

Welcome to Kindergarten!



Handbook

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to our Kindergarten program. Successful education is a partnership between parent and school; we look forward to working with you as your child explores and learns with us. Please be sure to let us know when you have a question or a concern; that is the best way to ensure a wonderful year for your child. Thank you for entrusting us with your precious Kindergartner.

It will be an exciting year!

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Homestead Elementary

7451 S. Homestead Parkway Centennial, CO 80112
Front Office: 720-554-3700 Attendance Line: 720-554-3795

Kindergarten Enrichment Program

Phone: 720-554-3723
Email: schoolcareworks@cherrycreekschools.org

HAWKS Nest (Before and After School Care)

Phone: 720-554-3762

What to Expect from Kindergarten

In Kindergarten, we...

- Stimulate the child's confidence and self-worth through offering many experiences within the individual's range of interests and competence which result in a joy and love for learning.
- Provide a child-centered program, which includes concrete, multi-sensory experiences that have meaning for your child and extends awareness and understanding of the surrounding world through an inter-disciplinary approach.
- Provide an environment organized around learning.
- Create centers in which the child can use language to label and categorize objects as well as situations that require problem solving and decision-making, questioning, evaluation, and discovery.
- Include curriculum experiences using games, art, music and play activities that stimulate and encourage creativity, cooperation, and social maturation.
- Include a variety of forms of written and oral experiences, which offer students the opportunity to share about self, feelings, curiosity, and personal knowledge.
- Develop a broad conceptual base moving from the concrete to the abstract in order to make skills in all academic areas of the curriculum more meaningful.

Communication

We strive to keep the lines of communication open between school and home. Please feel free to contact us whenever you have a question or concern. In turn, we will do the same with you. Our preferred method of communication is e-mail; however, we also do our best to check/return phone messages daily.

Friday Folders

Friday Folders are our system for sending home completed work and community announcements. As a general rule, we try to avoid sending work and notices home on a daily basis. Instead, we save all completed work and send everything home together on Fridays. We ask that you RETURN FRIDAY FOLDERS WITH COMPLETED WORK. Your cooperation with returning Friday Folders will be much appreciated!

Homestead Website homestead.cherrycreekschools.org

We encourage you to utilize the Homestead website for checking school calendars, PTCO news, grade-level information, school closures or delays, and parent/child learning resources.

Homestead App

Search for Homestead Elementary on your mobile device and download the app to stay up to date all activities that go on at Homestead Elementary. You can also notify the office of absences through the app.

Kindie News

The Kindergarten newsletter, Kindie News, is sent via email. Please read to be notified about important dates and current lessons being taught in your child's classroom.

Conferences

Conferences take place twice a year after the first two progress reports are sent home. The dates and times for conferences will be posted in Kindie News. You will sign up for a conference time from a computer using Sign Up Genius. The final progress report is sent home on the last day of Kindergarten. You are always welcome to request informal meetings as needed.

PLEASE NOTE: We would appreciate being notified of any changes or major family events, which may affect your child at school. These would include vacations, illnesses, deaths, or plans to leave your child with someone else for an extended period of time. We will be able to offer your child support and assistance if we are aware of these situations. Thank you!

Homework

Homework is assigned in Kindergarten. It will look different as the year progresses. Homework gives students the opportunity to reinforce skills taught in the classroom and helps to establish study habits and home routines for future school success. Sometimes the homework can appear easy but we want the students to feel successful as they extend their learning at home with you.

The year will start with letter and sight word reinforcement via word work practice. In October our district math program starts with weekly homework pages that help support our teaching for the week. We encourage you to work through these activities with your child. Completed homework should be returned to your classroom teacher in your child's Friday Folder.

In addition throughout the year "special" homework assignments (simple projects) are assigned that coincide with our units of study.

Arrival and Dismissal

7:50	AM Kindergarten and KEP Students Arrive at School
8:00	AM Kindergarten and AM KEP Sessions Begin
11:00	AM Only Kindergarten Ends and all of KEP goes to lunch
11:35	PM Only Kindergarten Students Arrive at School
11:45	PM Kindergarten and PM KEP Sessions Begin
2:45	PM Kindergarten and PM KEP Sessions End

We encourage you to have your child at school on time each day as instruction begins promptly upon arrival. If you are late, you must check in at the front office before bringing your child to the classroom.

Making attendance a priority at the Kindergarten level is one of the most beneficial things you can do for your child. Children learn the importance of going to school and it has been shown that attendance plays a major role in student success. Please schedule vacations and trips during the school breaks to minimize absences. If your child is going to be absent please use the attendance feature of the Homestead App or contact the attendance line before 8am.

