



**École Meridian Heights
School**

**English – French
Immersion Kindergarten**

KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

2023-2024

Field Trip Fees – Info. will be sent home in October
(Cheque payable to Parkland School Division)
Fees and all permission forms are due by the end of October 2023

Important Information Summary

Date: Friday September 1st: Meet and Greet for all Kindergarten students

Monday/Wednesday classes: 1:00-2:00

Tuesday/Thursday classes: 2:00-3:00

Come and meet your Kindergarten teacher and drop off your school supplies. Please download the app 'Class DoJo' prior to arrival.

Staggered Entry - Children will be starting kindergarten in small groups to ensure a positive kindergarten entrance. **Please refer to your email closer to the end of August for your child's staggered entry date, as well as a welcome letter and PSD kindergarten calendar for the school year.**

École Meridian Heights School Kindergarten School Supply List: TBD

Please check the school website for updates in August

(Please note: It would require far too much valuable storage space and time-consuming organization for each child to use his or her own personal supplies each day. We therefore "pool" the supplies and replace them as needed at centers and for group work. This also helps kindergarten children learn to share and cooperate. To avoid misunderstandings, please make sure that your child understands that the supplies that he or she brings to school will be shared by everyone.

WELCOME

Welcome to Meridian Heights English/French Immersion Kindergarten Programs. We know this year will be a learning and growing experience for both you and your child. As you read through this information we hope most of your questions will be answered.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions, ideas or concerns. You, as parents, are an important part of our kindergarten program and we welcome your input.

Mlle Kyla Pronovost, French Immersion Kindergarten Teacher
Mlle Hailey Munro, French Immersion/English Kindergarten Teacher
Mrs. Amanda Peck, English Kindergarten Teacher
780-963-2289 (school)

WHAT IS THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM?

Kindergarten is a program with educational goals and objectives, and is funded by Alberta Education. The program is not just for children, but also for staff and parents.

PHILOSOPHY

Kindergarten programs are based on the soundest, most up-to-date knowledge we have about young children and how they learn. The beliefs and principles upon which kindergarten programs are based are discussed in the official Alberta Education Kindergarten Program Statement. Parents are encouraged to read this document, which is always available in the classroom, and to discuss any questions it raises with the professional staff.

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Kindergarten is a significant period in human development. Independence, initiative, decision making, creativity, the ability to learn, the ability to relate to others and feelings of self-worth all have their beginnings in early childhood. What young children learn at this stage will have a major impact on successful learning experiences in school, on personal development and on future participation in society.

The kindergarten program not only helps prepare children for their entry into Grade one, but also provides a foundation for later success. The purpose of kindergarten is to provide learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate in order to meet the diverse needs of children and promote a positive attitude toward lifelong learning. A child whose developmental needs have been met is more likely to grow into a self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing member of society.

The kindergarten learner expectations describe learnings that are appropriate for young children and are part of the continuum of learning. Young children begin learning in a variety of environments - in their homes, in day care programs and in the community. They arrive in kindergarten from diverse backgrounds and with a variety of experiences. Some children have already been developing some of the learning outcomes described in the kindergarten program statement. Most children will achieve these outcomes before they enter grade one, others will continue to develop them during the primary school years. Young children benefit from programs that help them explore the world around them and guide them through the transition from home to school.

Young children learn best when they are actively involved in their learning, using all their senses. They are usually curious and investigative. They think in concrete, not abstract, terms.

Every child is unique, and develops at his or her own rate. Children's knowledge and feelings about themselves—the self-concept—influences their willingness to try new experiences. Relationships with other children and with adults are very important to them and they need guidance to help them develop responsible attitudes towards each other and society. Their parents were their first teachers, and are still the most important adults in their lives.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Play is a major way of learning for young children. Children use language, observe, discover, think, reason and interact with others as they play.

Our Kindergarten program provides time, space and materials for children's play. Each day children have the opportunity to choose from centers, which include housekeeping, blocks, sensory, construction, painting, crafts, puzzles, books, and listening. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that children learn at every center.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The Kindergarten Program Statement provides learner expectations in seven learning areas:

Early Literacy
Early Numeracy
Citizenship and Identity
Environment and Community Awareness
Personal and Social Responsibility
Physical Skills and Well-being
Creative Expression.

Learner expectations in the early literacy, early numeracy, and citizenship and identity learning areas are the outcomes for Kindergarten in English language arts, mathematics and social studies in the *Program of Studies: Elementary Schools*. Learner expectations in the other four learning areas are integrated and focus on the early learnings in science, physical education, health and the fine arts.

The expectations of the seven learning areas are interrelated and meet the social, physical, intellectual, cultural, creative and emotional needs of young children. These learning areas describe the learnings that young children accomplish not only in the Kindergarten program, but also in their homes and communities. The learning areas provide a transition to the subject area expectations of elementary schooling.

