

Dear Families,

Welcome to Kindergarten! I am so excited to welcome our new students and their families to our school community and I am honoured to be your child's kindergarten teacher.

My name is Kyoko Conne. I was born and raised in Nelson BC and love to spend time on the lake and hiking with my dog. I spend most of my free time reading, playing with my nieces, and learning new things.

I look forward to being a partner with you on your child's learning journey.

In September, we will begin the year with a gradual entry. This will support your child as they build stamina for full school days. I so appreciate your flexibility and support.

The first year of school is a very exciting time full of play, learning, and special milestones. It is also a major transition. Taking some time over the summer to prepare your child can really help to make this transition smoother for your family.

I will include some ideas here to help you have fun preparing over the summer.

Here are a few checklists that outline what children can do on their own at this age.

Encourage Responsibility and Independence

Fostering responsibility and independence in your child will make it easier to adjust to the demands of school. Whenever possible, let your child do things for themselves – and for others.

I can do things for myself. I can:

- Put on and take off my coat and hang up my coat
- Go to the bathroom
- Wash my hands
- Put on and fasten my shoes
- Open my lunch bag and the containers and packaging
- Change my clothes



I can help with family chores. I can:

- Sort, count and organize when helping to fold laundry, clean up toys, or set the table
- Help feed the family pet
- Help make my bed
- Put my dirty clothes in the laundry basket

Encourage Social Development and Behaviour Expectations

Fostering social skills and appropriate behaviour will make it easier for your child to function within a cooperative learning environment. In k/1, students work in small groups, independently, and within the larger group of the class, and an important part of our approach is play-based learning.

To support this, you can encourage play dates with children the same age as your child. Step back and try not to solve every problem, but be nearby to help with the solution if necessary. Teach sharing and taking turns. Develop conversation skills – conversation requires active participation. Expect eye contact when having a conversation and model good manners. Children can learn to wait their turn in conversation. Encourage words like "Excuse me."



I can:

- Play and have fun
- Take turns
- Share
- Work out problems

I can:

- Make eye contact with the person who is talking
- Speak in a voice loud enough to be heard
- Take turns listening and talking
- Understand and follow simple two or three step directions
- Listen to a story in a group

Encourage Sensory Motor Experiences

Sensory motor experiences are an important part of a child's development. Help your child develop large motor skills such as running and climbing, and fine motor skills such as using a pencil, crayons, and scissors. Have fun with crayons, markers, paints, paper, glue and scissors. Go outside and play.

I can:

- Use a variety of paper and writing tools
- Use my imagination to be creative
- Have fun while painting, cutting and drawing
- Have fun playing on the playground equipment



Encourage Literacy and Numeracy Development

Language and mathematics are key foundations to a child's intellectual growth. Children need to be exposed to books and hear stories read and told to them in order to develop an interest in printed materials. You can sing songs, recite rhymes, and read and reread books to your child.

Develop a positive attitude toward mathematics. Long before students label their investigations as math, children are participating fully and actively in numeracy activities. An activity such as setting the table involves sorting, counting with a one-to-one correspondence, and making groups. Baking involves measuring, counting and following the directions of a recipe.



I can:

- Sing along to music in the car
- Sing the alphabet song
- Recite nursery rhymes
- Look for letters and numbers in the house, store or neighbourhood
- Sort items by colour, size or shape
- Count stairs, windows, people, flowers in the garden, and ants on the sidewalk

Focus on Early Experiences with Literacy

There's been an explosion of research recently about how children's earliest experiences set the stage for success in learning to read and write. In fact, most experts agree that children who reach Kindergarten with certain characteristics--*an interest in books, a fondness for conversation, a curiosity about the world*--are more likely to thrive in school and have productive and happy lives.

"School readiness" refers to the bundle of knowledge, skills, and behaviors that we associate with children's successful entry into school. These skills include oral language and vocabulary development, phonological and phonemic development, knowledge of the alphabet, and an understanding that print goes from left to right and from up to down on a page.

Read to Them!

Possibly the most important thing you can do is read to your child. Language and vocabulary development forms the foundation for reading and writing. Children's vocabulary is growing rapidly during these early years. A considerable body of research confirms the link between being read to and learning to read and write successfully.

Play Rhyming and Word Games

Children begin to learn about the sounds of language as they enjoy nursery rhymes and word games. Studies have shown that knowledge of rhymes helps build phonological awareness later on--the ability to hear similarities and differences in words. Phonemic awareness refers to a child's understanding that speech is composed of identifiable units, including spoken words, syllables, and sounds.

