

Senator Buchanan
School

Kindergarten Handbook

2011-12



Welcome to Kindergarten At Senator Buchanan 2011-12



We welcome children and their parents to Buchanan and look forward to a very special year together. This handbook will provide some background and details about our program. It may be used as a reference throughout the year.



Philosophy



Our program is based on the Kindergarten Program Statement published by Alberta Education. The kindergarten program strives to integrate experiences and activities which develop the social, emotional, intellectual, physical and creative abilities of the child. We have a particular focus on developing reading and writing readiness, language comprehension and math concepts in order to prepare children for positive learning experiences in school. Community and environmental awareness, art, movement and music are also explored. Our classroom context provides opportunities for children to grow in self-awareness and socially.



Young children are active learners, which means that they learn best by doing. In our class, we provide concrete, "hands on" experiences. These may occur in structured play situations called centres. The centres are based on themes which change throughout the year. They are designed to develop skills and to allow for free exploration. This centre-time is balanced by teacher-directed activities with the whole class.



All children vary in their capabilities. The program will be modified or individualized to meet special needs. Our goal is that all children view themselves as competent learners, and develop a positive attitude towards learning.





Tentative Themes

September	Apples; Orientation to School; Introducing Me
October	Fall; Thanksgiving, Halloween
November	Shapes; Fire Safety
December	Christmas and My Five Senses
January	Winter
February	Groundhog Day; Valentines; Friendship and Feelings
March	My Family and Community
April	Spring; Easter
May	Dinosaurs
June	Pets and Farm Animals



Under these integrating themes, numbers, shapes, colours, patterns, letters of the alphabet, songs and rhymes, stories, movement and discovery will be explored.



Jolly Phonics

We use Jolly Phonics materials as a way of teaching children the letter sounds. The lively actions and songs help them to learn and remember the connection between letters and their sounds.



A Sample Daily Timetable

- Arrival; name tags, book or table time activity
- Opening: O Canada and school announcements
- Group time: Calendar and Weather
- Counting and Letters
- Poems and Songs
- Teacher-Directed Literacy or Numeracy Activities
- Gym/Music/Computer/Library Time
- Bathroom Break/Drink/Snack
- Story-time
- Centre Time
- Show and Tell
- Closing





Staggered Entry in September

Kindergarten will begin with "Staggered Entry". This means that a portion of the class will be scheduled to come on each of the dates listed in the accompanying letter. This allows your child to begin his/her first day in a small group setting where we can become acquainted.

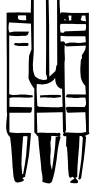


School Times and Bussing

A.M. Kindergarten 8:25 - 11:45 a.m.

P.M. Kindergarten 12:15 - 3:35 p.m.

Bussing is available to bring morning children to school at 8:25 a.m. There is no bussing at noon times. Bussing is available to take afternoon children home at 3:35 p.m. Please call the office for details.



Leaving and Picking Up Children

Kindergarten children use the doors on the east side of the school for arrival and departure.



For the staggered entry days and the first full week, parents may remain in the classroom, doing a puzzle or reading a book for 10-15 minutes. After the first week, we encourage children to enter the school, find their coat hook for their backpack and come into class with their teacher or assistant. This is often their first important accomplishment of the kindergarten year!



Morning students should wait for the bell at 8:25 a.m. before entering the school. Afternoon students should come into the boot room no earlier than 12:15 p.m. and proceed to the classroom with the teacher or assistant.



At dismissal time, parents of the morning class are asked to wait near the boot room at the east door to meet their child. The reason for meeting in the boot room is that other classes are still in session around the kindergarten room. In order not to disturb them, we escort the children down the hall. Visiting can occur once outside. To relieve congestion in the hallway, afternoon parents should also remain in the boot room until the teacher brings the children out.





