



♥ Welcome to Kindergarten

Dear Parents,

This booklet has been written to introduce you to the Kindergarten program at Muir Lake 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, allowing each one to reach their potential. Each child is unique with their own set of experiences, interests, 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.

See you in September!

Ms. LeDressay, Mrs. Ellert, Mrs. Jespersen

a

Absences-If, your child, is away, please email me at kledressay@psd70.ab.ca as well as the office at muirlake@psd70.ab.ca .

b

Bathrooms-We don't have a bathroom in our classroom, and we will be using the bathroom down the hall for our classroom. At the beginning of the year we will have a teacher supervise small groups of children to the bathroom, and as the year continues, we will allow one child at a time to use the washroom with permission and a bathroom pass.

Belongings- Please label all clothing and footwear your child brings to school.

Birthdays- Birthdays are special days! We celebrate birthdays by having each student create a special work of art for the classroom on their birthday. If your child would like to bring a treat to share with their classmates, you can send or bring in something to share at snack time at 10 am. Birthday treats are optional and not expected. If you are sending birthday invites, please send them in labeled ziplock, and we will help your child distribute them into the mail envelopes. A class list of first names will be distributed in September.



Curriculum- In Alberta, we follow the Alberta Program of Studies. This informs our planning and pacing for the year. 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 to provide a foundation for elementary schooling:

- ◆ Early Literacy
- ◆ Early Numeracy
- ◆ Community and Environmental Awareness
- ◆ Personal and Social Responsibility
- ◆ Physical Skills and Well-being
- ◆ Creative 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.

To read the complete kindergarten curriculum find the link below

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/563583/kindprogstate2008.pdf>

Communication-We want to hear about how your child is enjoying school and also share with you their learning each week. We will be using Seesaw in which we will post photos, daily learning, and reminders about upcoming events. You can download the app, and you will receive a QR code to access your child's learning journal. If you have any questions about setting up the app or

accessing your child's journal, I will be happy to help. You will also be able to message me directly and privately on seesaw, email, or call the school and leave a message. I am delighted to chat during pick up and drop off, and if you need to schedule a meeting for any questions you may have, I would be glad to set one up when I am available.

d Donate-We love to build and create with found materials! We will always accept materials for our collection. Some of the items we collect:

- Caps (from water bottles, detergent, markers, jam)
- Small baskets
- Small boxes (e.g., cracker, tea boxes)
- Natural materials (pine cones, sea shells, stones, twigs, seeds)
- Flyers, envelopes, calendars, magazines
- Paint samples (e.g., paint chips)
- Beads, pearls, buttons
- Anything wooden (spoons, blocks, wooden picture frames, wood pieces)
- Soup cans/cylinders (paper off and no sharp edges, paper towel rolls)
- Unused paper (computer, scrapbooking, construction, etc.)
- Pieces of material, felt, fabric, yarn, string, net, ribbon
- Trays, corks, toothpicks, egg cartons
- Clean plastic grocery bags

e Eating at School-We will have a snack at 10 a.m. and lunch at 12:00 everyday. We do not have a microwave in our classroom; please send warm foods in a Thermos. Please do not send any glass containers to school.

EYE (Early Years Evaluation)

The Early Years Evaluation is a tool we use in Kindergarten which provides us with information about each child's development and early learning. It will give us an understanding of your child's education in four areas of development- awareness of self and the environment, cognitive and intellectual skills, language and communication skills, as well as physical development. This assessment helps me to organize instruction and monitor each child's progress in school. We will complete this assessment during your child's playtime along with some one-on-one time in the month of September, as well as whole group activities. We will be documenting his/her interests, strengths and learning preferences. We will compile the data during the month of October and you will receive a report of your child's results. Parent/Teacher interviews will follow and provide you with an opportunity to ask questions.

f Field Trips- We will be going on many field trips this year to enrich our learning and the kindergarten experience. We will be going to Chickakoo to collaborate with the Nature Kindergarten, Telus Science Centre, West Edmonton Mall Sea Life Caverns, swimming at the Spruce Grove Tri Leisure, Happy Acres Farm, and the Edmonton Valley Zoo. More information regarding field trips and volunteering on trips will be sent home.

