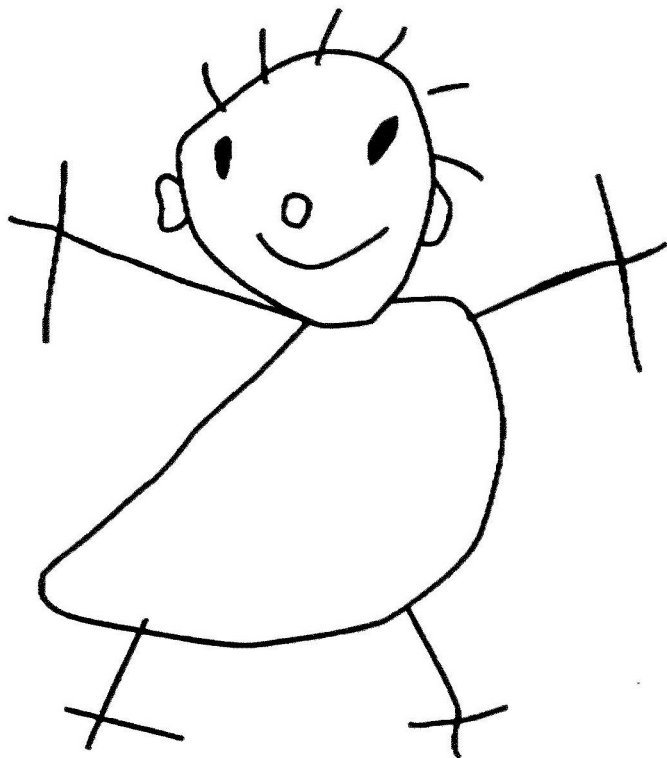




Renfrew County Catholic District School Board

Welcome To Kindergarten



The Renfrew County Catholic District School Board Vision Statement calls us to "sustain safe school environments characterized by warmth, hospitality, good humour and joy while we engage in the pursuit of life-long learning."

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I warmly welcome you and your family to our Catholic School Board. We offer many high quality academic programs, extra-curricular activities, hot lunch programs and transportation services that will make your child's daily interactions both happy and healthy ones.

We are committed to nurturing the giftedness, self-worth and potential of your child while helping them grow in their relationship with Jesus and with one another. We are truly an authentic Catholic community where your child will find meaning and belonging.

Academic excellence is our priority. We continue to surpass provincial averages with respect to achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. These results indicate that we have highly qualified principals and staff members who will help your child develop academically throughout their career.

Good nutrition and physical fitness is our mandate. We have provisions for healthy snack programs and many opportunities for your child to engage in physical activities both inside and outside the school walls.

Our schools are places of hospitality and faith. We know that you will be very pleased that your child is in our care. We commit to working collaboratively to provide your child with a safe and respectful learning environment because each child is a unique gift from God.

I wish your child the greatest success as they enter our Catholic system.

Sincerely,

Michele Arbour
Director of Education

Michele Arbour



Partnerships

Connections between home, parish, community and school are recognized, encouraged, valued and respected. Parents and teachers have similar goals for the children in their care - the well being and success of the child. A positive partnership between the home, school, community and parish can nurture and support that goal.

Children perform better in school if their parents/guardians are involved in their education. As the "first teachers" of your children, we look forward to working with you. Participating in parent conferences, working on the school council, talking with your child about life at school, and reading with your child are some of the many ways in which parents can take an active part in their child's education.

Faith Formation

Catholic schools have the unique educational purpose of presenting a Catholic world view to their students.

In a nurturing and supportive Catholic Kindergarten classroom, all children are accepted as loving beings from God. As Catholics, we believe we are created in the image of God. Each of us was created as a unique individual with a unique set of gifts and talents, and each of us has the potential to develop and express these gifts and talents in positive ways for the common good.

Children who are introduced to the person of God at a young age are more likely to pray, practice their faith and develop and mature spiritually. The school setting attempts to build on the foundation which has begun at home. Catholicity is embedded throughout the school day. As well, students will participate in a program for Kindergarten students called *In God's Image*.



Preparing Your Child for School

Getting ready for school is exciting! Talk to your child and read books about what they will experience at school. Here are some suggestions for you to prepare your child for school.

