

## **2025-2026 PVS KINDERGARTEN OPEN HOUSE FAQ**

Portland Village School is a Public Waldorf charter 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 Kindergarten, we focus on developing pre-reading and mathematics skills, as well as strengthening 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, taking walks to the park and outdoor play.

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

At PVS we teach 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 and writing skills, and strategies. Students are exposed to the richness of language through phonic skills, storytelling, puppetry, acting the story being told, circle games, poems, verses, rhymes, songs, drawings, clapping games and finger games.

**4- What assessments occur in Kindergarten?** Teachers conduct internal Kindergarten assessments which are discussed with parents at the November and March conferences.

**5- How are students assigned to class groups?** Placement in the Kindergarten classes is a school-based decision. We strive to balance the groups as much as we can, considering racial and ethnic diversity, sibling ratio, age, temperament and group dynamics.

**6- What is the rhythm of the day?** Each day includes an artistic activity such as painting, coloring, or beeswax modeling, baking, as well as walks to nearby parks. Movement circles, language and math lessons, library time, stories and puppetry are brought to the students each day. Social and emotional learning is further developed through friendship circle conversations. 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 1st to 5th grade and 6th to 8th grade. The PVS Looping Policy is occasionally adjusted due to school needs and best-thinking at that time.

**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 rain pants, rain-boots and raincoats are required.

**10- What about snack and lunch at school?** Students bring snacks from home every day. We bake bread every week as an extra treat and sometimes another edible activity might happen at the discretion of the teacher. Hot lunches can be ordered and qualifying students can get free & reduced rates. Please see the lunch tab on our website.

**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 limiting screen time?** Our central aim is to stimulate the healthy development of the child's imagination. There are strong research-based recommendations to limit screen time for young children to promote attention span, imagination, and creativity. Electronic media, TV shows, movies, and video games are extremely fast paced with edits every three to five seconds and this exposure 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. We are all learning how to navigate screen time post-pandemic.

**13- How many places are available in Kindergarten?** Typically, there are 48 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 currently capped at 24 students per class with a lead 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.

**17- What are school hours?** The school day begins at 8:30 am and ends at 3:15 pm, except for Wednesdays. Wednesdays are our early release days with dismissal at 2:15 pm.