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Gym- We have 15 minutes of gym per day, from 9:40-9:55 during the school's first-morning recess. We will work on building physical skills, playing cooperative learning games and learning to use gym equipment.

h

Home Reading- We encourage daily reading with your child. Listening to stories and reading books with you, will build their language and early literacy skills. We will begin a Home reading program in May for all students.

Hot lunch-During the school year you can order hot lunch and fundraising lunches for your child. When ordering, please keep in mind the dates your child attends that week and do not order on field trips days. Hot lunch cannot be saved for your child if they are away. If they are away and they have requested a hot meal, you can pick it up at noon in the classroom or a sibling can pick it up. The link to register is: www.muirlakeschool.hotlunches.net

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Illness-Although Regular attendance is vital to your child's learning; please do not send your child to school if they have a severe cough, fever or are vomiting. We work hard to ensure hand washing is completed and that our classroom is kept hygienic. It helps everyone stay healthy if your child stays home and rests when he or she are ill.

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Jolly Phonics-We will be using the Jolly Phonics literacy program for learning letter sounds. We will begin learning letter sounds at the end of September. More details to follow. If you would like more information about the program: <https://www.jollylearning.co.uk/jolly-phonics/>



Kindergarten Daily Schedule

Most days in kindergarten will have the following components:

8:01-Warning Bell

8:06-O Canada and attendance

- Free play
- Morning Meeting
- 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 and Lunchtime
- Centre time

2:35 p.m.-Dismissal

Music (2-3 times a week)

Library (once a week)

Recess (every day weather permitting)



Library-We will visit the library once per week, and each student can borrow two books. Our librarian is Mrs. Schram, and she is an excellent resource for us! The books are due the next week on their designated library day. Each student will receive a library bag to transport their books to and from school. Please ensure it comes back with the books each time. Library days will be marked in the monthly calendar as well as in the weekly reminder message.



Music-Kindergarten Students will have music 2-3 times a week with Mrs. Gottenbos our Music Specialist.



Newsletters-I will post a monthly newsletter on seesaw the last week of the month, and a paper copy will be sent home as well.



Office-If you are picking up your child early from school, please sign them out at the office and wait there. If your child is late, please sign them in at the office and get a late slip.

Outdoor Play-Playing and learning outside is an essential part of mental and physical development. Kindergarten students will have 1.5 hours of recess, each day as well as an additional 2 hours of outdoor learning per week. Please send appropriate clothing for the day; we will often be exploring in the outdoor spaces behind the school and having proper footwear is essential for the safety of little feet. Please ensure your child is able to run in their shoes.

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Parent Teacher Conferences-Parent Teacher conferences will take place in October, to review the EYE (Early Year Evaluation Results) and a Student-Led Conference, with a meeting with parents will take place in March.

Play-Play-based and Inquiry-based Learning: Our Kindergarten program follows a Play-based and an inquiry-based learning approach where the children's interests and curiosities guide the teaching and learning. Children will experience instruction in both large and small group work and engage in a variety of learning centers. Learning centers provide students with the opportunity to develop social skills, make decisions, use individual learning styles, work at their own pace, promote creativity and expression, communicate ideas, and foster personal interests. Play will be valued as an essential learning tool as well as paper pencil tasks and technology. Children learn best in a relaxed, non-threatening environment and they learn best when they are self-motivated and interested in the activity. They will learn best in a natural way through play discovery and experimentation. Play is a child's work!

http://www.ncca.biz/Aistear/pdfs/Guidelines_ENG/Play_ENG.pdf

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Questions-If you have any questions, you can contact via email: kledressay@psd70.ab.ca or send me a message through the Seesaw app.



