



Getting Ready for Kindergarten

An Information Booklet for Parents and Guardians

Prayer

Two little eyes to look at God.
Two little ears to hear His word.
Two little lips to sing His praise.
Two little feet to walk His ways.
Two little hands to do His will.

Amen.

Anonymous



Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

Our Curriculum, from kindergarten through grade 12, is aligned with the "Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations." The Ontario Catholic School Graduate is expected to be:

- A discerning believer
- An effective communicator
- A reflective, creative and holistic thinker
- A self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner
- A collaborative contributor
- A caring family member
- A responsible citizen



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 4. Message to Parents
- 5. Catholic Education in Kindergarten
- 6. The Kindergarten Program
- 6. Communicating and Reporting
- 8. Purposeful Play in Kindergarten
- 10. A Typical Day
- 11. How Parents Can Support Playful Learning
- 13. Before and After School Programs
- 13. Student Transportation
- 14. Useful Websites



MESSAGE TO PARENTS

Welcome to Kindergarten!

Starting Kindergarten is an exciting time in a young child's life filled with new experiences and opportunities to learn and grow. It is the beginning of a wonderful learning journey.

Success at school begins at home. You are your child's first, and most important, teacher. From the beginning of your child's life, you teach your child about love, trust, and his/her own goodness, which provides the foundation for all learning. York Catholic schools build on the learning, faith development and guidance you've given to your child to prepare him/her for this first step in his/her formal education. Our Catholic schools provide our youngest learners with an excellent academic program that is enhanced by Catholic values. Gospel values, religious education and family life form an important part of our curriculum.

Children arrive at school with different backgrounds and experiences, as well as at different stages of development. As your child begins Kindergarten, he/she enters a world full of new challenges and opportunities for learning. To make this new beginning a secure and positive experience, it is important that there is a strong collaborative partnership between home and school. It is through this partnership that we are able to fulfill the York Catholic District School Board's mission to educate and inspire all students to reach their full potential.

We are dedicated to ensuring the development of the whole child - spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and academically. We are honoured that you are choosing one of our Catholic schools for your child's educational journey and we look forward to working with you to help him/her reach their God-given potential.

Yours in Catholic Education,



Ab Falconi
Director of Education



Maria Marchese
Chair of the Board

For more information, visit the board
website www.ycdsb.ca
Click on Programs & Services
Click on Kindergarten

CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN KINDERGARTEN

Catholic education weaves sacred beliefs and values into curriculum provided by the Ministry of Education. In God's Image, the Canadian Bishops' Religious Education Program for Kindergarten, allows students to more fully explore their emerging spirituality.

Kindergarten students enrich their Catholic faith life at school in these ways:

- Participating in the prayer life of the school on a daily basis
- Celebrating their faith in prayer services and masses
- Experiencing the festivals and seasons of the liturgical year
- Deepening their friendship with Jesus
- Nurturing the relationships with the parish
- Growing in virtue and character through story, song, drama and play
- Belonging to a class and school community that values compassion, forgiveness and gratitude



THE FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

“The Kindergarten program is a child-centred, developmentally appropriate, integrated, extended-day program of learning for four and five-year-old children. The purpose of the program is to establish a strong foundation for learning in the early years, and to do so in a safe and caring play-based environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of all children.” ~Ministry of Education: The Kindergarten Program, 2016

The Kindergarten Team:

During the school day, a team consisting of a certified teacher and a registered early childhood educator, work together in the classroom, enriching the faith life of students as they learn and grow. This team provides a safe and caring play-based environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of all children.

Overall Kindergarten Expectations:

The Kindergarten Program is a two-year program, and is specifically designed to give children time to adjust to the world of school. It summarizes the knowledge and skills that children should demonstrate by the end of their second year in Kindergarten.

The Kindergarten Program provides opportunities for growth in four areas of learning:

1. Belonging and Contributing
2. Self-Regulation and Well-Being
3. Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours
4. Problem Solving and Innovating

COMMUNICATING AND REPORTING

Young children show their understanding by **doing, showing, and telling**. The educator team observe, listen, and ask questions about what the children are doing, in order to assess their learning.

Communication between parents and teachers is very important during the early years. Parents and/or teachers may ask for a meeting to discuss their child at any time of the year. There are **three reporting times** in each school year:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| November: | Kindergarten Communication of Learning: Initial Observation Report
Parent-Teacher Interviews |
| January/February: | Kindergarten Communication of Learning Report
Interviews on request by teacher or parent |
| June: | Kindergarten Communication of Learning Report |

A top-down photograph of five diverse children lying on a colorful, interlocking mat. The children are arranged in a circle, smiling warmly at the camera. From top-left to bottom-right, they are: a girl with blonde hair in a blue dress with white hearts and a pink bow; a boy in a green polo shirt; a girl in a blue and white striped shirt; a boy in a yellow polo shirt with a plaid pattern; and a girl in an orange lace top. The mat has sections of blue, red, and yellow.

Play is Children's Work



PURPOSEFUL PLAY IN KINDERGARTEN

It has long been acknowledged that there is a strong link between play and learning for young children, especially in the areas of problem solving, literacy, numeracy, and social skills. Play, therefore, has a legitimate and important role in Kindergarten and can be used to further children's learning in all areas of the Kindergarten program.

Young children actively explore their environment and the world around them through a process of learning-based play. When children are manipulating objects, acting out roles, or experimenting with various materials, they are engaged in learning through play.

The Kindergarten classroom program consists of both child-initiated play and more structured play-based learning opportunities. The learning activities are designed by the Kindergarten team to encourage children to think creatively, to explore and investigate, to solve problems and to share their learning with others.





