



Junior and Senior Kindergarten Handbook

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Welcome to Junior and Senior Kindergarten

at

John Knox Christian School

Kindergarten is the gateway through which a child enters elementary school. At John Knox Christian School, the Junior and Senior Kindergarten programs provide a Christ-centred, warm and loving environment in which a child can grow and develop.

This handbook has been designed to help you as kindergarten parents to understand the various components of the program and enable you to be partners with the school in the education of your child.

PREPARING FOR KINDERGARTEN

There are many ways in which you as parents* can contribute to your child's success in kindergarten. In fact, you are probably already doing many things that will enable him** to successfully adapt to the school setting and benefit from kindergarten.

To encourage you along, here are a few suggestions:

1. Teach your child independence
 - in dressing
 - in eating
 - in toileting
2. Foster creativity
 - by providing many opportunities to explore and create with sand, paints, water, food, and a wide variety of materials.
 - by asking and encouraging "what do you think" questions that develop thoughtful, creative responses
3. Encourage a love for books and an appreciation for the written word.
 - Read, read, and read to your child!
 - Write down your child's words (perhaps a letter to Grandma, or a story to accompany his picture)
 - Make many trips to the library
4. Encourage such social skills as
 - saying "please" and "thank you"
 - tidying up after himself
 - waiting for his turn

It is important that each child be given the tools necessary to allow him to step out with self-confidence, eager to learn more about himself and his place in God's amazing world.

* Please note that *parents* is used to denote both parents and/or guardians.

**In order to provide ease of reading, children are referred to alternately by the pronouns *he* and *she*, but these are to be understood as referring to both boys and girls.

GOALS OF THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

A. Primary Goal

The kindergarten program seeks to provide for the interests and needs of each child. A primary goal is to make the child more aware of God's love for her and to explore with wonder the intricacies of God's world by focusing on areas that touch a child's everyday life. Thus the focus goes far beyond academic development to address the child's growth in all facets of her being, including intellectual, as well as emotional, physical, and spiritual. As each child learns more about herself and God's world, she is also challenged to live as God's child in His service.

B. Relational Goals for Each Child

In Relation to God

1. To strengthen the child's awareness that he belongs to God.
2. To increase the child's knowledge of the Bible and its stories.
3. To increase the child's understanding of what it means to live for Jesus.

In Relation to Others

1. To develop respect for other children and for adults.
2. To develop sympathy and tolerance for the shortcomings of others.
3. To improve the perception of the feelings of others.
4. To learn how to work effectively in a group.
5. To develop an acceptance and enjoyment of other children, and at the same time to feel accepted by them.

In Relation to Self

1. To develop a feeling of adequacy and self-respect by gaining recognition as a significant human being.
2. To develop a positive attitude towards learning by experiencing success and by learning how to deal effectively with failure.
3. To develop some independence by making her own choices and decisions and yet feeling free to go to the teacher for help and assurance when needed.
4. To recognize his own feelings and learn to respond to those feelings in acceptable ways.
5. To develop a sense of responsibility by caring for her possessions.
6. To develop habits of orderliness.

C. Developmental Goals for Each Child

Academic Development

1. To develop emergent reading skills, such as phonemic awareness, letter recognition, sound/symbol association, rhyme, story sequence, and left-to-right and top-to-bottom progression.
2. To develop an understanding of basic concepts such as size, shapes, same/different, classification, one-to-one correspondence, sets, patterning, and sequencing.
3. To develop number recognition and an understanding of the quantitative value of numbers.

Physical Development

1. To develop large muscle strength and coordination through many regular physical activities.
2. To improve fine motor coordination through many manipulative activities.
3. To learn the correct use of a variety of materials and equipment.

We believe children.....

- are made in the image of God and that each child is loved by Him
- learn best in a safe and caring environment
- learn best when they feel a sense of achievement and self-worth
- learn at their own developmental level
- learn by building on past experience
- learn through play, using all their senses
- learn through repetition
- are active learners who benefit from manipulating and experiencing a variety of materials and situations

COMPONENTS OF THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM**Spiritual Development**

As the child grows, his awareness of his relationships with God, others, himself, and the environment develops. His world becomes “bigger” as he learns to step out in confidence and in the security of knowing “I belong to Jesus.” In this context, he can successfully learn obedience in new ways and in new settings. The teacher strives to help each child develop a love for, and knowledge of, God as a loving, caring Father. Through daily Bible stories, devotions and prayer, and by example, the teacher encourages the child to grow in faith.

Social Development

As humans, we live in communities. As a child enters kindergarten, she becomes part of a new community. Here she learns to express herself and behave in ways that reflect love and concern for others. Many activities provide opportunities to learn about caring, sharing, listening and cooperating with others.

Physical Development

Learning is very closely associated with the coordinated control of large and small muscles. Therefore, many activities will relate to this motor development, as children learn and practice a wide variety of skills, from kicking a ball to using scissors and pencils.

Intellectual Development

A stimulating environment, both at home and at school, has a profound impact on intellectual growth. Stimulators come in the form of books, pictures, objects for exploration and manipulation, discussions, etc., and all invite the child to respond in a variety of ways. All contribute to the child becoming more inquisitive and more aware of his surroundings. There is so much to learn about in God’s world! Through exploration and discovery, as well as instruction, the child will increase his understanding of the world as it is and as it ought to be. He will see how God cares for His world and how He wants His children to live. The kindergarten program is theme-based, with many of the activities and centres corresponding to the current theme.

