

# Welcome to Skwo:wech

[Welcome to Kindergarten](#)



“ Our interest and energy is focused on the development and growth of your child. We hope you find the information in this booklet useful.”

**-Our Kindergarten Teachers**

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*Kindergarten is play and activity-based learning.*

*The students are exposed to new ideas and activities as well as revisiting familiar activities, songs, and games. We provide a positive classroom environment and ensure the success of each child by being supportive of their learning needs.*

## **Learning Outcomes of the Kindergarten Program**

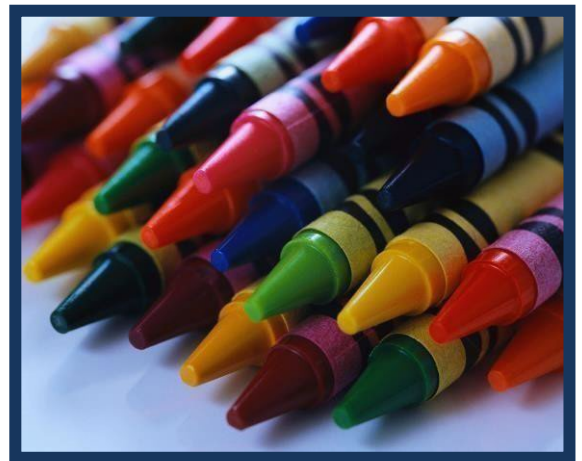
These are some of the goals of the Kindergarten Program (**note: this is not the entire list**):

- demonstrate being a good listener for a sustained period
- demonstrate being a good speaker (including sustaining conversation on a familiar topic)
- use oral language to explain, inquire, and compare
- engage in reading or reading-like behavior
- identify most of the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, and a few high-frequency words
- create simple messages using a combination of pictures, symbols, letters, and words to convey meaning
- relate, represent, and describe numbers 1 to 10, concretely and pictorially
- demonstrate an understanding of repeating patterns
- identify similarities and differences among families
- develop their emotional health (e.g., making friends, building independence, recognizing things they are good at)

For the entire list, visit:

<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca>

There are 2 informal reports and 3 written reports throughout the year.



## Coming to School



Please establish a routine with your child to develop their ability to attend school regularly and on time. This will help demonstrate to your child that the work they are doing at school is valuable and important. Please allow your child the opportunity to pack their backpack and get ready for school independently.

Students and their families are asked to wait outside of their child's classroom until their teacher comes to welcome them inside.

Whenever possible, please consider walking to school or parking a block or two from the school to help ease traffic congestion.

### **School Hours:**

8:50	School begins
10:30 – 10:45	Recess
12:05 – 12:25	Lunch
12:25 - 2:51	Supervised play outside
3:00	Dismissal

If a student has an unexplained absence, the school phones home to ensure that the student is safe. If your child will be late or absent from school, please email [skwovech@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:skwovech@sd40.bc.ca) or *phone the school* and leave a message stating the child's name, division, and teacher. In case of a late entrance, your child must sign in at the office before heading to class.

School ends at **3:00 p.m.** every day and you can meet your child outside of their classroom door. Teachers need to make eye contact with you or the person you have designated to pick up your child before we release them. Please be on time when picking up your child at the end of the day – they worry when you are late. If you are later than 5 minutes your child will be waiting at the office for you to arrive.

## Health Guidelines

While regular attendance is important, your child should stay at home if they:

- have a cold, sore throat, or cough
- have an upset stomach or fever
- have an unusual skin rash
- have other symptoms of illness



Please practice and encourage your child to use good hygiene (using a tissue; coughing or sneezing into their elbow; avoid putting hands in their mouth or nose; washing their hands with soap and warm water after using the washroom; avoid sharing hats, hair accessories or clothing due to head lice).

During your child's Kindergarten year, they may have their teeth, hearing and vision screened. You will be contacted through the Health Department if more thorough testing is needed. It is a good idea to have a check-up with your family doctor before school begins.

Kindergarten is a fun and active place, and many children need more sleep when they enter school. As your child enters school, you might find that they are more tired than usual.

\*Please inform us of any health concerns about your child, so that we can make the proper provisions at school.