Report Cards-There is no report card for the first term. I will review your child's EYE (Early Years Evaluation) results with you in October at the Student-Led Conference. A student-led conference is an opportunity for your child to share what they have been learning and also a time to meet with the teacher.

March 15, 2019-Report cards are available online through the parent portal. We will also have a student-led conference after the report cards.

June 28, 2019-Final Report cards are available online through the parent portal.

Recess-Kindergarten students children can be brought into their classrooms as early as 7:40 a.m. for the month of September. Coming in at this time will allow them to feel more comfortable entering the school and beginning their day. As of October, kindergarten students will play outside on the supervised playgrounds (both the little park by the pre-school and the big park) until the morning bell rings at 8:00 a.m. and they can enter the school. We will have another recess time from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. (just kindergarten students) during this time we may play at the park or explore the outdoor spaces about our school. Lunch recess is from 11:25-11:55 a.m., with all students. During this time kindergarten students, are permitted to play at the pre-school park, the central park and the grassy area between the parks.



Seesaw-We will be using the seesaw app for parent communication and for documenting student learning. At the end of the year, you will be able to archive all of your child pictures and videos.

Show and Share-A show and share bag will be sent home with your child, along with a piece of paper. Please write or help your child to print three clues about the object in the bag. Show and Share is an excellent opportunity to build language and list attributes of the object. We will guess as a class and ask questions about the item. A Show and Share Calendar will go home.



Transportation-Kindergarten students are taken to the bus a few minutes before the bell rings and we will work with students to remember which bus they are on. We work to build independence for the last months of school. If there are any changes to transportation (such as you are picking them up or they are taking the bus when you usually pick them up). Please send me an email or message so I can ensure that our end of day runs smoothly. They must have a bus pass if they are riding the bus. There is a charge for lost bus passes. If you have any questions about transportation please contact transportation at: 780-963-8452.

Toys from Home-If your child uses an object (stuffy, particular car) to help make the transition from home to school more comfortable, they may bring it to school. We do ask that all other toys stay at home. If toys are brought to school, they will be held in their cubby until the end of the day. We appreciate your help with this matter as children become very upset if their belongings go missing.



Unique- We love that each child is unique and brings their own unique experiences and ideas to our classroom. We work hard to foster their unique gifts and talents, and they grow and learn with us. Please complete the child information sheet at the beginning of the year to help us get to know your child better!



Volunteers-We enjoy and genuinely need parents and caregivers to help in the kindergarten classroom. We guarantee that if you come in you will be put to work and will be rewarded with many chuckles and opportunities to see how we spend each day. We need the month of September and most of October to ourselves, as the children and the teachers need the time to get to know each other, learn the expectations, and learn routines. By the end of October, we would be very grateful to have you assist in the classroom. If you are willing to help us out, please complete the volunteer package sent home at the beginning of the school year.

How to Become a Volunteer

1. Complete the volunteer sheet for kindergarten as to when you would like to volunteer,
2. Read the Volunteer Handbook, the link listed below
http://muirlake.psd70.ab.ca/documents/general/Volunteer_Booklet_Muir_Lake.pdf
3. Complete the Volunteer package and hand into the office.



Weather-Please, send appropriate clothing for each day. We spend at least 2 hours a day outside, and students will have more fun if they are warm, dry and comfortable.



eXtra clothes-Please ensure that your child has a complete extra set of clothes socks, underwear, pants and a shirt. We will send home a note if any items need to be replenished during the year.



Younger Siblings-It is in your child's and the program's best interest to have our parent volunteers available without younger children. This not only allows your full attention to be focused on the class but also allows for some special time between you and your kindergarten student. Thank you for making childcare arrangements for younger siblings.



Zippers-We work on building independence in kindergarten, work with your child on learning to zip their coat zipper if they cannot. Please send shoes your child can manage independently. They are always happy to be able to do things on their own, and it makes getting ready more manageable, so we have more time outside!