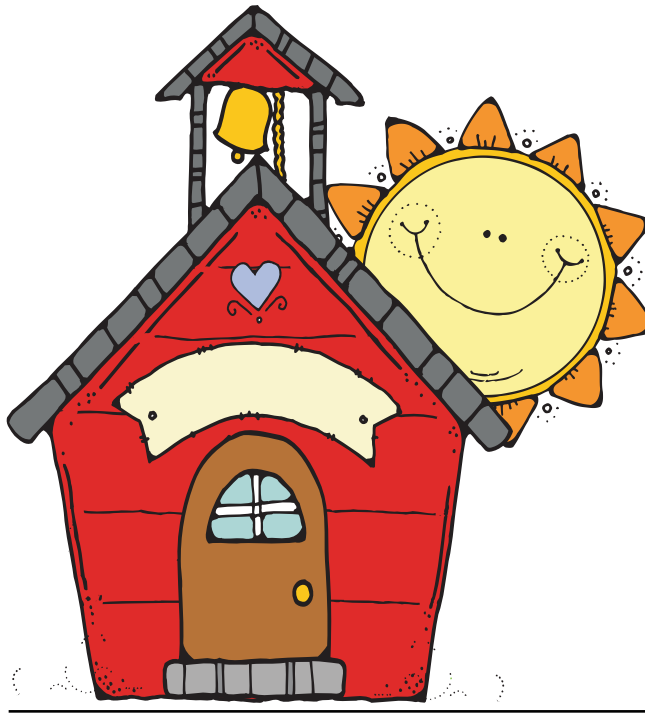


# Third Grade Handbook 2014-2015



Ms Van Arkel

# All About Miss Van Arkel

Dear Families,

This will be my seventh year teaching third grade at Georgetown. I am a graduate of Hope College and I love teaching third grade! I can't wait to get to know each student and I enjoy spending each day working together and learning together. I look forward to a wonderful school year!

In my free time, I enjoy reading, riding my bike, running, shopping, baking, being outdoors, and being with friends and family.

Your third grader is very important to me and to our classroom. I am thankful for each new day to be with a wonderful group of students!

## School Policies

### **Attendance**

Please inform the school office when your child is going to be absent. You can call the school any time before 9:15 to report the absence. Our answering machine will record your message if you call before the office opens.

More and more of our learning is being accomplished through in-class reading, writing, and discussion. This makes it more difficult to send home the work your child misses.

If your child arrives late, please stop in at the office to sign him/her in. If you are picking your child up early, please stop in the office to sign them out. At that time Mrs. Ripley or Mrs. Hoekstra will call your child down to the office to meet you.

### **Prearranged Absences**

Please send a note in advance indicating when your child will be gone from school. Families planning vacations must fill out a vacation request form at least five days in advance of the scheduled vacation.

### **Bus Policy and Dismissal**

**We have a new bus policy this year. Please check our classroom blog and be aware of this. You will not be able to send a note into school letting me know your child will ride a different bus home. All arrangements are made through the Transportation Office. Check the class blog or school blog for this process. If your child will be getting picked up, or will be walking, or riding a bike home instead of the bus please send me a note so I'm aware of this.**

**It leaves me less worries when I know all my third graders are getting home safely. :)**

### **Personal Items**

Please label your child's hat, coat, mittens, boots, gym shoes, lunch box, backpacks, etc. so that they are easy to identify when they are lost. Toys of any kind, including electronic games, are not allowed at Georgetown Elementary.

## **Recess**

Students are expected to go outside for recess when it is not raining and the wind chill factor is appropriate as determined by the office. Students will go out before their lunch and at afternoon recess. **Please make sure your child is dressed for the weather.**

## **Lunch Money**

You will need to send separate slips for each of your children with their first and last name, indicating how much money you would like to put into that child's account. Please send all slips in one **envelope with the children's names, grades and teachers** on the outside. It is recommended that money be sent in early in the week, but it will be accepted on any day. It is suggested that you deposit enough money in your child's account to cover at least one week's worth of lunches or milk.

## **Snack**

We have a snack break in the afternoon. Please send a small, healthy snack that will allow your child to do his or her best learning. Please avoid candy. Please avoid nuts as we are a nut-free classroom.

## **Messages**

Georgetown Elementary has a voice mail system, if you need to contact me, call the school at 797-9797. My extension is 22203. You can also email me at [avanarke@hpseagles.net](mailto:avanarke@hpseagles.net) I will try to check my messages when I can, but if you have an urgent message, please leave it with the secretary. I will return your call as soon as possible.

## **Special Circumstances**

We would appreciate knowing about any special circumstances (sickness or death of a family member, death of a pet, etc.) that you feel may affect your child at school. Sometimes things that happen outside of school cause them to need extra patience and TLC, and we want to take care of your child the best we can.

## **Classroom Procedures**

### **Mission and Rules**

The mission statement at Georgetown Elementary is made up of three simple quotes. Be Nice, Work Hard, Learn Well. Our basic rule is that we are respectful of ourselves, each other, other teachers, the school building/grounds, and the materials we use.