Young children learn in an integrated way, and many of the learnings identified in the program statement will be accomplished simultaneously. It is intended that the learner expectations will be integrated through learning activities that are developmentally appropriate for young children.

The Kindergarten Day

- Pick-up and Drop-off Routine:
 - Please drop off your child on the small playground after 8:15am when there will be supervision. The Kindergarten classes meet on the deck beside the gravel parking lot.
 - Please pick your child up at 3:06 on the deck. If making alternate arrangements please make sure that your child and the teacher know.

Starting October 1st, we no longer allow parents to drop off and pick up inside of the school. This is due to the congestion of the hallways and teaches your child independence. We will not release your child until we see a parent or guardian present.

- We plan a balance of quiet times and active times, teacher-directed activities and child-selected activities.
- Every day includes time for stories and talking together, centres, songs and music, movement, snack, quiet time and outdoor play. Regular field trips are planned. There will be a lump sum collected for field trip fees that will be due at the end of October.

Class Time - September through June

Classes run from 8:35 a.m. to 3:06 p.m.

English Classes (TBD)- Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday (some Fridays)

French Immersion Classes – Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday (some Fridays).

a division Kindergarten calendar will come out and be emailed to you prior to your child's start date

Parent Involvement

At Ecole Meridian Heights Kindergarten, parents participate most visibly as members of the Parent Advisory Council, School Council, Canadian Parents for French members, or as Parent Helpers. Such participation evokes benefits for parents, children and kindergarten staff. Parents become knowledgeable about what actually goes on in the classroom and are able to observe first-hand the progress of their children. Children feel they are important because their parents are going to school with them and are interested in what they are doing there. In addition, by participating in the classroom, parents enhance their knowledge and skills in working with young children and are therefore better able to meet the needs of their own children outside the classroom.

For kindergarten staff, benefits of parent involvement include not only day-to-day help in running their program, but also exposure to new ideas for program planning. In this

regard, parents are encouraged to discuss with kindergarten staff new ideas for activities such as field trips, songs, games or crafts, and to make the kindergarten staff aware of any special talents they may have (e.g. singing, puppetry, crafts, arts, etc.)

Parent Assistance In The Classroom

Beginning in October, parents will be given the opportunity to sign up, if they wish, to volunteer in the classroom. Please note that Parkland School Division requires that volunteers whose “service at the school over the course of the year is likely to exceed ten (10) hours of volunteer activity:”

- a. complete a volunteer registration form
- b. provide a criminal records check
- c. sign a confidentiality agreement.

If you have the criminal record check form signed at the school by the principal or vice principal, it is free of charge. These forms can be obtained at the office.

General Duties of a Parent Volunteer

- Interact with children.
- Encourage children to think and discover for themselves.
- Encourage children to share, to get their own materials, and to finish before moving to another center.
- Compliment children on a job well done.
- Encourage children to follow the rules and routines in the classroom such as walking (not running) in the room, cleaning up and washing up after activities, speaking politely and in a normal tone of voice, etc.
- During directed time, help with the group, assist with control and join in or help with another classroom job or project.
- Assist with routines of dressing and clean-up.
- Have FUN!!

Bus Transportation

It is the responsibility of the parent to complete an “Application for Kindergarten Bussing Form” which is available at the school office. Information regarding bus routes and bus drivers can be obtained from Student Transportation for the Parkland School Division at 780-963-8452, email: Transportation@psd.ca, or check out the website: <https://www.psd.ca/transportation>

If your child takes the bus, daycare bus or after school cafe, please notify us if there are any changes to pickups or drop offs

Reporting Periods

Reporting your child's progress in Kindergarten takes two forms: oral (interviews) and written (report cards). Parent/Teacher interviews are scheduled twice a year. Parents may request special interviews at any other time however, and are encouraged to contact the teacher whenever there is a concern regarding the welfare or progress of their child.

Themes

- Activities in our program are organized around themes. Themes can vary in length from one full day to several weeks or a month. We try to choose themes which interest the children, and from which the children can learn the most.
- Themes such as Space, the Ocean and Dinosaurs are very popular. Seasonal themes such as Thanksgiving, Fall, Christmas, Winter, Valentine's Day, Spring and Easter are also included. Themes about good health and nutrition and safety are covered. (Themes may change from year to year).
 - Parents will be notified through the class newsletter of up-coming themes. If you have pictures, artifacts or information about these theme topics, we urge you to contact the teacher about sharing your knowledge with children.

Field trips

All field trips for the year will be organized at the beginning of the year to give parents a lot of notice of dates and total cost incurred. This portion of the school costs need to be paid in a lump sum payment. More information can be found at the office.

