

Welcome to



Kindergarten!!

Greendale
Handbook
2014—2015

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We would like to welcome your child to Kindergarten at Greendale Public School. This booklet has been prepared to inform you about our class and school routines and to offer suggestions about how we can work together for the benefit of your child. We are looking forward to working closely with your child and your family during this school year.

Our program will be running all day, every day.

If your child will not be attending school on a certain day, please telephone the school to inform the office by 9:00 a.m. We have a 24 hour answering machine for your convenience. Our school phone number is 905-358-8111.

On school days please feel free to call us if you have any questions or concerns. Messages may always be left at the office and we will try to get back to you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

The Kindergarten Team

The Kindergarten Program

A.K.A.—ELP, ELKP, FDK, FDKP

“Full-day learning is part of our overall plan to help more children get a strong start in school, so they can go on to have successful, rewarding lives. By giving them more opportunities at a young age, we’re giving our children a brighter future.”

Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Education (from The Full-Day Early Learning—Kindergarten Program 2010–2011 Draft Version)

Language

The children will be engaged in a full range of language activities that will include: Jolly Phonics, shared and guided reading, and many writing opportunities. The children will be read to daily as children’s literature forms the backbone of their language-rich environment.

Math, Science and Technology

The children will use primarily hands-on activities where they will start to form numeracy skills and a deep understanding of fundamental concepts from the Ontario Kindergarten Program. Time for games, puzzles, cooking, computers and building are used in the program. These activities allow children to apply their implicit understanding of math and science concepts, such as balance, symmetry, measurement, geometry in meaningful play, inquiry and exploration.

The Arts

Movement, music, poetry, drama and dramatic play each hold an important place in Kindergarten life. They enhance physical and verbal agility, expression, communication and community.

For more information on the Ontario Kindergarten Program please visit <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten/> If you would like to ask a question, click on the “contacts” link and ask your question there.

Reporting Procedures

There will be many opportunities for us to share your child's growth and development over their two years in the Kindergarten Program. Please feel free to talk to us about your child's growth and development any time by contacting us to make an appointment.

Junior Kindergarten

November You will be invited to spend a day in your child's classroom and observe him/her in action. This observation will be accompanied by an interview shortly after your visit.

February You will receive a report card to make you aware of how your child is doing in JK.

June You will receive an anecdotal report card commenting on your child's growth and development during their first year in school.

Senior Kindergarten

November You will receive a report card and an interview concerning your child's growth and development.

February You will receive an anecdotal report card commenting on your child's growth and development.

June You will receive an anecdotal report card commenting on your child's growth and development.

A look at The Reggio Approach

The Reggio Approach gets its name from its place of origin, Reggio Emilia, a city located in Emilia Romagna in Northern Italy. Shortly after the Second World War, Loris Malaguzzi, a young teacher and founder of this system, joined forces with the parents of this region to provide child care for young children. Originally inspired by the need of women to return to the work force, over the last 50 years, this education system has developed into a unique program that has caught the attention of early childhood educators worldwide.

The Reggio Approach is a complex system that respects and puts into practice many of the fundamental aspects of the work of Dewey, Piaget, and Vygotsky (Childhood experts) and many others.

At the heart of this system is the powerful image of the child. Reggio educators do not see children as empty vessels that require filling with facts. Rather they see children as full of potential, competent and capable of building their own theories. Parents, children and educators work together interacting toward a common purpose; the building of a culture which respects childhood as a time to explore, create and be joyful.

The Reggio teacher allows the children to:

1. Ask their own questions, and generate their own hypotheses and to test them.
2. To explore and generate many possibilities both affirming and contradictory. He/She welcomes contradictions as a venue for exploring, discussing and debating.
3. He/She provides opportunity to use symbolic languages to represent thoughts and hypothesis.
4. He/She provides opportunity for the children to communicate their ideas to others.
5. He/She offers children, through the process of revisiting, the opportunity to reorganize concepts, ideas, thoughts and theories to construct new meaning.
6. He/She is a keen observer, documenter, and partner in the learning process.

The Environment as the Third Teacher

The educators of Reggio Emilia view the school as a living organism. A place of shared relationships among the children, the teachers, and the parents. The school gives the adults, but above all the children, a feeling of belonging in a world that is alive, welcoming and authentic. The classroom is meant to look natural and comfortable. The walls should be covered by the work of the children.

Long Term Projects as Vehicles of Learning

One of the highlights that often first attract educators to the Reggio Approach is its complex, long term exploration of projects. Unlike North American predetermined themes like "Penguins", the projects undertaken by Reggio educators may derive from both children's and teacher's ideas and interests (Worms, Airplanes), thoughts and theories in things worth knowing about. Teachers often work on projects with a small group of children while the rest of the classroom continues to involve itself in other self-selected activities and explorations.

