

# **ABC's of Kindergarten**



**Kindergarten Polices and Routines  
Buffalo Trail Elementary  
2021-20222**



# **A** is for Attendance, Absences, and Allergies

Attendance – A successful school experience is the responsibility of the child, the parents, and the school. Your child's progress, both academically and socially, is influenced to a great extent by daily participation. Regular attendance without tardiness is critical.

Absences – Excessive absences hinder a child's progress. It is also important now to instill in your child the importance of school. If your child is going to be absent, you must call the school at 720-886-4000, or use the Buffalo Trail app and let the school know of your child's absence. Please plan family trips during our scheduled breaks. It is hard for your child to make up work missed in kindergarten since most work is hands-on and is completed in class.

Allergies – If your child has any allergies please make sure that we are aware of them. Please bring paperwork to our school nurse, Nurse Heather. We especially need to know about food allergies and insect bite reactions.

# **B** is for Buffalo Bucks, Birthdays, and Backpacks

Buffalo Bucks –As a part of our Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) system, students earn buffalo bucks for following expectations that support responsible, respectful, and safe behaviors. Students collect buffalo bucks, and once they collect \$50 they can turn them into their teacher to collect a special prize.

Birthdays – Birthdays are important to us all and especially important to children at this age! **Please be advised that the Buffalo Trail school policy is that students and families may not provide food or “treats” for a student’s birthday.** Because of food allergies and health concerns, time taken away from learning, and availability for all students to have comparable birthdays, we feel that our own celebration will make the student feel special. We will provide the birthday boy/girl with a song, small gift (pencil, bookmark, etc.) If you would like to also give a small gift to the entire class on your child's birthday



that is acceptable, but please give the gifts to the teacher and let them know ahead of time.

Backpacks – Backpacks help your child carry projects and books to and from school. Please check your child's backpack DAILY.

## **C** is for Conferences, Clothing and Check-In

Conferences- In mid to late August we will have, “get to know you” conferences with you and your child. This is a time for you to meet with your child's teacher, tell them about your student, and set academic and social goals for kindergarten.

Parent/Teacher conferences with your child's teacher will be held following Trimester 1 and 2 (approximately November and February/March). These conferences will be 20-25 minutes in length and will cover your child's progress within the classroom. Online sign-up information will be provided by your teacher prior to all conferences.

Clothing – Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that is appropriate for kindergarten and in accordance with the Buffalo Trail dress code. Also, please remember to dress them appropriately for the weather. We do have outdoor recess during the winter months, so cold and snow can be a factor.

Check-In- The safety of our students is the number one priority at our school. All visitors must check-in at our front office. If you are volunteering, dropping off something for your child, dropping off late, or picking up your child early, please sign in at the front office first. You will need to have your driver's license to be scanned into our system. Once you have checked in, the office staff will call us to let us know that you are in the building. Our mobile classroom doors are always locked and we will not open or answer the door unless we are expecting you.

## **D** is for Discipline, Drop-off, and Dismissal

Discipline – Establishing good classroom discipline is essential to each child's success, confidence, and well-being. Buffalo Trail follows the Positive Behavior Intervention



Supports (PBIS), which promotes respectful, safe, and responsible behaviors. Every child should feel that the classroom environment is safe and secure, free from all threats of physical and emotional harm. The children will learn the purpose of the classroom expectations and develop the idea that our classroom is a community with the common purpose of learning, growing, and becoming friends.

Drop-off- Students may begin to arrive to school at 7:50am. Teachers will greet students at their classroom door. You may park on Progress Drive and walk your child to their classroom mobile. **Please be aware of no parking signs including the bus loop right outside of the classroom mobiles.** If your child attends Buff Club in the morning, a Buff Club employee will walk the students outside to their classrooms. Siblings may also walk your kindergartners to their mobile, then go to class.

