

Welcome Packet
Mrs. Whiddon's
Kindergarten Class



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Classroom Management Plan

Classroom Rules

During the first few weeks of school, we will read several books that explore the concept of rules and why they are important in the classroom. The students will discover that most of our classroom rules can be narrowed down to the following rules:

- Follow directions quickly
- Raise your hand for permission to speak
- Raise your hand for permission to leave your seat
- Make smart choices
- Keep your dear teacher happy ☺

The students will discover that we have rules to help us stay safe and help us learn. When the children have had ample time to become familiar with our classroom rules and procedures, we will begin our system for monitoring behavior.

Behavior Monitoring System for Mrs. Whiddon's classroom

Our class will be using a clip chart color system to monitor classroom behavior. We will keep track of their daily behavior in their planners. This is a communication link between home and school. Your child's overall daily behavior will be conveyed with a color, along with written notes home in order to keep communication lines flowing.

Kindergarten is an important year of growth in children, both academically as well as behaviorally. No child or person is perfect and it is important to me to have children learn from their mistakes. If your child has to move their clip down, they will have a stop and think time at their desk, and then we will discuss how we can fix the poor choice that was being made. If your child demonstrates an effort to fix the poor choice that was made, s/he will have the opportunity to clip back up.

Below you will find the colors we use for our behavior system. Every student will start the day out on green and have a chance to earn higher colors. Please do not expect the highest colors on a daily basis – The highest colors are awarded for an exceptional day. If your child received a blue or higher, they had a great day. If your child earns a green or yellow for the day, I will write a few words explaining why. If your child earns an orange or red, I will send home a behavior plan indicating what choices led to the color.



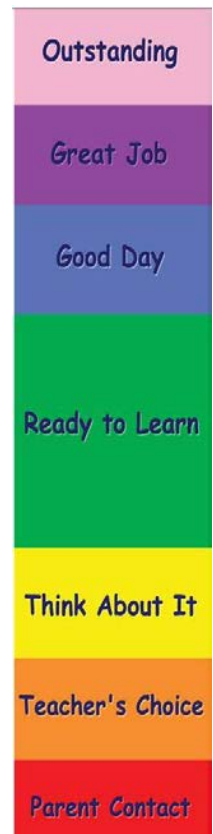
Clip Chart Behavior System

Our classroom theme is A Learning Journey through the Jungle! Throughout the week, students will have a chance to earn jungle bucks to be able to spend at my Jungle Mart. It is important to me that each student receive constant praise throughout each day. We all want to feel we are doing a great job. I use many opportunities in the classroom to offer positive reinforcement such as affirmations, high fives, stickers/stamps, and jungle bucks.

Please encourage your child to use appropriate behavior daily. When students remain focused on learning and stay on task, they will experience success, happiness, and improved self-esteem. Please be a part of this team effort, and consistently help monitor your child's learning behaviors, so that he or she may be successful this school year.

Behavior Color Rating Scale –

- **Pink:** Your child went above and beyond in meeting all behavioral expectations. Your child is focused and on task throughout the day and did not need any reminders. **Reward:** Receive \$3 jungle bucks
- **Purple:** All behavioral expectations are being met and are making great choices. Your child is focused on what they are learning and helping other students make great choices as well. **Reward:** Receive \$2 jungle bucks
- **Blue:** Behavioral expectations are being met. Your child's learning is moving ahead without obstacles. **Reward:** Receive \$1 jungle buck.
- **Green:** Some behavioral expectations are being met. The teacher has noticed your child off task and has given verbal and / or non-verbal cues, with little response from the student.
- **Yellow:** Behavioral expectations are not consistently being met. Your child has been warned about making better behavior choices, and has been given multiple verbal and non-verbal cues. If behaviors continue, they will block learning for self and others. **Consequence:** Loss of 15 minutes of center time or recess and make up incomplete work.
- **Orange:** No behavioral expectations are being met. Your child's behavior choices are very poor. Learning was interrupted for your child and classmates. Your child was instructed to complete a Behavior Plan and had a conference with the teacher on how to improve his or her choices. **Consequence:** Loss of all center time or recess. During this time your child will have time to finish his or her behavior plan as well as any incomplete classwork.
- **Red:** Poor choices are continuing to be made. Your child's behavior was disrupting learning for themselves as well as their classmates. **Consequence:** Your child will receive a classroom infraction that will need to be signed and returned to school the next day.