## Snacks and Lunch

Our **snack time** occurs either before or after recess so the children can play during recess time. It is preferred that you place your child's snack in a different place than their lunch (a front pocket, separate container etc.)

**Lunch** for the Kindergarteners will begin at 12:05 to 12:25 and then the children go out to play until 12:51.

An adult lunchtime supervisor will supervise the Kindergarteners while they eat their lunch in the classroom and on the playground afterwards. During lunchtime, students will practice table manners, good hygiene, proper lunchroom behavior and will be expected to eat and clean up independently. Please help us enforce that we do not share food at school.



It is a good idea to practice doing lunch at home before you start sending them to school. Pack a lunch for them in a backpack and show them the routines. Be sure they can open their containers. Set a timer for them for about 15 minutes so they get used to finishing their lunch in the time provided. Teach them how to put things back into their

backpack and then how to clean up their area (even the floor).

**PLEASE**



**NO PEANUTS  
OR  
NUT PRODUCTS**

**It is a good idea for your child to bring a reusable, labelled water bottle to use.**



**Please ensure that lunches do not contain nuts, as we have some children in the school who suffer from allergies. We also encourage healthy lunches!**



## School Supplies

The K teachers will be ordering the school supplies your child will need for the year. There is a \$40.00 fee which you will be able to pay online (School Cash Online).

Your child needs to bring...



- A zippered bag of a manageable size
- Waterproof jacket with a hood and boots on rainy days - this is the "wet coast", and we go outside on rainy days
- Healthy, easy to eat snacks
- Lunches (not too many choices)
- Comfortable clothes and shoes that they can put on by themselves
- Change of clothes (shirt, pants, socks, underwear) in a Ziploc style bag (please label)

It is a good idea to label jackets, lunch kits, extra shoes etc. Sharpie markers are great for this. You may also like to send some things to keep at school:

\*Extra pair of shoes



## Contacting your teacher

If you need to get in touch with your child's teacher there are a few ways to do this.

- Email - teacher's first initial, last name, @sd40.bc.ca

### **Regular Program**

[jsimpson@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:jsimpson@sd40.bc.ca)

[vballantyne@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:vballantyne@sd40.bc.ca)

[swhyte@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:swhyte@sd40.bc.ca)

### **Montessori**

[bpeng@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:bpeng@sd40.bc.ca)

- Send a note with your child and please ensure they see it and know to give it to us
- Wait until all the children have been dismissed at the end of the day and talk to us then
- Call the office and leave a message and we will return your call when we are available





## School Readiness

Every child learns and develops at their own rate. However, with time and practice, most soon gain the independence needed for school and social success. Always encourage your child to try their best.

Your child will be prepared for school if they can:

- follow simple directions without hesitation
- wash and dry hands and face independently
- go to the washroom without assistance (including handwashing)
- hang up their clothes
- do and undo zippers
- use a pencil and crayons to draw and write some letters
- say “please”, “thank you” and “excuse me”
- listen quietly to a story without interrupting
- share and take turns with others
- listen while others are speaking
- respect the property and personal space of others
- play respectfully with others
- walk up and down stairs on alternating feet



# Gradual Entry

You will be receiving an email with your scheduled times for school visits and gradual entry. **A kindergarten teacher will meet you at your scheduled time outside, in front of the kindergarten classrooms on the first floor.**

On the Wednesday or Thursday of the week of Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, your child will have a school visit for 30 minutes with you and a small group of other students and their caregivers. You and your child will get to know a few other k parents and children and we will do an activity together to help your child feel comfortable in the classroom setting.

For the **regular program students only**, there will be a second visit on Friday the 8<sup>th</sup>. This visit will be an hour in length and parents will not attend. The groups will be bigger with lots of teacher support to do an activity with your child.

For the week of Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, your child will attend school for approximately 2 hours on Monday and Tuesday with about 10 other k students. The periods run from 9:30-11:30 and 1:15-3:00. If your child attends in the morning of one day, they will switch to the afternoon the next and vice versa.

On Wednesday, Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> the children will be in a larger group and attend from 8:50-11:30. **Snacks will be needed for the first 3 days.**

On Thursday and Friday, Sept 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> the children will be attending school from 8:50-1:20 and will need both a snack and a lunch.

