



CONSIDERING KINDERGARTEN?

10 QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN RESEARCHING KINDERGARTEN



10 Questions to Consider When Researching Kindergarten

1. Will the school environment solidify their faith or work against it?
2. What worldview or religious instruction is offered?
3. What does discipline look like?
4. How does the school assess readiness for kindergarten?
5. What is the typical schedule for a kindergarten class?
6. Are the teachers trained in child development?
7. Am I encouraged to participate in my child's classroom?
8. What kind of emphasis is there on technology vs. hands-on learning?
9. How is mastery of a skill assessed? What do tests look like?
10. Who do you want your child to be when they graduate from high school?

10 QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN RESEARCHING KINDERGARTEN

Westminster Academy Answers

1. WILL THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT SOLIDIFY THEIR FAITH OR WORK AGAINST IT?

While this seems like a big question when holding your preschooler, the time to consider this question is now. The world is actively working against your faith. Westminster strives to provide an environment in which all aspects of school life demonstrate biblical principles, and where every student is encouraged to cultivate a personal relationship with the Lord.

Classical Christian education is the cultivation of virtue and wisdom by nourishing the soul on truth, goodness, and beauty according to God's Revelation using the classical liberal arts. Its purpose is to train the soul to love that which is worth loving.

2. WHAT WORLDVIEW OR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IS OFFERED?

There is no neutrality in education. Every education has a bias; the question is "what is my child being taught to believe?" For this reason, Westminster's curriculum is founded on biblical truth to provide an education that is intentionally Christian. Every class and every activity has one purpose: to see God's world rightly and to glorify Him.

Additionally, all Westminster Academy teachers are Bible-believing Christians who pour God's Word into their students through hymns, prayer, and scripture memorization.

3. WHAT DOES DISCIPLINE LOOK LIKE?

Westminster Academy approaches discipline by speaking to the heart of the child, and not just correcting behaviors. Westminster's discipline policy, God's Standards for Our Lives, aims to cultivate virtue and character in students by pointing the child back to Jesus and the scriptures.

God's Standards for Our Lives

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30)

Honor others above yourself (Romans 12:10)

Do your work as unto the Lord (Col. 3:23-24)

Do everything without grumbling or complaint (Phil. 2:14-15)

Take every thought captive to obey Christ (2 Cor. 10:5)



4. HOW DOES WESTMINSTER ACADEMY ASSESS READINESS FOR KINDERGARTEN?

We do not believe that preschool is required to prepare a child for kindergarten, however, it is essential that each student has reached a point in their development to give the greatest opportunity for success in kindergarten.

Our admission process looks at the whole child by using the Gesell Developmental Observation. Westminster understands that children develop at different rates and is not looking for the “perfect” child who is “completely ready” for kindergarten.

5. WHAT IS THE TYPICAL SCHEDULE FOR A KINDERGARTEN CLASS? IS A HALF-DAY PROGRAM AVAILABLE?

Westminster offers half-day kindergarten from 8am-Noon five days a week. There is the option to add afternoon enrichment from Noon-3pm on two, three, or five days of the week.

Your little ones will be taught reading readiness skills and many will move right into reading. They will refine their fine motor skills as they practice coloring, drawing, cutting, and writing. Gross motor skills will develop through guided and free play, PE, and classroom activities. They will have opportunities throughout the week to engage in art, music, science, and sensory exploration.

*“Non scholae sed vitae discimus.”
Not for school, but for life we learn.*

6. ARE THE TEACHERS TRAINED IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT?

Westminster partners with the Gesell Child Development Center at Yale to train teachers in assessing child development and recognizing milestones. All of our faculty participates in yearly professional development programs in accordance with their disciplines and grade levels. Additionally, we have two certified reading specialists who support our Grammar School students in developing foundational language skills.

7. AM I ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN MY CHILD’S CLASSROOM?

YES! Westminster Academy functions under the principle of *in loco parentis*, under the delegated authority of the parents. We believe that the parents are the primary educator and as a school, we partner with them in training up a child in the way he should go. Therefore, we desire our parents to be involved in and excited about the educational journey of their children.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer, participate in classroom activities, serve the school community, and they are always welcome to enter a classroom to observe lessons at any day, any time!

8. WHAT KIND OF EMPHASIS IS THERE ON TECHNOLOGY VS. HANDS-ON LEARNING?

Our Grammar School classrooms are intentionally technology-free to support hands-on learning, creative play, peer interaction, and problem solving skills. Through motor lab, physical education, recess, and free-play, our students have plenty of opportunities for movement and physical excursion throughout their day at school.

According to Dr. Michael Mintz, associate director of the Child Development Program of Children's National Hospital, “attention/self-regulation is often referred to as ‘the foundation of learning,’ as all other academic skills rely on the ability to pay attention. We can help our children develop these skills by relying less on screens and giving them the chance to regulate in more independent or social ways.”



9. HOW IS MASTERY OF A SKILL ASSESSED? WHAT DO TESTS LOOK LIKE?

Because our aim is higher than higher education, we do not teach to a test. Instead, we aim to instill a love of learning through hands-on experience, classroom discussions, social interactions, and presence in the classroom. While teachers use assessments to measure understanding, there is a de-emphasis on test scores and we never want our students to feel defined by the grades they make. Because Westminster students are taught to reason well and to seek truth, they perform exceptionally well on standardized tests. For the past five years, Westminster Academy seniors have had the highest average ACT score among all co-ed schools in the city of Memphis. Additionally, our graduates have 100% college placement, and all seniors who have applied for scholarships in the past three years have attended college with notable scholarships.

10. WHO DO YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO BE WHEN THEY GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL?

Westminster Academy desires to prepare students for their future, and not just to pass a test. As a result, Westminster faculty and parents create a unique community with one goal: to graduate well-prepared students who have a love for learning and for the Lord.

Westminster's curriculum is intentionally designed from 12th grade down to kindergarten. We believe that our youngest children thrive when they have the opportunity to interact with older students and peers. At Westminster, this includes interaction between our Upper and Grammar School students. Through various events like the Olympics, Secret Santa, and Reading Buddies, our older students have the chance to be mentors for your child. This mutually beneficial relationship results in our Upper School students learning the qualities of loving leadership while your child will develop the social skills necessary to grow into an independent and thoughtful adult.



*Play is the key that unlocks
a child's imagination.*



STARTING KINDERGARTEN IS AN EXCITING TIME.

Starting kindergarten is a significant milestone in a child's life, and it's natural for parents to have mixed feelings about this exciting new chapter. On one hand, you may feel proud and eager for your child to embark on their educational journey. On the other hand, you may feel nervous about letting go and entrusting their care to someone else.

At Westminster Academy, we understand the importance of this transition and take great care to make it a smooth and enjoyable one for our students and their families. Our teachers are highly qualified and experienced, and they are passionate about helping children learn to love learning and the Lord. They create a warm and nurturing environment where students feel comfortable and confident, and they provide individualized attention to help each student develop Godly character and grow in their gifts.

**SCHEDULE A TOUR TO EXPERIENCE THE UNIQUE ASPECTS OF A CLASSICAL
CHRISTIAN KINDERGARTEN, AND COME FIND YOUR PEOPLE!**

