

Welcome
to
Brookside Kindergarten



Kindergarten Handbook
2017-2018

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March, 2017

Dear Parents:

This booklet has been written to introduce you to the Kindergarten program at Brookside School. We hope it will answer many of the questions you might have regarding this important first year in school.

It is indeed a privilege to spend days watching children grow, learn and develop. Children bring with them a unique curiosity, energy and zest for life. We believe it is our role to provide an environment that facilitates the best possible place to grow and learn. An environment that is trusting, caring and encouraging will enable each child to feel comfortable enough to take risks in their learning, enabling each one to reach their potential. Each child is unique with their own set of background experiences, interests, characteristics and abilities. We, as teachers, will strive to foster an appreciation of one another as unique and valuable individuals in the class.

We want your child's first year in school to be filled with happy days and positive experiences.

Regards,
Our Kindergarten teacher



Kindergarten Registration

Children who are four years of age on or before March 1, 2017, may register in Kindergarten for the 2017-2018 school year. The school office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Kindergarten Fees and Supplies

Kindergarten fees are used for field trip admissions, kinder cooking supplies, guest speakers, Kanga pouches and school supplies. The amount will be determined by mid-June and will be due by September 30.

Kindergarten Program Statement

The *Kindergarten Program Statement* describes the learning achievements that will help prepare children for entry into Grade 1 and provide a foundation for later success.

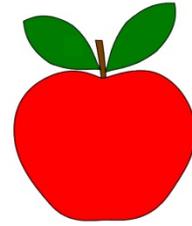
Young children begin learning in a variety of environments - in their homes, in day care programs, and in the community. Children arrive in kindergarten from diverse backgrounds and with a variety of experiences. Some children have already been developing some of the learning described in this statement.

The *Kindergarten Program Statement* is based on the following beliefs relating to young children, their learning, and home and community environments.

- ◆ Children develop through similar stages but at individual rates, and the kindergarten program provides learning experiences that meet the individual and group needs interests and developmental levels. Additional support is provided to children with special needs to help them increase their potential for learning.
- ◆ Young children are naturally curious and eager to learn, and they benefit from developing positive relationships with others, including children of their own age. The kindergarten program provides opportunities for children to learn about their environment through organized activities, purposeful play and cooperation with others.
- ◆ Parents are their children's first and most important teachers and play a central role in the lives of their children. The program supports and respects the dignity and worth of the family and encourages parents to participate in their children's education.
- ◆ The kindergarten program plays a role in the coordination of community services for young children and their families.

Clear expectations in seven learning areas are described in the *Kindergarten Program Statement*. They meet the social, physical, intellectual, cultural, creative and emotional needs of young children and provide a foundation for elementary schooling:

- ◆ Early Literacy
- ◆ Early Numeracy
- ◆ Community and Environmental Awareness
- ◆ Personal and Social Responsibility
- ◆ Physical Skills and Well-being
- ◆ Creative and Cultural Expression
- ◆ Citizenship and Identity



The expectations of the seven learning areas are interrelated. Young children learn in an integrated way during instructional activities and many of these will be achieved at the same time. Children accomplish learning not only in the kindergarten program, but also in their homes and communities.

Program Highlights

❖ **Early Literacy**

Children develop language skills by enjoying and sharing many different types of books, stories, poems, recordings and videos. They learn to predict what happens next in a story and to ask questions about their reading, listening and viewing. They express their ideas and experiences through talking and through pictures, letters or words. Children are able to recognize copy and write familiar words and letters.

Edmonton Public School's Balanced Literacy Program, which has been implemented by Edmonton Public Schools for the past eight years, forms the basis of our Kindergarten Language Arts programming. This program is consistent with the Alberta curriculum and is supported by a two-year teacher inservice and support model.



❖ **Early Numeracy**

Children explore number, patterns and space through daily experiences. They demonstrate awareness of addition and subtraction, and measurement by matching, counting, describing and comparing familiar materials. They sort, classify and build real-world objects, and learn to organize information related to their world.

In kindergarten, children begin to develop problem-solving skills that they will continue to expand and refine throughout their schooling.

❖ **Community and Environmental Awareness**

This area focuses on the early learning in science and social studies.