Starting Tuesday, Sept 19<sup>th</sup>, the children will begin all day going from 8:50-3:00.



## Fun Activities to do With the WTK Bag

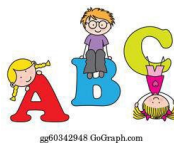


Here are a few things you can do with the items in your bag. Have fun!

You have a magnifying glass and clipboard to go out and enjoy nature. Take a closer look at things and record what you see. The book **'Me and My Sit Spot'** will inspire ideas as well.

### [Explore Nature](#)

There are lots of things you can do with the alphabet sound card to get ready for kindergarten. Ms. Ballantyne and one of her students will show you a few activities.



### [Alphabet Card Activities](#)

This video is showing us the proper way to hold and cut with the scissors.

### ["The Scissors Song" For Kids - YouTube](#)



If you have a deck of cards or dice, here are some fun games you can play.

[18 Easy Math Card Games for Kids - KidPillar](#)



[19 Fantastic Dice Games For Kindergarten - Early Impact Learning](#)





# SEPARATION ANXIETY

## During the First Days Kindergarten

### TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

It is natural for a young child to feel anxious about separating when starting the school year. It can also be a stressful time for parents. As a parent, the first thing to do is check in and be honest with yourself. Are there feelings of apprehension and dread about leaving your little one at school? Do you get frustrated orasperated at your child's resistance, meltdowns, and/or controlling behaviours? Do you have guilt or ambivalence about whether your child will be OK? It is natural to have mixed emotions about this big step. Gently acknowledging and taking care of your own feelings will help you find the calm, confident parent inside of yourself that your child is going to need during this transition.

#### BEFORE the first week school:

if you can go in and look around the classroom, and meet the teacher before school starts. Whether they meet in person or not, it's important to foster a relationship with the teacher in advance. Talk about going to school in positive ways, and hold light discussions with the teacher to have your child in his/her class. Sometimes more anxious or sensitive children will want to attach to their teacher first before they branch off to befriend other children. Some ideas:

- Talk about shared likes and interests.
  - g. "I heard Mrs. Johnson loves reading books about animals, and you do too. I wonder if she likes trains too?"

- Have your child draw a picture to give the new teacher on the first day.
- Help your child think of something special to show the teacher.
- Help your child work out some of their fears in advance through play. Some ideas:
  - Act out successful and loving separations and reunions with toys. Reverse roles and have your child be 'in charge' and I love you through school. Use humour to make it fun.
  - Hide and seek gives your child safe separation practice and the experience of being found over and over no matter what. g., "I will always come find you a million times, no matter what pirates try to stop me!" (Leon ...)



[www.anxietybc.com](http://www.anxietybc.com)

Anxious Behaviour in Children



[www.lab.ea.ca](http://www.lab.ea.ca)

In anticipation of school separation, some children may express or release **anxiety** through crying and emotional outbursts.

It's important for your child to feel heard, so sitting with the child with calm confidence is important during these times, without trying to convince them out of their feelings. Think of it as 'unloading' some pent up worries beforehand.



3. Go to the library and find some children's books on helping with separations (ask Librarian for help).

4. Create a special "transition" photo book of the steps for school drop off and pick up (e.g., putting on shoes, getting in car, front door of classroom, waving goodbye), including photos of loved ones and warm, encouraging messages. Your child can keep this at school or in his or her backpack or cubby.

5. Make sure your child gets enough rest. Start turning back bedtime by 15 min increments (instead of going to bed at 9:00 pm, first night go to bed at 8:45, next night 8:30, next night 8:15, etc). This may be hard due during late sunsets, but one way to ensure an earlier bedtime is to wake the child in the morning at the "usual" time for school (start the day at 7:00 am). Little ones need lots of sleep, usually 10-12 hours of sleep a night.

6. Have adventures in and around the school. Plan frequent, short trips to the playground (include other neighbourhood children if you can). Talk about what your child will be able to see from the classroom window, give the trees or other landmarks secret or silly names, suggest favourite things to do at recess or lunch, and games children might play in the field.