At Greendale, we are looking forward to integrating the Reggio approach into our early learning program.

Information from : www.reggiokids.com

A Day in Kindergarten

8:55 a.m. Morning Arrival:

Walking students—please walk around and meet at the Kindergarten doors.

Bus students—will be met by an adult and proceed to enter at the Kindergarten doors.

Our Routine:

Outdoor Time

Arrival

Learning Time

Snack

Outdoor Time

Learning Time

Lunch

Outdoor Time

Quiet Time / Learning Time

Home

Balanced Day:

At Greendale Public School we are on a "Balanced School Day". This means that our day is divided into three parts with a nutritional break and outdoor play time breaking up the three parts. The first break is from 10:35 until 11:15 a.m. This is when the students eat their snacks for 20 minutes and have outdoor supervised play for 20 minutes. The longer break is at 12:55 p.m. until 1:45 p.m. This is the lunch break and parents are welcome to take their children home for lunch. For those who are staying at school, the eating time is 20 minutes and the outdoor play time is 30 minutes.

3:15 Dismissal:

Walking students—can be picked up outside the Kindergarten doors.

Bus students—will be led down to the bus doors and supervised until their bus arrives.



Things Your Child Needs for School Each Day

Backpack

Please have your child bring a back pack each day. The back pack should be **large enough** to fit an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet, library books, a snack and extra clothes.



Snack

Each day your child should bring a **small, nutritious snack**. Snacks such as: muffins, crackers, cheese, fruit, vegetables, granola bars. Please do not send chips, candies or pop.

** We do have students this year with **SEVERE** allergies. Please do not send any foods with peanuts.

Lunch

Each day your child should bring a balanced lunch including protein, fruits and vegetables and a drink.

Clothing

Most days the children are involved in physical activity. Comfortable clothing is recommended. To help encourage your child's independence, please send clothing they are able to do up themselves. As the winter weather approaches, please have your child practice dressing in his/her snowgear.



Extra Clothes

Although children are always able to visit the bathroom when needed, sometimes an accident may happen. There are often spills at snack or the water table. An extra set of clothes, including socks, can be left in a bag on your child's hook at school or stay in the bottom of his/her backpack. Please place the clothes in a bag clearly marked with your child's name.

Shoes

Indoor shoes are not required for Kindergarten, however, in the winter months, shoes should be left at school while boots are being worn. Please ensure your child does not wear shoes that use laces. Although your child may be able to tie a bow, often times they are not able to put the bow tight enough for the shoe to stay tied. Please avoid fancy party shoes or flip flops which are not suitable for physical activity time.

Classroom Needs

Please purchase and send in one box of large Ziploc freezer bags and one box of Kleenex which will be shared by the class. Please purchase and clearly label a pair of headphones for your child to use in the computer lab.

Toys

Please do not send toys to school. When your child is chosen as the special star helper, he/she will be able to choose something from home to show the class.

Weekly and Monthly Routines

Class Calendars

At the beginning of each month a newsletter will be sent home explaining the different concepts and themes for the month. On the back of each newsletter a calendar will indicate important dates.

Communication Books

Your child will be receiving an agenda at a small cost. More information will follow in September. Please ensure that this book comes back to school daily. Please have the book open to the current date so that we can easily and quickly access it. Please note that the teacher will not be writing in the book every day.

Library Books

Your child will have the opportunity to bring a library book home once every two weeks. Please ensure each borrowed book returns in time for library day. If a book does not arrive, your child will have to wait until the book is returned in order to sign out a book at the next library period.

Scholastic Orders

Each month, the teachers will send out order forms. This book club offers quality books and other educational materials for you to purchase at reasonable prices. If you choose to order, please complete the order form and make a cheque out to Scholastic Canada (no bills or coin will be accepted because the program is by mail order).

Volunteers

Volunteers are very important to Greendale. Periodically volunteers are needed for special days and field trips. Please watch for letters coming home for opportunities to help out.

Birthdays

If you are planning to send invitations to school, please send them well in advance in a large envelope to the teacher. We will then place them in the children's backpacks. If you would like to send a treat, please contact your child's teacher ahead of time.

Preparing the whole child for School;
Emotional, Social, Language,
Literacy and Numeracy Skills,
Fine and Gross Motor, and Self-Care!

Emotional

Your child will be interacting with teachers and other children within the school community at Greendale. They will experience positive experiences, increasing their self-esteem which will make them feel good about what they can do. Within the classroom environment, they will be encouraged to talk about their actions and will understand how their actions can have positive and often negative effects on peers.

