



Barnhart School

Kindergarten Readiness Guide



Preparing Your Child for a Successful Start in Kindergarten

Welcome to Kindergarten!

Kindergarten is an exciting milestone that marks the beginning of a child's formal academic journey. At Barnhart School, Kindergarten students are encouraged to become confident learners, thoughtful community members, and independent problem-solvers.

While every child develops at their own pace, successful Kindergarten students typically demonstrate readiness across several important developmental areas, including executive functioning, social-emotional skills, independence, communication, and foundational academic abilities.

Readiness is not about perfection. Rather, it is about having the skills and dispositions that allow children to participate successfully in a classroom community and engage meaningfully in learning experiences.

Executive Function Skills

Executive functions are the brain-based skills that help children manage attention, emotions, behavior, and learning.

Attention and Focus

Your child may be ready for Kindergarten if they can:

- Attend to a teacher-directed activity for approximately 15–20 minutes
- Listen to stories and classroom discussions
- Complete simple tasks with limited reminders
- Participate appropriately during group instruction

Ways to Support at Home

- Read together daily
- Complete age-appropriate puzzles
- Play board games that require attention and turn-taking
- Encourage completion of simple household tasks

Examples:

- "Please put your backpack away, wash your hands, and come to the table."
- "Finish coloring your picture before choosing a new activity."

Working Memory

Your child may be able to:

- Follow two- and three-step directions
- Remember classroom routines
- Retell stories with beginning, middle, and end details
- Recall information learned previously

Ways to Support at Home

- Ask children to summarize books and experiences
- Play memory games
- Practice following multi-step instructions



Self-Regulation and Emotional Control

Your child may be able to:

- Manage frustration appropriately most of the time
- Wait their turn during group activities
- Use words to solve simple conflicts
- Accept feedback and redirection
- Recover from disappointment with support

Ways to Support at Home

- Teach emotion vocabulary
- Practice calming strategies
- Encourage problem-solving conversations
- Model respectful communication

Cognitive Flexibility

Your child may be able to:

- Adjust to changes in routines
- Transition between activities with minimal difficulty
- Consider different ideas and perspectives
- Try new experiences willingly

Ways to Support at Home

- Introduce new activities and experiences
- Encourage flexible thinking during play
- Discuss multiple solutions to problems



Social Readiness

Kindergarten students spend much of their day learning and working with others.

Peer Relationships

Your child may be able to:

- Engage cooperatively with peers
- Share materials appropriately
- Take turns during games and activities
- Participate in group projects
- Demonstrate empathy toward others

Ways to Support at Home

- Arrange playdates
- Participate in group activities
- Practice cooperative games
- Encourage perspective-taking conversations

Examples:

- "How do you think your friend felt?"
- "What could you do to help?"

Relationship with Adults

Your child may be able to:

- Follow directions from teachers and other trusted adults
- Ask for help appropriately
- Demonstrate respect for classroom expectations
- Separate from caregivers comfortably

Ways to Support at Home

- Encourage independence in new environments
- Practice following directions from multiple adults
- Foster responsibility and accountability

Communication Skills

Your child may be able to:

- Speak clearly enough to be understood
- Express needs and ideas appropriately
- Participate in conversations
- Listen respectfully when others are speaking
- Ask questions when clarification is needed

Ways to Support at Home

- Engage in daily conversations
- Read and discuss books together
- Encourage storytelling and imaginative play

Independence Skills

Independent learners develop confidence and resilience.

Self-Care Skills

Children entering Kindergarten should be able to:

- Use the restroom independently
- Wash hands independently
- Dress and undress with minimal assistance
- Manage personal belongings
- Open lunch containers and water bottles independently
- Put on jackets and shoes

Ways to Support at Home

- Encourage self-help skills daily
- Allow extra time for independent completion of tasks
- Establish predictable routines

Responsibility

Your child may be able to:

- Clean up after activities
- Follow classroom routines
- Care for personal belongings
- Complete simple responsibilities independently

Ways to Support at Home

- Assign age-appropriate chores
- Encourage organization of personal items
- Practice daily routines

Examples:

- Making their bed
- Feeding a pet
- Setting the table

Learning Behaviors

Successful Kindergarten students demonstrate positive approaches to learning.

Your child may:

- Show curiosity about the world
- Ask questions frequently
- Persist through challenges
- Demonstrate enthusiasm for learning
- Take pride in their work
- Try again after making mistakes

Ways to Support at Home

- Celebrate effort and perseverance
- Encourage exploration and discovery
- Provide opportunities for open-ended play
- Read widely and often



Fine & Gross Motor Development

Children entering Kindergarten benefit from developing physical coordination and control.

Fine Motor Skills

Your child may be able to:

- Hold pencils and crayons comfortably
- Use scissors safely
- Draw recognizable shapes
- Complete simple art projects

Gross Motor Skills

Your child may be able to:

- Run, jump, hop, and climb confidently
- Participate in playground activities
- Balance and coordinate movements effectively

Ways to Support at Home

- Provide opportunities for outdoor play
- Encourage drawing, coloring, and crafts
- Engage in activities that build hand strength and coordination



Foundational Academic Readiness

Kindergarten is a time to strengthen academic foundations while fostering a love of learning.

Literacy Readiness

Children may be able to:

- Recognize and write their first name
- Identify many uppercase and lowercase letters
- Recognize some letter sounds
- Enjoy listening to and discussing stories
- Understand that print carries meaning

Ways to Support at Home

- Read aloud daily
- Visit the library regularly
- Practice letter recognition through games and play
- Encourage drawing and early writing

Math Readiness

Children may be able to:

- Count objects accurately
- Recognize numbers
- Compare quantities
- Sort objects by attributes
- Recognize simple patterns

Ways to Support at Home

- Count everyday objects
- Play number games
- Explore patterns during daily activities
- Use cooking and shopping as math opportunities



A Partnership Between Home and School

Kindergarten readiness reflects a combination of academic, social, emotional, and developmental growth.

Every child enters Kindergarten with unique strengths, interests, and experiences. Our goal is to nurture confident, curious, and capable learners who are prepared to engage fully in a vibrant school community. Through a strong partnership between families and educators, we help children develop the skills, character, and love of learning that will serve them throughout their educational journey.

We look forward to partnering with your family as your child begins this exciting next step.