

St. Catherine's Kindergarten Handbook 2019-20

Dear Kindergarten Families,

Welcome to the start of a new school year! We are delighted to be welcoming your child to St. Catherine's, and look forward to getting to know you and your child better come September! Some of the following information has already been shared with you, but here are some friendly reminders you may wish to refer back to throughout the year.

Comfort Kit (Emergency Kit): In case of emergency, each year parents are asked to please provide the school with individual student "Comfort Kits". Details about what should be included inside your child's kit are located on the St. Catherine's website under "Parents" then click on "Printable Forms". If you have any questions about what needs to be included, just ask and we would be happy to assist you as best as we can! Please hand in your child's comfort kit during the first few weeks of school.

Parent Helpers: Each year, parent helpers are assigned to classes as needed through the Parent Participation Program, which is coordinated by Mrs. Cathy Quon. As always, we are very fortunate to have several dedicated parents helping out in our classroom on a regular basis. A big 'thanks' goes out to all our wonderful parent volunteers for the school year!

As Kindergarten is such a busy year, there may be times when additional in-class/take-home assistance is needed. For example, on field trips, during the Christmas play, etc. In these cases, we will do our very best to communicate our needs to parents well in advance so that those interested and available may volunteer.

Another way interested parents can help out is by sharing your talents with the children. Kindergarten students love to have their parents come in to talk to the class about different careers during our spring study of "Community Helpers". We would also love to have parents who are musically inclined or who play an instrument come in to lead us in song! If you have a special interest or talent you would like to share with our class, please let us know so we can schedule your time in Kindergarten.

Parent Interviews: You can sign up for a timeslot when you meet the teacher. If September 5th and 6th don't work for you, please let us know and we would be happy to meet with you at another time over the first few

weeks of school. These interviews are very valuable in that they help us get to know you and your child better early on in the school year.

Sharing: When it is your child's turn to be our daily "Special Helper", he/she will also be asked to please bring in **one** special, non-breakable item from home for him/her to discuss with his/her classmates during "Sharing", or "Show and Tell". Before your child has Sharing, help your child complete the planning sheet provided. This will be sent home the day before in a special bag. The skills we are working on in class are: staying on topic, looking at the audience, speaking loudly and clearly, and keeping our hands/body still. Please don't worry if your child happens to be absent on his/her Sharing/Special Helper day or forgets to bring something in. Your child will still get his/her turn.

Backpack: Each child should have a backpack big enough to carry an agenda, lunch kit and water bottle (Sept.- Jun.), as well as a small blanket or pillow (Sept.-Dec. only) to and from school. ***Please note that no roller bags are permitted.***

Afternoon Quiet Time: Please begin sending your child to school with a small, labelled blanket or pillow that fits in the bottom of his/her backpack starting the week of Monday, September 16th. These will be taken out during afternoon "Quiet Time" and will be kept in your child's backpack at all times in order to conserve classroom space and prevent blankets and pillows from getting mixed up. Blankets and pillows are for use on the floor, so please be sure to wash them regularly. By no means is your child required to sleep; however they may if they wish. They will have an opportunity for some quiet rest and relaxation while listening to a story or some soft music with the lights dimmed. We will continue or discontinue this practice based on the needs of this particular class.

Indoor Shoes: Kindergarten students are not permitted to have multiple pairs of indoor shoes, i.e. a pair of black dress shoes as well as a pair of runners for gym. As children participate in movement-related activities regularly throughout each day, they require appropriate supportive footwear. Thus, please send ***one pair only*** of all black athletic shoes with a non-marking sole for use indoors and during gym time activities.

Recess/Outside Time: Students will go outside for two recess breaks each day. The on-duty staff (as well as our Grade 7 helpers in Terms 1 & 2) will supervise them. For the first couple of weeks, students will not have recess with the rest of the school. They will be taken out to the playground at a different time so that they can familiarize themselves with the equipment and the rules. Please ensure that your child is dressed in appropriate footwear and outerwear for the weather.

Snacks, Lunches, Water Bottles & Tea Towels: Please send one small and healthy snack to school with your child, as well as a healthy lunch. Please be sure your child can quickly identify his/her snack by storing it in a separate baggie or compartment in his/her lunch kit, or by giving it a special label. Every student should have a labelled reusable water bottle in his/her backpack at all times to be used when eating and following physical activity. ***Please do not send candy or anything containing nuts as part of your child's snack/lunch.*** Please note that you are still required to send your child to school with a snack on Hot Lunch days.

Please send an old tea towel you are comfortable with your child using as a place mat in his/her lunch kit daily. This will help prevent crumbs and ensure a speedy clean up. Ideally empty wrappers and unfinished food items will all be sent back home in your child's lunch kit so you can tell what your child has/hasn't eaten, and to prevent waste.