### **School and Classroom Behavior**

As a class, we create a classroom promise. This is a list of rules that we think are important for our classroom. We will be doing our best to follow this promise. It is important that students are held accountable if our promise is not followed. **Our third grade classroom promise usually includes:** Be respectful and polite to others, Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself, Raise your hand and wait to

be called on, Follow directions the first time they are given, Encourage each other! (fill a bucket), and Always try your best!

We will be using a behavior clip chart in our classroom and throughout the school. The chart encourages positive behaviors. We have a chart in our classroom that looks like the one below. Each student will have a small chart at their seat with a clip attached. Each day, every student begins on green-Ready to Learn. As a student makes positive choices for learning they will be asked to clip up. If a student needs some reminders to follow our class promise they may be asked to clip down. It's important to remember that remaining on green-Ready to Learn is a great place to be! Throughout the year we will be focusing on making positive choices and building character traits. Please talk about responsible behavior with your child at home as well.

I will be using the ticket system in our classroom as well. Students will have many opportunities to earn tickets. Tickets may be earned by appropriate hallway behavior, quiet working, being ready for learning, turning in homework on time, having the agenda signed, helping a classmate, clipping up, etc. Students may owe tickets when they show disrespect, are not following our class promise, show inappropriate hallway behavior, clip down, etc. There will be opportunities throughout the year to spend tickets on special prizes!

Outstanding
Great Job
Good Choices
Ready to Learn
Warning
Think About It
Problem Time

## **Homework**

Homework helps to develop responsibility and it reinforces skills learned in class. It also increases parent awareness of what is happening in the classroom. The majority of homework will consist of math. This will usually be sent home on Tuesdays and Thursdays unless it is needed on other days. Other homework such as spelling, science, social studies, etc. will be sent home as needed. It's your child's responsibility to bring their homework folder each day and return the work, but gentle reminders from you are always helpful. I encourage you and your third grader to designate a special spot at home to complete homework. Also, feel free to help your child with homework, but please have them do the work with you as a guide.

## **Agenda and Homework Folder**

This year the students will have an agenda sheet in the homework folder that will come home with them each evening. They will write a few words each day to inform you of what we did in class and any homework assignments they might have. Please check the folder with your child daily and initial in the space provided. I will check the agendas each morning, so questions or notes you need to write can be written in the agenda and I will get back to you. Students with parents signatures will receive a ticket. Any papers or homework for your child will travel to and from school in their nightly folder. **Please check it each evening and make sure it is returned each day to school.**

## **Notes from the Office**

This year, notes from the office will travel with the youngest or only child in your family and will be sent home on the day they are issued. Please check your child's mail each evening.

## **Blog**

Our class blog is <http://vanarkel.edublogs.org> . We are working on becoming a 'green' school so I encourage you to check the blog often for news, upcoming events, homework and test information, and things we are studying. There is also some education links on the blog for your third grader to practice at home.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards will be issued three times a year. Parent/Teacher conferences will be held in November and February.

## **Math**

We will be using Math Expressions as our math curriculum. Your child will learn many new and helpful ways to think about math by using drawings and writing. I encourage you to support your son or daughter as they learn some wonderful math strategies. Your third grader would probably love the opportunity to teach you some great, new strategies as well! :) Look for some more information regarding math on our blog.

## **Reading**

I encourage you to read daily with your children at home. Ask them about what books they are reading at school and talk about what strategies they are learning. Reading every day will build confidence and improvement.

## **Reading Workshop**

Our reading workshop will begin with a mini lesson or shared reading. Then students will move into independent reading time. They will be learning to choose good-fit books to read. Students will work at their level, and take responsibility for their literacy learning and behavior. This will help students develop the daily habits of reading and literacy. During this time I will be working with readers in small groups.

## **Reading Counts**

In grade three we have a program (Reading Counts) that allows children to read at their own level and take comprehension quizzes to see how well they read the text. In the next few weeks each student will be given a quiz on the computer to determine his/her reading range (level) and a point goal. Each book is worth a certain amount of points. Depending on how well your child has read, they will receive points after passing the quiz. It is a great motivational tool for the children. They can read at their own pace and at their own level. In third grade, It is important that students take responsibility for reading the reading counts books and taking quizzes. Please encourage your third grader to get reading counts books at the library and sign up to take a quiz when they are ready.

## **Science**

In third grade we will study; life cycles, adaptations, and the parts of a plant and each parts job, properties of matter; pollution and conservation; rocks and earth changes; forces of motion; sound and light; the scientific method. We will do many activities with each unit and end each unit with a final assessment. We will be

switching for science and social studies this year. Ms. VanderStel will teach science and I will teach social studies.

## **Social Studies**

This year we will be studying Michigan throughout the year. This includes Michigan geography, economics, history, growth of Michigan, the government of Michigan, and public issues facing Michigan. We will be switching for social studies and science this year. I will teach social studies while Ms. VanderStel will teach science.

## **Handwriting/Keyboarding**

In third grade your child will be introduced to cursive writing and key boarding when we have computers. Please check our blog links for some fun keyboarding games.

## **Specials Schedule**

Our special schedule will be each day from 10:35-11:25. Day 1 is Art, Day 2 is Music, Day 3 is P.E.

**It is very helpful for your child to have gym shoes to keep in their locker.**

We will have computers on Mondays and Library on Fridays. Please help your child to remember to return library books when completed.