

Welcome Packet
Mrs. Whiddon's
Kindergarten Class



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Classroom Management Plan

Classroom Rules

During the first few weeks of school, we will read several books that explore the concept of rules and why they are important in the classroom. The students will discover that most of our classroom rules can be narrowed down to the following rules:

- Follow directions quickly
- Raise your hand for permission to speak
- Raise your hand for permission to leave your seat
- Make smart choices
- Keep your dear teacher happy ☺

The students will discover that we have rules to help us stay safe and help us learn. When the children have had ample time to become familiar with our classroom rules and procedures, we will begin our system for monitoring behavior.

Behavior Monitoring System for Mrs. Whiddon's classroom

Our class will be using a clip chart color system to monitor classroom behavior. We will keep track of their daily behavior in their take home folders. This is a communication link between home and school. Your child's overall daily behavior will be conveyed with a color, along with written notes home in order to keep communication lines flowing.

Kindergarten is an important year of growth in children, both academically as well as behaviorally. No child or person is perfect and it is important to me to have children learn from their mistakes. If your child has to move their clip down, they will have a stop and think time at their desk, and then we will discuss how we can fix the poor choice that was being made. If your child demonstrates an effort to fix the poor choice that was made, s/he will have the opportunity to clip back up.

Below you will find the colors we use for our behavior system. Every student will start the day out on green and have a chance to earn higher colors. **Please do not expect the highest colors on a daily basis – The highest colors are awarded for an exceptional day.** If your child received a blue or higher, they had a great day. If your child earns a yellow or orange for the day, I will write a few words explaining why. If your child earns a red, I will write a few words explaining why. There could also be an email sent with more explanation or an infraction report.



Clip Chart Behavior System

Our classroom theme is "A Learning Journey through the Jungle!" Throughout the week, students will have a chance to earn jungle bucks to be able to spend at my Jungle Mart. It is important to me that each student receive constant praise throughout each day. We all want to feel we are doing a great job. I use many opportunities in the classroom to offer positive reinforcement such as affirmations, high fives, stickers/stamps, and jungle bucks.

Please encourage your child to use appropriate behavior daily. When students remain focused on learning and stay on task, they will experience success, happiness, and improved self-esteem. Please be a part of this team effort, and consistently help monitor your child's learning behaviors, so that he or she may be successful this school year.

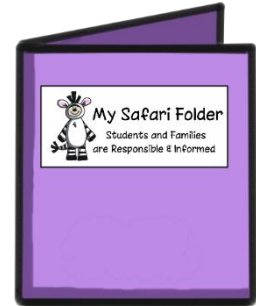
Behavior Color Rating Scale -

- **Pink:** Your child went above and beyond in meeting all behavioral expectations. Your child is focused and on task throughout the day and did not need any reminders. **Reward:** Receive \$5 jungle bucks
- **Purple:** All behavioral expectations are being met and are making great choices. Your child is focused on what they are learning and helping other students make great choices as well. **Reward:** Receive \$3 jungle bucks
- **Blue:** Behavioral expectations are being met. Your child's learning is moving ahead without obstacles. **Reward:** Receive \$1 jungle buck.
- **Green:** Some behavioral expectations are being met. The teacher has noticed your child off task and has given verbal and / or non-verbal cues, with little response from the student.
- **Yellow:** Behavioral expectations are not consistently being met. Your child has been warned about making better behavior choices, and has been given multiple verbal and non-verbal cues. If behaviors continue, they will block learning for self and others. **Consequence:** Loss of 5 minutes of center time or recess and make up incomplete work.
- **Orange:** No behavioral expectations are being met. Your child's behavior choices are very poor. Learning was interrupted for your child and classmates. Your child was instructed to complete a Behavior Plan and had a conference with the teacher on how to improve his or her choices. **Consequence:** Loss of 15 minutes of center time or recess. During this time your child will have time to finish his or her behavior plan as well as any incomplete classwork.
- **Red:** Poor choices are continuing to be made. Your child's behavior was disrupting learning for themselves as well as their classmates. **Consequence:** Loss of all center and recess time. An infraction report may be sent home for parent signature. This form will need to be returned.



Parent Communication

Safari Folders – Every student will receive a folder that will come home every night. Inside the middle of the folder will be a calendar where your child's color will be recorded daily. Please initial in the corner every evening. The calendar will be checked daily to ensure daily progress is being communicated and reviewed. The pocket on the left will be used for take home papers that will need to be taken out. The pocket for take home papers will include class newsletters, school papers, notices, and any other important school information. The right pocket is used for classwork that needs to be completed/corrected or for review work that could happen throughout the year.