Language Development

In a relaxed but stimulating environment, the children have many opportunities to develop skills in language. In both casual conversation and group discussions, they will be encouraged to:

- share ideas and experiences
- talk about their interests
- expand their vocabulary
- gain confidence in oral expression

As children mature, their understanding of language expands as they become aware that what is spoken can be written down and read.

Literacy Development

A rich and varied experience of language through stories, songs, and rhymes is crucial to later reading success. In kindergarten the children will be exposed to a wide variety of developmentally appropriate literacy activities in which the teachers will:

- share books with children and model reading behaviours
- establish a literacy-rich environment
- engage children in language and listening games
- engage children in activities that develop phonemic awareness
- encourage the children to experiment with writing
- promote literacy-related play activities
- use the Jolly Phonics program to teach the sounds of the English language and the names of the letters, and Handwriting without Tears program to teach the correct formation of the letters
- use the following framework of activities in order to provide a comprehensive literacy program:
 - Reading: *to* children
with children
by children
 - Writing: *to* children
with children
by children

Mathematical Development

Our lives are full of numbers, weights, measures, time, counting, etc. In order for a child to develop an understanding of this aspect of creation, he needs many opportunities to use concrete materials in whole group, small group, and individual activities. The emphasis is on using manipulatives in patterning, counting, sorting, classifying, comparing, measuring, and graphing. The children are also introduced to concepts of time, financial literacy and coding.

Creative Development

All children, as God's image-bearers, are creative beings. In kindergarten, they engage in daily opportunities to express their creativity in artwork, dramatic play, writing, song, and dance, etc.

Activity Centres

The centres allow children to explore and experience a wide range of materials and activities which are both multi-leveled and multi-sensory. Students are encouraged to explore and create using the open-ended materials provided. Centre choices may include building blocks, craft materials, puzzles, games, and more!

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Children are God's image-bearers. As Christian teachers, our desire is to see students develop responsibility and accountability. As such, discipline at JKCS is.....

Positive Discipline is....

- designed to assist the child in learning appropriate behaviour
- used in a positive and caring manner
- focused on instruction, correction, and redirection

Positive Discipline does NOT include:

- any forms of verbal or physical abuse
- withholding a child's basic needs, including food, clothing, and shelter
- leaving a child in an unsupervised area

When a child's behaviour is a matter of concern, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue in order to work together towards helping the child. A meeting with parents, teacher, and principal or vice-principal may be set up to deal with major concerns.

ILLNESS AND ABSENCE

When To Keep Your Child Home

Please keep your child home at the first signs of illness. Headaches, running nose, difficulty in breathing, sore throat, coughing, unusual flush, pallor, or facial expression, fever, vomiting, and skin rash are all symptoms that should lead you to suspect illness in your child. Health regulations require that schools exclude any child suspected of having a communicable disease. It is essential that parents cooperate with the school and the local health department in this regard.

Medication

If your child requires medication (Tylenol, Advil, antibiotics) during school hours, the front office staff will administer it providing the parents give written authorization and instructions.

Absence

If your child will be absent, please call the front office by 8:30 a.m. and leave a message. Staff are required to follow up on all children who are absent without notice. This can be time-consuming, thus it is very helpful to notify the school in advance.

REPORTING SCHOOL PROGRESS

The procedures for sharing your child's progress and development at school are as follows:

1. Both JK and SK receive three report cards – November, March, and June.
2. Parents are requested to attend an interview at the end of the first term.
3. A second interview in March is optional. Either the teacher or the parent may request a meeting at this time.
4. In addition, you are welcome to discuss your child's progress and participation at school with the teacher at any time during the year.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **School Work** – Please show an interest in your child's work. Display her artwork and other papers, and ask her to tell you about her pictures.
2. **Classroom News** – Please check in daily to Classroom Connection (you will receive a link for this at the start of the school year) and read carefully all information that is sent home. Follow instructions closely so that your child will be fully prepared for each day.
3. **Lunch and Snacks** – Help your child practice using lunch containers independently. Try to develop healthy snack habits. Children may bring a refillable water bottle to use in class.
4. **Backpacks** – Please be sure it is large enough to easily hold a lunch box, school papers, library books, and artwork.
5. **Shoes** – Children must have a pair of indoor running shoes to be kept at school. Please do not send shoes with laces, unless your child can tie them independently.
6. **Birthdays** – A child is given special attention at school on his birthday. Please note that food treats are not permitted for birthday celebrations in accordance with the JKCS nutrition policy. It is a school policy that invitations are not to be handed out at school unless the whole class is invited.
7. **Arrival and Dismissal Procedures** – Parents will be provided with a detailed note explaining the specific procedures which will be in place. Please read and follow the plan carefully to ensure children arrive and leave in a safe and timely manner.
8. **Labels** – Please label all your child's uniform items, shoes, and any personal items taken to school.

BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR 2023-2024

- small blanket (to be used during Quiet Time)
- workout mat with dimensions of about 6 feet (180 cm) by about 2 feet (61 cm)
- indoor shoes (no laces)
- change of clothes (uniform colours, including socks and underwear)
- headphones (labeled, in a labeled Ziploc bag)
- 1" binder
- 1 small whiteboard
- 1 whiteboard eraser
- 2 whiteboard markers (at least one of them black)
- 2 containers of playdough (in your child's favourite colours!)
- hand sanitizer (unscented, with pump, for personal student use)
- 1 package of wipes (for personal student use)
- 1 box of kleenex

Please LABEL each item clearly with your child's name before coming to school.