Dismissal – Dismissal is at 2:45pm. Please do not come to the classroom to pick up your child. We will bring students outside our mobiles when the bell rings. If kindergartners are walking home with an older sibling, please be sure everyone knows the designated meeting spot at the classroom mobiles. If your child is going home with another adult, make sure you notify the classroom teacher via written note/email and that adult is listed on your student's emergency contact form. If your child attends Buff Club after school, a Buff Club employee will pick them up from our classrooms and take them to Buff Club. If your student rides the bus, their teacher will watch them walk to the bus loop, which is located right outside our classroom mobiles.

## **E** is for Email, Email Lists, and Emergencies

Email – We check our email as frequently as possible. If you have an important message for your child regarding after school change in plans, please call the office and they will notify us directly.

Email Lists – Please check your email periodically as we will be sending out information regarding events and activities. If you are not receiving emails, please contact your student's teacher to confirm.

Emergencies – Please make sure that all of your contact information is always up to date at the office, so that we are able to reach you.



# F

**is for Field Trips**

Field Trips – We are hopeful that in fall 2021 we will be able to attend field trips. If we can, per district guidance and Covid-19 protocols, we will schedule one or two field trips to enhance our curriculum. Permission slips and requests for fees will be sent home prior to each trip. School buses will provide the transportation. Parent volunteers will be chosen on a first come, first served basis. No siblings may accompany us on our trips.

# G

**is for Good Behavior**

Good Behavior – Our kindergarten is a safe and happy place where lots of learning takes place. We are a classroom family where teamwork and good relationships are expected. We will spend time learning class procedures and practicing them. Each student is expected to act within our standards of behavior as a class and school aligned with PBIS. Problems will be dealt with one on one. If misbehaviors continue, you will be contacted for support.

# H

**is for Hands-on Learning and Homework**

Hands-on Learning – The best way to help children learn is to make activities fun. Important concepts can be learned by doing meaningful hands-on activities. There are times when seatwork at the tables is required and necessary, but for the most part our classroom will be an active learning environment.

Homework – Homework will be sent home on Thursday in your child's Thursday folder. All homework must be returned the next Thursday. Please read the directions of the homework. All homework is a review of concepts already taught in class. The homework papers and games may seem “easy” to some students if they have already mastered the skill, but extra practice of all skills is important for all students' success. If



your child becomes frustrated, please just send us a note letting us know, and stop after 10-15 minutes of working time. If there is a question on how to complete the work, let us know. Our goal of homework in kindergarten is to set a homework routine. We ask you do 15-20 minutes of homework a night including pages sent home on Thursday, reading to and with your child, and having your child read and write the kindergarten power words.

## **I** is for Independence and Internet Usage

Independence – Kindergarten students may be young, but they are highly capable. An important part of learning, and fostering skills that will carry students throughout their education, is the skill of independence. All students need assistance, but only up to the point where they can do it on their own. Each child becomes increasingly independent at different times, though allowing them to learn this is a key to their success! We teach this through our daily instruction, and you can help by providing minimal yet adequate support during homework and learning at home as well.

Internet Usage – Kindergarteners will have many opportunities to use the internet, including our wireless laptops. Please be sure to sign and return the Internet Usage consent form at the beginning of the school year.

## **J** is for Joyful Learning

Joyful Learning – Children learn best when they are feeling loved and encouraged to try new things. Our classroom builds a feeling of mutual respect, being risk-takers, and supporting each other when we make mistakes. Smiling faces are important!



# **K** is for Kindness

Kindness – Students in our classroom are encouraged and expected to treat all members of our class, as well as others in society, with kindness and respect. Bothering others, bullying, and interrupting learning will not be permitted.

# **L** is for Library, Letters, and Lunch

Library – We have a scheduled library time every week. Kindergarten students will check out new books each week, if their book is returned. Be sure to help your child remember to bring back their books each week on their library day.

Letters – The beginning of kindergarten is filled with letters, letters, and more letters! Unlike schooling in the past where one letter was taught each week, at Buffalo Trail we have experienced the fact that students can learn letters much faster, while retaining the knowledge required to apply such skills to reading and writing. We do one letter each day during the initial months of the school year. This includes instruction on letter recognition, sound, and writing. Once we have worked through the alphabet, this knowledge is then stretched to more advanced literacy skills. As educators we understand that students mastery of such skills comes at varying levels, and we continually teach to each student's needs.

