

SECTION C-3 EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The guiding principles or philosophy used by the board for early identification of children's learning needs:

It is the educational philosophy of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board that all students will be fully integrated into the regular classroom for as much of the instructional day as possible.

The Renfrew County Catholic District School Board guiding principles/philosophies regarding early screening of all children is based on the Policy/Program Memorandum No. 11. "These procedures are a part of a continuous assessment and program planning process, which is initiated when a child is first enrolled in school and no later than the beginning of a program of studies immediately following kindergarten and continue throughout a child's school life". The Renfrew County Catholic District School Board participated in the use of the Early Development Instrument tool. It is used to assess school readiness in four and five year olds. The RCCDSB has participated in this survey since 2002.

The parent's role in early identification

Parents are the child's first teachers. They have encouraged the development of language, interests and skills during the pre-school years. Parents have the best interests of their children at heart. Parental interest and involvement continues to be extremely important during the school years. At the time of formal registration, parents are provided with a complimentary package containing the Parents Guide to Kindergarten at RCCDSB as well as speech, nutritional, dental and physical fitness guides to assist them in their child's journey to Junior Kindergarten.

Parents are also asked to complete a Parental Questionnaire.

Parents are encouraged to share with the school any information that may assist school personnel in planning for their special needs child by either completing the Special Needs Section of the form or by speaking to the principal directly. Parents may already be working with an agency or department prior to a child attending school. If assessments have already been conducted by an agency, parents can consider giving written consent to release these documents to the school principal. An IPRC or case conference will be held in June to assist school personnel, agencies and parents to plan for the transitional entry of the student. By starting the process in June, items such as specialized transportation, physical changes to the child's classroom or any other accommodation can be put into place prior to the actual arrival of the child in September. This procedure assists in a seamless transition into Junior Kindergarten.

AN ASSIST SHEET DURING KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION (Parental Questionnaire)

Agency Supports and Services Listing for Parents

Family and Children Services (FCS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social Worker ▪ Child Protection
Family and Children Services - Developmental Services (FCS-DS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infant Development Program ▪ Communication Consultant, Program Coordinator of Communication/Behaviour ▪ Behaviour Consulting Services ▪ Service Coordination
Champlain LHIN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Occupational Therapy ▪ Physiotherapy ▪ Speech and Language Services ▪ Dietitian ▪ Nursing
Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre (OCTC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Physicians ○ Dietician ▪ Early Childhood Program Treatment Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Occupational Therapy ○ Physiotherapy ○ Speech-Language Therapy ○ Psychology ○ Social Work ▪ Liaison Teacher (for students with severe physical disabilities/developmental delay) ▪ OCTC Preschool ▪ Clinic for Augmentative Communication ▪ Seating and Mobility Team ▪ ABA Program (CHEO/OCTC)
Phoenix Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mental Health Services ▪ Behaviour Services
Preschool Speech Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Speech and Language Pathologist
County of Renfrew
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integration Services
Other: CHEO, Autism Intervention Program (AIP) , Respite

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

February/March:

- School Registration: parents identify son/daughter with special needs
- Coordinator contacts community agencies for names of incoming students with special needs

March/April:

- School notifies Superintendent and Coordinator of incoming students with special needs
- Coordinator notifies school of incoming students with special needs

March/April:

- Determine the lead agency and all services involved with the student

April:

- **Essentials Assessment:** Coordinator, Principal and SERT meet incoming students who may need EA support

April/May:

- School (SERT and Principal) coordinate and plan a Transition to School/IPRC Meeting
 - ✓ Set time and location (approx. 1 hour)
 - ✓ Invite parents, coordinator and all agencies involved with the student

NOTES:

- **Registration:** if parents identify their son/daughter as having special needs, be sure to give them the Agency Supports and Services Listing for Parents to reference when filling out the registration package.
- **Transition to School/IPRC Meeting:** most agencies will be sending a case manager rather than service deliverers.

The teacher's role in early identification

Renfrew County's Catholic teachers recognize that each child is unique and learns in different ways. Our teachers are committed to Catholic education. They provide a nurturing learning environment that provides young children with opportunities to grow and learn in their own way.

Administer the Junior or Senior Kindergarten Assessment Screening Tools. This is part of the Diagnostic Assessment Tool Kit that was developed in the Spring of 2010 as part of the CODE JK-Grade 1 provincial project. It was released in draft format for the 2010-2011 school year. A final version of the draft document was released in Spring of 2011. This tool is used at prescribed times through the JK and SK year.

