



It's Time for Kindergarten...What Does it Mean?

A child's future academic success is dependent on being **ready to learn and participate** in a successful kindergarten experience.

At CVSD, Kindergarten teachers believe that social-emotional development is the foundation for academic success. To achieve this, our kindergarten programming has been aligned with the [Vermont Early Learning Standards](#) on the Vermont Agency of Education website.

The questions and the checklist below were compiled from conversations with CVSD early education teachers, both in private early learning partner programs and school-based programs, kindergarten teachers, school counselors, special educators, speech-language pathologists, and administrators. All age-eligible children are welcome in kindergarten and these skills will continue to develop in kindergarten. This document is meant to guide families and teachers in helping you prepare your child to prepare for the transition to kindergarten.

<i>Ask ...</i>	<i>Why is this important?</i>
Does the child participate in pretend or make-believe play?	<i>This kind of play helps children work through conflicts and improve their language skills.</i>
Does the child interact positively with other kids? Do they share and know how to take turns?	<i>They will be interacting with other children all day, so your child's social skills are particularly important for success in school.</i>
Can the child work together with others as part of a group?	<i>The ability to problem-solve, compromise and join in a consensus with other children is a part of emotional competence.</i>
Can the child explain "how to" get ready for bed, pick up toys, brush their teeth? Will they follow the routine?	<i>The ability to explain and plan for simple routines is an important skill.</i>
Can the child listen to 2 step instructions and then follow them?	<i>These skills help children keep up with the teacher and with their peers.</i>
Can the child put on their coat? Use the bathroom independently?	<i>Children need to have basic self-help skills to manage self-care tasks with minimal support at school.</i>
Can the child hold a pencil? Cut with scissors?	<i>These fine motor skills will allow a child to participate in reading activities and classroom projects.</i>
Does the child show an interest in books? Do they try to "read" a book by telling a story based on the pictures?	<i>This is a sign that language and early reading skills are developing. Reading to your child daily has been shown to improve vocabulary and other literacy skills.</i>
Is the child curious and excited about learning new things?	<i>If a child's curiosity is stronger than their fear of the unfamiliar, they will likely be more comfortable entering kindergarten.</i>

CVSD Kindergarten Skills

Every child develops in their own way. There is no perfect formula that determines when children are truly ready for kindergarten. The information on the front of this handout describes some important skills that will help your child be prepared for kindergarten.

This includes additional skills found on most kindergarten checklists. Keep in mind, young children change fast -- if they can't do something this week, they may be able to do it a few weeks later. This list might help guide your spring conference with your child's early childhood educator.

Play skills: <i>share, turn-take, interact with peers, play alone or make a choice, cooperating, be kind, play pretend games</i>
Follow the group plan: <i>sit, wait for short periods, follow the routine, rules of the classroom</i>
Communication Skills: <i>ask for help, problem-solve with a peer, relay a story, sequence events or retell a favorite book</i>
Social-emotional competencies: <i>self-regulation, problem solving and conflict resolutions, empathy (awareness of others and their feelings), wait, define emotions, recover from disappointment, accept "no"</i>
Independence: problem solve , <i>dress/undress with minimal support, separate from adults, eat, open snacks, use the bathroom (toileting), wash hands, spacial awareness, playing alone or finding an activity when bored</i>
Habits of learning/values: <i>having these skills: curiosity, attention, persistence, perseverance, problem solver, kindness, flexibility</i>
Motor skills: <i>use writing tools with nearly typical grasp, cut with scissors safely, build with small manipulatives, dress self, climb, run, safely use the playground</i>
Stamina: <i>keep up with peers on the playground, stay alert through the day, attend to a task for 20 or more minutes</i>
Early literacy: <i>pretend to read, recognize and perhaps write name, recognize individual sounds, understand that a word/letter has value, rhyme words and clap out or recognize syllables</i>
Early Math: <i>sort, match shapes, create sets in categories, count, recognize patterns in the environment, understand positional words like first, last, understand measuring concepts like more, less, full, empty</i>

If you have questions regarding readiness for kindergarten, please contact your preschool. Your local school is also a great resource.