

2021-2022 PVS KINDERGARTEN OPEN HOUSE Q&A

Portland Village School is a public charter Waldorf school serving students in grades K-8. Our Kindergarten program provides a warm, safe, beautiful, and loving home-like environment for the young child. The activities are predictable, regular, and rhythmic. The teachers cultivate reverence and respect for all that they do. The teachers nurture the capacity of imagination through carefully selected stories, puppetry, circle time, and encouragement of free play. There is great emphasis on developing basic skills necessary for the foundation of academic learning. Our Kindergarten is a creative environment, where the children are given a range of activities and structure that help them prepare for the next phase of school life.

1- How is the Kindergarten program at PVS unique?

In the Kindergarten, we focus on developing pre-reading and mathematics skills, as well as, developing social skills. Students learn through imitation and imagination and develop a sense of respect and wonder. The activities include storytelling, puppetry, creative and unstructured free play, movement, singing, painting, drawing, beeswax modeling, baking, cooking, taking walks to the park and outdoor play.

2- What are the alignment requirements between PVS and other Portland Public Schools?

At PVS we include the Common Core State Standards and align them with our Waldorf developmental approach.

3- How is reading approached in Kindergarten?

At PVS, we work primarily with the foundations for learning, pre-reading skills and strategies. The students are exposed to the richness of the language, through storytelling, puppetry, acting the story being told, circle games, poems, verses, rhymes, songs, drawings, clapping games and finger games.

4-What assessments occur in the Kindergarten?

A district required Kindergarten assessment is given in the first 4-6 weeks of the school year. Teachers also conduct internal Kindergarten assessments, which are discussed with parents at the November and March conferences. Each February a First Grade Readiness Assessment is also conducted with the children.

5- How are students assigned to class groups?

Placement in the Kindergarten classes is a school-based decision. Gender, ethnic diversity, sibling ratio, temperament, age, and group dynamics are all considered in the decision making process.

6- What is the rhythm of the day?

Each day includes an artistic activity such as painting, coloring, beeswax modeling. In addition, cooking or baking occur, as well as walks to nearby parks. Movement circles, stories and puppetry are brought to the students each day. Free play, both indoors and out, is also incorporated into our daily rhythm.

7- What is the looping policy at PVS?

Kindergarten teachers do not loop. Currently, teachers loop from first to fourth grade, fifth to sixth grade, and seventh to eighth grade. The PVS Looping Policy is occasionally adjusted as administration and teachers take into consideration best-thinking at the time and school need.

8- What opportunities are there for parents to volunteer in Kindergarten?

There are weekly opportunities to escort children on walks to the park each week. Other volunteer opportunities may also be available when a celebration or a special activity is planned at the discretion of the teacher. Please speak with your child's teacher regarding specifics.

9- Do the children play outside everyday, even if it is raining?

Yes, the students play outside each day in all weather conditions. Proper outside rain gear such as rainpants, rain-boots and raincoats are required.

10- Do you make snack at school?

Snack is made in the classroom weekly on a varied schedule and can include bread or soup making. Monday through Thursday students bring snack from home. Snack making is at the discretion of the teacher and subject to change.

11- Do you have a rest time?

Yes, there is a dedicated rest time each afternoon in the Kindergarten.

12- Why does your school recommend the limiting of screen time?

Our central aim is to stimulate the healthy development of the child's imagination. There is strong research based recommendations to limit screen time for young children to promote attention span, imagination, and creativity. Electronic media is extremely fast paced with edits every three to five seconds (TV shows, movies, and video games) this considerably reduces the student's attention span. Our concern is with both physical and cognitive effects, as well as the content of much of the material. We understand that the pandemic and extended time at home has, in many cases, impacted the time children have spent on screens.

13- How many places are there?

Typically, there are 46 places to fill for Kindergarten. We do give priority to siblings of currently enrolled students, as well as to those who reside within Portland Public School district as per our charter. Out-of-district applicants are offered enrollment after in-district applicants.

14- How many students per class?

Our Kindergarten classes are capped at 22 & 24 students per class with a teacher and an assistant teacher. Our grades classes are capped at 27 students.

15- If my child does not receive placement in Kindergarten do I have to apply again?

If your child does not lottery into Kindergarten or receive a mid-year placement (from the waitlist) then

you must reapply for admission. Each year PVS conducts a new lottery, which generates a new waitlist for that school year. The wait list does not transfer year to year.

16- What if my child is going to be late or absent?

If your student will be late for school, please call the Front Office and let them know the estimated time of arrival. You may leave a message with this information or send an email. The office staff will inform the teacher. If your student will be absent, please either email or call the Front Office explaining the days he/she will be absent and the reason why. Again, the staff will inform the teacher.

17- What are school hours?

The school day begins at 8:30 am and ends at 3:00 pm, except for Wednesdays. Wednesdays are our Early Release days and dismissal is at 2:00 pm. Parents with siblings are welcome to pick up their Kindergarten students first.