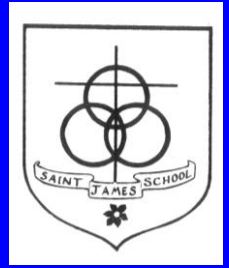




St James School Kindergarten Program



Learning with Spirit

Information for Parents

INFORMATION FOR KINDERGARTEN PARENTS

Welcome to St. James School! Whether you are new to the school or are one of our veteran members, there are bound to be questions that you have about routines and special needs, and how you can get involved this year. The following is intended to provide you with some information to help you and your child have a successful start to kindergarten.

Preparing your Preschooler for Kindergarten

Language

Children develop language by listening to you talk, read, and sing to them, and by you listening and responding to them as they talk to you! Talk Talk Talk!!

- Finger plays, make up songs, answer their questions

Read

One of the best things you can do for your children is to read to them.

- Talk about the story, have fun, cuddle, read in bed, listen to story tapes, etc.

Fine Motor skills

- Turning pages, buttoning up buttons, using scissors, opening containers

Gross Motor skills

- Climbing, jumping, running, walking up the stairs, balancing

Social Skills

- Sharing, taking turns (playing cards and board games), getting along with others, being aware of others' feelings

Self Confidence

- Taking care of their own belongings, cleaning up their play space, doing chores at home, listening when being spoken to, receiving unconditional love from parents

Safety

- Know their full name, address, phone number

Independence

- Dress self and handle a back-pack. Have a dress-up box at home to stimulate imagination and develop independence with dressing.

Quiet time

- Avoid over-stimulation. All children need quiet times and rest.

As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher. A child learns more in their first five years with you, than at any other time in their lives!

St. James School Kindergarten Program

Goal Areas We strive to develop all aspects of the 'whole child'.

The seven key goal areas for a child's development are:

- ***Spiritual***: prayer, knowledge of our faith, etc.
- ***Intellectual***: language development, number concepts, etc.
- ***Emotional***: expressing emotions appropriately, identifying emotions, etc.
- ***Social***: peer relations, cooperation, etc.
- ***Social Responsibility***: contributing to the class and school community, solving problems peacefully, valuing others and the environment
- ***Physical***: large and fine motor skills
- ***Artistic/aesthetic***: music, art, drama, dance

Days and Times in Session

Our program is full days from Monday to Friday, 8:30am - 2:45pm.

Orientation Day

In June, the new kindergarten students come for a 45 minute session to give them an opportunity to meet their teacher and some of their new classmates. It helps your child feel more confident about kindergarten and it allows the teacher to begin to get to know her students. The date and time for this year's orientation will be determined once registrations are in.

Gradual Entry

Children are gradually introduced to a full day at school. They come to school for partial days in early September. An information letter is sent to parents in August to inform them of the gradual entry dates and times. Until the children come for the full day, they will need to be picked up at the early dismissal times as established by the kindergarten teacher. In September, there will be a half-hour parent/child and teacher meeting in the kindergarten classroom; dates and time will be given in August.



Arrival/Dismissal/Breaks

Once the kindergarten children attend school for the full day, the schedule will be as follows: school **begins** at 8:30 in the morning, **recess** is at 10:05 - 10:20, **lunch time** is from 12:00 - 12:55 (outside 12:00 - 12:30; eating in class 12:30 - 12:55), and **dismissal** is at 2:45.



Absences or Lates

Please contact the school if your child is going to be absent from school and then send a note explaining the reason for the absence when your child returns. Please do not send your child to school if he/she is sick. If your child is going to be late on any given day, please phone the school office and let us know that your child will be late. Our school has a "safe arrival" program and you will be called if your child is not at school and we have not heard from you.

