



Garfield Elementary School

The ABC's of Kindergarten

Mrs. Mitchell
2014-2015





is for **Attendance** and **Arrival**

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. Students need to be in school as much as possible. We are building language, working on auditory development, and using hands-on materials to enhance our learning. These activities cannot be duplicated for students who are missing. Regular attendance without tardiness or leaving early is critical. Excessive absences hinder a child's progress.

Arrival- The kindergarteners will line up, as a class, on the blacktop by the basketball hoops. They will enter the building when the bell rings at 8:45 am. If they are eating breakfast at school, they need to pick it up at the breakfast window before getting in line.



is for **Birthdays**, **Book Orders**, and **Backpacks**

Birthdays- Birthdays are very important to children. In class, we will celebrate your child's birthday in a special way. He/she will be showered with special attention! As part of that celebration, he/she will bring home one of our Birthday Bags for the night. Look inside that bag, when it comes home, for further directions. If you wish to donate a birthday themed book to our birthday basket that would be wonderful. If your child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate their "1/2 birthday" so as not to miss out on this fun school experience.

Book Orders- We will send home Scholastic Book Orders each month for you and your child to look through. These book orders are a great way to purchase books for your child to read at home. You will be able to find books that your child will be able to read independently. Orders can be made either online or through the forms we will send home.

Backpacks- Backpacks help your child carry folders, notes, projects, and books to and from school. Please **check and empty** your child's backpack everyday so that it does not become too full. Your child will have a locker to keep his/her backpack in. Please label your child's backpack with his/her first name.



is for **Curriculum Night**, **Clothing**, and **Candy**

Curriculum Night- Garfield will be holding School Information Night (Curriculum Night) on Tuesday, September 10th. On this night, we will go over the Kindergarten Curriculum, schedule, and we will answer any questions you may have.

Clothing- Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that is appropriate for Kindergarten. Things may get a little messy as we explore and learn! Be sure to be thoughtful about footwear, as we do go out for recess every day. Sandals and flip-flops are not the best shoes for running and climbing on playground equipment. Try to dress your child in clothing that they can manage independently (think of the bathroom breaks...belts and buttons can be tricky... so can shoe laces!) Please pack an extra set of clothing...including socks and underwear...in a large Ziploc bag. Your child will keep this bag in his/her locker just in case he/she needs it. Each season, you may want to send in a new set of clothing.

Candy- As we are planning to help your child grow and develop in all areas, including academically, emotionally, and physically, we are asking that they leave their candy at home or save it for lunchtime.



is for **Discipline** and **Dismissal**

Discipline- The Garfield Elementary Behavior Expectations Matrix and the Student Handbook will be sent home soon. Please review these with your child. In the classroom, we will be focused on teaching the children to use kind words and treating others the way in which they would like to be treated.

Dismissal- Our school day ends at 3:58pm. At that time, Mrs. Francis' students will be walked to the back door (#11) if they will be riding home in a car, or walking. Mrs. Mitchell's students who are getting picked up will be excused at door # 15. If your child will be riding the bus home, we will be walking them to the correct bus line in the gymnasium.



is for **Email**, **ESAP** (Elementary School Assistance Provider)

Email- The best way to reach us is via email at kmitchel2@livoniapublicschools.org or jfrancis2@livoniapublicschools.org We will be checking our email every day, however if you need to get a message to your child regarding an after school change of plans, please call the office directly and Mrs. Coyne will get the message to us.

ESAP- We are fortunate to have Mr. Stafford on our staff here at Garfield. He offers support to the students in a variety of ways. He will likely be working with our classes on social skills, friendship, school behavior, and he may also be with them during lunch and/or recess.



is for **Field Trips**, **Folders**, and **Fund Raisers**

Field Trips- Throughout the year, we will schedule field trips to enhance our curriculum. Sometimes we will leave the building and other times, the field trip experience will come to us. If and when we need parent volunteers for any trips, we will let you know. Anyone who plans to attend a field trip as a chaperone will need to complete an ICHAT form and return it to the office.