Children use their senses to explore, investigate and describe their environment. They recognize similarities and differences in living things, objects and materials. Using simple tools in a safe and appropriate manner, they select and work with a variety of materials to build structures. They explore scientific concepts using sand, water, blocks and other materials.

Children become aware of similarities and differences between themselves and others by describing feelings, special interests, events and experiences shared with family and friends. They learn about special places and people who help in the community and role-play familiar situations, such as the store, home or school.

❖ **Personal and Social Responsibility**

This area focuses on personal and social management skills necessary for effective learning across all subject areas. Development of these skills takes time and occurs at different rates as a result of each child's experiences. In the kindergarten program, children begin to develop and practise skills that they will continue to enhance throughout their lives.

By participating actively in learning tasks, trying new things and taking risks, children see themselves as capable of learning. Children are curious and learn to adapt to new situations. They begin to accept rules and deal with routines in a school environment. They learn to take responsibility for selecting and completing learning activities.

❖ **Physical Skills and Well-being**

This area focuses on the early learning in health and physical education.

By becoming aware of healthy food choices, learning to observe safety rules and participating in physical activities, children practise behaviours that promote a healthy lifestyle.

Through games and activities, using equipment, such as balls, beanbags and hoops, children develop coordinated movement, balance and stability. Children develop finger and hand precision and dexterity by using objects, such as beads, blocks and puzzles.

❖ **Creative and Cultural Expression**

This area focuses on the early learning in art, music and drama.

Children explore and express their thoughts and feelings in many ways through the use of language, sound, colour, shape, and movement. They join in poems, songs, and action verses, and share their family traditions and celebrations.



❖ **Citizenship and Identity**

This area focuses on the skills and processes of critical and creative thinking, decision making and problem-solving, as well as cooperation and conflict resolution.

Kindergarten students will experience opportunities to develop attitudes, skills, and knowledge that will enable them to become engaged, active, informed and responsible citizens.



Brookside School Profile

A Caring School Creating the Future



Brookside is a school in which students are provided with opportunities to learn and grow in a supportive environment that fosters high achievement and a strong sense of well-being.

In its 48th year Brookside will offer the program of studies to more than 260 students. Kindergarten to grade 6 teachers, are using a Balanced Literacy Program in Language Arts. French as a Second Language is provided to students who are in grades 4-6.

All students and staff members are continually expanding their knowledge of the latest educational resources in the area of communication and technology and make good use of our computer lab. The Kindergarten classroom is equipped with its own SmartBoard. This equipment is primarily intended to increase student engagement in their learning through the use of color and movement. The interactive quality of these boards is what makes them interesting and dynamic in our classroom. Students love using the SmartBoards as we incorporate them in our daily lessons.

Our parents are very involved in every aspect of their children's education. Expectations for achievement are high and the results have been excellent. School Council meetings are well attended. We are fortunate in having many volunteers who work directly in the classroom with students as well as volunteers who give presentations, assist with some clerical work and help supervise field trips.

Since the fall of 1994, an out of school care service has leased classrooms in our school, This has provided an excellent service for students in the community and students from outside the community who wish to come to our school. Since the fall of 2012, the YMCA has been operating this service in our school.

Our focus is to foster high achievement in language arts, mathematics, and science. Daily physical activity is supported by structured gym time and unstructured recess time. We will encourage participation, leadership, co-operation, responsibility, and caring with our students at Brookside while enforcing high expectations for student behaviour and conduct. We will continue to encourage a high degree of involvement from our parents and our non-parent community.



What is SchoolZone? SchoolZone is an information system developed by Edmonton Public Schools. It provides parents and students with secure access to school and student information and is designed to enhance the relationship between school and home. Using portal technology and the convenience of the Internet, it is available any time and any place. SchoolZone provides online access to daily homework assignments and class news from participating classroom teachers, gathered together in a convenient calendar format. By accessing the site, parents will have timely access to information and help them be more actively involved in their children's academic success. Students have access to a valuable organizational tool to help them plan their time. As well, you can find attendance records, newsletters, progress reports, district events, achievement results, and access to selected online educational resources.

Kindergarten Times



Morning

Bell	8:40 a.m.
Classes Begin	8:45 a.m.
Recess	10:15 - 10:30 a.m.
Dismissal	11:36 a.m.

