

IS YOUR CHILD READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

* adapted from Kindergarten Readiness – Shirley Tronnes & Preparing for Kindergarten – Cathie Mutter *

Schools know that children learn at various rates and show strengths in different areas. The following information should help parents become familiar with what will help your child feel ready and confident to start kindergarten.

Frank J Mitchell hopes our Kindergarten kids can:

Emotional & Social Development

- separate from familiar people, places and things with little or no distress
- help with simple chores around the home
- show awareness of personal space
- assert themselves when something is important to them
- 'tune-in' to the feelings of others
- solve practical problems (eg. getting a stool to help reach something that is up on a shelf that is too high)
- handle difficulties with others without being physically aggressive (hitting, biting, kicking or pinching)
- make an appropriate choice when given several options
- help clean up toys after play is finished
- know some emotion words and what they feel like inside (e.g. sad makes my heart feel big or scared makes my stomach feel bubbly)



Intellectual Development

- show interest in exploring the world around them through play or direct investigation
- tell first and last name when asked
- point out print in their environment (signs, advertisements, books)
- recognize some letters and numbers

- count
- follow most direction words (up, down, over, under, beside)
- enjoy listening to stories
- 'read' books by looking at the pictures
- imaginative play
- Stay engaged with a non-preferred task for a bit of time
- pretend to read and write and practice activities at a table
- recognize their name in print
- sing or say simple songs or poems

Physical Development & Well-Being

- use a variety of tools to draw, colour, and cut (crayons, pencil, scissors)
- use the washroom, wipe, wash and dry hands without help
- dress independently, including putting on shoes and doing zippers up and down (if your child is not able to tie, please do not send shoes with laces to school)
- put things into their backpacks and zip them up without help
- practice with "pincher pencil grip"



Should I delay my child's entry to Kindergarten?

Many children are ready to start school the year they turn 5 years old. Parents of children in British Columbia have the option to delay registration for one year. This may be a difficult decision for a family to make. When considering this option, parents should focus on the child's readiness rather than the child's birthdate.

The following points may help you decide whether or not to delay your child's entry to school.

A combination of the following (not a single factor) may affect a child's readiness for school:

- Your child will not be five years old until the fall or winter (your child might also show high anxiety or no interest in going to school)

- Your child is a boy with a birthdate between September and December (you might notice that he is maturing later than girls of the same age)
- Your child was born prematurely and has a late December birthdate
- Your child is not able to do most of the things from the lists on the other side of this page (these are the “widely-held expectations” for a child starting school)
- Your child struggles with fine motor activities like drawing, cutting and making crafts at home
- Your child has difficulty focusing on books and shows little interest in talking about the stories you’re reading at home
- Your child has great difficulty sharing, taking turns, and/or cooperating with others
- Your child is smaller than other children of the same age, tires easily, and/or has difficulty doing things independently
- Your child takes daily naps

A child’s positive attitude and self-confidence are important to school success. A child who is both young and/or immature tends to struggle with the Kindergarten program. This may cause a child to be less confident when learning new things and potentially cause difficulties as the child moves through school. Delaying Kindergarten entry may assist your child in gaining important readiness skills.

Children with identified “special needs” may not be able to do the same things as other 4- and 5-year-olds. Parents of these children will work with school district staff to develop an individual plan to support learning.

Please contact FJMES principal, Mr. Jason Sommerfeld, if you are considering delaying your child’s Kindergarten entry. We want to ensure all our students enter Kindergarten when they are most ready.



How can I help my child get ready for Kindergarten?

Parents might try the following activities to build important readiness skills. Observe your child as a learner and remember to have fun!

- Make friends with the school. Visit the schoolyard for playtime on weekends and in the summer, and attend Kindergarten orientation activities with your child
- Sing or say the “Alphabet Song” or other rhymes together
- Play board games like “Snakes & Ladders” or card games like “Go Fish” to practice taking turns and cooperating with others.
- Read stories to your child for 15 minutes every day. Work with your child on “paying attention” when reading or speaking to them.
- Teach your child to communicate with words when feeling angry, frustrated, sad etc. Emphasize that it is ok to feel angry/sad/frustrated etc. but it is not ok to scream, hit, and other aggressive behaviours.
- Make sure your child has a healthy school start with proper **rest** and **nutrition**. Start bedtime routines several weeks before school starts. **It is recommended that 3–5-year-olds have 10-13 hours of sleep per night (can include naps)**
- Consider taking your child to the doctor for a complete physical.

There’s a lot you can do as a family to make the transition to Kindergarten enjoyable for everyone!