- ✓ Help your child make choices at home (e.g. clothes to wear, activities to do).
- ✓ Provide opportunities for your child to be with other children, to learn to share, wait, and take turns.
- ✓ Provide new situations for your child. Talk about what to expect beforehand.
- ✓ Encourage your child to use language to make needs known and to solve problems (e.g. getting a drink, bathroom, asking for help).
- ✓ Involve your child in writing (e.g. drawing, making cards, and signing). Talk about your child's name and the letters in their name.
- ✓ Tell stories and say poems and rhymes. Sing! Read to your child and talk about the pictures, the ideas, and the words and letters.
- ✓ Point out words, numbers, and signs in the community.
- ✓ Visit the library with your child.
- ✓ Talk with your child about the things they see or hear on walks and trips. Notice changes that occur (e.g. seasons, growth, construction).
- ✓ Involve your child in sorting activities (e.g. toys, clothes, dolls).
- ✓ Talk about shapes and patterns in the environment.
- ✓ Play games with your child (e.g. matching, counting, cards, simple board games).
- ✓ Encourage your child's use of imagination through drawing, building, moving to music, and acting out stories.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for your child to exercise and develop large muscles (e.g. running, climbing, playing with a ball) and small muscles (e.g. crayons, playdough, pencils).



The Arts

The Arts in their many forms provide a natural vehicle through which children express their interpretation of our world. They stimulate learning and play a key role in children's development. In the area of the Arts, children will:

- * Demonstrate an awareness of themselves as artists through engaging in activities in visual arts, music, drama, and dance;
- * Demonstrate basic knowledge and skills in the arts;
- * Use problem-solving strategies when experimenting with the skills, materials, processes, and techniques used in the arts both individually and with others;
- * Express responses to a variety of art forms, including those from other cultures;
- * Communicate their ideas through various art forms.



Assessment & Reporting

Young children show their understanding by doing, showing, and telling. Observation is the most important method of assessment in the Kindergarten classroom. Educators will focus on what students **can do** and plan activities for students to continue to extend their learning. Other assessment tools might include: portfolios with samples of student writing, photographs capturing a piece of work, one-on-one conversations with a student, etc.

Special Education

Some children may need special programs designed specifically for them to achieve their maximum potential. The RCCDSB Parental Questionnaire provides the opportunity for parents to indicate if your child has special needs. You may be asked to provide consent for the gathering and exchange of information that would be helpful in planning your child's transition to school.

The Kindergarten Program

To find out more about what your child will be learning, contact the school principal OR see www.edu.gov.on.ca and follow the "Elementary" curriculum links to:

- * *The Full-Day Early Learning—Kindergarten Program (Draft Version- 2010-11)* for all of our schools.

The six areas of learning in the Kindergarten years are:

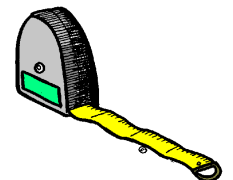
- Personal and Social Development
- Language
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Health and Physical Activity
- The Arts

Play-Based Learning

Young children come to school with an enormous capacity to learn. They have an interest in exploring and investigating to see things work and why things happen. Kindergarten programs capitalize on children's natural curiosity and their desire to make sense of their environment. Play and academic work are not distinct categories for young children. Play has an important role in early learning and can be used to further children's learning in all areas. Both child-initiated free play and more structured play-based learning opportunities will be integral parts of the Kindergarten classroom.



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Language

Oral language must be the foundation of literacy development in Kindergarten. However, reading and writing need to be taught and developed at the same time, so that children can make connections between what they hear, say, read, and write. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are all interrelated, and development in one area supports development in the others.

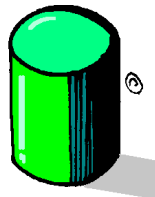
By building on the language development and the understandings that children bring to school, teachers can provide children with the learning experiences they need, as well as support and guidance in their learning.



Mathematics

Mathematics in Kindergarten builds on children's desire to make sense of their world, and helps them develop and demonstrate their mathematical understanding. Young children use mathematics intuitively and develop their understanding of math through the experiences they bring from home (e.g. Is there a seat for everyone at the dinner table? How many steps will I take from the front door to our car?).

Rich problems involve important mathematical ideas and arise out of real-life situations. The study of various aspects of everyday life should permeate young children's mathematical experiences. Teachers create an environment in which children are encouraged to pose mathematical questions, explore, and investigate. Opportunities can be found daily to encourage children to reflect on and extend their understanding of mathematics as it occurs in their everyday activities, play, and conversations.



Science and Technology

Science and Technology in Kindergarten need to build on children's natural curiosity and sense of wonder at God's work. By observing and exploring the world using all of their senses, and by interacting with their classmates, they further develop an understanding of the world around them. Students can learn about the physical properties of materials at the sand and water centres and about living things and ways of caring for them at the discovery centre. They can learn how to use simple machines such as ramps at the block centre and how to follow through with a plan at the technology centre. It is important for all young children to see themselves as scientists and as people who can work with technology as they investigate their world.



Health & Physical Activity

Learning to make healthy choices and participating in daily physical activity will provide young children with a foundation for overall well-being. In the area of Health & Physical Activity, children will:

- * Demonstrate an awareness of health and safety practices for themselves and others and a basic awareness of their own well-being;
- * Participate willingly in a variety of activities that require the use of both large and small muscles;
- * Develop control of large muscles (gross-motor control) and small muscles (fine-motor control) in a variety of contexts.