# H.C.S. Kindergarten Program



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**Thank you for taking the time to join us to learn about the curriculum and programs of the kindergarten at Hinesburg Community School! In this handout, you will get a glimpse of a typical day in kindergarten and learn about the various components of our rich, standards based curriculum.**

## What does my child do all day?

Below is a sample of the daily schedule in kindergarten. Please note that all kindergarten classrooms build all of the listed components into their schedule, but they may occur at slightly different times. Please see the following pages for more specific information about the various curriculum components.

Arrival, Morning Jobs, Free Choice Time
Morning Meeting
Snack and Chat
Math
Movement Break
Literacy
Recess
Lunch
Read Aloud & Quiet Reading
Theme/SEL (Social Emotional Learning)
Essential Arts (P.E., Art, Music, Library)
Free Choice Time

## Kindergarten Curriculum

Our goal (and our job!) is to help students become lifelong lovers of learning and successful pre-readers, writers, mathematicians, scientists, and thinkers. Throughout the day, students are instructed in a variety of ways, including whole group, small group, and/or individually. The curriculum is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners.

**Social and Emotional Development**: We recognize that students must feel safe and happy in order to reach their greatest learning potential, so we place a great deal of emphasis on children's social and emotional growth. We follow the *Responsive Classroom* approach, which focuses on building a strong classroom community, bringing together social and academic learning. Children are given opportunities throughout the school day to engage in both structured and unstructured play with peers to practice important social skills. Within this model, students are taught the three core values: **Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Others, Take Care of This Place.** We also incorporate the *Second Step* program into our weekly routines, explicitly teaching social and emotional skills through lessons, modeling, and activities.

**Inclusive Learning:** We teach that all are welcome in our school. Through developmentally appropriate practices which include curriculum, modeling, and peaceful conflict resolution we reinforce this philosophy. We learn together about equity, read children's books that emphasize diversity, and celebrate all family structures and gender identities. We live these values every day in our classroom communities, emphatically.

The racial, cultural, ethnic, diverse family structures, and the learning differences of the members of our community/world present opportunities for each child to learn from those whose life experiences differ from their own. We are committed to providing an emotionally and physically safe space for each of our students while celebrating our friendship.

**Literacy**: Students spend their days immersed in literacy. We use a combination of a balanced literacy and structured language approach, which includes the following components: read aloud, shared reading, independent reading, and word study. Below are the literacy standards that are covered throughout the kindergarten year:

- Students learn specific strategies to decode and comprehend text
- Students systematically learn about phonics, spelling, and handwriting in multisensory ways
- Students learn the skills of effective writers and practice writing stories from their own lives. Writing stories could include the use of drawings, labeling or writing words/sentences.
- Students practice phonemic awareness skills, including rhyming, onset fluency, isolating initial and medial sounds, blending and segmenting of words, syllables, and phonemes (sounds), adding and deleting phonemes, and substituting phonemes

**Math:** We use the *Bridges in Mathematics* program, a program which is aligned with the Common Core State Standards, and helps to make math exciting and engaging. Our math instruction takes place during both Number Corner (calendar time) and the math block. In kindergarten, we focus on whole numbers

and shapes. Throughout the year, your child will:

- Count and compare numbers to 100, with a special focus on numbers to 20
- Think about joining and separating situations as addition and subtraction
- Sort, compare, and draw shapes
- Combine shapes to make other shapes and complete puzzles

Your child will probably share with you about math work stations, which is a time during the math block when children are able to practice skills and concepts that are taught in small groups using engaging, hands-on manipulatives and games.

**Science and Social Science**: We refer to this as "theme time," and we work hard to integrate these themes into our literacy block, but occasionally have separate blocks of time during our day to focus on them. The themes covered in kindergarten are:

- About Me/School Norms
- Fall/Apples
- Colors
- Pumpkins/Halloween
- Thanksgiving Traditions
- Holidays Around the World
- Seasons
- Force & Motion
- Maps
- Lifecycles (plants, ladybugs)
- Birds




**Thank you for being our partners on your child's learning journey! We welcome any and all questions and encourage you to contact your child's classroom teacher at any time!**