Welcome to Imagine School at North Manatee (ISNM)!

Welcome to VPK!

We are looking forward to teaching your child and providing meaningful experiences to develop a lifelong love for learning! Please keep this letter handy throughout the year so you can refer back to it when necessary.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

The VPK program runs from 8:30-11:30 am. All students who are not approved bus riders MUST be signed in and out of the VPK attendance books daily, by an ADULT. VPK students cannot be picked up or dropped off in the car rider line. Please park in a guest parking space and escort your child to the sign in area via the sidewalks and crosswalks, and avoid walking between parked buses. Please include all permitted dismissal adults on your pick-up/emergency list, as we cannot release your child to anyone not listed.

Approved Bus Riders: Your child’s safety is our top priority. VPK students are therefore only permitted to ride the bus if they have been approved to ride with an older sibling. If the older sibling is not riding the bus, your VPK child will not be permitted to ride the bus. Please make alternative drop off and pick up arrangements on days the approved older sibling is absent.

Arrival is between 8:00 to 8:15 at the playground gate. Dismissal takes place at the playground gate from 11:30-11:45am or 3:30-3:45 pm for Extended Care. If you do not sign your VPKer in during the 8:00 to 8:15 time frame at the gate, you must bring your child into the front office and wait for VPK staff person to sign in. Approved dismissal adults MUST sign in and out of the VPK attendance books. Bus riders dismiss at 3:30 pm.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Below is a sample of our daily activities. Please note that schedules may vary from classroom to classroom:

8:00: Arrival
8:30: Welcome and Table Toys
8:45: Morning Circle
9:10: Centers and Small Group Learning
10:30: Snack and Read Aloud
10:40: Outside Gross Motor Activities & Free Play
11:20: Circle Time
11:30: Dismissal/Extended Care Begins
12:00: Extended Care-Lunch, Nap, Outdoor Free Play, Centers
3:45: Extended Care Dismissal

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

Extended care runs from 11:30 am – 3:30 pm, with a monthly charge of $250. A VPK Extended Care Application must be completed and $50 paid before school begins to be enrolled in the CARE program during the first week. If your account remains in good standing and you have not made any late payments, you will receive a discounted rate of $200 for the months of December and May. Applications are available upon request at the front office.

UNIFORM

Approved VPK uniforms include the yellow Spirit Shirt with khaki, black, or blue shorts, slacks, or skort. Spirit Shirts can be purchased from the Front Office. On the last day of the week, children who participate in the weekly Dress Down fundraiser (by paying $1.00 to dress down) may wear jeans and/or a casual, but school-appropriate outfit. Participation is optional. Students not participating in Friday Dress Down must adhere to the regular uniform dress code, or they can wear the pirate-themed spirit shirt with jeans.

ATTENDANCE and TIMELINES

Attendance and timeliness are very important to your child’s success in preparing for kindergarten. Please ensure your child does not lose valuable learning time due to excessive absence or tardiness.

In the event your child is tardy and participates in Extended Care, please be sure to bring a packed lunch for your child, as you may have already missed the morning lunch order.
If your child is absent, you MUST call the classroom by 8:30 am to verify the absence. If you do not, we will have to contact everyone on your emergency contact list until we hear from you, the legal guardian/parent. Please note that excessive absences may result in your child losing his/her spot in our VPK program.

**DISCIPLINE/EXPULSION**

General discipline issues are dealt with as follows:
- Provide positive feedback
- Discuss better choices
- Thinking time in a designated area for one minute per year of age of child
- Communicate with parents when needed

VPK also follows ISNM’s and the school district’s discipline/expulsion policies. Please refer to those handbooks for more details. ISNM’s reserves the right to release your child from the VPK program in instances where the safety and/or learning experience of other students is jeopardized by your child’s enrollment, and/or due to non-compliance with ISNM VPK Attendance Policy.

**SNACK/LUNCH**

Please send in one HEALTHY snack item with your child every day, along with a water bottle. Children are rewarded for eating fresh fruit or vegetables for snack. Candy and soda are not permitted. If your child is staying after 11:30 am, you should also pack a lunch or purchase a lunch for $2.25. Packed lunches must meet the county’s guidelines for a nutritious meal. If a packed lunch does not meet the county’s guidelines, a school lunch will be purchased at your expense. Make checks out to Buffalo Creek Middle School. You may also go to www.mypaymentsplus.com to make online payments or go to www.manateeschools.net to apply for free/reduced lunch.

**WHAT TO PROVIDE FROM HOME**

Please bring in an extra set of clothing in a Ziploc bag in case of an accident. If your child will be staying past 11:30, he/she will also need a small blanket and nap mat. All blankets go home on Fridays to be washed. Children are NOT permitted to bring toys or candy to school, unless the toy is for show-n-share.

**SHOW-N-SHARE**

We will have Show-n-Share for the letter of the week. The specific day will be chosen at the beginning of the school year. Please have your child bring in something that starts with the letter of the week.

**HOMEWORK**

Environmental print books will go home with your child to work on throughout the year. Your child will also write his/her name every night. Please read at least 15 minutes each night with your child. Other homework may be assigned throughout the year. Homework is due on the last day of the week.

**VOLUNTEERS**

The first couple of weeks of school are a period of adjustment for pre-kindergarten children. Leaving home, getting to know new friends, and learning about the classroom and school are very big steps. This adjustment can be made easier if parents postpone visiting the classroom until after the first few weeks of school. Once the adjustment period is complete, parents are welcome to volunteer in the classroom. Most of the time, we need assistance with assembling papers/homework packets, which may be done at home as well. Donations can also be made. Each $10 worth of donations equals one volunteer raffle ticket. We will also need volunteers on special events or parties in the classroom as well as school wide.

**BIRTHDAYS**

Birthday party invitations may be sent to school if there is an invitation for every student or every student of the same gender (i.e. “girls only” or “boys only”). Due to Manatee County Schools’ Nutrition and Wellness Policy restrictions, which are in place to protect students with allergies, we are unable to serve birthday snacks or treats sent in by families, even if store-purchased. Therefore, non-food gifts or celebratory treats are allowed. Per
policy, birthday celebrations will be limited to the last hour of the school day and will take place during the designated snack.