

A is for Attendance, Absences, Arrival 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 by daily participation. Regular attendance without tardiness is critical.

Absences—Excessive absences hinder a child's progress. If your child is going to be absent, you must call the office. 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 done in class. If you do miss school, due to a family vacation, any work will be given out after return.

Arrival—Kindergarteners should arrive at school no earlier than 8:05 A.M. Your child should be walked to the playground doors. The children should make a single line.

Allergies—If your child has any allergies please make sure that I am aware of them. I especially need to know about food allergies and insect bite reactions.

B is for Birthdays, Book Orders, Book It! and Backpacks

Birthdays—Birthdays are very important to children. In class, we will celebrate your child's birthday in a special way: a crown, a card, a song and a snack. When we celebrate your child's birthday, this will also be their snack day. Birthday treats can be a "sweet" treat, but I strongly suggest sticking to a healthy snack, as per our Wellness policy. **Please do not send a cake as a Birthday treat!**

Book Orders—I will send home Scholastic Book Orders periodically throughout the year. If you would like to place an order, please make checks payable to Scholastic. You may also place your order online. Directions on how to do this will be given with each order. It may take up to two weeks for the orders to come in.

Book It!—The Pizza Hut Book It! program begins in October and ends in March. This is not mandatory but strongly suggested. More information about this program will come home in October.

Backpacks—Backpacks help your child carry folders, notes, projects, and books to and from school. **PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S BACKPACK AND FOLDER DAILY!**

C is for Church

Church—Beginning at the end of October, we will begin attending weekly Mass. For the first semester, we will sit with our KinderBuddies, who are the 4th graders. Your child will be paired with up with one or two 4th graders, who will help us in church. However, the best example your child can receive for appropriate church behavior is going to Mass on Sunday with you. **Please see St. Charles Dress Code in the Student Handbook for appropriate clothing for Church Days.**

D is for Discipline, Dismissal and Dress Code

Discipline— Young children need a balance of structure and freedom to learn and grow. In our classroom, we have a "Stoplight" that helps us learn when we have pushed the limits of our freedoms. Each child has a clothespin, which starts everyday on green. If, during the course of the day, a child has a hard time remembering the rules, and needs two reminders, then the clothespin moves to yellow. If the behavior continues, then the clothespin moves to red. If your child's clothespin moves to red, I will send you a Stoplight Note explaining what happened in school. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to stop by and ask!

Dismissal—All students who are car riders/walkers will be dismissed out the playground doors. Parents are not allowed into the building before dismissal. Please do not ask the Safety Patrol to let you in. If you do need to enter near dismissal time, you will have to enter at the main school door. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to ask.

Dress Code—Kindergarten students are expected to follow the school Dress Code. Kindergarteners can be easily upset if they feel they are not following the rules, so please make sure to have your child dress within the Code. Please refer to the Student Handbook for questions regarding the Dress Code, or feel free to contact me.

E is for Email and Early Release

Email—I can be reached by email at msalmins@mystcharles.org. I check my email several times throughout the day, so it is really the best way to reach me with questions, concerns, or any other non-urgent matters. If you have to get an important message to your child, regarding an after-school change in plans, please call the office and they will notify me directly.

Early Release—Several times a year we will have Early Release Days. Bus students are released at 12:50 P.M. and non-bussers are released at 12:55 P.M. Please make note of these dates.

F is for Field Trips and Friday Folders

Field Trips—Throughout the year, we will take field trips to enhance our learning. Permission slips and requests for fees will be sent home prior to each trip. My goal is to keep these field trips reasonably priced in these tough economic times. School buses paid for by Home and School will provide the transportation. Chaperones will be chosen on a first come, first served basis. No siblings may accompany us on our trips.

Fire Drills—Fire drill procedures are taught and practiced during the school year, and especially during Fire Safety Week. All students will participate and are expected to walk quickly and quietly to our designated spot. We will practice and become familiar with procedures before our first scheduled drill.

G is for Good Behavior and The Giving Tree

Good Behavior—St. Charles Kindergarten is a safe and happy place where lots of learning happens. 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 rules, and this will be reflected on our Stoplight. Problems will be dealt with one on one. If misbehavior continues, I will contact you for support.

Giving Tree—In our classroom is a tree with a “wish list” of apples. These are items that are needed in our classroom (light paper products or art supplies). If you are able to donate an item or two, your generosity is appreciated! Just take an apple off the tree and send the item back to school with your child in a timely manner. At various times through the year, I will update the tree if we have new needs. Thank you again!

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 tables is required and necessary, but for the most part, our classroom will be an active learning environment.

