

Niles Adventist School

KINDERGARTEN



Welcome Packet

-A Guide for Prospective Families-

110 N. Fairview, Niles, MI 49120

269-683-5444

www.nilesadventistschool.org

About Us

Meet the Teacher—Mrs. Jenni Coffen



- Graduated from Andrews University with Elementary Education degree and an emphasis in Language Arts
- Trained in Orton-Gillingham methodology
- Entering my 18th year teaching
- Happily married to Ron for 28 years
- Mother to 24-year-old Kelli and 18-year-old Chris
- Enjoys reading, walking, vacationing in nature, hot tubbing, and spending time with friends
- Loves Kindergarten kids and is already making plans for the new year
- Phone/Text: 269-683-5444
- E-mail: jcoffen@misda.org

Kindergarten Program Benefits

- Christian thematic-based curriculum
- Developmental, hands-on learning
- Science-of-reading approach to teaching reading
- Low teacher/student ratio
- Weekly instruction in Art and Music
- Regular interaction with pastor
- Weekly classroom letter from teacher
- Weekly folder with completed work and digital portfolios
- Field trips that enrich in-class learning
- Kindergarten graduation ceremony



Niles Adventist School Benefits

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- Family feeling
- Dedicated teachers and staff who pray for your children daily
- Strong academic program
- Nature-enhanced education

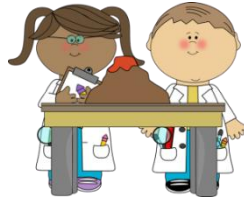
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- Large playground in country setting and forest with trails
- Connection with the Niles Westside Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Weekly school-wide chapels

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- Extend-ed program
- Hot lunch program
- Active Home and School
- Bible labs/outreach opportunities
- Many ways to volunteer and get involved
- Computers and/or iPads in all classrooms

Curriculum Highlights



The Kindergarten curriculum is called Stepping Stones. This curriculum was developed by Adventist early education teachers and is unique to our beliefs and philosophy for the young learner. It covers all the subject areas in thematic units which include: Off We Go!, Let's Be Friends, Who's My Neighbor?, Deep in the Forest, Giving Gifts, We Are Family, Brrr! It's Cold, Wonderfully Made, Moving On, and I'm on a Mission.

KEY AREAS OF ACADEMIC FOCUS

BIBLE: Monthly themes, Bible stories, weekly memory verses, crafts, lots of songs including classic hymns and praise songs

LANGUAGE ARTS: Read-alouds, phonological awareness, rhyming words, color words, opposites, letter names, letter sounds, blending, segmenting, letter formation, word decoding, writing, speaking, listening, comprehension, vocabulary, high-frequency words, independent reading

MATH: Number sense, sorting, classifying, patterning, sequencing, subitizing, shapes, measurement, writing numbers 1-20, understanding and reading numbers to 100, ten frames, place value, addition, subtraction, story problems, months of year, days of week, counting by 2's and 10's, graphing, estimating

CENTERS: There are six main center areas where students may choose to play. Within each center, students will find numerous options, with new materials added throughout the year. Our six center areas are:

Building Center	Construction blocks, Duplos, waffle blocks
Art Table	Art materials, coloring pages, stickers
Library	Books, literacy games, listening station
Dramatic Play	Loft, dollhouse, kitchen
Theme Area	Games, puzzles, and activities related to our monthly theme
Math & Technology	Math manipulatives, iPads

BASIC SKILLS: Fostering respect and care for others, becoming aware of one's own emotions, making responsible choices, being part of a group, developing practical skills including following directions, sharing, listening, cutting, pasting, coloring, tidiness, and cleaning up

Our Kindergarten Day



Time	Activity	We Are Learning
8:00-8:20	Morning Bins	Students greet each other and practice fine motor, language arts, and math skills through hands-on STEAM activities with classmates.
8:20-8:45	Worship/Bible	We sing songs, listen to Bible stories, engage in interactive activities to reinforce the Bible story, memorize Bible verses, and pray.
8:45-9:35	Language Arts	Students learn pre-reading and reading skills through explicit, systematic, multi-sensory instruction. Correct letter formation and beginning writing skills are also learned. We use a variety of learning materials, songs, and games to make learning fun and hands-on.
9:35-9:55	Recess	Students engage in outdoor or indoor interactive, unstructured free-choice supervised play and build gross motor skills.
9:55-10:15	Story Time	Students enjoy stories and activities related to our theme. Science, social studies, comprehension, and vocabulary concepts are taught in the context of our theme.
10:15-10:50	Math	Students use math manipulatives, games, and paper/pencil activities to gain number sense and learn math concepts.
10:50-11:15	Choice Time	Students practice social skills as they interact with classmates in free-choice play in a variety of classroom centers.
11:15-11:30	Clean-up/ Closing Circle	Students learn to work cooperatively to clean up and take responsibility for their classroom. We end the day with a focus on social/emotional learning and with prayer.

Preparing for Kindergarten



Children entering Kindergarten demonstrate a variety of learning behaviors. Encouraging the following behaviors and skills will help your child prepare for Kindergarten.

