

Social Studies

At the kindergarten level, learning in history and social science is built on children's experiences in their families, school, community, state, and country. Children listen to stories about the people and events we celebrate in our national holidays and learn why we celebrate them. They also become familiar with our national symbols. The purpose of the kindergarten curriculum is to begin the development of their civic identity.



Social Competency

Your child will participate in the social competency program called "**Open Circle.**" This program will be implemented 30 minutes a week in the classroom. The goals of this program are to foster a positive school environment for all students, enhance communication skills, engage in problem solving, and help enable students to develop self-control and take responsibility for their actions.

Music

Singing and movement are at the core of the music program at the kindergarten level to develop the students' interest and ability in music. Vocal activities help students match pitch, sing in tune, and develop their aural abilities. Students learn to sing and small groups and by themselves. Students also experience music 'readiness' concepts and learn to distinguish musical elements, such as, fast/slow, loud/soft, and high/low, to prepare them for concrete conceptual teachings in first grade.

Art

During the school day, kindergarten children are provided with opportunities to explore with a variety of art media such as crayon, paint, chalk, play dough, and paper. Art lessons are designed to help children strengthen their fine motor skills as their creativity. Art is integrated throughout the curricula, so that projects are created which relate to ELA, Social Studies, and Science topics.

Physical Education

The Elementary Physical Education program, grade levels K-5, consists of six performance strands. As students progress through elementary school, each strand is adjusted to meet grade level expectations. The strands are made up of movement, dance, gymnastics, fitness, ball skills, and social competency concepts and skills. Movement, dance, gymnastics and fitness are designed to enhance balance, body coordination, spatial awareness, muscle tone and strength development. Ball skills and striking activity are more manipulative based, working towards improving motor planning using objects. Finally, social competency is a behavior concept that is taught to enhance self esteem and sportsmanship.

Assessment

Norwood Public Schools follows all testing requirements from the Department of Education. Throughout the year, classroom teachers will assess each student's growth and progress toward achievement of the learning goals in the state curriculum and that of Norwood Public Schools. These classroom assessments will be used to guide instruction in order to provide every child with the opportunity to learn and succeed.

Report cards are issued twice a year at the end of January (mid-point in the year) and the end of school. Afternoon and evening conferences are scheduled during the school year and may also be scheduled anytime upon request.

Norwood Public Schools

James R. Savage Center
275 Prospect Street
Norwood, MA 02062

Willett Early Childhood Center
781-440-5902
Balch Elementary School
781-440-5932
Callahan Elementary School
782-440-5942
Cleveland Elementary School
781-440-5952
Oldham Elementary School
781-440-5962
Prescott Elementary School
781-440-5972

Norwood Public Schools

Curriculum Overview Kindergarten

Norwood Public Schools welcomes you to kindergarten. This overview of grade-level skills and concepts is designed to provide you with information about what your child should know and be able to do by the end of first grade. Parents are their children's first teachers and we know that parents play a vital role in supporting learning. We are looking forward to working with you during the upcoming year.

English Language Arts



To become good readers and writers, students need a balanced literacy approach. **Balanced Literacy** has three elements:

1. Readers' Workshop
2. Writers' Workshop
3. Phonics/ word study

During **Readers' Workshop**, students learn, practice, and apply reading strategies that will help them become strong, life-long readers. The Workshop gives students time and opportunity to listen to and "read" a variety of books. The teacher demonstrates a strategy to the whole class and explains and models the lesson through either Interactive Read Aloud or a Shared Reading. After the Read Aloud the students are allowed to work in centers on specific skills, look through and "read" on their own, practice strategies, and become aware of their own thinking. Each student has a book bag or bin containing books, poetry, and other printed text. The majority of books in the bag should be on your child's "Just Right" level. While the students are working in groups or on their own, the teacher will be either meeting with a small group for guided reading instruction or holding a conference with a student.

English Language Arts (cont.)

At the end of independent reading, all students gather as a whole community to share with each other to explain how they used the strategy or learned something that will help them as readers.

Writers' Workshop begins with a focus lesson which teaches a specific skill or technique related to writing. The teacher models the skill and has the student practice independently or in small groups. Students are encouraged to think about what good writers do. Students will be able to engage in the steps of the writing process and bring several pieces to the publication stage. During the kindergarten year, student writing will change dramatically. At the start of the year, some children will pretend to write, just like they may pretend to sing like a movie star or steer a car like a racer. Soon these youngsters will be labeling their pictures and some will attempt to write words or sentences under their pictures. At first their writing will be hard to read because they will not have learned to correctly form letters, leave spaces between words, or make the correct connection between sound and letter using phonemic awareness and phonics. But this will begin to change. In the meantime, the classroom teachers may write a tiny translation for you.

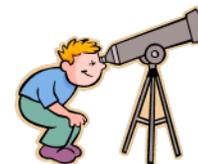
Norwood Public Schools phonics programs are presented through systematic, explicit instruction. They are taught that sound/spelling forms words, that words form sentences, and sentences form paragraphs. They are also taught that specific sounds require specific spellings.

Mathematics



Mathematics is an active time in the kindergarten classroom. The students engage in various hands on activities through the use of various manipulatives, visual aides, and mathematical tools. Instruction is provided as a whole class, as well as small group, partner work and independent work. Ample time will be provided each class for students to share their thoughts, ideas, and strategies during large and small group discussions. Students are encouraged to listen to their classmates in order to see and understand how to solve problems in different ways.

As prescribed by the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Mathematics and Norwood Public Schools Mathematics Curriculum, the Kindergarten focuses on these critical focus areas. In kindergarten, the primary math goal for students is to understand concepts of counting and numbers. They practice saying the number sequence up to 100 by ones and tens, counting objects, and comparing amounts of objects up to 10 items. Children learn to write numbers and recognize familiar number words. They begin working with basic addition and subtraction stories with small amounts. In addition to numbers, children learn to name, describe and compare basic shapes.



Science

Young children are naturally curious. They wonder about how things work and why things happen. The kindergarten curriculum fosters young children's sense of curiosity about the natural world around them. This promotes inquiry and exploration. Science learning at the kindergarten level is not limited to "science time," rather kindergarten teachers look for opportunities to develop children's understanding of scientific concepts in all content areas.

At the kindergarten level, children also need to observe things first-hand as much as possible. The teachers provide simple, concrete activities, they use scientifically accurate books, and encourage children to use the precise language of science.

Some of the focus topics in kindergarten are:

- Observation of the cycle of day and night, the movement of the sun, the waxing and waning of the moon, and the stars in the sky.
- The study of physics while dropping an object and watching it fall to the floor, balancing a block tower, floating a cork in water, etc.
- The study of life science as they study plants and animals.
- Life science also includes learning about the parts of their body, learn about their five senses, and observing a variety of living things.
- Technology and engineering involves finding out how things are constructed and work. Kindergarten experiences help children build and test ideas as they play.