



Senator Buchanan School



Kindergarten Handbook

2024-25



Welcome to Kindergarten at Senator Buchanan 2024-25



We welcome children and their parents to Senator 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 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 all 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, Pumpkins, Halloween
November	2D Shapes, Fire Safety, My Body, PEACE
December	World Celebrations, Christmas, My Five Senses
January	Winter, Research Project, 3D Shapes, Author Study
February	Valentines, Friendship and Feelings
March	My Family and Community
April	Spring, Animal Lifecycles
May	Farm
June	Bugs, Dinosaurs, Fun in the Sun



Under these integrating themes, numbers, shapes, colours, patterns, letters of the alphabet, songs and rhymes, stories, movement and discovery will be explored. Please note these themes may change based on the interests of the children.

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—Morning & Afternoon

- Arrival; 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/Library Time/Learning Commons Time/STEM
- Bathroom Break/Drink/Snack/Outside
- Story-time
- Centre Time/Group Activity
- Stack and Pack
- Dismissal



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.



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 at the 8:35 a.m. bell and 12:37 p.m. time, come into class and find their coat hook for their backpack. This is often their first important accomplishment of the kindergarten year!



School Times and Bussing

A.M. Kindergarten—8:35 -11:45 a.m.

P.M. Kindergarten—12:37—3:47 p.m.

Alternating Fridays—8:35—11:30 a.m.

Bussing is available to bring morning children to school for 8:35 a.m. There is no bussing at noon times except on Fridays. Bussing is available to take afternoon children home at 3:47 p.m.



For alternating Fridays, morning and afternoon kindergarten students may ride the bus in the morning and at dismissal time at 11:30 a.m.

Bussing is available to students living more than 1 km away from the school. For a detailed bus map, please see the information on our school website. Students riding the bus will require a bus pass issued by the school.



Leaving and Picking Up Children

Morning kindergarten students will wait for the bell at 8:35 a.m. before entering the school through the far East door. Parents may stay outside with their child until the bell at 8:35 a.m. Afternoon students will meet the teacher outside the far East door at 12:37 p.m.

At dismissal time, parents are asked to wait outside.



Attendance

To ensure children are getting the most out of school, parents are responsible for seeing that children attend regularly and are punctual. If for any reason your child will





be late or absent, please call SafeArrival Student Absence Reporting System. We are concerned about the safety of children. As classes begin each morning and afternoon we try to locate any students who are not at school and are unaccounted for. Your call will save us phoning you at home or at work.



1. Use the SafeArrival website, <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>. The first time you use the website, select Sign Up to create your account using your email address. Select Attendance to Report an Absence.



2. Using your mobile device, download and install the SchoolMessenger app from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store (or from the links at <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>). Use your new login information to access your account. Select Attendance to Report an Absence.



This available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time.



Nutrition Breaks

Kindergarten is a 1/2 day program. Each day the children will go outside to enjoy fresh air and play time. Please make sure your child is dressed for all weather. The children will have a snack each day. Please send healthy, non-sugary foods and water bottle for your child. Healthy eating and staying hydrated with water is key in your child's learning.



Learning Commons

Classes will visit the school learning commons. 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

The school newsletter is available online at sb.lethsd.ab.ca. Parents/guardians will automatically receive a school newsletter by email each month. Each month a kindergarten newsletter will be sent by email. The kindergarten newsletter is our primary way of informing parents about our program. It includes a calendar of events, birthdays, and field trips.



We will send home additional notices as required. Please check your child's backpack daily 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 an email to Carissalynn.Stretch@lethsd.ab.ca. 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 transportation will be used on field trips.



Field trip notices are sent home before each excursion to notify parents regarding place and times. Some field trips may require a nominal fee (\$1-\$5) for entrance.



Possible field trips include:

- Fire Station or visit from the Fire Department
- Galt Museum
- Helen Schuler Coulee Centre
- Aggie Days
- Swimming





KinderCare

The first six years of a child's life are an extremely important time in their development when the brain is developing connections faster than at any other time. Strong brain foundations are critical to support future learning and life success. The KinderCare Program is offered in addition to kindergarten to allow for all day programming and increased opportunities for children to engage in purposeful play-based activities with peers. Activities are designed to encourage exploration, foster creativity, problem solving skills and language expression to support future learning and well-being.

KinderCare follows the school calendar and school bell times. Children registered in KinderCare will attend in the morning or the afternoon - opposite of their kindergarten program. This allows for all day programming Monday to Thursday and Friday mornings (bell start time to bell end time each day). They will eat at the school, following our Nutrition Break Schedule.

Students enrolled in the KinderCare program who meet eligibility requirements for school bus transportation to our school will qualify to access the school bus to and from school Monday to Friday.





Welcome to everyone!



We look forward
to a great year together
in Kindergarten!



Teacher: Mrs. Carissa-Lynn Stretch
Principal: Mrs. Lenee Fyfe
Vice Principal: Bob White