Absences

Should your child be unable to attend Kindergarten, we ask that you let the teacher know by leaving a message at the school. We do have an answering machine and messages can be left before 8:00 a.m. The school phone number is 780-963-2289. If you are arriving late to school with your child, **please visit the office** so they know your child has arrived.

Accidents

Should your child be involved in an accident at school and an injury results or is suspected, you will be contacted as soon as possible. In the event that an injury is deemed to be serious and you or your contact person cannot be reached, the child will be taken to the hospital. Please ensure that we always have up to date information about your contact numbers in case there is an emergency.

Newsletters

A monthly kindergarten newsletter will be sent home by the teacher to inform you of class activities. School newsletters also go home each month.

Photographs

School pictures will be taken in the fall, usually the first week in October. You will be notified regarding the date. Our retake date is usually in November and may fall on a

day that your child does not attend class. (It would be your responsibility to bring in your child for a retake if one is needed).

Physical Education

Class time is scheduled in our school gym. As well, we make use of our outdoor large equipment.

Lunch/Snack

On each kindergarten day, please send a nutritious lunch and two small snacks. Please make sure your child's name is clearly visible on their lunch kit. Please send a labelled water bottle, filled only with water.

Objectives of Meridian Heights Kindergarten

Social

Each Child will:

- learn how to get along with other children.
- show kindness to other children and adults, and will consider others' rights and feelings.
- stand up for his/her own rights peacefully and will learn to solve conflicts in a constructive manner.
- learn to share facilities and the teacher's time.
- develop self-confidence in speaking in front of others.
- be taught positive character traits.

Physical

Each child will:

- have ample opportunity to develop physically.
- improve his large muscle control through both free play and planned educational movement activities.
- develop small muscle control and eye-hand coordination through activities such as cutting, pasting, drawing, painting, sewing and pouring.
- increase stamina and fitness through regular vigorous physical exercise.
- develop balance and rhythm through games and musical activities.
- learn appropriate safety rules.
- learn appropriate health rules and the importance of good nutrition.

Intellectual

Each child will:

- develop curiosity and eagerness to learn.
- be exposed daily to a wide variety of books, with the aim of developing a desire to learn to read.
- be engaged in appropriate language learning activities as outlined in the Elementary Language Arts program of studies.
- participate in appropriate early number learning activities.

- learn good work habits – to listen when instructions are given, to follow directions for structured learning tasks, to concentrate on the task at hand, and to tidy up and clear away when finished.
- learn problem solving skills through working with a wide variety of puzzles, construction toys and blocks, manipulative toys and learning games.
- develop memory through learning songs, rhymes and plays.

Cultural

Each child will:

- increase his knowledge and understanding of the world around him through field trips, stories, pictures and other learning activities.
- explore the world of nature, of work and of families.
- will begin to identify with the richness of Canadian culture through the celebration of traditional holidays.
- engage in painting, modeling and other art activities to develop their creativity and self-expression.
- will learn both traditional and new songs for young children.

Emotional

Each child will:

- develop a sense of self-worth and of self-confidence at every opportunity.
- be helped to become more responsible and trustworthy.
- have the security of knowing that classroom rules are both fair and firm.
- be encouraged to make choices from the activities available, with guidance from a teacher as needed.
- be treated with respect; as a unique, valuable and lovable individual.

Help Your Child Get Off To A Good Start

Parents say,

“Can I help my child be ready for school?”

Yes, you can. Check the list below.

Five year-olds develop these abilities, and each one is helpful in school.

Five Year Olds Learn to:

- Follow simple directions (helping parents).
- Finish small tasks (putting away toys, etc.).
- Sit still (for short periods only).
- Eat quietly in one place without scattering food in all directions.
- Put away toys, clothes, books, etc.
- Tie shoes, put on and take off outer clothes without help.
- Say “please” and “thank you” and “excuse me”.
- Use a kleenex properly.

- Wash and dry face and hands alone.
- Know which items are his or her own.
- Use the bathroom unassisted - washing hands after use.
- Know first and last names, parents' names and telephone number.
- Recognize his/her own printed name and practice printing it.
- Know how to take his turn and help others to take theirs when playing games.
- Count objects to ten.
- Color pictures with wax crayons, keeping within certain lines.
- Cut out pictures and paste cut-outs.
- Listen quietly to stories.
- Listen to a very short story and tell what happened in it.
- Say some nursery rhymes.
- Look at a picture and name things in it.
- Recognize colors.
- Let others speak without interrupting.
- Obey simple rules of the house.

Help your child look forward to school. Talk about it in a friendly way so your child will think of it as a happy place. Discuss school activities, school friends, new experiences, and new things to learn.

If your child expresses doubts or fears, don't pass them off. Try to answer all the questions in a positive, reassuring way and let your child know that there will be friendly people to help on those first uncertain days.