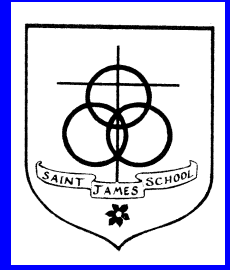




# St James School Kindergarten Program



**ALL ARE WELCOME!**



*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.

### 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, empathy, 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. Parents do have the option of a half-day program, especially at the beginning of the year.

### 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 ahead of time 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.



### 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 (playing outside from 12:00 - 12:30; eating in class from 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 once 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 attend school for the full day, they will require both a lunch and a snack. Please send several small, nutritious items that they can eat easily (and that they like!); carrot sticks, fresh fruit or vegetables, crackers and cheese are healthy 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 encourage 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 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](http://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 Child's backpack is really important for carrying precious things back and forth to school. It is very helpful if you teach your child to put on shoes and dress him/herself for going outside. It takes a long time to get a whole class ready if the teacher has to tie shoes and zip up coats for everyone.



### Library

The children will be going to the school 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. 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' (Starting in November).



### 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 small cupcakes, cookies or fruit are preferable to a large cake which needs cutting. Children with summer birthdays will be recognized in June.

### Playground



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 outside play times.

## **Parent Involvement**

There are many ways that you can become involved both in the classroom and in the school itself. Occasionally, you are welcome to help in the classroom and be part of our day. The Kindergarten Teacher will let you know in advance when she requires help during the year. We will 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. or, by helping prepare materials at home! All parents are encouraged to join 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 through the Ministry of Justice. The forms are available through the school office; 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.

## **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!!

- Do 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**

- Turn pages, button up buttons, use scissors, open containers, use pencils, crayons and felt pens

### **Gross Motor Skills**

- Climb, jump, run, walk up stairs, balance

### **Social Skills**

- Share, take turns (playing cards and board games), get along with others, be aware of others' feelings, develop empathy

### **Self Confidence**

- Take care of their own belongings, clean up their play space, do chores at home, listen when being spoken to, receive unconditional love from parents

### **Safety**

- Know their full name, address, and 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' 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 Principal and/or the Kindergarten teacher are 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