Support Invented Spelling

Children develop a great deal of knowledge of the alphabet through their early writing attempts. One study found that even without formal spelling instruction, preschoolers use their intuitive knowledge of sounds and letters to spell words. Some people use the term invented spelling or phonic spelling to refer to this process. For example, a child may initially write b or bk for the word book, to be followed by a more conventional form later on. As children engage in writing, they are learning to break down the words they wish to spell into their corresponding sounds.

Offer Writing Opportunities

Writing and reading are closely related. Writing helps children understand that there is a systematic relationship between letters and sounds. They learn that the alphabet includes a limited set of letters, and that these letters stand for the sounds that make up spoken words.

For many children, the beginnings of these skills appear in activities such as pretend play, drawing, and conversations about stories and favorite characters. These playful activities make it clear that children are actively trying to use, and to make sense of, reading and writing long before they can actually read and write.

Identify Expectations

What are appropriate expectations for school readiness? In general, children should be able to:

- carry on a brief conversation
- attend and respond to stories
- know the letters of the alphabet
- know some basic print concepts, such as that print has meaning and that it begins at a specific place on each page.

How to Hold a Pencil: The Correct Pencil Grip

The pencil should be positioned so that there is equal pressure between the thumb, the side of the middle finger and the tip of the index finger. All fingers are bent slightly. This is called a "tripod grip" or "tripod pencil grasp".

If your child has difficulty, try using a pencil grip on your child's pencil. A pencil grip can position their fingers correctly and keep them from slipping out of position.

Why the Correct Pencil Grip is Important

Using the correct grip allows a person to write quickly and fluidly, while a tight or awkward grip can slow writing. The correct grip also prevents physical problems with the hand and arm later in life. The constant aggravation of clenching a pencil — a habit often formed in childhood — can cause the ligaments in the wrist to become inflamed.

September 2023- Kindergarten gradual entry schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4	5 1st day of school - Grade 1 only. Dismissal at 11:30	6 First full day. Grade 1 only. No kindergarten	7 First day of Kindergarten. Morning Kindergarten only 8:25 am -11:55 am. Pickup required before lunch. *Bring Snack	8 Morning Kindergarten only 8:25 am -11:55 am. Pickup required before lunch *Bring Snack
11 Morning Kindergarten only 8:25 am -11:55 am. Pickup required before lunch *Bring Snack	12 Morning Kindergarten only 8:25 am -11:55 am. Pickup required before lunch *Bring Snack	13 Morning Kindergarten only 8:30 am – 12:45 am. Pickup required after lunch and recess. *Bring Snack and Lunch	14 Morning Kindergarten only 8:30 am – 12:45 am. Pickup required after lunch and recess. *Bring Snack and Lunch	15 No Kindergarten
18 First Full Day of Kindergarten 8:25 -2:30 *Bring Snack and Lunch	19 Gradual Entry ends: Remainder of the year is: Monday-Friday full day Kindergarten – 8:25-2:30.	20	21	22

Notes:

- We will work as a team to best support your child with this exciting, new change. I know the transition into school can be a challenge for some and invite your family to discuss ways to set your child up for success, if your child

needs more time to transition, optional days, etc. Please work with me on this plan and let me know what your family decides so I can best plan for the class.

- Please make sure your child comes with a backpack, water bottle, snack, lunch, a spare change of clothes, and a pair of indoor shoes. **Please label all items.**
- School begins at 8.25 am and students are expected to be in class at that time. If your child will be absent, please phone the school at 250-227-9218 to let our school secretary, Tanya, know by 9:00 am.
- Bus Arrangements: Registration for the bus is done online through the www.sd8.bc.ca website at <https://www.sd8.bc.ca/schools/busing-transportation> by selecting 'To register online for bus servicing'. You can also see the times for bussing by selecting 'Bus Routes- East (Creston-Crawford Bay)' and scrolling down to Route 11- Coyote and Route 12- Road Runner.
 - Please note that if you make any alternate plans for your child (ie. going to a different house for a play-date, or having a different person pick your child up) you need to let the office know in advance by phone 227-9218, by email clerical.crbay@sd8.bc.ca or online through the CBESS website <https://cbess.sd8.bc.ca/absence-late>. Please inform the office a day in advance.
 - Healthy lunch/snack. Please always send a healthy snack for your child to eat at recess and if your child is not eating hot lunch a healthy lunch as well. From experience we know that children often eat more at school than expected, please make sure you send enough snacks, and a good size lunch.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this letter.

I am looking forward to our time together and I wish you a wonderful summer. Please contact me if you have any questions at kyoko.conne@sd8.bc.ca.

Sincerely,

Kyoko Conne