

Mrs. Cowan Kindergarten Disclosure
2015-2016

Philosophy: Here at Quest, "It's **ALL** about the children." I share this as part of my personal philosophy, and for this reason I chose to work at Quest Academy. I hope to transfer my love of learning to my students with a tender, but firm approach. I realize that children are on many different levels at this age, and with the use of differentiated instruction, we can work to help them progress individually. I am so excited about the opportunity to facilitate the learning in our Kindergarten classroom!

School Wide Rules: There are five basic rules in our classroom and school:

1. Silent Movement
2. Raise Hands
3. Self Start
4. Follow Directions
5. 12 Inch Whisper

Dress: Please send your child dressed appropriately for the weather and for the school's dress code. Students who are not in school dress code will be required to call home so that a change of clothing can be brought to him/her. This will include socks and belts. The school dress code can be found in your parent handbook. Please note that light up shoes are not allowed and may be a distraction.

Homework: My goal is to create a love and desire for learning, especially reading. Research indicates that the best way to help your child become a successful learner is to READ at home. I encourage 20 minutes of reading to and with your child each day, but only 10 minutes will be required for grading. This includes listening to your child read the baggie books, which are assigned on their reading level. In addition to reading with your child, there will be a weekly homework packet involving math and language concepts, which can be done daily in short spurts. Quest policy indicates that your Kindergarten child should not be required to spend more than 10 minutes on daily practice homework, but feel free to allow your child to do more according to your discretion.

Beginning in September, there will be weekly homework practice assignments attached to my blog under the homework section. I believe in short, meaningful, challenging spurts of learning.

We want children to be enthusiastic and excited about learning. Encourage them to do their best and work hard, but please don't overwhelm or force your child with the homework. I accept incomplete work with your approval. If your child has given their best effort for the maximum time, simply draw a line and sign it off for full credit.

There will be weeks that I will not assign homework due to holidays, short weeks and assessment weeks. I will notify you via my blog when these weeks occur.

Grading: Grades can be found on Aspire, so please sign up for that through the school; the office can help you get started. Grades will be updated by Sunday of each week. If I feel your child is struggling, I will do my best to work with him/her and keep you informed through parent conferences to provide the student with opportunities to improve.

Grading in Kindergarten largely involves the child putting forth their very best effort. Evaluations provide us with information about your child's knowledge and identify areas that may need improvement. I want each child to leave my class feeling like they can accomplish anything they set out to do. Please let me know if there is any concern at any time!

Birthdays: Birthdays are a great way to help your feel special and unique, as well as a way for them to practice speaking in front of their peers. On your child's birthday, he/she will be the STAR of the Day. Please bring a poster to hang in the class on the day of their birthday celebration to share a bit about themselves with their classmates. This poster can be a collage of photos or magazine cut-outs or drawings.

Feel free to be creative. If you need a blank poster sheet, please let me know. Birthdays that take place when we are not at school, summer, holidays, weekends, etc., will be assigned a different day during the school year. I will have the celebration dates posted on my blog birthday calendar under Parent Information. Let me know if there is a conflict. (continued on next page)

Administration has asked that students not bring in any food-type treats. One suggestion is that a book be donated to our class library in lieu of treats. Others have provided a small toy or party favor. Please do **not** feel “obligated” to have your student bring in anything for their birthday. Your child’s birthday will still be acknowledged. If you choose to do so, we have 22 students in our class. To avoid any hurt feelings, please mail birthday invitations to classmates’ homes. Do not have your child distribute his/her invitations before or after school, as this may also cause hurt feeling.

Show & Teach: This version of “show & tell” allows for sharing while learning. My goal is to teach the students the process of discovery. Discovery involves asking questions. I will send home the bucket with one child at a time. The instructions will be on the bucket. Your child may bring only one item and No toys! Your child should be prepared with three clues. The class will have the opportunity to ask questions before the item is shown. This helps children develop the ability to think, ask questions, speak before a group, and analyze information. I will rotate the bucket so the children will each have opportunities throughout the year to teach us.

Behavior/Rewards: Kindergarten is a chance to learn great social skills. I follow the Love and Logic principles of discipline. Kindergarten children can learn expectations and gain an understanding of following those expectations. It takes some practice for the children to gain the experience, but a classroom set up with clear expectations fosters learning. There are a few rules and many procedures, and we will spend many weeks practicing these. It is important to me that my students love coming to school and feel excited about the new things they are learning. I teach respect by example and I want them to feel loved and respected. It is my goal to teach my students the “good feeling”, or intrinsic reward, that comes from making good choices. If a child makes a sad choice, there will be a consequence for their choice. Should a situation arise when your child demonstrates extreme behaviors, I will set up a conference with you.

Classroom Supplies: My supply list is provided on my blog under the Parent Information Tab. Supplies are considered donations, but these supplies greatly contribute to our classroom functioning smoothly. Thank you for your generous donations!

School Calendar: Please be sure to check the school calendar for “Early Out” days and “No School” days. You can view/obtain a copy of the calendar from the Quest Academy website: www.questac.org

I hope you will become very familiar with our website, as it is our primary form of communication with our parents. Let me know if you need help.

Contacting the Teacher: Parents may contact me by email, in person after school, or by calling Quest Academy at 801-731-9859. My email address is wcowan@questac.org. I will respond as soon as possible, but please allow at least 24-hours for a response. If your in-person visit with me is expected to last for more than 2-3 minutes, please schedule a time to visit with me, otherwise just stop in, and I will help you as best I can. You might receive a text alert from me if I need to reach you immediately. Please reserve my cell phone number as a last resort of contacting me.

Make-up Work: When your child is absent, I will allow them to make up any work they missed, preferably as soon as they return to school so they can keep up with the pace of instruction. If extra time is needed, I can work with you on an individual basis. If he/she misses a test, I will have my aide help with the make-up work.

Illness: We do our best to prevent the spreading of germs in Kindergarten. We use sanitizer often and encourage proper washing when using the restroom (although we cannot always verify it). I teach the children proper nose blowing, sneezing and coughing, followed by sanitizing. We also learn what to do if they need to vomit.

I realize you don't always know for sure, but please do not send your child to school if you suspect they are ill. Please also keep them home if they have had a fever in the last 24 hours. Be sure they have had antibiotics for at least 24 hours prior to sending them if they have had a contagious disease such as strep throat or pink eye. Always ask your doctor the appropriate time frame before sending them to school.

Volunteers: I encourage your involvement in your child's education. I have an open door policy, and welcome your involvement through volunteer work. Please contact me if you would like to volunteer some of your hours in the classroom or even do work for me at home. I will set up my volunteer schedule via Sign-up Genius. Unless you are volunteering, please refrain from visiting the classroom for the first 2 weeks of school. It is difficult for some children with separation anxiety to see their parents while making the adjustment to being at school.