

"All I Really Need to Know I Learned in
Kindergarten"

By Robert Fulghum

Most of what I really need to know about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in Kindergarten.

Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain, but there in the sand pile at preschool.

These are the things I learned:

- SHARE EVERYTHING.
- PLAY FAIR.
- DON'T HIT PEOPLE.
- PUT THINGS BACK WHERE YOU FOUND THEM.
- CLEAN UP YOUR OWN MESS.
- DON'T TAKE THINGS THAT AREN'T YOURS.
- SAY YOU'RE SORRY WHEN YOU HURT SOMEBODY.
- WHEN YOU GO OUT INTO THE WORLD, WATCH OUT FOR TRAFFIC, HOLD HANDS, AND STICK TOGETHER.
- BE AWARE OF WONDER.

Escuela Las Morochas Handbook for the Early Childhood Education Program

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A DESCRIPTION OF OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

Our program consists of a pre-kindergarten 3, a pre-kindergarten 4, and a kindergarten. Pre-kindergarten 3 and pre-kindergarten 4 are half-day programs. A child must be 3 years old prior to October 1st the year they enter preschool. A child must be 5 years old on or prior to December 1st in order to enroll in kindergarten. All students begin their day at 8:00am. Preschool students are dismissed at 12:30pm. Our kindergarten is a full-day program with students being dismissed at 3:00pm. All teachers are bilingual. Two of our three teachers hold masters from US universities.

THE CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is designed to be academically challenging. Research shows that young children are competent and capable of excelling at academic tasks when held to high expectations. We base all curriculum choices on research, which is why we use Zoo-phonics at all levels. Spiraling our curriculum to build on prior knowledge has also been shown to provide optimal results in student learning.

Our curriculum addresses all areas of the students' development: academic, physical, emotional, social and cognitive.

For more information on curriculum specifics, ask for a copy of the curriculum guide, available from the office.

ADMISSION

We recommend that a child be 3 on or before October 1st of the year of admission, toilet trained, able to communicate in his/her home language and be ready to socialize with peers to enter ECEY1.

We recommend that a child be 5 on or before December 1st of the year of admission to enter ECEY3.

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The school will invite prospective parents and child(ren) to a personal interview before admission to the Early Childhood Education Program to ensure the child's readiness and aptitude for school.

- The interview held between the parents, ECE teachers and coordinator is to gather information about the child, the languages the child has been exposed to, previous day care experience, health etc.
- A recorded observation is carried out to verify the child's readiness for school in terms of social skills, language production, maturity, and independence skills.
- Having been observed and found ready, students may enter ELM's ECE Program as deemed fit by the coordinator and the director.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Character education is an important part of our curriculum. We teach RESPECT: that responsibility, effort, self-control, a positive attitude, effective communication and tolerance are essential to each child's success, confidence and well-being. Every child should feel that the classroom environment is safe and secure.

Therefore, we have established three rules in Early Childhood Education and they are the same for each classroom. First, all students must listen when the teacher or a friend is speaking. The second rule is, students must keep hands and feet to themselves at all times. Our third and final rule is that students must follow the teacher's directions. To remind students to make appropriate decisions we use a color-coded chart that starts fresh each day.

- Green - Everyone starts here
- Blue – Student misbehavior results in first warning
- Yellow – Student continued misbehavior results in second warning

- Orange – Student’s continued misbehavior requires a consequence
- Red – Student’s continued misbehavior requires a phone call to parent
- Purple – Student’s continued misbehavior requires a parent – teacher conference.

Rewards for appropriate behavior are numerous and varied. Some are individual, i.e. stickers, while others are class-wide, like more recess time, or a video.

UNIFORMS

All pre-kindergarten children must wear red shirts and dark blue skirts, a pinaforte, or pants every day. Socks must be white. Shoes should be black, but they may be athletic shoes. All shirts must display the school patch. Kindergarten students are required to wear a white polo shirt and dark blue pants or skirts. They must also wear dark athletic shoes with white socks. The school patch should be affixed to the shirt. All levels must have their shirts tucked in prior to entering the building. Physical education does not have a set uniform, but as teachers, we recommend that students wear red or white tee shirts and dark blue sweat pants. We also recommend that when you purchase uniform clothing you buy items without small buttons, zippers, and belts.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY



Basic skills develop when learning is meaningful to children. Language and literacy are encouraged through reading aloud stories and poems, games, puzzles, writing, drawing, painting, circle time, and imaginative play.

As a staff we have chosen to use Zoo-phonics to supplement our phonics-based Houghton Mifflin core curriculum. Zoo-phonics teaches letter sounds before

letter names using a pictorial mnemonic and a body movement for each letter. Because Zoo-phonics incorporates multiple modalities and addresses the learning gap between the genders, we feel it is an important addition to our language and literacy program.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Students develop concepts and reasoning skills by observing and interacting with their environment.