Special note: Throughout the year I may put important papers in the middle section of the Safari folder. Please keep these papers inside your child's folder. 😊

Class Newsletter (Email Distribution List)

At Open House you completed a form in which you provided any email addresses you would like to be included in my email distribution list. Throughout the year you will receive newsletters, news, and other important updates via email. If your email ever changes, please be sure to let me know.

If your email changes during the school year...

Because we use many forms of online communication, please be sure to email me if you change your email address during the school year. 😊

Class Website

Both of the Kindergarten classes share a website. We will have important information uploaded onto the website starting at the beginning of the year. Throughout the year, we will upload important documents as the year progresses. Please refer to the emails you receive from your classroom teacher in regards to website updates!

Teacher Communication

If you need to contact me to discuss anything, you may call the school office or email me. If I am not available when you call, the front desk will take a message for me to return your call. **The best way to reach me is through email.** Please note that parent communication is important to me, and as such I aim to respond within 24 – 48 hours.

Email Policy: Please note that any emails received during evening hours, weekends, or holidays may not be responded to until the following school day.



Classwork and Homework Policies

Grading System

We continually assess for student mastery using a variety of methods. Your child will be completing class activities that reinforce the concepts being taught in the classroom. Classwork will be marked the following ways...

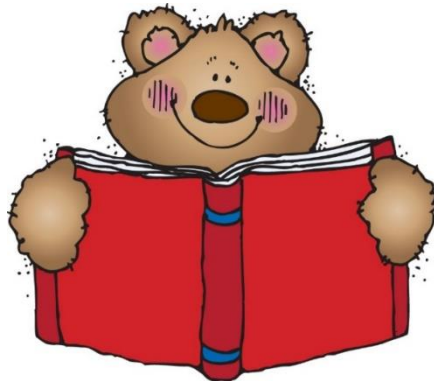
- Star (Excellent) – All Academic standards are being met. Your child followed directions, needed little guidance, and put forward their best effort.
- Check Mark (Satisfactory) – Most academic standards are being met. Your child followed directions and needed some guidance.
- Check Minus (Review Needed) – Some or all academic standards were not met. Please review the work with your student at home.

Note: If you see a pair of eyeballs with a few words, this is the target skill I would like your child to work on. 😊

- Incomplete classwork – Students will have until Friday to complete classwork. Any classwork that is incomplete by the end of the day will be sent home as homework the following week.

Homework

In Kindergarten, we have a weekly homework packet. The packet consists of four sections: Reading Log, Sight Words, ABC/Phonics Practice, and Math Practice. For the reading log portion, we have access to a wonderful reading program called Raz-Kids. We ask the children to read at least 40 minutes a week on Raz-Kids. More information about Raz-Kids will be sent home shortly after school starts.



Important Procedure Information

Bathroom Procedures for Accidents

Students are asked not to use the restroom during instructional time, but may sign out to use the restroom before and after. Sometimes, accidents will happen. Please provide a spare set of clothes in your child's backpack (including underwear). **It is Kindergarten policy that the children have an extra change of clothes in their backpack throughout the entire year.** Please have your child's spare set of clothes in a bag with his or her name labeled clearly on the front. The spare set of clothes does not have to be an extra uniform, but does need to be a solid color that is similar. You will receive an "Ooops! Notice" that indicates which clothes they changed into and if any clothes need to be returned to school.

Sickness Policy

Families, please refer to the parent handbook for our sickness policy as the health of our students is of upmost priority. **We would like to emphasize that children must be fever free for 24 hours without medication.** If your child is sent home with a fever, then they **must** be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child went home with a fever and arrives the next day, we will call you to pick up your child. We appreciate your cooperation in helping to keep our students and teachers healthy throughout the year.

Absences & Tardies

If your child is missing a day of school, please email us within 24 hours to let us know and to give us a reason as to the absence (illness, religious holiday, family vacation, etc). To have an absence marked as medical excused due to an illness or an injury, you will need to submit a doctor's note.

Students are considered tardy after 8:40am. Please be aware that three unexcused tardies will be marked as an unexcused absence. If you have any questions about our school policies on absences and tardies, please be sure to check the parent handbook.

Water Bottles *Required school supplies*

Your child will need a water bottle for the classroom. Please provide your child with a reusable water bottle that can be returned to and from school. **Please fill your child's water bottle only with water.**

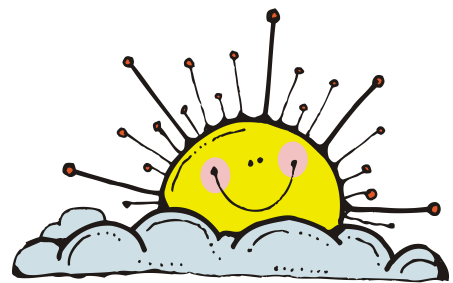
Money Procedures

If you send in money with your child, please include it in an envelope or sandwich bag labeled with the following information: Student's name, purpose of money, and the amount. This will help keep their money safe and easy to identify what it is for. There will be a zipper pouch inside your child's Safari folder to hold money and forms that need to be turned in.

