

Information About Kindergarten Screening

What is the purpose of the screening?

Our purpose is to gather information about the kindergarten class enrollment numbers and about children's readiness and learning needs so we can plan for their instructional program. Through the screening we will provide parents with feedback on their child's individual readiness level and may make suggestions on how to use remaining months before kindergarten to strengthen that readiness.

What will my child be doing during the screening time?

When you arrive, you and your child will be welcomed by one of our staff members. The staff member will give your child a name tag to wear and each parent will be given a quick informational sheet to complete. Your child will then be escorted to our gymnasium where a teacher will be waiting. Let your child know that you will be staying with the principal to learn more about kindergarten while they spend a little time with the teacher.

Tell me about the screening itself.

The screening will be done through prepared questions and tasks.

- First, a teacher will interview your child by using a series of prepared questions looking for basic color, number, and letter recognition.

- Then, your child will be asked to do some small and large motor tasks such as standing on one foot, and copying different shapes.
- If another language is spoken at home, your child will also be administered the WIDA-Model test. The WIDA- Model test will be administered in English.

Is the screening a test?

No, it is not. It is a set of tasks and skills that pre-kindergarten children typically know and/or can perform. We will take a look at your child's language development, general knowledge, specific knowledge and some large and small muscle task accomplishments. The screening will be based on a series of questions that should look like a game or should seem like just plain conversation. Your child's responses will be recorded on the screening instrument, but there will be no actual "scores" to analyze.

Who will be doing the screening?

We will use our Westchester Primary staff who have received training in the use of the screening program.

How long should the screening take?

We expect that the entire process will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

Do screening results determine whether or not my child is eligible for kindergarten?

No, Illinois law states that any child who is 5 years of age on or before September 1st of the kindergarten year is eligible for kindergarten.

Should I prepare my child for the screening?

No. Please do not do anything differently than you would otherwise be doing with your child at this time. A child who has been “coached” in a special way may in fact provide misleading information. What we hope for most is to meet your child at the stage of development and readiness that is natural for him/her at that time

Why am I being asked to complete the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)?

We are asking you to complete the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to assist the school team in screening students for social emotional needs. The SDQ is a research based assessment that looks at children’s feelings, behavior and how well they get on with adults and other children. This questionnaire is already widely used across the United States as well as Europe. More information is available about the SDQ at www.sdqinfo.com. The information from the screener will assist the team in understanding the child’s readiness and social emotional needs so we can plan for their instructional program.

Will I be able to just drop off my child for the screening?

No. All parents must remain in the building. Parents will have the opportunity to meet and talk with the Westchester Primary Principal. She will provide important information and answer any questions you may have.

When will I know who is my child's kindergarten teacher?

Classroom assignments will be made in mid-August.

When will I find out about my kindergarten child's bus assignment?

Bus assignments will be made available to parents at the kindergarten bus orientation. If you are unable to attend, bus assignments will be emailed to you.