Parent Communication

Safari Folders – Every student will receive a folder that will come home every night. Inside the middle of the folder will be a calendar where your child's color will be recorded daily. Please initial in the corner every evening. The calendar will be checked daily to ensure daily progress is being communicated and reviewed. The pocket on the right will be used for take home papers that will need to be taken out. The pocket for take home papers will include class newsletters, school papers, notices, and any other important school information. The other pocket is used for classwork that needs to be completed/corrected or for review work that could happen throughout the year.



Special note: Throughout the year I may put important papers in the middle section of the Safari folder. Please keep these papers inside your child's folder. 😊

Class Newsletter (Email Distribution List)

Inside your parent folder I have a form where you will be able to provide any email addresses you would like to be included in my email distribution list. Throughout the year you will receive newsletters, news, and other important updates via email. If your email ever changes, please be sure to let me know.

Class Website

Continually throughout the year I will update my class website to include a glance into what we will be learning during the month, important dates/announcements, and more! When I update my website, I will send out an email to let you know!

If your email changes during the school year...

Because we use many forms of online communication, please be sure to email me if you change your email address during the school year. 😊

Teacher Communication

If you need to contact me to discuss anything, you may call the school office or email me. If I am not available when you call, the front desk will take a message for me to return your call. Please note that parent communication is important to me, and as such I aim to respond within 24 – 48 hours.

Email Policy: Please note that any emails received during evening hours, weekends, or holidays may not be responded to until the following school day.



Classwork and Homework Policies

Grading System

We continually assess for student mastery using a variety of methods. Your child will be completing class activities that reinforce the concepts being taught in the classroom. Classwork will be marked the following ways...

- Star (Excellent) – All Academic standards are being met. Your child followed directions, needed little guidance, and put forward their best effort.
- Check Mark (Satisfactory) – Most academic standards are being met. Your child followed directions and needed some guidance. Your child and I had a conference about why s/he did not receive a star. Please review the work with your student at home.

Note: If you see a pair of eyeballs with a few words, this is the target skill I would like your child to work on. ☺

- Incomplete classwork – Students will have until Friday to complete classwork. Any classwork that is incomplete by the end of the day will be sent home as homework the following week.

Homework

Once we have settled into the school year, we will begin monthly reading logs. We will ask you and your child to pick 4 nights to read and practice their sight words. 2 of the nights, we would like your child to practice reading on a program called Raz-Kids. This program provides books for your child to read that are at his or her reading level. 2 of the other nights are free picks. Your child can choose to continue reading on Raz-Kids or choose to have you read one of their favorite stories to them. More information about Raz-Kids will be sent home shortly after school starts.



Important Procedure Information

Bathroom procedures for accidents

Students are asked not to use the restroom during instructional time, but may sign out to use the restroom before and after. Sometimes, accidents will happen. Please provide a spare set of clothes in your child's backpack (including underwear). **It is Kindergarten policy that the children have an extra change of clothes in their backpack throughout the entire year.** Please have your child's spare set of clothes in a bag with his or her name labeled clearly on the front. The spare set of clothes does not have to be an extra uniform, but does need to be a solid color that is similar. You will receive an "Oooops! Notice" that indicates which clothes they changed into and if any clothes need to be returned to school.

Sickness Policy

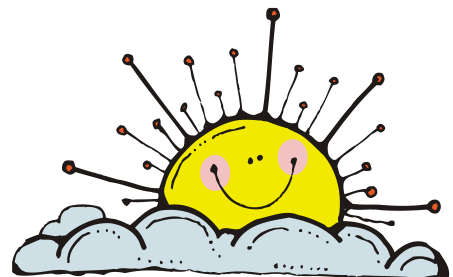
Families, please refer to the parent handbook for our sickness policy as the health of our students is of utmost priority. **We would like to emphasize that children must be fever free for 24 hours without medication.** If your child is sent home with a fever, then they must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child went home with a fever and arrives the next day, we will call you to pick up your child. We appreciate your cooperation in helping to keep our students and teachers healthy throughout the year.

Money Procedures

If you send in money with your child, please include it in an envelope or sandwich bag labeled with the following information: Student's name, purpose of money, and the amount. This will help keep their money safe and easy to identify what it is for. There will be a plastic pouch inside your child's Safari folder to hold money and forms that need to be turned in.

Afternoon Dismissal

The children will be dismissed at 3:10pm. Please remember that learning is taking place all the way up till that time. If you need to pick up your child before, please make sure to notify the office and myself beforehand. Car Circle is a busy time for teachers and our main goal is the safety of the students. If you have questions, please email me so I can take the time to answer your questions thoroughly.