Afternoon Dismissal

The children will be dismissed at 3:10pm. Please remember that learning is taking place all the way up till that time. If you need to pick up your child before, please make sure to notify the office and myself beforehand. **Car circle is a busy time for teachers**

and our main goal is the safety of the students. Therefore I will be unavailable to answer questions during this time. If you have questions, please email me so I can take the time to answer your questions thoroughly.



Additional Important Information

Snack & Lunches

We ask for all students to bring a snack with them each day. We will have snack in the afternoon after lunch. The snack should be placed inside their backpack away from their lunch box so the kiddo doesn't eat it at lunchtime. If your child forgets their snack, I will have some emergency snacks available and a reminder note will be sent home. Please keep in mind that snacks and lunches cannot be kept cold or warmed up in the microwave.

Jackets & Shoes

We encourage the children to keep a light sweater inside their backpack at all times. The sweater needs to be solid color and match the children's uniform. After winter, the administration asks that children wear a Plato issued sweater inside the school building. On very cold days, the children can wear heavy jackets outside that are not Plato-issued. In regards to tennis shoes, please refrain from purchasing light up shoes. These can be a distraction throughout the school day. If your child does not know how to tie their own shoes, please work on this skill at home. This is greatly appreciated and very helpful.

Toys and Electronics

Toys have a special place in everyone's hearts – we all have had that favorite stuffed animal or toy truck that made us feel special. However, bringing toys to the classroom can be a distraction to the students, so we are asking to please have your child leave toys at home. Electronics must stay at home. Please refer to the parent handbook about items that may be brought to before and after care.

Field Trips

We take 3-4 field trips each year in Kindergarten. Due to safety, we travel in a bus for each field trip. We strongly rely on our level 2 chaperones to make each field trip possible. Please see below for more information on level 2 chaperones. Please note that if we do not have enough level 2 chaperones for a field trip, we will not be able to attend as safety is our number one priority.



Level 2 Volunteers for Field Trips

Pinellas County Schools now requires that all volunteers attain a level 2 clearance. This requires the volunteer to have a background screening as well as complete fingerprints. There is a fee for the fingerprints. However, once you obtain level 2 clearance, it is good for 5 years. **We strongly encourage parents to obtain level 2 clearance at the beginning of the year.** The process can take some time and all field trip chaperones must be level 2 approved. We heavily rely on parent volunteers to help make our fields trips possible.

Birthday Invitations & Treats

Birthdays are an exciting time in every child's life! Please let me know if you would like a class list of names for invitations. Please remember that all children love to be invited to birthday parties. **Invitations will gladly be placed in each child's take-home folder, however all students in the class have to be invited.** Students are not allowed to pass out individual invitations during car circle or in the hallway. Please note that we can't forward digital birthday invitations or reminders to other parents.



We love celebrating birthdays at school as well. Your child will receive a special crown to wear and "Birthday Stitch" will join them at their desk. You are allowed to bring in one treat for your kiddo to share with the class. Treats must be store bought and in their original packaging. We will do our best to provide advance notice when there is a birthday. **If your child has a food allergy, please provide a separate snack that your child may have during birthday celebrations.** Any food items must be stored at room temperature and not be refrigerated.

*Please note – No goodie bags or balloons are allowed for birthday celebrations.

Uniform Policy

Please refer to the staff handbook for Plato's uniform policy. We would like to emphasize the importance of wearing safe footwear to school. We also do not permit light up shoes in the classroom as they can be highly disruptive to the learning environment. If your child's footwear is deemed unsafe for the day, s/he will be asked to sit out of recess and/or PE due to safety reasons. Please note that we do not permit the following items in the classroom as they can become a distraction: watches, bracelets, long necklaces, and non-prescription glasses.

Lunch Routines and Procedures

Lunch locations include both Kindergarten classrooms as well as the cafeteria. We do not use the cafeteria each day. Hot lunch is available daily for students to purchase. Please refer to the parent handbook for paying for hot lunches. Payments are completed online as we do not accept cash for lunch money.

Practicing Independence With Your Child

Kindergarten is an important year for your child's growing independence! As such, we ask you to practice the following skills at home with your child.

- Untying and tying shoes.
- Buttoning and zipping up pants
- Taking off and putting on jackets
- Opening water bottles and juice boxes
- Opening food containers
- Cleaning up after playing or eating



Thank you for choosing Plato Academy! I look forward to working with you and your child!

