

St. Catherine's Kindergarten Handbook 2020-21

Welcome!

Welcome to the start of a new school year! Kindergarten is a very exciting time for children and their parents, but Kindergarten can also be a challenging year as students transition from being at home to being in a school environment. During this school year, your child will have many experiences and opportunities to meet and work with other children as well as get used to the routines of school.

Parents are their child's first teachers. We want to work with you to educate your child in the years to come. This handbook is intended to help you and your child understand and prepare for the adventure ahead.

Let's get started!

How Parents Can Help:

Please see the attached document titled, *"Getting Ready for Kindergarten – How Parents Can Help"*

Additional Information:

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: (TBD)

Each year, parent helpers are assigned to classes as needed through the Parent Participation Program, which is coordinated by Mrs. Cathy Quon/Mrs. Rebecca Baker. 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:

Meetings with the Kindergarten teacher are done during the first week of school. These meetings are one-on-one and are 10 minutes long. If the dates that are provided 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.

Labeling:

It's important that every clothing item, footwear, water bottle, and meal accessories (thermos, utensils, etc.) are clearly labelled. **Mabel's Labels** are a durable label product and are highly recommended: mabelslabels.ca

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 their Agenda. Please place the sharing item in a reusable bag non-transparent 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 roller bags are NOT permitted.

Afternoon Quiet Time: (TBD)

Please begin sending your child to school with a small, labelled blanket or pillow that fits in the bottom of his/her backpack. 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 and play in a designated area. The on-duty staff will supervise them. 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. 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 pack juice or milk.

Due to allergies, do not send anything containing nuts as part of your child's snack/lunch.

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: (TBD)

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: (TBD)

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:

Refer to the St. Catherine's Restart Plan on this year's Drop-off protocol. The Restart Plan information is found in a school wide email sent from the office.

Please walk your child to the Kindergarten classroom outside door and wait until the teacher has welcomed your son/daughter inside. Be mindful of social distancing while waiting.

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:

Refer to the St. Catherine's Restart Plan on this year's Pick-Up protocol. The Restart Plan information is found in a school wide email sent from the office.

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: (TBD)

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: (TBD)

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 two or three times a week. Kindergarten students do not wear a gym strip. **Girls must wear a pair of dark shorts under their tunics at all times.**

Raz-Kids:

It is highly encouraged that 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. There will also be a weekly message glued into your child's Agenda on either Thursday or Friday. Please make sure to read these messages as they let provide details on learning activities that are happening in the Kindergarten classroom.

Website:

The Kindergarten page on the St. Catherine's website is updated weekly. It contains the Agenda's weekly message, field-trip permission forms, and additional learning activities with literacy and numeracy that can be done at home.

Fieldtrips: (TBD)

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 "2020-2021 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!

Ms. Canil - mcanil@stcatherines.ca

Getting Ready for Kindergarten -

How Parents Can Help:

Faith Formation

- Read me stories about Jesus and let me know that His love for me is everlasting.
- Take me to Mass so I can celebrate Jesus' life with other members of our Church.
- Pray with me every day so that I can grow closer to Jesus.
- Show me how to make the Sign of the Cross and pray the Our Father and Hail Mary prayers.
- Give me opportunities to help and serve others.
- Teach me about the birth of Jesus, His death, resurrection, and ascension.
- Talk with me about what makes me special and that I am a unique creation of God.

Social & Emotional Skills

- Show me how to get along with others.
- Allow me to make new friends.
- Teach me to "use my words".
- Give me time to "use my words" (five seconds)
- Encourage me to speak in complete sentences.
- Help me learn to follow simple routines.
- Provide early bedtime routines for me.
- Provide times for me to be away from you.
- Give me chances to take turns.
- Help me learn self-control.
- Show me good manners and help me practice.
- Encourage me to listen to others.
- Teach me kindness.
- Show me how to care for others.
- Talk to me about feelings and name them so I can talk about feelings too.
- Help me learn that my actions have consequences.
- Give me chances to work on my own.
- Give me chances to be responsible.

Safety & Self-Help Skills

- Teach me to use the bathroom by myself.
- Teach me the names of my body parts.
- Let me dress myself.
- Teach me my full name, age, phone number and parents' names.
- Show me how to care for my belongings.
- Encourage me to clean up after myself.
- Expect me to put away my own toys.

Coordination Skills (Large and small muscle control)

- Let me run, jump, hop and march.
- Play ball with me.
- Let me build with blocks.
- Let me practice opening and closing things.
- Show me how to zip, button, tie and wrap clothing.
- Help me use scissors to cut out simple shapes and pictures.
- Give me crayons and pencils to use.
- Let me cut and paste and draw and paint.
- Teach me to make lines and circles and to print my name.

Problem Solving Skills – Science Discovery

- Talk about similarities and differences.
- Help me ask questions about the world.
- Show me about cause and effect.
- Encourage me to create collections.
- Encourage me to observe nature.
- Let me experiment and make predictions.
- Give me time to figure things out.
- Let me touch, hear, see, smell and taste when it is safe.
- Give me opportunities to help prepare snacks and meals.
- Help me learn the colours.
- Give me chances to weigh things.
- Help me understand relationships between things.
- Teach me about space like: above, below, next to, in front of, after, before.
- Encourage me to use describing words, such as, big, little, small, smooth, rough, over, under, fat, thin, long, short.

Problem Solving Skills – Math

- Help me discover parts and wholes.
- Help me learn the basic shapes.
- Give me chances to sort and match objects by colour, size and shape.
- Show me groups in sets of two, three, four and five.
- Play counting games with me so I can learn to count to 10.
- Show me how to use objects to learn how to add and subtract up to 10.
- Talk about time, such as, "Its 7 o'clock, time for bed," the seasons and today, tomorrow, and yesterday.
- Show me how to measure and count: for baking, for building, and travelling.
- Talk about place such as: first, second, third, and last.
- Give me chances to follow patterns and put things in order.
- Give me puzzles to solve with 4 – 12 pieces.
- Help me learn to estimate and make good guesses.

Creativity Skills

- Give me chances to express myself through art, music, dance, cooking, building and drama.
- Help me learn to make choices.
- Show me how to invent and experiment.
- Help me pretend and imagine.
- Let me to think and wonder.
- Support and encourage my interests and talents.

Language Skills (Reading Readiness Skills)

- Read to me often every day.
- Talk about the stories with me.
- Let me retell simple stories to you.
- Help me to make up my own stories.
- Show me how you read from the left to right on a page and from the front to back of a book.
- Give me letters to play with like magnetic letters for the fridge, or letters cut out of a magazine.
- Help me identify upper- and lower-case letter names and sounds.
- Help me learn what my name looks like and the letters in my name.
- Sing songs with me.
- Share rhymes with me.
- Help me learn words in my world (i.e. STOP signs, cereal boxes, t-shirts)