Teachers guide the children in cause-and-effect thinking, anticipation of logical consequences, brainstorming, and problem solving skills. Concepts in the areas of social studies, math and science are learned through relevant, hands-on activities.



PHYSICAL AND AESTHETIC DEVELOPMENT

Students have daily opportunities to develop gross motor skills, and express themselves freely on the playground. In the classroom, fine motor skills activities are enhanced with puzzles, painting, and cutting. Aesthetic expression and appreciation are encouraged daily through art and music.

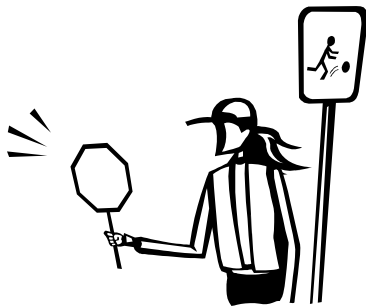
SPECIALS

All our Early Childhood Education students attend physical education. They have Library, Art, Music and Computers at least once a week. Students will be supervised by their teacher during all transitions to and from Specials.

ATTENDANCE

Daily attendance is of vital importance to the academic success of all students. There are times, however, when a child will be ill and unable to attend school. Please call the office and inform the School Secretary as soon as you determine that your child will be out due to illness.

If your child becomes ill at school, you will be notified by the School Secretary.



Your child should **arrive** at school **before 7:55am**. There will always be a supervising teacher at the gate to assist your child from the car. Inside the gate there will be a second supervising teacher and a representative from the Early Childhood Education Program to greet your child.

Late arrivals must check in at the front office.

At the **12:30 dismissal** your child will be assisted into your car. We ask that you display your colored pick-up card in your front window. A teacher on a walkie-talkie will radio for your child to be brought out to you. If multiple people driving different cars will be picking up your child we recommend you buy extra cards for each vehicle. If a friend of the family is picking up the student you must notify the teacher, through the office, and provide that individual with a card. At the **3:00pm dismissal** the same process is repeated.

EARLY CHECK-OUT PROCEDURE

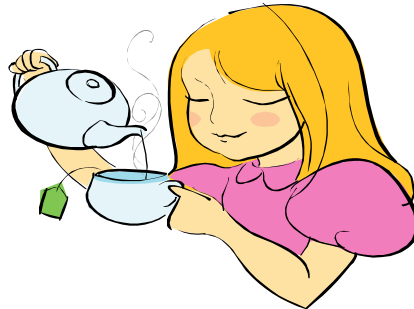
If, for any reason, your child must leave before dismissal time, the parent is responsible for picking up the child. The parent will sign a slip stating the time and reason for withdrawal in the Office. If parent is unable to pick up the child, the person who comes to take the child will wait in the Office until the parent is reached by telephone and confirms that person's identity.

SNACKS

All students have a twenty minute snack time in the morning. We have a cantina that provides snacks for a reasonable price, or your child may bring a snack from home. If you prefer to have your child bring their own snack, it must be a healthy one. We recommend things like yogurt, fruit, sandwiches, juice, milk and/or water. **We do not permit candy, chocolate, chewing gum, soda, or dulce de leche at snack time.**

LUNCH

Kindergarten students have a lunch time. Parents have the option to buy a hot lunch or provide a lunch for their student.



MISCELLANEOUS

Toys and jewelry such as watches are not allowed at school. As teachers we find these items to distract the students.

We do not celebrate birthdays at school, but would be happy to share a special birthday snack that you provide for your child and his classmates during snack time.

Our rules are as follows:

- The sharing will take place during the regular twenty-minute snack time. Please be on time, the snack time cannot be changed.
- Please notify the teacher a few days ahead of the date.



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- Explain to your child that they will be sharing a special time with his or her classmates, but that it will not be a party with presents.
- **DO NOT SEND decorations, balloons, entertainment or favors.**

You may wish to have a birthday party at your home or elsewhere after school or on a weekend day. In that case, invitations can be distributed at school, provided that you kindly:

- Notify the teacher at least a week in advance. Remember, other parents may be planning something for that day.
- Bring the invitations to the teacher at least three days before the event.
- Make sure there are enough invitations for all students in the class, and a few extras just in case.
- Please do not label the invitations. It is easier for the teacher to pass out the invitations at dismissal time if they are not labeled.

PARENTS REMEMBER YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT TEACHER

A recent study showed that students in homes where parents talked to them about what they were learning in school showed a 42 percentile gain over the students in homes where parents accepted answers such as "I don't know" or "Nothing". We need to work together to provide the best education for your child.

