



# 20 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT KINDERGARTEN AT WARDS CREEK ELEMENTARY

## 1. Is Kindergarten a full or half day?

Kindergarten is a full day program in St. Johns County. Kindergarten students in SJCS D participate in staggered start. **Each Kindergarten student will come to school 1 of the first 4 days of school.** They will engage in Kindergarten activities with a small group of students to acclimate to the “big school” environment. During Meet and Greet in the evening on Tuesday, August 8<sup>th</sup>, you will select one of those days in your child’s classroom. All children will come to school on Wednesday, August 16.

## 2. What are school hours?

Our school day begins at 8:30am (when the tardy bell rings). On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, school releases at 2:50 pm and on Wednesday at 1:40 pm.

## 3. How many students are in a class?

Kindergarten classes have 18 students to meet the class size amendment. Pending student enrollment and when additional kindergarten students enroll, a certified teacher may be added to an existing kindergarten class. This will allow the class to grow up to 27 students.

## 4. How many teachers will there be in kindergarten?

The number of teachers is determined by the number of students enrolled in kindergarten.

## 5. Where are the kindergarten classrooms located?

The classrooms are located in the orange house in our school building. Group tours of our building will be given during the summer. Check our site for times.

## 6. How is discipline addressed in the Kindergarten classroom?

Wards Creek sets high expectations for behavior. All Kindergarten classroom behavior plans revolve around the six pillars of character (Caring, Trustworthiness, Fairness, Respect, Responsibility, and Citizenship) and the The Eight Habits of Happy Kids. (Be Proactive, Begin with the End in Mind, Put First Things First, Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood, Synergize, Sharpen the Saw, and Find Your Voice & Inspire Others to Find Theirs. All classrooms use rewards and consequences to reinforce good behavior.

## 7. What is the homework policy in Kindergarten?

Our philosophy in Kindergarten is to provide meaningful learning experiences for your child. We will send home a monthly homework calendar for you to work on with your child. It will be due at the end of each month. Reading logs and Book in the Bags will be a part of their homework as well. Periodically, there will also be a family project for you and your child to work on.

## 8. How will I know how my child is doing academically?

Each nine weeks a report card will be issued informing you of how your child performed during that nine week grading period. You are welcome to request a conference with your teacher. The teachers use many different assessments to determine where your child is academically in math and reading. Students are given iReady periodically throughout the year to monitor students’ progress. Half way through the year, your child will host a student led conference at our Annual Kindergarten Data and Donuts. Date to be announced. Report cards, attendance, and demographic information is available on our online portal, HAC. You can create an account by visiting this link: <https://parents.stjohns.k12.fl.us/>.

**9. How will the teacher communicate with me?**

- Communication Folder
- Classroom Newsletters
- School Newsletters
- Class and school website
- Email

**10. What resources does my child receive while at school?**

- Art
- Music
- PE
- Media
- Computer
- Health/Leadership

**11. What are the core academics in Kindergarten?**

Each subject area below gives a brief description of just a *few* of the skills that will be covered this year. All Kindergarten children are expected to reach these skills by the end of the year. We do realize that students come to school at varying levels, both socially and academically and we will work hard to meet all students' needs where they are.

**Reading**

The students will listen to conversation and stories for meaning; know the sequence of events, characters and setting of a story; be able to retell a story (beginning, middle, end); know rhymes, rhythms, and patterned structures in children's text; know the names of upper and lowercase letters, as well as their sounds; know the alphabetical order of the letters; understand basic phonetic principals; identify frequently used words; and select material to read for pleasure. Each teacher will be working with students in small guided reading groups, selecting materials and/or literature which are on the child's reading level.

**Writing**

The students will be involved in both shared and independent writing activities throughout the year. Students will be able to write in response to a given prompt, using at least initial consonant sounds. We would like to see the children striving to use beginning, medial, and ending sounds while putting spaces between their words. We would also like to see the students identify and attempt to use correct punctuation and write a multi-sentence story loosely linked by the end of his/her kindergarten school year.

**Math**

The teachers will use a hands-on approach to help the students achieve many mathematical skills. The students will use manipulatives to gain a solid foundation of the numbers 0-20. Students will also extend and construct patterns (both pictorial and numerical); understand and apply basic addition and subtraction; collect, display data and make generalizations; interpret and create graphs; and explore various measuring tools for measuring length, weight, and capacity. The children will also be introduced to math vocabulary words that correspond with each math concept.

**Social Studies**

The students will understand why rules are necessary; respect individual differences; vote on classroom issues to express a preference; distinguish between the past, present, and future; identify patriotic holidays; compare the lives of students and families in another country with their own; know that the

globe is a model of the earth; and locate the state of Florida on a map or globe. Social studies also encompasses Character Counts! We teach the six pillars of character: Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Citizenship, Trustworthiness, and Fairness. Students will know and be able to demonstrate behavior associated with these pillars.

### **Science**

Science, like math, will also be taught using a hands-on approach, but through experiments done in the classroom. The students will demonstrate curiosity about scientific concepts; observe characteristics and behaviors of living and non-living things; know ways living things change and grow over time; be able to identify the five senses and understand how the senses work together to find out things about the world; know that matter exists in different states; know that objects have many different observable properties; know that the motion of an object can be changed by a push or pull; and understand that different things move at different speeds.

### **12. Will my Kindergartener be going on field trips?**

Yes, they will be going on off campus field trips. All field trips will be connected to our curriculum.

### **13. What can I do to help my child build his/her independence?**

Independence and responsibility go hand and hand. Encourage your child to try things on his or her own (packing up backpack, tying their shoes, self-help skills). Realize that your child will make mistakes, but will grow in the process.

### **14. Can parents volunteer in the classroom?**

Yes! During Kindergarten Orientation your child's assigned classroom teacher will have a volunteer sign up list for parents to complete. All parents **MUST** complete a volunteer form and be approved **PRIOR** to volunteering in the classroom or attending any field trips.

<http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/volunteer/>

### **15. What additional activities will my child participate in during the school day?**

- Recess
- Cooking
- Centers
- Science Lab

### **16. Will my child have rest time?**

No, we recommend an early bed time because it is a **BUSY** day!!

### **17. Can my child have a rolling backpack?**

No. Due to safety reasons, rolling backpacks are strongly discouraged. We recommend you purchase a backpack that can be carried on your child's back.

### **18. What is the security like at Wards Creek Elementary?**

Security and safety is the number 1 priority at Wards Creek. After all students have arrived, the front entrance doors are locked with the exception of our main office doors. The only way into the building is through the front office. There is fencing around our entire school campus and our grounds are monitored by our staff throughout the day. All teachers wear name tags and all visitors or volunteers must be approved and sign in at front desk where they will receive a name badge to wear.

<http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/volunteer/>

**19. Is there a curriculum for Kindergarten?**

Yes. You can visit [www.fldoe.org](http://www.fldoe.org) to learn more about the curriculum standards for kindergarten in Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science.

**20. How can I make my child's Kindergarten year a success?**

- Support your child's teacher
- Stay involved
- Be positive, positive, positive!