- Encourage your child to talk about their feelings by sharing likes and dislikes.
- Have your child tell you all about the things about him/herself to promote a sense of pride.
- Read stories about many different topics and themes and discuss the feelings of the characters in the stories. Try to read throughout the day, not just at bedtime when your child is tired.
- Encourage your child to be a helpful member of their classroom by giving them a few chores/jobs around your home.
- In August, begin a routine at home. Having a predictable routine at home will help your child adjust to accept the new experiences and expectations at school.
- To prepare for separation, arrange play dates so your child is comfortable away from you.
- Share feelings and experiences from daily events with your child to develop an increased sense of trust. Pretend play with your child and experience different roles to promote a sense of security and empathy.

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Social Development

The Kindergarten Classroom is a social environment where children can be seen playing and learning together. Your child will be playing with groups of friends at learning centres and activities. Play is an important part of our Kindergarten program, with children initiating and sustaining play with peers. Each day we will introduce and practice concepts as outlined in the Ontario Kindergarten Curriculum in a large group setting. Your child will be encouraged to participate during games and activities during our circle times each day. Social skills that are beneficial include co-operation, sharing, listening, turn taking and following classroom rules.

- Help your child learn to play, share and make new friends by arranging play dates at your home where your child already feels comfortable. You can also promote social interactions by visiting playgrounds and indoor playrooms (e.g. Early Years Centres).
- Practice following social rules at home in family situations. Play games and discuss fairness between family members.
- Children will be working in groups where turn taking and listening to the opinions of others will be important. Practice these skills by playing games that involve turn taking and listening like: memory, Go-Fish, Bingo, Simon Says, and board games.
- Help your child practice listening by encouraging him/her to look at the person who is speaking, not to talk or move around while the person is speaking and to think about what is being said.
- Register your child in community swimming, sports, and movement programs. Your child will meet new friends and will be exposed to social interactions.

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Language Development

Your child will be using oral language to express feelings, respond to instructions and communicate needs. In the Kindergarten Program, children will use parts of speech correctly, learn to use new words, speak in complete sentences and ask "what", "where", and "who" questions. During conversations, your child will be learning to take turns and they will be listening to others for a short duration of time.

Beginning steps will be taken to build the foundation for reading by teaching print concepts and phonemic awareness. The District School Board of Niagara supports the Jolly Phonics and Star Strategy programs to help in language development.

- Play Language games throughout the day—in the car, at the store and while reading various materials.
- Create a storybook with pictures and words of his/her own after a family vacation or special event. Practice reading it with your child and then have them read it to you.
- Make new words using letters and their sounds. Alphabet fridge magnets work great!
- Practice retelling stories and events with focus placed on the beginning, middle and end.
- Promote proper grammatical structure when your child is speaking in conversations with friends and family.
- Encourage your child to speak and ask politely for things they may need or tasks they may need assistance with.
- Take time each day to listen to your child about their opinions and experiences. Use the time in the car or at the dinner table to share.

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Fine Motor

Your child will be experiencing activities in the classroom that will further develop their fine motor skills. During free play experiences, your child may choose to complete puzzles or other games involving the manipulation of pieces. During art and painting experiences, your child will learn how to cut various materials using scissors. Paint brushes, pencils, crayons, markers, and other writing/drawing tools will be utilized in the classroom to further develop fine motor control in preparation for printing letters and words.

- Children will be printing their names on work, paintings and daily sign-in charts. Practice printing your child's name in different mediums such as rice, sand, shaving cream, pudding and finger paints. You could also practice tracing skills by printing your child's name with an upper case letter followed by lower case letters using a yellow marker. Then have them trace over the letters.
- Activities such as painting, cutting, building, doing puzzles, beading and printing numbers and letters helps to develop fine motor skills and attention spans.
- Practice dressing and undressing using buttons, snaps, laces, and zippers.
- Playing games with pieces to manipulate will perfect your child's eye hand co-ordination.
- Have fun drawing/painting people and animals focusing on their different body parts.

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Gross Motor

Your child will be playing outside on the playground and will have structured gross motor activities and games in the gym during scheduled physical education periods. Skills that will be introduced and developed are: skipping, jumping, walking with different movements, balancing, throwing, catching and moving to different music and rhythms.