If after conducting the speech assessment, they observe the student experiencing difficulties, kindergarten teachers will then consult with their Special Education Resource Teacher and Board Speech and Language Pathologist for further assistance.

A more in-depth assessment can occur with the parent's consent. The child is then provided with an appropriate speech and/or language program and either a Communications Disorder Facilitator, Educational Assistant, or Special Education Teacher will carry out weekly lessons. The board or agency Speech and Language Pathologist leads all instructional programming. The parents are expected to also assist with the program at home.

There may be other areas of need as indicated through the Early ID Screening process or other Kindergarten Assessment Tools. This may indicate a need for the student to become part of the Early Years Lighthouse Intervention Program -- a booster program for struggling JK/SK students. The SERT (Special Education Resource Teacher) would assist with this intervention.

There may also be a need to request Community Care Access Services in the area of Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy. Personnel from Developmental Services or the Board's ABA Consultant can also provide assistance.

Assist in the collaboration of an IEP along with the resource teacher and any other outside agency implementing any modifications or accommodations to the child's program as deemed by the IEP.

Communicate with parents, other teaching personnel or outside agencies when changes, progress or difficulties (the use of anecdotal notes is important) occur.

Prepare to participate each term in the IEP meeting when the present term expectations are evaluated, and new expectations are set for next term.

If the situation warrants an IPRC meeting, the RCCDSB Assessment Procedure is followed.

Recognize that in the case of special needs children, teamwork is an integral part of providing the best service possible.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT (EDI): A Population-based Measure for Communities

FACT SHEET

This instrument is an outcome measure of children's early development.

It measures children's readiness to learn in school environment in **five general domains** identified in the literature: physical health and well-being; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive development; and communication skills and general knowledge in relation to developmental benchmarks rather than curriculum-based ones.

The Early Development Instrument can be applied at either junior or senior kindergarten level, i.e. for either 4 or 5-year olds. A teacher uses his/her observations after several months of classroom/school interaction with the child to complete the questionnaire.

The instrument provides information for groups of children in order to:

- a) report on areas of strength and deficit for populations of children
- b) monitor populations of children over time
- c) predict how children will do in elementary school

The EDI has been developed by Drs. Magdalena Janus and Dan Offord at the Canadian Centre for Studies of Children at Risk, McMaster University, with support of a national advisory committee. It is largely based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY) and other existing developmental tests. It was implemented in 1998/99, 1999/2000, and 2000/2001 for over 90,000 students nationwide.

The purpose of the instrument is to report on populations of children in different communities. It is intended to help communities assess how well they are doing in supporting young children and their families and assist in monitoring changes.

READINESS TO LEARN CONCEPT

The EDI is based on the **readiness to learn** concept.

We know that children are born ready to learn; it means that their neurosystem is pre-programmed to develop various skills and neuropathways, depending on the experience it receives.

The EDI measures children's **readiness to learn at school** (or school readiness to learn). This term refers to the child's ability to meet the task demands of school, such as being cooperative and sitting quietly and listening to the teacher, and to benefit from the educational activities that are provided by the school.

The Canadian Centre for Studies of Children at Risk McMaster University, Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation Hamilton, Ontario Tel: (905) 521-2100 ext. 74377

FIVE DOMAINS OF SCHOOL READINESS TO LEARN

There are five domains of school readiness to learn included in the Early Development Instrument.

1. Physical health and well-being

Includes: gross and fine motor skills;

- holding a pencil
- running on the playground
- motor coordination
- adequate energy levels for classroom activities
- independence in looking after own needs
- daily living skills

2. Social knowledge and competence

Includes:

- curiosity about the world
- eagerness to try new experiences
- knowledge of standards of acceptable behaviour in a public place
- ability to control own behaviour
- appropriate respect for adult authority,
- cooperation with others
- following rules
- ability to play and work with other children

3. Emotional health/maturity

Includes:

- ability to reflect before acting
- a balance between too fearful and too impulsive
- ability to deal with feelings at the age-appropriate level
- empathic response to other people's feelings

4. Language and cognitive development

Includes:

- reading awareness
- age-appropriate reading and writing skills
- age-appropriate numeracy skills
- board games
- ability to understand similarities and differences
- ability to recite back specific pieces of information from memory

5. **Communication skills and general knowledge**

Includes:

- skills to communicate needs and wants in socially appropriate ways
- symbolic use of language
- story telling
- age-appropriate knowledge about the life and world around;

TWO ADDITIONAL INDICATORS:

Special Skills

Includes: literacy, numeracy, dance, music, etc.