Lunch- Kindergarten has a designated time to each lunch every day. Students may bring their lunch or buy school lunch. You can pay online for your students' lunch. Lunch menus are available online on the Buffalo Trail and Cherry Creek websites. Please make sure your child's lunch includes nutritious and protein foods to refuel them for the rest of their day!



# M

**is for Meetings**

Meetings – Please respect that we are not available before or after school unless you have a scheduled appointment. As you can imagine, our schedules are quite full, but we would love to schedule a time to talk with you. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

# N

**is for Nightly Reading and Nurse**

Nightly Reading – We cannot stress enough the importance of reading with your child! In order for your child to progress and become a reader, they need to be reading to you, and you need to be reading to them. Even if it is just a short book, please try to read with your child every night.

Nurse- We are so lucky to have a nurse at our school. Nurse Heather is one of the first people your students will get to meet. If your child has medication that needs to be taken at school, you will touch base with her and she will take care of it all. You may get a call from her if your child has any bumps or bruises that often occur at recess.

# O

**is for Office Staff and Open Communication**

Office Staff – We have a wonderful staff in the front office who can assist you with questions and will be there to answer calls during the school day.

Open Communication – Please let us know if you have ANY concerns or questions regarding your child throughout the year. We feel that it is our job to work together as partners to help your child have a successful first year. We try to check our messages throughout the day, but of course there are times when we are unable to. If you have



an urgent message and you want to be sure that we get it before school is out, please call the office at 720-886-4000, and they will be sure to pass along the message.

## **P** is for Parent Involvement, and PTCO

Parent Involvement – We love parent and family involvement! Please be involved in your child's kindergarten year as much as you can. Your support of school activities makes your child feel important, and sends the message that you value school! We are always happy to have your help for special activities in the classroom. We will try to let you know at least one week ahead of time if we need specific help. We hope that you can come and join in the fun!

PTCO (Parent/Teacher Community Organization) – All parents are encouraged to join the school's PTCO. It is a great way to meet other kindergarten parents and get involved in all the great things they support. Come to meetings and find out more about community outreach, enrichment activities, fundraisers, student achievement support, and all the fun social events. BTPTCO will also send out weekly emails via your child's teacher weekly updates of Buffalo Trail happenings. Here at Buffalo Trail we have been so fortunate to have community leaders within our PTCO who have given so much to the school. Reach out to [btptco@gmail.com](mailto:btptco@gmail.com) for any questions, or to get involved!

## **Q** is for Questions and Quick Goodbyes

Questions – Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's education. We will make every effort to meet with you and discuss your concerns. Many of you are sending your first child to school and may still have some unanswered questions. Please feel free to call us at school or email.

Quick Goodbyes – Quick goodbyes leave dry eyes! The first day, and maybe some to follow, might be accompanied with tears, but please know that usually once you are



gone your child's tears stop. On the first day of school encourage your child that they will have a great day, and then make your goodbye quick.

## **R** is for Report Cards and Restrooms

Report Cards – Report cards will be sent home two times during the year. Trimester 2 report cards will go home in February/March, and Trimester 3 report cards will go home at the end of the year. Kindergarten in the Cherry School District does not provide a Trimester 1 report card in November, though we will go over your student's progress during fall conferences.

Restrooms – We have restrooms located in our mobile classrooms, and your child is allowed to go whenever needed. Unfortunately, accidents will happen, and we will make sure that your child is sent to the nurse's clinic for a change of clothes. Keeping an extra set of clothing in your child's backpack is extremely helpful.

## **S** is for Snacks and Safety

Snacks – We will have snack time once a day. Students need to bring their own snack. Please ensure your student's snack is healthy, easy to eat, and not messy. Pre-cut fruit, vegetables, fruit snacks, crackers, granola bars, and squeezable applesauce are a few examples.

