excellent ways to develop large and small muscle development. They also assist in developing eye/hand coordination.
- ❖ Get a book bag your child can open and close easily. It should be big enough to hold a large library book. Label the bag with your child's name. Notice what he takes to school. For example, toys should not be brought to school. Check the book bag daily for important notes.
- ❖ Work on developing listening skills. Paying attention to the teacher certainly is beneficial in the learning process.
- ❖ Have your child pick up toys or be given other small tasks so that he/she understands the concept of responsibility. This skill provides a child with greater success in kindergarten.
- ❖ Discuss the start of kindergarten with your child. Show excitement and relate your personal excitement when you started school. Realize that if your child shows uneasiness, this is common. The uneasiness should subside when kindergarten actually begins.

Developmental stages mark the growth of all children. Each child passes through these growth intervals at different times and at different rates. Do not push your child in the academic areas, if they are uneager. This will have negative results. A child cannot usually achieve academically until he/she is ready to do so.

We hope these ideas are helpful. We also realize that many parents have already been doing all or many of the suggestions, and we commend you. Some of the entering kindergartners will have surpassed the introductory developmental level. Our curriculum and supplemental enrichment activities and programs will provide appropriately for those developmental needs.

The teachers and I are looking forward to meeting with your child, as he/she enters their first "formal year" of education! We also look forward to ongoing communication with you. You will receive your teacher assignment around the third week in August.

Sincerely,

*Ms. Jennifer Norman*  
Principal

**Kindergarten Registration and Screening** for the 2010-2011 school year will take place on April 27-29<sup>th</sup> at Goldwood Primary School. You and your child will enter through the main doors to Goldwood Primary School. Greeters will welcome you, sign you in and direct you to the media center while your child visits the various screening activities.

Your child will:

- Be guided by Preschool PTA parent volunteers as well as Goldwood staff members so the whole atmosphere is relaxed and non-threatening.
- Participate in a variety of high interest readiness screening activities.
- Earn a star for each station visited. Once your child has four stars on his/her nametag, screening activities are complete.
- The **only** station you will accompany your child to is the vision station in order to answer questions from the school nurse.

You will be able to set up an appointment for the process by attending the Information Night for Parents on Thursday, March 5, 2009 from 6:30-7:30 PM in the Goldwood Room at Goldwood Primary School or by calling 356-6730 on Friday, March 6, 2009 or Monday, March 9, 2009 between 9:15 and noon. Appointments can be arranged on an ongoing basis, as well, before the screening dates.

You will receive a Kindergarten packet of various forms to complete. Included is a form requesting morning or afternoon parent preference. A team composed of the principal, guidance counselor, and grade coordinator will carefully consider the needs of your child and determine placement in an optimal learning environment. A component of the placement process includes parent preference in regard to the morning session (9:05-11:50 AM) or afternoon session (12:35-3:20 PM). Morning or afternoon notification will be mailed in June to allow ample time to arrange for day care needs if necessary.

It may be necessary to conduct a lottery in order to balance class sizes—morning session is requested more than the afternoon. Names, in the order in which they are drawn, will be placed on a waiting list. If and when morning slots become available, we will honor waiting list requests for morning kindergarten.

After March 5 until the screening dates, we ask that you stop by with the following:

#### **Registration Checklist**

##### **Items to Bring for Registration (See *Enrollment Procedures in packet* for further information)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Residence Verification – 2 items (see Affidavit of Residency Form in packet)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Parent/Guardian's driver's license, state photo ID or passport
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Student's Birth Certificate – original or certified copy
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Immunization Records
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Custody or Custody Pending Form – if applicable
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Students with Special Needs/MFE, IEP, 504 Plan – if applicable

##### **Forms to Complete and Submit at Registration**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Enrollment Procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Affidavit of Residency
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Student Registration Form (both sides)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Health Questionnaire (Completed by parent)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. School Entrance Medical Record (completed by Physician before the first day of school and returned to the school nurse in the envelope attached.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Kindergarten Parent Observation Form
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Home Language Survey
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Kindergarten Morning or Afternoon Preference Form

***Your child will be assigned to a class only upon the completion and return of all the above documents/forms.***

The teachers and I look forward to meeting your child for his/her first “formal year” of education. We also look forward to ongoing communication with you. Parent participation is vital during these formative years.

We urge all parents to become involved as partners with us during this educational journey.

Welcome to our Goldwood family!