Snacks and Lunches

Once the children are attending school through lunchtime, they will require both a lunch and a snack. Please send several small, nutritious items that they can eat easily (and that they like!); for example, carrot sticks, fresh fruit, crackers and cheese are good choices. It is a good idea to pack "lunch" with your child so that they know what is in their bag and they can give you ideas about amounts and preferences. (Before you know it they will do this chore themselves!) We will be discussing and encouraging the use of reusable containers for 'litterless lunches'. Containers that they can open and re-seal by themselves help to encourage their independence. We ask the parents to be sensitive to the food requirements of some of our students as we try to provide an 'allergy-aware' environment. If you are not sure what an allergen-aware environment looks like, check out web sites such as www.foodallergy.org



Clothing

St. James School has a school uniform for all students. Please refer to the uniform policy for details regarding uniform requirements. All kindergarten students need one pair of non-marking runners left at school for gym and inside wear. Please choose runners that fit well and that your child can put on by him/herself (Velcro, slip-on, or stretchy laces are kid-friendly). Please note that kindergarten students will not be changing for gym class, but they may wear the gym uniform to school in September, October, May and June (if you choose to purchase the school regulation shorts and t-shirt). *An extra set of clothing (shirt, pants, socks, underwear) in a cloth bag also needs to be left at school for emergency use (wet days and occasional accidents). Please label all your child's clothing, including shoes and boots. A regular backpack is really important for carrying precious things back and forth to school. It will be very helpful if you teach your child to put on shoes and dress him/herself for going outside as it takes a long time to get a whole class ready if the teacher has to tie shoes and zip up coats for everyone.

Rest-Time



Once we start with full days in kindergarten, we will be having a short "quiet reading/rest time". Please send one special item, such as a towel, little pillow or small blanket, for your child to lie down with. This will be kept at school until later in the year when we will not need a rest time anymore.



Library

The children will be going to the library once a week. They are encouraged to take out one book for home and then return it so they can take out a new book the next week. Each student will need a special book bag to use for transporting his or her library book to and from school every day. We hope this will protect the books from any accidental lunch kit spills or other damages. Please read/look at these books with your child. They will learn to love books and learn to be responsible for them, too.

Show and Tell

This is an excellent way for the children to raise their self-confidence when they speak about a treasured item from home. They will be encouraged to bring theme-related items, books, objects from nature, pictures, collections, etc. Your child will be given a specific day for 'show and tell' (TBA).



French. Music, Physical Education



The children will receive French, Music and P.E. instruction from the classroom teacher or another teacher. Physical education classes and/or daily physical activity (DPA) are scheduled each day of the week.

Birthdays

Birthdays are celebrated in the classroom and parents are welcome to send a special treat to be shared with the class. Individual items such as cupcakes, donuts, and cookies are preferable to a large cake which needs cutting. Children with summer birthdays will be recognized in June.

Playground



outside play times.

The kindergarten students will be gradually introduced to the playground at recess and lunch play times. At first, we will take them outside for play during non-recess times and discuss rules and safety on the playground. Once they are ready, they will go out during recess/lunch times with the whole school. Their teacher will help them gain familiarity, confidence and independence. We are always available to help any student experiencing difficulties during

Parent Involvement

There are many ways that you can become involved both in the classroom and in the school itself. You are welcome to help in the classroom and be part of our day. Let us know in advance so that we will have something specific for you to do with the children. We will also need helpers and drivers for field trips and outings. Even if you work during the day you may want to get involved by being a phone rep., by helping prepare materials at home, or by becoming a part of our Parent Support Group or School Council. Parents who are interested in helping in the classroom or on field trips will need to complete a request for a Criminal Record Check. The forms are available through the school office and there is no cost to volunteers for this service.

Most importantly, get involved by talking with your kindergarten child. Listen to what they tell you and show that you are interested in what they have to say. Encourage more than just single word responses by questioning them and giving them the time and the attention they need to tell you things in their own way.

St. James' parents are very special. The support that the school receives from all of you is very important and much appreciated. We look forward to working with you and getting to know you and your children better. As well, we have an active Parent Support Group (PSG) where you can meet other parents!

School Tours

St. James School welcomes all interested parents to call the school (250-542-4081) to arrange an appointment for a personal tour of the school. The school principal or the kindergarten teacher will be available to answer questions you may have about the school and the kindergarten program.

Thank you for the opportunity to teach your child!

St. James' Kindergarten Teacher