Safety – Safety is always our main priority. To ensure the safety of students in different situations that may arise we will practice fire, tornado, and lockdown drills. The teachers will talk about the drills and practice with students as a class before the whole school practices. If your child is sensitive to loud sounds or suffer from severe anxiety caused by fire alarms or tornado sirens, please let your teacher know so that we can accommodate them properly during the drill or if the situation would arise. Our goal is for our students to learn safety, not be scared. Our principal will notify all Buffalo Trail parents when a lockdown drill has been practiced at school.



## **T** is for Tardies, Toys, and Teaching Assistants

Tardies – Students who are late to school are considered tardy. This means they arrive after the 8:00am bell. The school keeps a record of these tardies, and they will be documented on your child's report card. Excessive tardies are disruptive to the class, as well as to your child's learning. Please make every effort to get your child to school on time! If your child is late to school, please bring them to the front office where they can get a tardy slip and a teacher's assistant will walk them out to our classroom mobiles.

Toys – No toys are to be brought to school other than during designated times. If students choose not to listen, the toy will be taken and an adult will need to come to the classroom to get it back.

Teaching Assistants – At Buffalo Trail, we are fortunate to have Teaching Assistants (T.A.) who work with each grade level, or a combination of grade levels. These amazing staff members support us within the classroom, during our instruction, and while students are at lunch and recess. T.A. time varies, but your child will likely talk about our T.A.'s, and we're so thankful for their support.

## **U** is for Unique and Updates

Unique – Each child in our school is unique and wonderful. In kindergarten we learn about how we are unique and special, and we celebrate our differences and similarities. We also learn about the different cultures within our class.

Updates-Each week, or every other week, you will receive a weekly update email from your child's teacher. This email will let you know what we are learning in class as well as important dates and upcoming events. We feel it is important for you to be in the loop of what is happening in our classrooms and this is the best way we can keep you updated! You will also receive updates from our PTCO in a weekly email blast that we will send you.



# V

## is for Visitors, Volunteers

Visitors – Buffalo Trail has a policy that ALL GUESTS (including familiar faces) are required to check in at the office. All guests must enter through the main doors. After visitors buzz in, the school secretary will print a visitor badge that must be worn as long as they are in the school. Visitors must have a photo ID. It is important to remember that while this may seem inconvenient to frequent visitors, it is the goal and responsibility of the school to create a safe learning environment.

Volunteers – Volunteering in the classroom is encouraged and welcomed! We love your help! Your child's teacher will let you know whether there will be a sign-up sheet, or email system for volunteers. Occasionally in kindergarten, students will behave very differently when their parents are helpers in the room. If this becomes a problem, we will ask that you help prepare projects at home instead of in the classroom. In addition, younger siblings will not be permitted to join you on your volunteer day. Before volunteering in the classroom you must sign and return the parent volunteer confidentiality form to your student's classroom teacher.

# W

## is for Water

Water Bottles – Staying hydrated is something we teach as a healthy lifestyle habit. Therefore, water bottles are certainly permitted in the classroom if you so choose. Teachers will either let students place them at their tables, or have a designated area. Additionally, water bottle fill up stations are available in the hallways, and students are always allowed drinks during appropriate times.



# **X** is for X-tra Special and eXciting

X-tra Special and eXciting – Kindergarten is such an exciting and magical year. Each child is extra special to us, and we will guide them gently and consistently all year long. Thank you for sharing them!

# **Y** is for You!

You! – Please remember that YOU are your child's first and most important teacher! No one can influence your child's life in the way that you can. You can help to make your child feel successful this year by discussing your child's school day with them. Ask questions like, "What did you learn today?", "What did you work the hardest on?", or "What are you getting better at?" These questions cause children to reflect on their learning, which in turn helps them remember new information. Don't let them tell you "nothing." Ask your child about centers, story time, reading, or math work. The way your child perceives your feelings about his/her school and teachers will have a direct effect on how they feel about them. Show an enthusiasm for learning! It is contagious!

# **Z** is for Zzzzzz's

Zzzzzz's – It is so important for your child to be alert and ready to learn each day. Set a bedtime and be consistent. Children ages 5-6 need at least nine hours of sleep a night. Setting and keeping a bedtime is a wonderful gift you can give to your child. It will help them to be attentive and prepared to learn each day! Don't forget to read a book before bedtime!