Snack and Story-Time

Each child brings his/her **own** healthy, snack food each day. We will use the fountain to drink, or water bottles may be sent from home (no other beverages please). We will discuss food groups and ask that only nutritious foods be sent as snacks. The individual snack format has been chosen due to the possibility of allergies. Snack ideas: fruit, vegetable, cheese and crackers. No items high in sugar.



Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are an opportunity for us to focus on the months of the year and celebrate the child. The birthday child's parents are encouraged to bring a special snack for the whole class on this special occasion, and to share the day in class. Parents will be notified of any allergies.



Birthday celebrations will be noted on our monthly calendar and occur as near as possible to the birthdate.



Calendar Person

Our monthly calendar notes a child's name on each class day. This means that the child is designated as Calendar Person. The calendar is presented by this person. In addition, he or she is invited to bring one item from home for Show and Tell. A child's calendar day is also the time for a parent or special guest to come in and spend the class-time with us. This is an opportunity to observe your child in the classroom setting and to participate in our activities. Our schedule rotates through our class list, so your child will probably be Calendar Person every other month.



Show and Tell

The children are asked to bring an item from home for Show and Tell **only** on their Calendar days. Please check the monthly calendar for names and assist your child to choose an item. One suggestion is to find something that begins with the letter of the week. Other ideas will be given periodically in the newsletter.





Library

On Tuesday, our classes will visit the school library. Children are taught how to choose books and how to sign them out. They are responsible for returning their book each week in order to borrow a new one. Parents can help by checking the calendar for our library day and sending the book in the child's backpack.

Families are also encouraged to become familiar with the Bookmobile from Lethbridge Public Library.



Newsletters and Home Communication

Each month the children will bring home a school newsletter with school-wide information and a kindergarten newsletter. The kindergarten newsletter is our primary way of informing parents about our program. It includes a calendar of events, birthday celebrations, calendar person each day, and field trips. Please refer to this calendar frequently.

We will send home additional notices as required. Please check your child's backpack regularly for messages. Some notices need to be returned with a response. Children should be encouraged to deliver these messages to us as an opportunity to learn responsibility.

If you need to speak with us, please send a note with your phone number. We will call as soon as possible. Please feel free to discuss any concerns or observations about your child's kindergarten experience.



Field Trips

Field trips are planned to enhance the classroom experience. We try to space out the dates throughout the year and relate the trips to our themes.

Bus or taxi transportation will be used on field trips.

Field trip notices are sent home before each excursion to notify parents regarding place and times.

Possible field trips include:

Safety City

Fire Station or visit from the Fire Department





Museum
 Helen Schuler Coulee Centre
 Save-On Foods
 Last Frontier Mini-Railway



Parent Involvement

We believe that parental involvement in learning is essential to each child's success. This includes a range of activities already mentioned such as driving, sending a daily snack, helping in the classroom, providing a birthday treat, reading at home.



It is our expectation that a parent will come into the classroom to help and observe when it is his/her child's calendar day. This occurs approximately once per month, with notification given in the monthly newsletter. If it is impossible to come in, parents may arrange for another close adult who is interested in the child to join the class on that day. This means a lot to the children and improves your awareness of the program.



Following the issue of report cards in November and March, Parent/teacher conferences are held.



If you as a parent have an interest that you would like to share, we would be glad to include this in our program under the appropriate theme. Activities such as cooking ethnic recipes, playing a musical instrument, showing slides, storytelling, demonstrating hobbies, showing cultural items can enrich our program. Please indicate your interest on our volunteer form.



Parent Volunteers

We need parent volunteers to help out throughout the year. There will also be special requests for assistance in our newsletter. We will appreciate your willingness to volunteer in order to make our programs possible. All parents must fill out a Volunteer Registration Form in September.



Most important is a volunteer from each class to represent kindergarten on the Senator Buchanan School Council.





Welcome to everyone!

*We look forward
to a great year together
in kindergarten!*

*Principal: Ms. Heather Colburn
Teachers: Mrs. Debbie Newman*