- Play active games such as tag, Mother May I, Simon Says, ball games, and hopscotch that encourage running, balancing, hopping, catching, kicking, rolling, skipping, and jumping.
- Play co-operative games together that involve turn taking, exercise and body co-ordination.
- Provide opportunities for outdoor play and exercise. Visit parks and playgrounds where your child can climb, balance, run, jump, swing, and slide.
- Safety rules will be enforced during gym time and outside play time to ensure safe play. Discuss the need to be safe and follow the rules on playgrounds and in public areas.
- Incorporate exercise and activity into your family routine by going on a bike ride or taking a nature hike. You are your child's best motivator. If you are active, your child will be more likely to join in the fun!
- Enroll your child in a summer activity such as swimming, baseball or a day camp program.

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Literacy and Numeracy Skills

Your child's education will be supported by the Ontario Kindergarten Curriculum. Math, Language, Science & Technology and The Arts expectations will be used to create meaningful small and large group learning experiences. Some of the concepts that are introduced are reading strategies, matching, retelling, counting and letter/sound identification.

- Children should be able to follow two step directions. Play board games and card games that involve simple rules and steps and that teach beginning concepts (shapes, colours, letter sounds, numbers/counting, alphabet.)
- Be excited and celebrate when your child learns new things!
- Questions from your child can be overwhelming, but allow your child to have an inquisitive nature. Remember with each question and answer your child feels valued and they may learn something new.
- Introduce your child to new toys and experiences. Visit the library or a toy lending library at the Early Years Centre.
- Focus on the math around you. Involve your child in daily activities that involve counting, sorting laundry, patterning toys, measuring ingredients when baking).
- Share the love of books by reading and talking about the story. Read books about early concepts, colours, numbers/counting and shapes. Experience reading when grocery shopping by involving your child when making your grocery list.

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Self Care

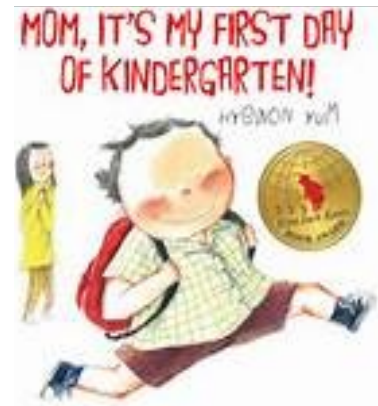
Your child should be responsible when completing personal hygiene, dressing and toileting tasks. Children will be helped when needed, but they will be encouraged to gain greater independence. Children will be encouraged to dress and undress themselves. They should be able to use the toilet when necessary and wash hands after visiting the washroom and before snack times.

- Teach toileting habits at home. Children must wash their hands (fronts and backs) with soap to reduce the spread of germs. Teach your child a hand washing rhyme or song.
- The children are dispensed foam soap when waiting in line at the sink and are encouraged to lather their hands while waiting. Discuss the need for good hand washing. Read the book *Germ's are not for sharing* by Elizabeth Verdick.
- Practice dressing and undressing at home (buttons/snaps on pants and coats, zippers on sweaters and coats). Have friendly competitions when putting on shoes/boots. Time your child to see if they can beat their own time as they get more proficient.
- Encourage, reinforce and praise independence in activities such as dressing, cleaning up and using the bathroom. This confidence will develop self-esteem and your child will act as a role model for other classmates.
- Remind your child that they will be expected to tidy up at school after play and activity time. Create ways to practice this skills at home (songs and games).

First Day

Everyone has a First Day
When they feel sad and all alone
It can be scary
When you're out on your own
Take my Kleenex, dry your tears.
You'll find lots of things to do
And you'll probably make new friends,
I promise we'll be together
When the School day ends.
Here comes the Teacher,
Blow your nose and be brave.
Come on now wipe your eyes
This is no way to behave.
"Well good morning Teacher,
We really must beg your pardon.
No, Mommy doesn't always act this way,
But it's my first day of KINDERGARTEN!!!"

- anonymous



Nothing!

When children come home at the end of the day,
The question they're asked as they scurry to play is:
"Tell me what did you do at school today!"

Perhaps nothing means that I played in the sand, or
Played with the teacher in our own band.
Maybe I painted a picture of red or blue
Or I heard a story about an elephant that flew.
Maybe I played with the Play Dough today,
Or went outside to the playground to play.
Maybe today was the very first time
That my scissors followed a very straight line.

Maybe I led a song from beginning to end,
Or played with a special, brand new friend.
When you're only four and your heart has wings
Nothing can mean so many things.

- "Nothing" Questions to ask at the end of the day:
- How did you make that?
 - What are you learning about now?
 - What centres did you go to today?
 - Can you tell me about the story you heard or read today?
 - Where did you play?
 - Who did you play with?

We hope your experiences at Greendale
will build a strong, independent,
self-confident, free-thinker who will
one day be all that they can be!!