A young girl with dark braids is looking down at a young boy who is focused on playing with blocks on a wooden table. The background is a blurred classroom setting. The text 'KINDERGARTEN AT A GLANCE' is overlaid in large blue letters.

KINDERGARTEN AT A GLANCE

INFORMATION BOOKLET

MESSAGE TO PARENTS

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, which begins at home with you as your child's first and most important teacher.

From the beginning of your child's life, you teach them about love, trust and their own goodness. This is the foundation of all their learning. Working together, we are dedicated to ensuring the development of the whole child – spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and academically. York Catholic schools build on the learning, faith development and guidance you've given your child to prepare them for this first step in their formal education. Our Catholic schools provide our youngest learners with an excellent academic program that is rooted in Gospel values, religious education and family life.

Children arrive at school with different backgrounds and experiences, as well as at different stages of development. As your child begins Kindergarten, they enter 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.

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 them reach their God-given potential.

Yours in Catholic Education,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Sarna". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, flowing initial "J".

Jennifer Sarna
Interim Director of Education

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN KINDERGARTEN

In our Catholic schools, faith is at the heart of everything we do. From the moment your child begins their learning journey, our goal is to nurture their spiritual growth and faith development, helping them come to know Jesus as a friend and guide.

Religious Education in Kindergarten is not just a subject — it's a way of living and learning together in faith. As students engage with the *Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ* resource, they will participate in daily prayer, hear and read stories from Scripture, learn songs, and enjoy interactive activities. Using this program, staff help children begin to understand that they are loved by God and part of a caring Catholic community.

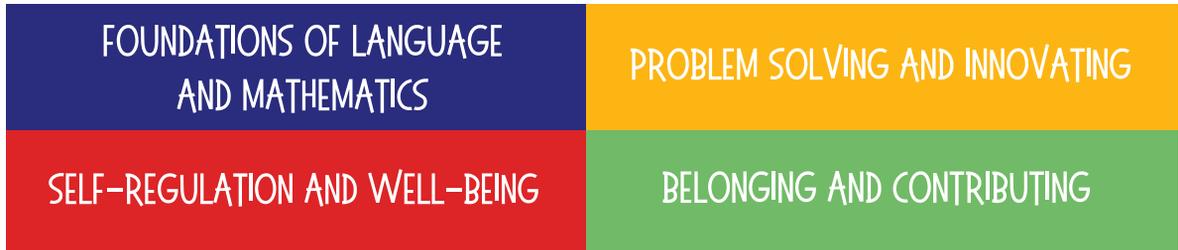
This program helps children enrich their faith journey through:

- Discovering God's love in their everyday lives.
- Participating in the liturgical life of the school on a daily basis, through prayer, faith celebrations, and Masses.
- Learning about Jesus' teachings and how to live with kindness, gratitude and respect.
- Celebrating the seasons of the Church and the Liturgical Calendar.
- Nurturing the relationships with the parish.
- Building a foundation of faith that will continue to grow throughout their years in Catholic education.

At home and at school, we partner with families to support your child's spiritual formation, helping them grow in faith, hope and love.

THE PROGRAM

The Kindergarten program is a two-year program focused on building a strong foundation for learning. The curriculum provides opportunities for growth across four interconnected strands:



THE KINDERGARTEN TEAM

A certified teacher and a registered early childhood educator work together as a team in the classroom to observe, listen and ask questions about the children's activities. They provide a safe and caring play-based environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of all children. The learning activities are designed by the Kindergarten team to encourage children to think creatively, explore, solve problems and share their learning with others.

PURPOSEFUL PLAY

There is a strong link between play, inquiry and learning for young children, especially within the four strands of the curriculum. When children are manipulating objects, acting out roles or investigating questions, they are engaged in learning through play and inquiry. The Kindergarten program consists of inquiry-based exploration, direct instruction and various forms of play-based learning opportunities.

COMMUNICATING AND REPORTING

Progress reports are made available in November, February and June. Meetings to discuss your child can be scheduled at any time during the year. In Year 2 (Senior Kindergarten), early reading screening identifies each child's strengths and needs, ensuring targeted support is provided as early as possible.

A TYPICAL DAY

Children are active participants in a learning environment that integrates purposeful play-based learning with evidence-based systematic and explicit instruction. This balanced approach ensures students develop foundational skills in literacy and mathematics while nurturing their natural curiosity through inquiry and exploration.

ARRIVAL

Children greet their classmates and may engage in outdoor play.

WHOLE GROUP LEARNING

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

SMALL GROUP LEARNING

There are many opportunities for small groups of children to work and play together. Educators work closely with small groups to provide precise, differentiated support. This focused instruction in foundational literacy and mathematics is tailored to each child's needs.

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 to reinforce new skills. Other centres allow children to engage in self-directed playful learning and discovery.

SNACK AND LUNCH

The children are supervised during nutritional breaks.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

The York Catholic District School Board supports the provision of child care services for students. School-based child care (infant to 5 years) and/or Before and After School programs (4 to 12 years) are in place in many of our school locations.

[CLICK HERE TO FIND
BEFORE & AFTER CARE
AT YOUR SCHOOL](#)

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 53,000 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.

[CLICK HERE TO FIND YOUR
BUS STOP & ROUTE](#)

PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN LEARNING

Parents and families are valuable contributors to their child's learning. Below are some suggestions on how to make everyday life a learning connection.

ORAL LANGUAGE

- Surround children with language – talk to them often and use new vocabulary
- Practice oral storytelling and listening to a variety of diverse voices and texts
- Sing or say nursery rhymes, songs and chants
- Notice and talk about shapes, colours, letters and items of interest in the environment

READING & WRITING

- Read together every day and use fun voices for each character
- Visit the library and allow your child to select books of interest
- Play "I Spy" using starting sounds (e.g., "I spy something starting with the /s/ sound")
- Look for letters on signs or food labels and discuss the sounds
- Help your child recognize and print their own name
- Provide materials for writing and crafts (crayons, paper, scissors, glue, play dough)
- Use magnetic or plastic letters to build simple words together

MATHEMATICS

- Count everything: snacks, steps, toys, etc.
- Ask, "How do you know?" when your child counts or sorts
- Solve problems together (e.g., How many plates do we need?)
- Notice and name shapes and patterns
- Ask your child to help divide a snack up equally
- Play games with dice or dominoes to help your child recognize small groups of dots quickly without counting them
- Explore Canadian coins and discuss what we use money for

MORE RESOURCES

Click to be directed to website

INSTITUTE FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PARENT WEBSITE

NOVALIS

ONLINE BIBLE

ONTARIO CATHOLIC KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

TVO LEARN FOR KINDERGARTEN

YORK PUBLIC HEALTH IMMUNIZATION

YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