Birthdays & Treats: If you would like to bring in a special treat for your child to enjoy with the class on his/her birthday or for another special reason, i.e. Halloween, Christmas, Easter, etc. please ensure it does not contain nuts or traces of nuts. ***If it is purchased from a store, the package must clearly state, "Does not contain nuts".*** Some parents like to provide us with a list of ingredients when they have made food items from scratch, just to be sure. This is greatly appreciated!

Birthday Party Invitations: If you would like to have your child's birthday party invitations distributed at school, please ensure you have invited the whole class, or that you have invited either all the girls or all the boys. Otherwise, please discreetly distribute invitations outside of school hours, as to avoid any hurt feelings.

Arrival at School: It is school policy that ALL students from K-7 wait for the bell on the grass field. Once the first bell has rung at 8:30am, children are to line up outside the classroom along the wall by the Kindergarten door. Please ensure neither you nor your child is standing behind the door during drop-off or pick up. Please encourage your child to enter the classroom independently. If you arrive after the first bell rings at 8:35am, please try not to knock on the outside Kindergarten door, as the teachers will be busy assisting children. Instead, please try and walk your child around the building and drop him/her off at the inside door, or have an older sibling do this.

If you arrive with your child between 8:10 and 8:30am on an indoor supervision day only, you may drop your child off at the inside Kindergarten door and he/she will be able to look at a book quietly at his/her table, colour or play with a puzzle or game on the carpet. Please do not enter the classroom prior to 8:30am otherwise.

Lates: If you arrive after the second bell, i.e. after 8:35am, please be sure to stop by the office and get a late slip so that they know your child has arrived. Attendance is taken at the start of the day and after Lunch Recess for safety reasons.

Dismissal: Please wait for your child at the outside Kindergarten door, which leads directly to the back parking lot. Instead of walking through the parking lot, please be sure to take your child along the sidewalk. Dismissal is at 2:45pm and students will not be released until a parent or older sibling comes to the door. If you need to pick up your child early for an appointment (i.e. doctor, dentist, etc.) please first check-in with Ms. O'Donnell. She will page us and your child will meet you at the office.

Absentees: If your child is going to be away, please inform us as well as the office ahead of time, if possible. A note explaining the absence must be sent to the school upon your return for administration purposes.

Library: Your child will be permitted to take home a library book once a week and is responsible for returning it before being allowed a new book. The Kindergarten children have Library on Wednesday and books will be due back on Tuesday.

Assemblies/Masses: We have weekly school Masses on Friday mornings at 8:30am in our school gymnasium. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend! Kindergarten children sit with their Grade 5 Buddies during all Masses and assemblies. **Labelled school sweaters** must be worn to school on Mass and assembly days.

Physical Education: Children will participate in gym time activities three times a week, plus daily games and singing activities, which will take place both in class and outdoors. **Girls must wear a pair of dark shorts under their tunics at all times.** If girls wish to remove their tunics for P.E., they must have St. Catherine's gym shorts underneath.

Supporting Your Child's Learning: Please use the materials and suggested activities that were provided in the Kindergarten Orientation Bag that your child received in June 2019. These activities will help with kindergarten readiness skills.

It is also highly encouraged that, in addition to using the materials in the Kindergarten Orientation Bag, families read to their Kindergarten child every day for at least fifteen minutes. If you are having trouble finding books appropriate for your child, please let us know. We will happily recommend some early readers

or share some of our classroom books. On the inside cover of your child's agenda book, you will find his/her Raz-Kids login information and password. Just go to www.raz-kids.com, go to the student Log In page, and enter the teacher username. From there, your child can access his/her account and begin reading!

*****Individual student agenda books will be distributed in September.**

Agendas: Student agendas will be sent home daily and can be used for parents to relay non-urgent messages/questions. They will also contain any notices in the front pocket. **Please have your child show you his/her agenda nightly.** Please do not convey urgent or sensitive information through your child's agenda. Those matters are always best dealt with in person, preferably after school.

Fieldtrips: If you sign-up to drive/supervise during one of our upcoming field trips, **please enter the school through the main office doors and check in.** We will be paged and will indicate to the office staff when the children are ready to go and you may proceed to the classroom to please wait by the inside Kindergarten door until notice is given to depart. It is important that when parents sign up to drive they have a current "2019/2020 Driver Authorization Form" on file at the office. Parents are also strongly encouraged to complete a current criminal record check if they will be working with students at school or driving students on field trips. Our school provides a link to parents to complete this criminal record check form.

Family Photos: Please bring in a 4x6" vertical family photograph so it can be displayed above your child's coat hook to help make him/her feel welcome 😊.

Please don't hesitate to contact us at the school directly if you have any questions. We look forward to an exciting and successful school year!

Thank you!