Folders- Every student at Garfield is given an orange folder at the beginning of the year. This is to be used on a daily basis to take papers back and forth from home and school. If this folder becomes lost, a replacement folder can be purchased from the office for \$1. Please check this folder and empty it every day, so that you are aware of your child's progress as well as school updates. You will find your child's monthly homework calendar and family reading log in the back cover of his/her folder. Please complete this calendar and reading log throughout each month and make sure it is returned to the folder. A new one will be provided each month.

Fund Raisers- Our school participates in an annual fundraiser through the PTA to raise money to support PTA events throughout the year. In Kindergarten, we may be holding a separate fund raiser to raise money towards our snack fund and additional field trips. More details to follow.



is for **Good Behavior** and **Guest Teachers**

Good Behavior- Our Kindergarten classrooms are safe and happy places where lots of learning happens. We are a Kindergarten community where teamwork and good relationships are expected. Positive behavior is modeled by the teachers and expected from the students. We will spend time learning classroom procedures and practicing them. Problems will be dealt with one on one, and if misbehavior continues, we will contact you for support.

Guest Teachers- It is our intention to be at school every day; however we know that there are some days that we will be absent due to LPS district committees that we each are a part of. We both also have children at home...so as you know, things don't always go as planned! We will make sure that a guest teacher has all the necessary information so that your child will still have a successful, productive day.



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

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

Homework- Homework in Kindergarten is a good habit that when started early and supported by you, will last throughout your child's academic career. Your child will bring home a monthly *Kindergarten Family Calendar and Reading Log* for homework. It will be located in the clear back pocket of the orange folder. We will collect family calendars at the end of each month. This calendar will be filled with suggested activities for you to do with your child. These activities should take 10-15 minutes. We are also suggesting that you read with your child on a nightly basis. More information will come home with the first family calendar. Other homework will involve family projects that will come home once a month and these will be sent with directions and due dates.



is for **Internet Usage** and **Independence**

Internet Usage- Kindergarteners will have opportunities in school to use the Internet. Please sign and return the LIVNET policy form from LPS as soon as possible.

Independence- Independence is a goal for Kindergarten students because it builds self-esteem and self-confidence. Kindergarteners are very capable of doing many things on their own and we encourage them to do as much as they can for themselves in the classroom. Please continue to work on buttoning, zipping, and tying skills at home. We expect children to carry in their own backpacks every morning, and put them into their lockers, along with their coats. We will teach them how to take care of their things and we will practice this a lot. Thanks for your support in letting your child grow more independent. A quick goodbye at the door or the bus stop is the best way for your child to start his/her school day.



is for **Joyful Learning**

Joyful Learning- Children learn best when they are feeling loved and encouraged to try new things. Our classrooms build a feeling of mutual respect, being risk-takers, and supporting each other even when we are scared or make mistakes. Happy faces and sweet voices are so important!



is for **Kindness**

Kindness- Students in our classrooms are encouraged to treat all members of our class, as well as others in the school, with kindness and respect. Bothering others, hurting others, bullying, and interrupting learning will not be permitted. We will use several opportunities throughout the day to learn about kindness and empathy. Your children will be in a loving, caring environment at school...don't worry! We will take great care of them.



is for **Labeling and LMC**

Labeling- Please label all personal items that your child brings to school, especially his/her backpack, lunchbox, and coats/boots.

LMC- We will have a scheduled library time once a week. Kindergarten students will listen to a story and check out books. Be sure to remind your child to bring his/her library books back to school each week so he/she can check out more books.



is for **Messy, Meetings and Motor Moms/Dads and Math Moms/Dads**

Messy- Remember that Kindergarten is a time of exploration and experimentation. We will be working with lots of new and exciting materials that may get messy! Dress in clothes that are fully washable!