Attendance Line: 720-554-3795

Back Parking Lot Guidelines

Please do not drop off before 7:50. There is no supervision until that time!

- For everyone's safety, please end all cell phone use before entering the parking lot. The traffic in the back lot goes **ONE WAY** only. Enter from the north side and exit through the south side. **DO NOT ENTER AGAINST THE ARROWS!**
- There is no left turn out of the back parking lot onto Homestead Parkway. Vehicles must turn right.
- Please pull your vehicle all the way up to the crosswalk when possible before dropping off or picking up your child.
- **Please have your child enter and exit the car from the PASSENGER SIDE ONLY. Drivers may not exit vehicle** in the drop off lane for any reason. If you need to assist your child, please find a parking space.
- If you have dropped off your child, you may pull out and pass the cars that are curbside in order to exit the parking lot. Please pull forward **slowly** and anticipate that the drop off lane merges back into one lane after the crosswalk.

- Please only use the designated crosswalk when going to and from the parking lot. It is very important to show our kiddos where it is safe to cross, even when they are accompanied by an adult.
- Please remember that there are hundreds of kiddos walking next to moving cars – please drive slowly and attentively.

Midday Pick Up and Drop Off

- If you are one of the first cars to arrive, please *PARK YOUR CAR IN A SPOT* so that the drive way is open for cars to pull through. Parking your car in the neighborhood and walking the very short distance to the school is one of the best options. You don't have to deal with traffic and you and your child get to enjoy a walk together.
- The back, rounded corner of the drive is impassable if there is a car stopped in that spot. Please do not leave your car there. Wait until cars pull forward and proceed.
- Just like before and after school, please *DO NOT* pull in through the exit. The traffic in the back lot goes one way.

Daily Snacks

Both morning and afternoon Kindergarten students will have daily snack time. Snack time takes place during recess so that instructional time is not interrupted. We encourage you to send a SMALL, HEALTHY snack each day, one snack per recess; it should be something that your child can manage on his/her own. There are only two water fountains in the Kindergarten hallway, so it *is* necessary to send a labeled water bottle – only water at snack time, please, no other beverages! If your child has ANY food allergies, please notify the school nurse and us BEFORE the first day of school. Only occasionally will we do cooking or class activities that involve food.

Birthdays Celebrations

We look forward to celebrating your child's birthday at school. Children will be recognized on their birthdays with a birthday crown and a small surprise. If you and your child would like to bring a nut-free, special treat to share with classmates, we welcome a SMALL, easy-to-eat treat for birthday celebrations (fruit snacks, a cookie, rice krispie treats, etc.) We will celebrate with treats once per birthday; KEP students will not share birthday treats. If your child's birthday falls on a weekend or a vacation day from school, please check with the teacher as to the best day to celebrate at school. If your child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate it in May.

****An important word about party invitations.**** Since we wish to protect the feelings of ALL students, we ask that you NOT send or distribute party invitations at school.

Classmate addresses will be available in the Homestead Buzz Book, our school's address book. Watch for a PTCO permission form that will allow you to add your address to and purchase a Buzz Book.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS (COATS, HATS, BOOTS, LUNCHBOXES, BACKPACK, WATER BOTTLE) THAT YOUR CHILD BRINGS TO SCHOOL. It will be much easier to return lost items to your child if they are labeled. There is a small Lost and Found Bin inside the Kindergarten doors that will collect belongings that are not labeled.

We work and play hard at school, so "play clothes" and shoes are suggested. On PE days, please see that your child wears appropriate footwear. Every day we will go outdoors except under extreme conditions, so cold weather gear is a must on winter days. Help us by teaching your child to button or zip coats and tie shoes.

Your child will need a regular sized backpack each day, large enough to fit snacks, water bottles, library books, and Friday Folders. PLEASE DO NOT PURCHASE BACKPACKS WITH WHEELS. These do not fit well under our cubbies and have even proven dangerous with children swinging them around. Thank you for cooperating with this request!

We request that NO TOYS be brought to school. This includes electronic games, stuffed animals or dolls, sports equipment, etc. Such items can become lost or broken at school and will become a distraction during class time. On occasion, we may ask your child to bring in a favorite item or an item of interest that will support one of our teaching units. A note or email will always come home regarding such requests.

Our Rules

1. Follow Kindergarten's Body Basics guidelines (includes hands to self, quiet in the hallways and during learning time, walking, not running in the building).
2. Raise hand to speak; don't interrupt.
3. Respect school and other's property.
4. Be kind to others.

