

Terraset Elementary School



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What to Expect When Your Child Starts Kindergarten at Terraset

Your child is probably really excited about starting Kindergarten. And you probably have a few questions you'd like answered. Not so much about policy and procedures but more about the nuts and bolts of their day. How do we know this? We've been there! We've called friends on Labor Day trying to figure out how the school will know which bus my child gets on. We've worried about them eating a good lunch because up until now, someone has been quartering their grapes for them. They are ready. You'll be ready. We can help.

Frequently Asked Questions!

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When do we meet the teachers?

You'll receive a letter from Terraset about a week before school starts containing you child's classroom teacher's name, the bus schedule and more. New families (either Kindergarten families and/or new to Terraset families) will be invited to an Open House. Terraset's principal, Ellen Cury, will give an overview of the typical kindergartner's day and answer any questions parents might have. Then you and your child can meet their teacher!

The teachers will still be setting up their classrooms, but will be available for a meet and greet time so your child will know where they are going to go on the first day of school, where the bathroom is, what the other kids look like, etc.

After meeting the teachers, families are usually invited to join the PTA for Popsicles on the Playground. Parents can chat, kids can play - and you can ask us any questions you have. [▲](#)

How will my child find their classroom?

Included in the letter that comes home before school starts is a nametag for your kindergartner to wear on the first day of school. The tag will contain your child's name and the name of his or her teacher. A teacher will meet each kindergartner as they arrive at school and escort them to their appropriate class. Parents are not permitted to walk to the classroom with their child. Hard

as that seems, it is the best way for them to get started and to minimize separation anxiety (for them!).

In addition to the hand-to-hand transfers provided to kindergarteners, many resource teachers are stationed at points in the entrance and the hallway to make sure our new students easily find where they are going. Often times, older students help out if someone looks a bit lost. They remember what it was like!

When you attend the Open House, it might help to talk to your child about the way to the classroom— "down the hallway, go towards the big ONE, past the library, way to the back of the building. And look! Ms. Hagen has a fish tank by her classroom - or Ms. Matthews's classroom looks out at the playground - or Ms. Miller is the first door at the end of the ramp with all those apples on the walls." [▲](#)

What about lunch?

The Kindergartners are the first group to have lunch, so the cafeteria is (relatively) quiet. Their classroom Instructional Assistant will help them through the lunch line and will seat them with their classmates. An adult is in the lunchroom at all times. Parents are ALWAYS welcome to join their child for lunch. It is a great way to share their day and get to know their friends.

It's a good idea to bring a check or cash to the Open House/Orientation to purchase a lunch card for your child. It is a lot safer and more convenient for the children than bringing in lunch money every day. You'll be notified (a big sticker on your child!) when their card is low on money.

Lunch menus are sent home each month and are also available at <http://www.fcps.edu/parents/schlunch.htm> (Terraset follows a Traditional calendar.)

For your own peace of mind, if your child forgets their lunch or doesn't have money, there is an emergency lunch available for them. They won't go hungry!

The kindergarten teachers will talk to parents about snacks in class as well. Usually they encourage parents to send in a healthy snack for the children to eat during the day. Granola bars, fruit, crackers are all great choices. [▲](#)

How do I know they'll get on the right bus, come to Kiss and Ride, etc.?

The kindergarten teachers keep careful track of where each child should go at the end of the school day and make sure that the kids are in the right place.

Bus Riders: If your kindergartener takes the bus (and we strongly encourage that, even on the first day of school, bus riders take the bus), they'll be given a sticker with their bus number on it and will be taken to their bus earlier than the older students so they get settled in. Kindergarten students always sit right behind the bus driver. It is very important that your child knows which stop to get off on the return trip home - mention a landmark to them (the mailbox, past the green house) or count the number of stops before their stop. An adult **MUST** meet the kindergarten student at the bus stop or the child will be taken back to Terraset.