A Typical Day in Kindergarten

8:40 a.m. Arrival and Attendance

Most days in kindergarten will have the following components:

- Calendar, weather
- Balanced Literacy/Math Learning
- Poems, songs, stories
- Science/health/social studies activities
- Physical activity in the gym., the classroom or outside
- Teacher/student directed learning
- Whole group and small group activities
- Snack time
- Centre time
- Music (once a week)
- Library (once a week)
- Recess (every day weather permitting)

11:25 a.m. Clean up, prepare for home, review activities

Note: Library, Music, Computers and Gym are scheduled on varying days.

Learning through Play

Children learn best in a relaxed, non-threatening environment. They learn best when they are self-motivated and interested in the activity. They learn best in a natural way through play discovery and experimentation. Play is a child's work!



Centres

Learning centres are areas where carefully selected equipment and materials are set up to provide a range of experiences for students. They are used to introduce, reinforce and enrich the learning of concepts and skills. They support and extend curriculum activities and allow the opportunity for self-directed learning. This is a time when we can observe and guide children individually and as members of small groups. It is a time when children have the opportunity to be independent, interdependent and creative as they engage in learning activities.



Some centres are open all the time, while others are used at certain times to enhance theme related studies. Students are encouraged to direct themselves in choosing a centre according to their interests and needs. At times students will be asked to participate in a specific activity or centre.

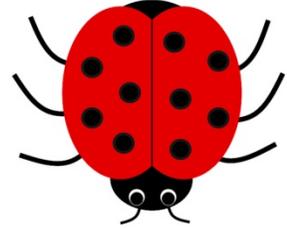
VALUE OF LEARNING CENTRES:

- hands on activities
- making choices
- developing skills
- developing independence
- accommodating a variety of levels and needs



INTEGRATING CURRICULUM AND MOTIVATING THROUGH A FOCUS ON AREAS OF INTEREST

The Kindergarten program addresses the curriculum through a focus on areas of interest and inquiry. The learning projects become a vehicle for acquiring skills, knowledge and attitudes. Each area of focus addresses the expectations of the curriculum and will sometimes involve a field trip or a special guest to extend the learning and understanding. All areas of study will incorporate literacy, math, science, songs, rhymes, games, and other activities.



Absentee Check Program

Brookside School has a Student Absentee Check Program. The program is intended to ensure your child has arrived at school. Please e-mail brookside@epsb.ca or call 780.434.0464 to report absences. If a student is absent from class, a phone call is made home to the parent to make sure that the child is at home.

Attendance

A written explanation, e-mail to brookside@epsb.ca or phone call to the school office (780.434.0464) of student absences is required from parents. Good attendance is important in the first years. If you know your child is going to be absent, please inform the school ahead of time.

Holidays during Scheduled Instructional Time

The school year has been organized so as to provide for natural breaks and holidays for students. The demands of the curriculum are such that if a child were to miss a significant period of instructional time this could have an impact on his or her achievement for the year.

Field Trips

Field trips extend the classroom themes and provide opportunities for students to share common experiences in the community. Throughout the year field trips are scheduled to complement the unit of learning. We will go on a few field trips. Places that may be visited include: Ortona Gymnastics, the Royal Alberta Museum, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, the Storyland Valley Zoo and the Muttart Conservatory. Alternatively we may invite specialists to visit our class to share information on our topic of learning.



Footwear



Suitable footwear should be worn according to weather conditions. All students, parents, and visitors are asked to remove outdoor footwear at the entrances. Shoes or slippers are to be worn at all times in the building. This is not only for health reasons, but to accommodate fire drills which may occur at any time. A pair of running shoes should be left at school for indoor use only. Students need to be able to get in and out of them without assistance. Velcro runners are recommended. **Please do not send shoes with shoelaces.**

Snack Program

Kindergarten children will eat a snack together each day. Please provide your child with a nutritious snack. Here are some suggestions: fruits (whole or cut-up, applesauce, yogurt, cheese and crackers, veggies with or without dip, muffins or granola bars.