A TYPICAL DAY

Religious education and family life expectations are embedded and infused in all aspects of the day. Children are involved in a variety of activities consisting of a balance of exploration, guided instruction, and explicit instruction. A typical day consists of the following:

Children arrive and engage in outdoor play.

Meeting Time

Gather for announcements and national anthem.

Whole Group Learning

During this time, children are engaged in focused instruction. Developmentally appropriate lessons are designed to motivate our youngest learners to participate fully in their learning.

Small Group Learning

There are many opportunities for small groups of children to work and play together. The Kindergarten team may work with small groups of students based on assessment, observation, and the Kindergarten program expectations.

Learning Centres

Children explore and investigate their world at learning centres. Some centres require the children to engage in specific tasks designed by the Kindergarten team. Other centres allow children to engage in self-directed playful learning.

Snack and Lunch

The children are supervised during these nutrition breaks.





HOW PARENTS CAN SUPPORT EARLY LEARNING

Parents can encourage children's love of learning by playing games and by making learning fun. This will help them to get ready for kindergarten and eagerly anticipate the experience. The following hints might be helpful, but remember to stop when your child is no longer interested and it is no longer fun! Short frequent experiences are best for young children.

Oral Language

- Surround children with language – talk to them often and respond to their questions and comments
- Sing or say nursery rhymes, songs, and chants
- Notice and talk about shapes, colours, letters and items of interest whenever they appear in the environment (eg., in shops, in the neighbourhood, on TV)
- Write exactly what your child says – this shows the relationship between writing and talking (eg., a message in a card to a grandparent or friend)

Reading

- Read to children daily and talk about the story or pictures
- Include Bible stories and lives of the saints as part of your family reading
- Make sure children see other members of the family reading
- Take children to the library and visit local book shops
- Encourage children to choose their own books
- Let children use pictures to help them read a book – the pictures are there to help them make meaning
- Play travel games (e.g., play 'I Spy' using colours or first sounds)
- Make shopping fun (e.g., ask them to find items on the list)





Writing

- Print children's names often. Have them watch and tell them what you are doing
- Provide children with magnetic or plastic letters and encourage them to make words – stick them on the fridge or cookie trays
- Talk about things that are printed all around us (e.g., road signs, posters)
- Write lists, messages and notes in front of children – talk about what you are doing and why
- Provide a variety of materials for writing at home (e.g., children's scissors, paper, pencils, glue, crayons, cards or old Christmas cards). Children love to 'pretend' to write notes and letters. They can write cards to grandparents, friends or draw pictures about a special trip
- Provide a variety of materials for crafts at home (e.g., children's scissors, paper, pencils, glue, crayons, paint, play dough, flyers)

Mathematics

- Make shopping fun, (e.g., have children count the number of apples needed)
- Have children set the table (e.g., one spoon and one fork for each person)
- Let children help with cooking
- Solve problems together (e.g., How many plates do we need?)
- Count the stairs as you go up and down
- Sing counting songs and rhymes
- Notice and name shapes and patterns





BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The York Catholic District School Board supports the provision of childcare services for our students. School-based childcare (infant to 5 years) and/or Before and After School programs (4 to 12 years) are in place in many of our school locations. For information regarding Before and After School Programs and fees, please visit www.ycdsb.ca

- Click "Programs & Services"
- Click "Childcare"
- Click "Before and After School Programs"

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Student Transportation Services of York Region (STSYR) is a collaborative venture of the York Catholic and York Region District School Boards and provides transportation to more than 52,000 students every day. All service routes are designed and supervised by the STSYR.

In accordance with York Catholic District School Board policies, Kindergarten students who are attending their home school and who live more than 1.2 km from school are eligible for transportation. **Children who qualify** can take the bus in the morning and at the end of the day. To obtain bus stop and route information, including bus stop locations and service times please visit the STSYR website at www.schoolbuscity.com



USEFUL WEBSITES

www.ycdsb.ca

The York Catholic District School Board website has literacy and numeracy activities for every grade level.

You can find the link at www.ycdsb.ca

Click on Students

Click on Student Resources

Click on Elementary Students Login

- User ID: elem
- Password: ycdsb

www.cccb.ca

www.acbo.on.ca

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents

www.edu.gov.on.ca

www.york.ca

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario

Ontario Ministry of Education Parent Website

The Ministry of Education

York Region

(click on Health to access York Region Public Health)

Notice to Students and Parents about Immunization Records

Every child must have a complete and up-to-date immunization record on file with York Region Health Services in order to attend school. York Region Health Services is required by the Immunization of School Pupil's Act RR. O 1990 Reg. 645 to ensure that each child attending school in York Region is fully immunized.

For more information about Health Services in York Region, contact: 1-866-967-5582 or visit www.york.ca



Mission Statement

Guided by Gospel Values and Catholic Virtues, in partnership with home and Church, we educate and inspire all students to reach their full potential in a safe and caring environment.

Vision Statement

Our students will become creative and critical thinkers who integrate Catholic Values into their daily lives, as socially responsible global citizens.

Core Values



Strategic Commitments

Integration of Our Catholic Faith

Continuous Improvement of Student Achievement

Effective Use of Our Resources

Engaging Our Communities

BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION



York Catholic District School Board

320 Bloomington Road West, Aurora ON L4G 0M1

Phone: 905-713-2711 • 1-800-363-2711

Fax: 905-713-1272

Website: www.ycdsb.ca

Twitter: @ycdsb