Homework—The purpose of homework is to reinforce concepts and ideas that have been learned in school and to develop good work habits at home. I will send home a monthly calendar of suggested activities with our monthly newsletter. There will be daily activity suggestions, but 2 or 3 a week is expected. All of the homework has a purpose and is related to what we are working on in class. It should never take more than 10-15 minutes. Along with the activities calendar, I will be including a nightly reading chart. Both of these will be due at the end of each month. At various times of the year, we will also have other Family projects, which will have their own due dates.

I is for Internet Usage

Internet Usage—Kindergarteners will have many opportunities to use the internet during Computer class. Please be sure you and your child sign and return the blue Internet and Telecommunications form. I also like to post pictures of activities and events on our website. Please consider carefully allowing me to post your child's picture. We have much fun and would love to share our excitement with you and your family via our website!

J is for Joyful Learnings

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

K is for Kindness and KinderBuddies

Kindness—Students in my 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.

KinderBuddies—As stated earlier, we will have 4th grade KinderBuddies. These special friends are there to help us remember how to behave in church, and when to sit, stand and kneel. At various times throughout the year, we will complete special activities with our KinderBuddies. It is inevitable that your child will come home and talk about their KinderBuddy. Our 4th grade Buddies take their jobs very seriously, so it is important that your child follow the directions of their KinderBuddy.

L is for Library

Library—We have a scheduled library time every week. Each Monday at 1:00 P.M., Kindergarten students will check out a book and listen to a story. Be sure to help your child remember to bring the book back by Monday. I suggest leaving the Library book in their backpack when you are not reading it. I do not take anything out of their backpacks, but I will remind your child to take their book out. If you would like to be a "Guest Reader" during our Library time, please let me know!

M is for Meetings and Duties

Meetings and Duties—Please respect that I am not always available before or after school to meet with you, as I have supervision duties and lessons to prepare for the day. If possible, please try to set up an appointment time with me ahead of time. If it is an emergency, and I am not around, please stop in the office and ask Kathy to page me.

N is for Newsletters and Nightly Readings

Newsletters—Once a month I will send home our newsletter, Kindergarten News. It contains updates on what we are learning in Reading, Math and Religion and information on upcoming special events in our classroom and in school. It will also include our homework and snack calendars. As needed, I will also send home Kindergarten New Flashes. I really value your right to keep informed and hope you take advantage of all the opportunities I give you to know what's happening in our classroom.

Nightly Reading—Nightly reading is essential for future success. Kindergarten students are expected to read nightly. In class, we will work on many reading comprehension strategies and I will share those with you to practice at home as well. Your reading aloud to your child is just as important as your child practicing independent reading. The books that come home for their Treasure Box should be practiced over and over. Building fluency is an essential part of successful reading.

O is for Open Communication

Open Lines of Communication—Please let me know if you have ANY concerns or questions regarding your child throughout the year. I feel that it is our job to work together as partners to help your child have a successful year in Kindergarten.

P is for Parent Involvement, Parties and Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent 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! There may be times during the year that I will need your help. Any requests for help will be sent home in the newsletter or in a newsflash.

Parties—We usually have 2-3 parties throughout the year. I look for volunteers to organize these main parties—Christmas, Valentine's Day and End of the Year picnic. The Room Mom's/Dad's organize these events and coordinate volunteers and donations. All are welcome to participate in the festivities! We will also have some other celebrations that I will organize, such as a Thanksgiving Feast, 100th Day, and the Last Supper. These will be discussed in the monthly newsletter and are marked on our monthly snack calendar.

Parent/Teacher Conferences—St. Charles has mandatory fall parent-teacher conferences. At these conferences, we will discuss your child's accomplishments, strengths, and overall progress. If you feel we need to have a conference other than these times, please call me, send a note, or email me. Spring conferences are only held by special request by me or parent.

Q is for Questions and Quick Goodbyes

Questions—Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's education. I will make every effort to meet with you and discuss your concerns.

Q is also for Quick goodbyes

...leave dry eyes!

R is for Report Cards, Reading, Restrooms and Rest time

Report Cards—We are on a quarterly reporting system and report cards will be sent home 3 times a year. The last report card is mailed directly to you after the last day of school. Grades are available online through StandardsScore (formerly Webgrader) at any time. In Kindergarten, I do not enter many grades, as we are constantly practicing and learning the skills we learn. I will be sending home a letter further explaining what the grades mean.

Reading—Read to your child daily and let your child see you reading daily. Reading to your child is the single most important thing you can do, even if they can read it themselves. It encourages them to become good readers.