Social/Emotional Development

- 👏 Encourage your child to persist in tasks when encountering a problem by giving him tasks slightly above his current ability level. When your child cannot find a solution on his own, encourage him to calmly ask for help.
- 👏 Allow your child to stay with other trusted adults for a few hours at a time prior to kindergarten (especially if she has rarely been in the care of someone other than mom and dad).
- 👏 Tell your child you expect him to clean up promptly after play.
- 👏 Help your child understand how to appropriately express her feelings or needs.

Language Development

- 👏 Verbally give your child specific one-step and two-step directions and encourage him to listen and follow through.
- 👏 Encourage your child to share and tell about things you see and do.
- 👏 Set aside time each day to read to your child.
- 👏 Read signs, letters, labels or other common items.
- 👏 Expose your child to the uppercase and lowercase letters and, most importantly, the sounds each letter makes through play and games.

Number Skills Development

- 👏 Practice counting aloud to 20.
- 👏 Teach your child to write and recognize numerals 1-10.
- 👏 Count objects in your home. Have your child point to each object as she counts.
- 👏 Go on a shape hunt. Point out circles, triangles, squares, and rectangles to your child while you are taking a walk or grocery shopping.

Physical Development (Gross & Fine Motor)

- 👏 Give your child plenty of opportunities for outdoor play: running, jumping, and climbing.
- 👏 Let your child use child-safe scissors to cut out a variety of shapes.
- 👏 Teach your child to write his name (with only the first letter capitalized). To start, write his name using a highlighter and encourage him to trace over it. Be sure that he forms the letters from the top to the bottom.
- 👏 Use a variety of materials to let your child paint, draw and explore!

Practical Skills

- 👉 Teach your child to take care of her own bathroom needs. *(This is a requirement.)*
- 👉 Teach your child to zip, snap, or button jacket.
- 👉 If your child wears shoes with laces, make sure he can tie them.
- 👉 If your child will be staying for extended education/after school care, give your child experience eating out of a lunchbox. It's helpful to have her practice opening and closing containers and putting things back into the lunchbox after lunch.
- 👉 Help your child learn his full name, home address, phone number and birthdate.
- 👉 Teach your child to recognize the following colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, white, brown, gray, and pink.

We do not expect mastery of all the above skills! This is simply a list that can help you as you prepare your child to enter the exciting world of school! Remember,

Childhood is a journey, not a race!

The following resource was utilized in creating this list:

<http://www.icanteachmychild.com/2012/03/71-things-your-child-needs-to-knowbefore-kindergarten/>©



As the school year approaches Kindergarten kids need to:

- 👉 Begin going to bed by eight o'clock each night.
- 👉 Practice getting up each morning at the same time they will need to when school starts.
- 👉 Eat a good breakfast.

Handwriting Guide



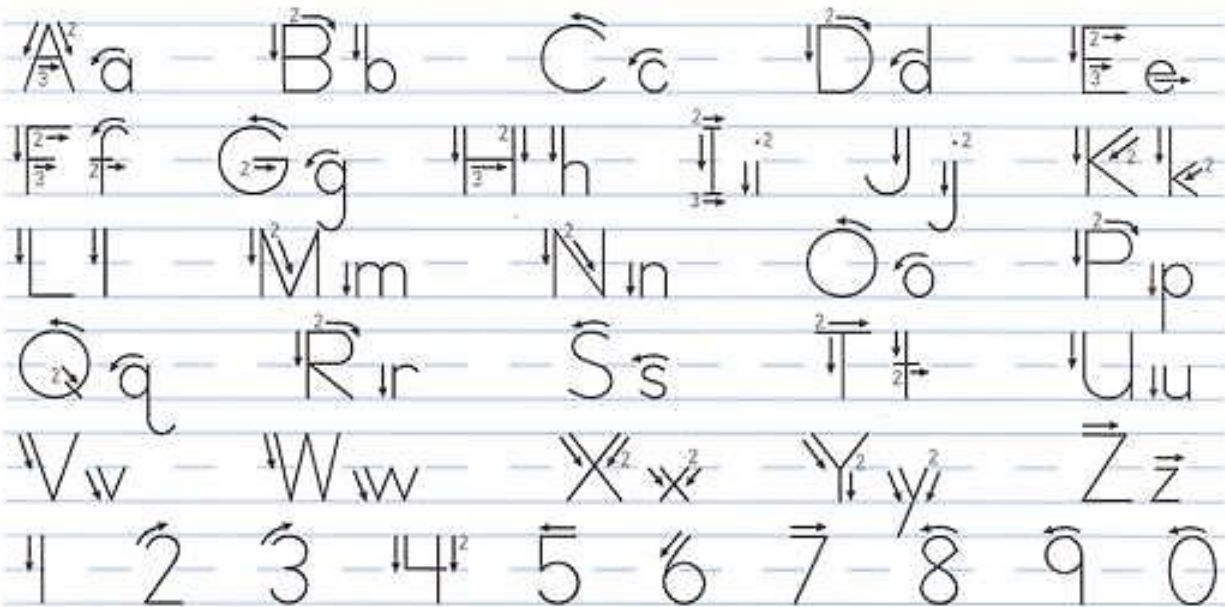
If your child is expressing an interest in writing their name, please help them learn to write it with only the first letter capitalized as that is how we will write it at school. It is also very helpful to teach your child to form the letters correctly as it is very difficult to “unlearn” incorrect formation. I am including a guide to the way your child will be instructed to form letters in school.