Please avoid sending junk food, e.g. chocolate bars, chips, pop, etc and any foods containing peanuts due to severe allergies in the school. Please remember the food sent is meant to be a *snack, NOT a meal*. **Juice boxes are not necessary as there is a water fountain in the classroom.**

Handbooks

Brookside's School Handbook outlining school events, procedures and rules will be on SchoolZone as well as sent home with all Kinder students in September.

Library

Our Brookside library is an integral part of all curricular programs because it is an important source for books - books for enjoyment and reference. Beginning in mid-September, the kindergarten children will sign out books from the library once a week.



Marking Clothing

Please label with the child's full name all clothing, boots, book bags and other supplies. It is impossible to locate misplaced or lost belongings unless they are clearly labelled. **Your co-operation in this matter is appreciated.**

Newsletters

The Kindergarten newsletter will be posted on SchoolZone during the first week of each new month, with updates provided at other times, as required. This newsletter will inform parents of recent classroom activities as well as upcoming events and activities. Included, will be a monthly calendar. Other school documents are posted on SchoolZone as required and are also available from the school office.



Parent and School Partnership

Parent participation enhances the kindergarten program. Parents or guardians are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, support programming at home, or become part of the School Council. The School Council works with the administration and teachers to maintain communication, assist with planning special events, is important to the child, to the teacher, and to the classroom programs.

Reporting Periods

There are two reporting periods - March and June. Parent-teacher conferences in November and student-led conferences in March as well as written reports are some ways in which dialogue about progress occurs.



In-class FM System

An FM system is used in our classroom. The purpose of the system is to create equal sound throughout the classroom. This is done through appropriate placement of speakers. Systems are adjusted so they sound slightly louder than normal conversation volume, anywhere in the classroom

Parent Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering in school and at home is greatly appreciated and adds something "extra" to the program for your children.

Some possible areas for helping out include:

- volunteering in the class on a regular or occasional basis
- volunteering on field trips and/or special guest days
- helping to prepare materials at school (cutting, copying, scrapbooks)
- helping prepare materials at home (craft preparation, play dough)
- sharing a talent, skill, or information with students
- helping with special class projects
- providing snacks on special celebration days (every parent is asked to sign up for one)
- taking photographs on special days



- a class representative is needed from the Kindergarten room to attend Parent Council meetings.
- Scholastic book organizer

A sign-up sheet for these duties will be posted during our Meet and Greet Day on the first day of School. Your efforts and support are greatly appreciated!

First Week of School Schedule

Tues. Sept. 5
Confirm
registration

Wed. Sept. 6
1/2 class attend

Thurs. Sept.7
1/2 class attend

Fri. Sept. 8
Entire class
attends



Confirm registration is a time for all parents and children to come to Kindergarten for an initial visit **between 8:40 and 10:00 a.m.** to meet the teacher, fill out forms and become familiar with the classroom/school.



2017-18 IMPORTANT DATES

September 5	First Day of School	
October 9	Thanksgiving Day Holiday	
October 20	Teacher learning Day (PD Day - no school for students)	
November 9 & 10	Non-Instructional Days - NO SCHOOL	
November 27	Teacher Learning Day (PD Day - no school for students)	
December 23 - Jan 7 (incl.)	Winter Break	
February 9	Teacher Learning Day (PD Day -no school for students)	
February 19	Family Day Holiday	
March 1 & 2	Teacher's Convention (NO SCHOOL)	
March 24 - April 2 (incl.)	Spring Break & Easter Monday	
April 30	Teacher Learning Day (PD Day - no school for students)	
May 18-22(incl)	May 18 is a Non-Instructional Day, Victoria Day holiday is May 21 and May 22 is a Day-in-lieu for Teachers - NO SCHOOL	
June 28	Last day of classes	



All I ever really needed to know I learned in Kindergarten

By Robert Fulghum



Most of what I really need to know about how to live, and what to do, and how to be. I learned in Kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain but there in the sandbox at nursery school.

These are the things I learned: share everything. Play fair.

Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you. Live a balanced life. Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon. When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands and stick together. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the plastic cup - they all die. So do we.

And then remember the book about Dick and Jane and the first word you learned, the biggest word of all: LOOK. Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all - the whole world - had cookies and milk about 3 o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankets for a nap. Or if we had a basic policy in our nation and other nations to always put things back where we found them and cleaned up our own messes. And it is still true; no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.