Special Problems

Includes: health problems, learning problems, behaviour problems

Procedures for providing parents with notice that their child is having difficulty

When a child is having difficulty in school, the parent is either contacted by the classroom teacher or the Special Education teacher. They would then ask if the parent could attend a Case Conference meeting so that the staff could explain in greater detail the area of difficulty.

However, some parents who may be unable to attend due to other commitments may request that this information be discussed via the telephone.

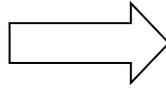
Procedures used within the board for referring a student for an assessment (e.g. an assessment by an in-school team or by professional resource staff) should learning problems be identified that might result in the student's being referred eventually to an IPRC (these procedures include notifying parents and involving them in the process).

The procedures used for referring a student for an assessment usually comes in the form of a Case Conference meeting as stated above. If an assessment on other services is felt to be the next step, then board procedure is followed (view Assessment Procedure).

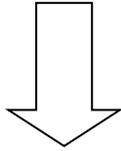
Renfrew County Catholic School Board Assessment Procedure

Student in regular classroom: Teacher or parents suspect school difficulties

Step I — Pre-Referral Classroom
teacher discusses concerns with student and parents. Teacher observes, collects data and makes minor changes or accommodations to help the student. Uses differentiated learning.

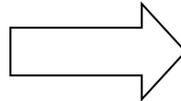


Successful Child progresses with minor class accommodations.

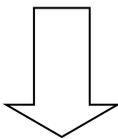


Not Successful

Step II — Referral
Classroom teacher meets with Special Education Teacher and Principal to request help. Discussion may lead to:
a) major classroom accommodations (IEP listing accommodations may be put into place)
b) remedial program



Successful Child progresses with accommodations and modifications.



Not Successful

Step III — School Level Assessment/Modifications

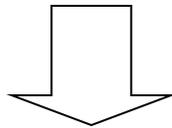
Classroom teacher meets with SERT – may lead to

- a) Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills Assessment*
- b) modifications are put into place and page 3 of IEP is utilized
- c) Brigance to be done yearly to determine effectiveness of programming and student's learning level.

Written parental consent is not needed for this step, but parents should be informed.



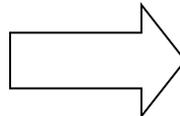
Successful Child progresses with accommodations and modifications.



Not Successful

Step IV — Board Level Assessment

If child is suspected to be two or more years behind academically, the school may wish to refer this student to the school board psychologist for a psycho – ed. assessment. Written parental permission is required.



Successful Student is identified as exceptional and progresses with accommodations and modifications.

* All Special Education teachers have been provided with the new Brigance Inventory of Basic Skills 2010. A new reporting model for the Brigance Assessment Tool was also provided in September 2010. This assessment model required the SERT to provide school personnel strategies and next steps in remediation. This type of detailed assessment will lead staff to better defined learning expectations within the child's Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.)

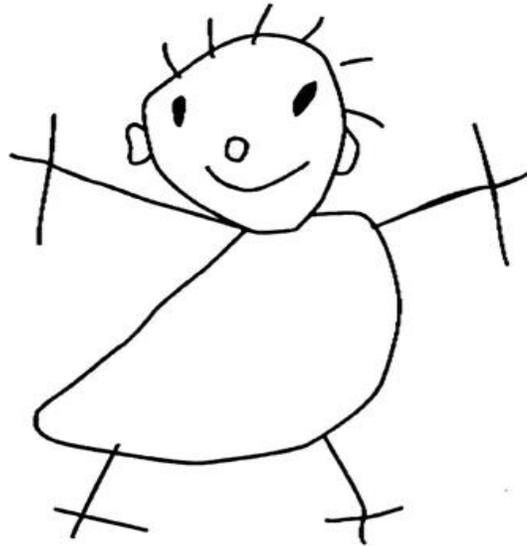
*See inserts: "Welcome to Kindergarten"
"Speech and Language Support"*



Schools to believe in!

Renfrew County Catholic District School Board

Welcome To Kindergarten





Schools to believe in!

*...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,

Jaimie Perry
Director of Education



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 wellbeing 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*. **The**

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 how 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.

Before and After Care

If you are interested in before and after school care for your child please speak to your principal. If your school does not yet have this program please fill out the on-line survey that can be found on the RCCDSB board web page:

www.rccdsb.edu.on.ca

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.

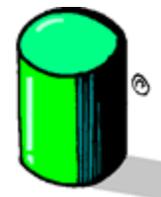
By building on the language development and the understandings that children bring to school, teachers can provide children with the learning experiences they need, as well as support and guidance in their learning.



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.

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.

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).