Note that strokes should always be made from top to bottom, not bottom to top. In school we sing (to the tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It”), “I always start my letters at the top. I always start my letters at the top. When I write another letter, I get better, better, better when I always start my letters at the top!”

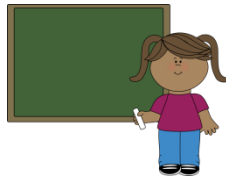
Also note that most lowercase letters are formed in one stroke without lifting the pencil.



Manuscript Letter Formation



Hearing/Vision Screening



No matter where you send your child to school, Michigan state law requires that your child receives a hearing/vision screening before the start of the school year. Please plan to do this early. You may have your health care provider do this as part of your child’s annual well-child visit or the Berrien County Health Department offers this service for free. The Berrien County Health Department provides several options for free public pre-school/Kindergarten screening clinics throughout the summer months. For your convenience, we are including the required form in your registration packet.

2024 PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN FREE HEARING, VISION AND DENTAL PUBLIC CLINIC SCHEDULE

Hearing, vision and dental screenings are **required by state law** for all children entering kindergarten at public and private schools. Our team provides these **free screenings** for all Berrien County residents **by appointment only**. We cannot accept appointments after Aug. 28. If you do not complete your child’s screening by Aug. 28, you will need to arrange and pay for a private appointment with hearing, vision and dental professionals.

Location	Date(s)	Time(s)
Berrien County Health Department 2149 E. Napier Ave., Benton Harbor	Thursday, June 6	2-6 p.m.
	Thursday, July 11	8:30-Noon, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
	Wednesday, Aug. 14	8:30-Noon, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
	Wednesday, Aug. 28	8:30-Noon, 1:30-6 p.m.
Berrien County Health Department 1205 N. Front St., Niles	Thursday, July 25	1-5 p.m.
	Thursday, Aug. 8	8:30-Noon, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
	Thursday, Aug. 22	8:30-Noon, 1:30-6 p.m.
Merritt Elementary 1620 LaSalle Ave., Niles	Monday, June 10	8:30-Noon, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Hollywood Elementary 143 E. John Beers Road, Stevensville	Monday, June 17	8:30-Noon, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
BCHD WIC Office 704 West Merchant St., New Buffalo	Wednesday, June 19	8:30-Noon, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Roosevelt Elementary 2000 El Dorado Drive, Stevensville	Tuesday, June 25	8:30-Noon, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Coloma Administration Building 302 W. St. Joseph St., Coloma	Tuesday, July 30	8:30-Noon, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Scan the QR code to schedule your appointment.

Questions? Call Melisa Jordan at 269.926.7121 ext. 5293



Clothing Considerations



As you begin to shop for school clothes, please make sure that the clothing you choose for your child is child-friendly. Your child will need to be able to manage their own clothing when using the restroom and going outside for recess.

We kindly ask that your child wear Velcro-style shoes until they are able to tie shoes independently.

Please ask your child to practice using those new pant snaps, belts, tights, zippers, and buttons--especially those that need to be used when visiting the restroom. If your child cannot operate their clothing independently while using the restroom, please consider selecting something else for them to wear.

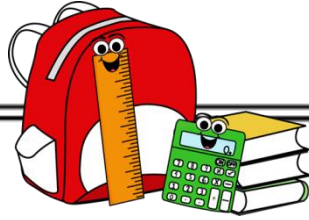
NAS Dress Code







Our dress code is designed to promote Christian values and set an academic atmosphere.

- Clothes will be neat, clean, and presentable without tears.
- Athletic clothes including jerseys, jogging shorts, tights, and workout sweats are not to be worn.
- Screen-printed graphics must be limited and appropriately placed. Graphics can be no more than 4 x 4 inches. The only exceptions are Adventist church/school sponsored shirts.
- All clothing must fit properly. Excessively baggy, tight, and/or revealing clothing may not be worn.
- Skirts and shorts must be modest and come closer to the knee than mid-thigh.
- All shirts and blouses must have sleeves.
- Jewelry and makeup should not be worn.
- Hats are not to be worn in the building.
- Flip-flops are not to be worn.
- Proper athletic footwear is to be worn during recreational activities.
- Undergarments must not be visible.
- Hair coloring can only be natural.
- Finger nail polish must be clear or a natural color.

School Supply List



	Water bottle
	Velcro tennis shoes (Until your child is proficient at tying shoes.)
	\$20 for student supplies
	Optional: Rubber boots

Thank you for keeping toys and personal items at home!

I recommend that you send an extra set of clothes to keep in your child's locker in case of an accident.