Meetings- Please respect that teachers are not available before or after school unless you have a scheduled appointment. As you can imagine our schedules are quite full with weekly staff meetings, staff development trainings, or other committee or school obligations. We may also have supervision duties before and/or after school, keeping an eye on students. Because of this, we are not able to meet with you, unless you have contacted us ahead of time. We are more than happy to meet with you; we just need a little notice. School policy is that you stop in the office upon entering the school to sign in and get a name tag. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Motor Moms/Dads and Math Moms/Dads- We are looking for volunteers to help with Motor Moms and Dads as well as Math Moms and Dads. More information will come home at a later time.



is for **Newsletters and Nightly Reading**

Newsletters- We are committed to keeping you informed about all of the great things happening in Kindergarten. We will be using both electronic and paper means of communication.

Nightly Reading- Nightly reading is essential for future success. All Kindergarten students are expected to read at home. Your child will be able to record his/her reading time at home on the monthly *Family Reading Log*. In class, we will work on many reading comprehension strategies and we will share these with you to practice at home. Reading aloud to your child is just as important as your child practicing his/her independent reading. Remember that the monthly Scholastic Book Orders are a great way to add to your library at home. The books that we send home should be practiced over and over. Building fluency is an essential part of reading success.



is for **Office Staff** and **Open Communication**

Office Staff- We are fortunate to have such an amazing office staff here at Garfield. Mr. Green (principal) and Mrs. Coyne (secretary) are here to help you in any way they can. You may also see Mrs. Ingram (paraprofessional) in the office as well. Calling the office is a good way to reach us if you have an urgent message (734) 744-2715. Office hours are 8:30 am to 4:20 pm.

Open Communication- Please let us know if you have ANY questions and/or concerns regarding your child throughout the year. It is our job as teachers to work with you as partners to help your child have a successful first year. Remember, email is the best way to reach us, as we will be checking it daily. We are committed to maintaining communication with you throughout the school year, regarding your child's progress. You will hear from us a lot!



is for **Parties, Parent Involvement, PTA** and **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parties- We will have various parties and celebrations throughout the year. We will be asking parent volunteers to organize these events. All are welcome to donate, plan and party with us!

PTA- All parents are encouraged to join the Garfield PTA. This is a great way to meet other Garfield parents and get involved in our school community. Come to the monthly PTA meetings and find out about all of the exciting things happening and the ways in which your help is needed.

Parent/Teacher Conferences- Garfield has parent/teacher conferences scheduled for November. At this conference we will discuss your child's accomplishments, strengths, and overall progress. If you feel the need to have a conference at a time other than during November conferences, send us an email or call the office.

Physical Education- We will have gym class once a week. Wear gym shoes that day!



is for **Questions** and **Quick Good Byes**

Questions- Please contact us at any time with questions or concerns that you have regarding your child's progress. We are happy to meet with you, and will return all phone calls and emails at our earliest

convenience. We will make every effort to keep you informed of our classroom happenings, through both paper and electronic means.

Quick Good Byes...leave dry eyes! Thank You!



is for **Report Cards, Reading, and Restrooms**

Report Cards- Your Kindergartener will get four report cards this year, one at the end of each marking periods. Our hope is to be in continual conversations with you regarding your child's learning. Please take every opportunity we provide to understand how your child is achieving in school; any completed papers that come home in the orange folder, classroom news updates, and through activities completed as part of the *Family Fun Calendar* and *Reading Log*.

Reading- Read to your child daily and let your child see you read daily. Reading to your child is the single most important thing you can do to ensure your child's school success. It not only encourages them to want to become good readers, but it gets them excited about the world that awaits them through books.

