

First Grade

Hello,

My name is ***** and my daughter, *****, will be in your first grade class. ***** had a stroke before she was born and has weakness in her right arm, hand and leg. Therefore, she is left handed. Her hand is most affected and she has limited use of it. She can do many gross motor things with it, such as grasp and hold onto things, but has difficulty with fine motor skills. ***** is a very independent girl and is very willing to try anything. She asks for help when she needs it and definitely lets you know when she doesn't! She doesn't consider herself to be a "special needs child" and she has never been treated as such. She sees herself as just a kid with a hand and arm that doesn't work as well as other kids' do.

***** wears a brace on her right foot. She is not able to put her brace or her shoes on, nor tie her shoes yet, so she needs help doing this. She is working on these things and I am sure she will let you know when she is able to do it herself. It is fine that she go without her shoes and brace if there are activities they do without their shoes.

As far as dressing goes, she will need help with zipping her coat, tying her hood, and putting her left mitten on. She was unable to do these things last winter, but we will continue to be working on these things too, so who knows this winter. I don't know how the bathroom privileges work, but hopefully when ***** asks to go, she will be allowed to go immediately. Since she has to take her pants down one-handed, it takes a little longer than other kids. She will be always wearing elastic waist pants to school to facilitate this.

Cutting and printing are a couple of difficult areas for her. She has her own way of holding the paper when she cuts, and her cutting is not always accurate. With increased practice, this will improve. Printing is difficult for her, as she seems to have some weakness in the small muscles of her left hand. Our OT believes this is due to her not being able to do the two handed activities that naturally strengthen the hands, such as climbing monkey bars, hanging from things, etc. She has pencil grips that help her hold the pencil correctly. The school OT, *****, was involved with ***** last year and is aware of these difficulties. ***** will be looking in on ***** in the classroom this year. ***** was evaluated by the assistive technology department last year because of her difficulty with printing. ***** is also aware of these difficulties as we were considering staffing her last year. We decided to wait to see how things went this year, when her printing would become more important. I would appreciate any feedback you have throughout the year on her printing abilities.

My main concern this year is the lunchroom. ***** may not be able to hold the lunch tray steadily enough and walk with it. She would be absolutely mortified if she dropped one. I am going to borrow one from the cafeteria so that we can practice at home. I have talked to ***** already about this and will be getting letters to the main people in the lunch room. She will ask for help, but it would be nice if she didn't have to when it came to carrying her tray. I plan to be at lunch at least the first three days to facilitate this process. She may need help opening her milk carton and definitely with opening those little condiment packages. (I have a hard time getting those open half the time myself!)

I believe that is it for the physical stuff. Please call me if you have any questions about anything. I would be more than happy to come in and talk with you. Mrs. *****, Mrs. ***** and Mrs. ***** are all very familiar with ***** abilities in the classroom and PE.

As Mrs. ***** and Mrs. ***** can tell you, I am quite involved in ***** life. I am more than happy to volunteer every other week in the classroom. Last year, ***** Grandpa picked up the other weeks, as my schedule is a two week rotation and I don't have the same days off every week. I was assistant room parent last year and will be more than happy to do that again this year. Again, with my schedule, I can't commit to being the main room parent as I may not be off the day of the parties. If you need extra help at any time, please feel free to call me. My phone number is ***** and her grandparents', where you can always leave a message for me, is *****.

I am looking forward to getting to know you and working with you this year. Hopefully, with keeping the lines of communication open, we will be able to meet ***** needs successfully.

Thanks so much,