Kiss and Ride/Car Riders: Kiss and Ride children will gather in the front of the school and will be escorted by a teacher to the Kiss and Ride area at the top parking lot. Please allow the safety patrols or teachers help your child into the car. Please use extreme caution in this area to keep everyone safe. Kindergarteners are released first, so parents should arrive early.

Walkers: Kindergarten children who live close enough to Terraset to walk home must be met at the Terraset front door by an adult. [▲](#)

What will their day be like?

Very Busy! Not only will they be learning their way around the school, their classmates' names and the best thing to order at lunch, they'll be going to gym, playing outside, enjoying art, exploring music and discovering books in the library. The kindergarten teachers will go over the curriculum and their goals for the year in more detail at Back to School night, but you will be amazed at what they will accomplish this year! [▲](#)

Will my child be tired— that's a long day?

Down time is built into the school day for the children, time to rest a little and recharge. Teachers realize that all-day kindergarten is a transition for many children. The kids will be tired when they get home, especially during the first weeks. But they will adjust to the routine and soon won't even need the rest period during the school day. If you can, try not to over-schedule their after school or weekend time for a few weeks. [▲](#)

Do I need to purchase school supplies? What about a backpack?

The kindergarten teachers have put together a list of school supplies to start off the year. It is a good idea to bring the supplies to school at Orientation on September, if possible, so your child doesn't have to bring *All* these things in the first day!

Kindergarten School Supplies

(if you purchase from Office Depot, Terraset earns 5% back. Terraset ID # is 7010458)

- 10 glue sticks
- 2 boxes of 24 count crayons
- 1 box of tissues
- 1 4-pack playdough
- 1 large container unscented baby wipes (to clean desks)
- 1 regular sized backpack, but not with wheels
- one sturdy folder with pockets (not slanted) for Spanish

Teachers may request additional supplies throughout the year.

Supplies in Kindergarten are shared, so there is no need to label the supplies. However, it is very important to label anything your child might lose! Jackets, sweaters, backpacks, and lunchboxes - anything they can take off or leave behind should be labeled with permanent marker so they can be returned to the student and not end up in the Lost and Found (located outside the cafeteria).

You'll also receive a regular TUESDAY Folder from school. This white envelope contains all the communication from school and the PTA. After removing the newsletters or flyers from the Tuesday Folder, sign the outside of the envelope and return it to school with your child on Wednesday. [▲](#)

How do I contact the teacher?

Your teacher knows you may have some concerns or questions as your child enters kindergarten. All the kindergarten teachers are experienced, loving professionals who welcome communication and feedback from their students' parents. They will give you their contact info at Open House or the first day of school. Every classroom has a phone, but the teachers cannot receive calls during the day because it would interrupt their instruction. If you need to speak to a teacher urgently, you should call the front office (703.390.5600). If you would like the teacher to contact you, leave a message on the classroom phone or use email. [▲](#)

I'd like to volunteer! How can I help in the classroom?

The classroom teacher will let you know when she needs volunteers and how you can help. The room parent for each class will also need your help with celebrations in the classroom, field trips and other areas. And the PTA is always looking for a few good volunteers! In-school volunteering opportunities include GRACE Art, Math Superstars, Field Day and much more. Check www.terraseta.org for more details. [▲](#)

I have more questions... or just need some reassurance?

Contact the school with any questions you might have (703.390.5600). In addition, some "Veteran" kindergarten parents/PTA officers are willing to answer questions or calm your nerves. Check the PTA website, www.terraseta.org, for contact information.

So, Welcome to Terraset! You and your child can look forward to a great year! [▲](#)

Can you point me to other resources?

These sites have been put together by FCPS for new families:

<http://www.fcps.edu/start/kindergarten.htm>

<http://www.fcps.edu/start/allgrades.htm>

These articles offer other suggestions on how to have a great start to the new school year!

[Teacher's Tips for a Great School Year](#)

[Children's Books about the First Day of School](#)

[NEA Parent Guides](#)

[Count Down to Kindergarten](#)

[Cures for First Day Jitters](#)

[Easing Back-To-School Anxiety](#) [▲](#)