Restrooms- We do have restrooms in our classrooms and children are allowed to use them as needed, although it is not encouraged during direct instruction time. Consider the clothing your child wears to school, and make sure it is something they can manage in the bathroom...especially when they wait until the last minute and have a "bathroom emergency"!



for **Safety, Snacks, and Songs**

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

Snacks- Think healthy! Students may bring a healthy snack from home that will be eaten in class. We will have one snack break each day, in the morning. If you put your child's snacks in his/her lunchbox, please have it clearly labeled as a snack, or maybe store it in a special container. This will allow us to help your child put his/her snacks in their cubby spot each morning. If your child is having a school lunch, they can bring their snack in their backpack. Great snack examples are crackers, dry cereal, fruit/veggies, or granola bars. NO chips, candy, cookies, doughnuts, juice, or other sugary snacks.

Songs- We will be learning a lot of songs this year. These songs will help your child to learn words, days of the week, counting, etc. Encourage your Kindergartener to share these songs with you. Be careful though, you may start singing them yourself.



is for **Tardies and Toys**

Tardies- Students who are late to school are marked tardy. We keep a record of tardies (in addition to absences) and these are documented on your child's report cards and permanent school file. Excessive tardies are disruptive to the class and to your child's learning. When you must be tardy, please walk your

child into the office to sign him/her in. If you must pick your child up early, please go to the office to sign him/her out. Please keep this to a minimum, as our daily routines are very important.

Toys- Please keep all toys at home. There will be opportunities for your child to bring special things to share during certain times, but we find that toys, and sometimes even jewelry, often serve as a distraction in the class. If toys do appear, they will be put into your child's backpack. Chronic items brought to school will be taken away until they can be returned to you directly.



is for **Unique** and **Updates**

Unique- Each child in our classes is unique and wonderful. In Kindergarten, we learn about how we are unique and special, and we celebrate and value our differences and similarities.

Updates- We will be using technology as much as possible to keep you updated on our classroom happenings. More information will be coming to you, as we roll out our paths of communication.



is for **Visitors** and **Volunteers**

Visitors- Garfield Elementary has a policy that ALL GUESTS (even familiar faces) are required to check in at the office and wear a visitors pass. 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 Kindergarten classroom is encouraged and welcomed! We will have a sign-up sheet at Curriculum Night and we may also send one home. Occasionally in Kindergarten, students will behave very differently when their parent helper is in the room. If this becomes a problem, we may ask that you help prepare projects in the teacher workroom instead of helping in the classroom. In addition, younger siblings are not permitted to join you on your volunteer day (although they are welcome during parties and celebrations).



is for **Water Bottles** and **Website**

Water Bottles- Hydration is essential for learning. The students will have a place in the classroom to keep a water bottle. Please mark it with your child's first name, and make sure it has a flip top...and that your child can open and close it *independently*.

Website- Our Kindergarten websites are <http://www.livoniapublicschools.org/webpages/kmitchell/> and <http://www.livoniapublicschools.org/webpages/jfrancis/>



is for **eXtra Special** and **eXciting!**

eXtra Special and eXciting- Kindergarten is such an eXciting, magical year! Each child is eXtra special to us and we will guide them gently and consistently all year long. Thanks for sharing them with us!



You! Please remember that you are your child's first and most important teacher. No one can influence your child's life the way you can! You can help to make your child feel successful this year by discussing their school day with them. Ask questions like, "What did you learn today?", "What did you work 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 answer, "Nothing"! Ask your child about centers, songs, 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 he/feels about them.

Show an enthusiasm for learning. It is contagious!



is for **Zoo Phonics**, **ZZZZZ's**, and **Zoom**

Zoo Phonics- Zoo Phonics is a method of teaching the alphabet and its sounds to children. Each letter has an animal (Allie Alligator) and a motion to go with it. It advances to teach spelling and reading. We will include Zoo Phonics in our daily routine.

ZZZZZ'S- Your child should get plenty of rest every night. Kindergarten students require 10-12 hours of sleep per 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!

Zoom- Sit back and watch your child's skills take off! You will be amazed and surprised at the incredible growth and changes that will take place this year.