Additional Important Information

Community Snack & Lunches

We ask all parents to donate 2 weeks' worth of community snacks for the classroom. Your child may choose to eat a community snack or a snack from their lunchbox. We ask that all snacks are healthy choices. When it is your snack week, please provide a class set of **individually wrapped snacks** for each day of the week. We would like to request to please refrain from purchasing large boxes of bags of snack that require to be passed out. Please bear in mind that snacks and lunches cannot be kept cold or warmed up in the microwave.

Water bottles *Required school supplies*

Your child will need a water bottle for the classroom. Please provide your child with a reusable water bottle that can be returned to and from school. **Please fill your child's water bottle only with water.** Every Friday I will have the students pack up their water bottles to be washed and cleaned at home. **It is important that your child brings his/her water bottle clean and filled by the following Monday.**

Jackets

We encourage the children to keep a light sweater inside their backpack at all times. The sweater needs to be solid color and match the children's uniform. After winter, the administration asks that children wear a Plato issued sweater inside the school building. On very cold days, the children can wear heavy jackets outside that are not Plato-issued.

Toys and Electronics

Toys have a special place in everyone's hearts – we all have had that favorite stuffed animal or toy truck that made us feel special. However, bringing toys to the classroom can be a distraction to the students, so we are asking to please have your child leave toys at home unless it is for show and tell. Electronics must stay at home. Please refer to the parent handbook about items that may be brought to before and after care.

Field Trips

We take 3-4 field trips each year in Kindergarten. Due to safety, we travel in a bus for each field trip. We strongly rely on our level 2 chaperones to make each field trip possible. Please see below for more information on level 2 chaperones. Please note that if we do not have enough level 2 chaperones for a field trip, we will not be able to attend as safety is our number one priority.



Additional Important Information Cont.

Level 1 and 2 volunteers for Field trips

Pinellas County Schools now requires that all volunteers attain a level 2 clearance. This requires the volunteer to have a background screening as well as complete fingerprints. There is a fee for the fingerprints. However, once you obtain level 2 clearance, it is good for 5 years. **We strongly encourage parents to obtain level 2 clearance at the beginning of the year.** The process can take some time and all field trip chaperones must be level 2 approved. We heavily rely on parent volunteers to help make our fields trips possible.

Birthday Invitations

Birthdays are an exciting time in every child's life! Please let me know if you would like a class list of names for invitations. Please remember that all children love to be invited to birthday parties. Invitations will gladly be placed in each child's take home folder, however all students in the class have to be invited. Students are not allowed to pass out individual invitations during car circle or in the hallway.



*Please note that we can't forward digital birthday invitations or reminders to other parents.

Uniform policy

Please refer to the staff handbook for Plato's uniform policy. We would like to emphasize the importance of wearing safe footwear to school. We also do not permit light up shoes in the classroom as they can be highly disruptive to the learning environment. If your child's footwear is deemed unsafe for the day, s/he will be asked to sit out of recess and/or PE due to safety reasons. Please note that we do not permit the following items in the classroom as they can become a distraction: watches, bracelets, long necklaces, non-prescription glasses, and cologne/perfume (due to allergies).

We recommend: If your child does not know how to tie their shoelaces, we recommend to please send your child in shoes that velcro instead. This would be a huge help to us during PE and recess. 😊

Lunch Routines and Procedures

Lunch locations include both Kindergarten classrooms as well as the cafeteria. We do not use the cafeteria each day. Hot lunch is available daily for students to purchase. Please refer to the parent handbook for paying for hot lunches. Payments are completed online as we do not accept cash for lunch money. (The only exception is for pizza and ice cream days – please see below)

Ice Cream and Pizza Days

The middle schoolers offers Westshore pizza each Wednesday for purchase. Each slice of pizza costs \$2 and is collected on Tuesdays. **Please note:** Pizza money is collected in the morning each Tuesday and will not be accepted late.



The middle schoolers also offer ice cream each Friday for purchase. Ice cream costs \$1 and is bought during recess time. **Please note:** We do not allow the kids to purchase ice cream if there was a birthday party or celebration that day. We also do not purchase ice cream if there is bad weather outside.

Practicing Independence With Your Child

Kindergarten is an important year for your child's growing independence! As such, we ask you to practice the following skills at home with your child.

- Untying and tying shoes.
- Buttoning and zipping up pants
- Taking off and putting on jackets
- Opening water bottles and juice boxes
- Opening food containers
- Cleaning up after playing or eating



Thank you for choosing Plato Academy! I look forward to working with you and your child!