## The Morning(s) of School Days:

- Remind your child about the fun things that are happening at school that day and what the classroom will look like. Paint a mental picture for your child of what to expect.

- If your child is looking worried, say "I see that you have some worries and butterflies inside. And I know you can be brave!" Parents can say the same thing over and over, in a soothing tone. Soon the child may begin mimicking the message to themselves.

- Give your child an item of yours to hold on to for the day until pickup, or buy something special that is the same, such as matching bracelets.



- Draw a heart or put a sticker on the child's hand and on your own hand, and say every time your child looks at it throughout the day, you will think of each other.

- Together, make up a special goodbye handshake or secret silly parting ritual (e.g. tugging ears and then kissing the back of your child's hands).

- Leave an encouraging note or drawing in your child's bag to look at during a certain time of the day (e.g. at lunch).

- Share things that you are carrying around to remind you of your child (e.g., photos on your phone, a drawing your child made) to show that while apart, you are 'holding on' to your child too.

- Being hungry can make separation issues much worse. Even a small protein snack just prior to leaving the house can help.

- As much as possible, focus your child's attention into the reconnection after school. "After school, let's sit on the hammock together and you can tell me the three most fun things you did at school today. I can't wait to hear!"

## At Drop-off:

- This is the time to maintain a stance of warm confidence.

- Arrive early if your child likes a bit more quiet and calm to get settled.

- Spend a bit of time talking about something fun or interesting you both see in the classroom.

- Talk about how you can't wait until after school to see the craft project for the day, or learn about what story the teacher will read or what game the kids play at recess.

- Make sure you are **transitioning or 'handing over' your child to another caring adult in the classroom** that he or she feels comfortable and can attend to, such as the teacher.

- Once your child is attending to the other adult, give a hug or kiss and say goodbye with a warm confident smile. **And leave.** Resist lingering too long around the doorway or sneaking back and seeing how things are going.

- Finally and most importantly, have **confidence in your child's teacher to handle your child's feelings** and take care of your child. And importantly, believe in your child's ability to cope.

## Other things to keep in mind:

- At any stage in this process, your child may cry, cling, freeze, or become excessively controlling or aggressive. Your child's frustrating or difficult behaviours are coming from deep instincts to elicit a response from caretakers to take action and remove the 'threat' (= being left at school). The child just wants to feel better again. **Your child is not acting this way to upset or manipulate you.**

- Children this age **often don't know how to calm themselves down in the moment**, and are dependent on adults to help them feel more safe and secure. They may have no idea what is really making them anxious, so asking 'why' is not going to be very productive.

- Saying "Calm down!" "Don't be afraid!" "You'll be fine!" are not very effective and may make the child more distressed. Instead, **using a calm, soothing tone**, say "I see that you are having a hard time. We'll work through this together" "Let's see what is in your new classroom." "Your teacher is over there and looks so happy to see all the children!" "Let's see if we can find your courage." are examples of simple sentences to state over and over. If your child is irritated by hearing these types of verbal

encouragements, instead convey your belief in them through your patient body language and steady tone.

- It can be particularly exasperating when your distressed child resists your attempts to soothe or calm down, so **stay tuned into your own emotions and behaviour when you feel your temperature start to rise.** Your child will be very sensitive to your non-verbal cues and have a heightened focus on your tone and body language. Try to maintain a stance of calm confidence.

- It may sometimes be less emotionally charged if **another trusted adult drops off the child**, such as a grandparent, older sibling, or another caregiver. Consider going with a school buddy or a neighbourhood friend.

- **Some children may not exhibit separation anxiety for a few weeks into school**, once the novelty has worn off and it really sinks in that this is not temporary. Or a child's anxiety may reappear after long holidays or after an illness. Better to expect it will happen rather than repeatedly get surprised.

- **Some children will be upset and have a meltdown at pickup when they see you, or when you get home.** This is likely because your child is reminded of the separation and may feel safe enough to let out his or her anxiety and frustration at you. Or your child is really tired and has had a long day at school. Your child's brain is developing and learning so much now, and there are many new things to figure out. But with lots of love and confidence in your child's abilities, you'll both get through this milestone!