Restrooms—Children are allowed to use the restrooms as needed, although not encouraged during directed instruction time. We take scheduled bathroom breaks before and after morning recess, before lunch, after lunch recess, and before snack. Unfortunately, accidents will happen and I will make sure that your child is sent to the office for a change of clothes. Keeping an extra set of clothes in your child's backpack is optional.

Rest time—All children will participate in a daily “rest time.” Each child will be asked to lie quietly for about 20 minutes, which is a time to “rest our minds and our bodies.” I do not expect the children to sleep—but if someone does fall asleep, this is not a problem. Later in the year, I will provide the children with a writing journal to work on during rest time. Each child is asked to bring a towel to lie on during rest time. This towel should be at least the length of the child. Also, a small pillow, no larger than 9”X12”, is allowed. Please label all items with you child's name or initials.

S is for Safety, Show & Tell, Snack Calendar, and Specials

Safety—Your child's safety is top priority. I take every precaution when your child is in my care. Please be sure the office always has your updated emergency contact numbers (work, cell, and home) and numbers of your emergency contacts in an event you cannot be reached.

Show & Tell-- We will have Show and Tell in our room every Friday that we have school. Generally, only three children a week will have Show and Tell. Occasionally we will have an all class Show & Tell, which will be clearly marked. If your child has Show and Tell, he/she will bring home a slip of paper entitled **My Treasure** on Thursday. With your help, your child should complete this form and bring it back to school on Friday with the Show and Tell item. Sometimes there may be a theme for our Show and Tell; this will be written on the form. Please try to keep Show and Tell to an item no bigger than the child's backpack.

Snack Calendar— We will have a quick snack break every day. I will be sending home a monthly snack calendar for the class. There are 17 students in our class. On Wednesdays I will provide snack. **Snacks that are sent to school must be nutritious, as per our school's Wellness Policy**—Some examples include: crackers, granola, pretzels, fresh fruit and/or vegetables. Please keep in mind this is a snack—small quantities are all we need! We do have a small fridge in the classroom, to keep items cold. We will also be having milk daily. To make it simpler, I am asking each parent to complete a slip choosing white or chocolate milk for this snack. If your child would like to change their choice at any time during the school year, it is not a problem. Just send a note letting me know this!

Specials—Our specials are scheduled in the afternoon, to take advantage of prime academic learning time in the morning. All of the children must have a set of gym shoes that are to be kept at school. This item was on your supply list. On gym days, we spend quite a bit of time tying shoes before and after gym. I ask that you start working with your child on tying their own shoes, if they do not already know how. I truly appreciate your help with this!

T is for Tardies and Toys

Tardies—Students late to school (after 8:30 A.M.) are considered tardy. I keep a record of tardy students and they will be documented on your child's report card. Excessive tardiness is disruptive to the class as well as to your child's learning. Be sure to walk your child into the office and sign them in.

Toys—No toys are to be brought to school unless it is for Show and Tell. This is the only exception.

U is for Unique

Unique—Each child in our class is unique and wonderful. In Kindergarten, we learn about how we are unique and special gifts from God, and we celebrate our differences and similarities.

V is for Visitors and VIRTUS

Visitors—St. Charles has a policy that all guests (including familiar faces) are required to check in at the office and wear a guest pass. It is important to remember that while this may seem inconvenient to frequent visitors, it is the goal and responsibility of our school to create a safe learning environment.

VIRTUS—Anyone who would like to volunteer in any capacity at St. Charles School must complete Safeguarding God's Children (VIRTUS) training. Once you have completed this, you do not need to complete it again. If you have not completed this training, please watch for training session bulletins, or ask in the office if there are any scheduled in the area. As always, if you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask.

W is for Water and Web Site

Water—Please do not send water bottles to school. Students may get drinks from the bubbler in our room as needed.

Web Site—Our class website is www.mystcharles.org. I will frequently post pictures of activities or projects we have been working on and celebrations. The monthly newsletter, snack calendar and homework calendar will also be available. Be sure to sign the blue Internet and Telecommunications form.

X is for X-tra Special and eXciting!

X-tra Special and eXciting—Kindergarten is such an eXciting, magical year! Each child is eXtra special to me and I will guide them gently and consistently all year long. Thank you for sharing them with me.

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?", "What was the best part of your day?" 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 specials, story time, reading, religion, or math work. The way your child perceives your feelings about his/her school and teachers will have a direct effect on how he/she feels about them. *Show enthusiasm for learning. It is contagious!*

Z is for Zzzzz's

Zzzz's—It is so important for your child to be alert and ready to learn each day. Set a bedtime and be consistent. 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!