H.A.W.K.S. is a school wide character-building acronym that our school has embraced. (H-Honest, A-Achieving, W-Working Hard, K-Kind, S-Safe)

Discipline

We strive to maintain an orderly, happy learning environment where each child's right to learn and play is protected. In order for all children to have this opportunity, a few rules must be intact, understood, and consistently enforced. We suggest you review school rules with your child often and discuss the importance of following through. During the first weeks of school, we will spend much time discussing safety, respect, rules and procedures. Each classroom has a positive reinforcement discipline plan in place, which may include time out (5 minutes at seat or on sidewalk at recess), if necessary. Your child's teacher may contact you if your child is having difficulty following school rules. We wish to keep you informed about behavior and desire to work with you to alleviate any difficulties.

Volunteers

We look forward to inviting volunteers (parents/guardians/grandparents) in to work with students on projects! We are also grateful to volunteers for their support of our program through preparing and organizing materials. Once students have settled in to the school routine and have successfully made the separation from home, we will begin using in-school volunteers. Prior to that, we may be seeking parent help in preparing materials at home. Our Trail Moms and Room Moms will schedule volunteers throughout the year. Please let them know if you wish to become involved! Our volunteer schedule is made and posted through Sign Up Genius, an online sign up website. Thank you in advance for your help.

Curriculum

The academic curriculum in Kindergarten will include:

- Reading Readiness and Reading
- Math
- Writing
- Science
- Social Studies
- Art, Music, PE, STEAM

Reading Readiness

We will begin the year with a strong emphasis on phonemic awareness (the ability to hear/produce rhyme and differentiate sounds). Reading research has shown that a strong foundation in phonemic awareness is critical to reading success. We will also use a combination of methods, including systematic phonics instruction, to teach reading and writing. Our reading program includes: whole-group reading activities, word work, teacher-guided literacy groups, music and movement, teacher

read-a-louds, games, independent book browsing/reading time, literacy centers, explicit teaching of sight words (high frequency words).

Writer's Workshop

Your child will also have writing time weekly. Writer's Workshop is a period of time dedicated to creative writing, preceded by direct instruction from the teacher on "what good writers do". Writer's Workshop is NOT a time of handwriting instruction although letter formation may be touched upon. Just a few of the topics we will cover in Writer's Workshop are: picture-story matching, using knowledge of sounds to represent the written word, adding details to pictures and stories to make them more interesting, experimenting with conventions of print (punctuation, capitalization, spaces between words). 9

MOST IMPORTANTLY, we remind you that reading and writing are DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSES. Not all children will progress at the same rate. We will guide your child through the various stages of these processes. It is extremely important that each effort and success be celebrated as the journey towards reading/writing proficiency moves along.

Handwriting

We will be working to develop fine motor skills with numerous cutting and tracing activities. We will be modeling the correct formation of both upper and lower case letters.

Science

Our goal is to motivate students in science by encouraging inquiry, discovery, observation, and invention. We will expose students to scientific language and the scientific method. We utilize FOSS Science, an exciting hands-on program.

Social Studies

The major objective of social studies is the development of effective citizenship. Our program extends the concepts of the child's relationship to others by studying the family and cultural similarities/differences through thematic units.

Math

The standards for Kindergarten math include Counting and Cardinality, Operations and Algebraic thinking, Numbers and Operations in Base 10, Measurement and Data, and Geometry. Our focus is on developing critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Our activities will include: counting, numeration, measurements, geometry, addition, subtraction, fluency, and data collection. We use many hands-on activities in our math lessons and centers to develop these skills. Our daily calendar time is rich in math concepts and skills as well. If you visit the classroom, you will often

find us in conversation around a math problem or situation. Such conversation affords opportunity to develop higher-level thinking, vocabulary expansion, and an appreciation for mathematics in our daily lives. Children grow in math using practice, repetition, exploration and discovery.

Integrated Arts

Kindergartners go to Integrated Arts once a day on a rotating schedule. They will also visit the library once each week for book checkout. We are fortunate to have these wonderful Integrated Arts programs that include art, music, physical education and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics)!

Support Staff

In Kindergarten, we take advantage of using our support teachers to reinforce or extend the Kindergarten curriculum. Working with these additional teachers provides a wonderful opportunity for collaboration and support for every student in Kindergarten! These staff members include an ELA Specialist, an Interventionist, a Learning Disability Specialist, an Occupational Therapist, and a Speech Language Pathologist.

Thank You

We look forward to an exciting Kindergarten year full of learning and growing.