



Junior and Senior Kindergarten Handbook

John Knox Christian School

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Updated May 2025

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, loving environment in which a child can grow and develop.

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

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

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 them 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 a picture).
 - Make many trips to the library.
4. Encourage such social skills as
 - saying "please" and "thank you"
 - tidying up after themselves
 - waiting for their turn

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

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 them and to explore with wonder the intricacies of God's world by focusing on areas that touch their everyday life. The focus goes far beyond academic development to address the child's growth in all facets of their being, including intellectual, as well as emotional, physical, and spiritual. As each child learns more about themselves and God's world, they are 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 they belong 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 their own choices and decisions and yet feeling free to go to the teacher for help and assurance when needed.
4. To recognize their own feelings and learn to respond to those feelings in acceptable ways.
5. To develop a sense of responsibility by caring for their 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, their awareness of their relationships with God, others, themselves, and the environment develops. Their world becomes “bigger” as they learn to step out in confidence and in the security of knowing “I belong to Jesus”. In this context, they 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, 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, they become part of a new community. Here they learn to express themselves 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. 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 their surroundings.

There is so much to learn about in God's world! Through exploration and discovery, as well as instruction, the child will increase their understanding of the world as it is and as it ought to be. They 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 following framework of activities 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. For a child to develop an understanding of this aspect of creation, they need many opportunities to use concrete materials in whole groups, small groups, 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 use daily opportunities to express their creativity in artwork, dramatic play, writing, song, dance, etc.

Activity Centres

The activity 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!

JKCS Grade Level Learning Goals

As students enter JKCS, it's important to set them up for success. They are strongly encouraged to work on the following prior to their first day.

Junior Kindergarten

Skills to Master	Ideas to help your child grow
Social Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can transition well when separating from parents Ask for help when needed Interact kindly with peers Takes turns, shares with others, and listens to others Can dress himself/herself Uses good hygiene habits and table manners Uses bathroom unassisted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leave child at Sunday school or with a babysitter for short periods Coach "please" and "thank you" Organize play days and coach sharing Practice putting on coat and shoes alone Coach bathroom habits (washing hands, privacy, etc) Play games that require waiting and taking turns
Motor Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses scissors, crayons, pencil, glue stick Can open and close lunch containers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice cutting out simple shapes Colouring pictures Practice opening and closing the same containers that will come to school
Verbal Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talks in sentences Expresses ideas and opinions so that others can understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice communication and conversation skills Ask your child questions Wait for your child to form sentences before you help
Literacy Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looks at books and can talk about what they see Recognize some lowercase and uppercase letters and sounds Can print his/her name (even partially) Can recognize his/her own name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly read a variety of books aloud to your child Learn the alphabet together and ask them what sound various letters make Work on recognizing and writing his/her own name
Mathematic Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can identify a square, circle, and triangle Recognizes some numbers Can count aloud from 1-10 Recognizes and names colours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice drawing lines and shapes Ask, "what colour is it?" about various items/pictures Practice counting from 1-10 Count things aloud (eg. cans of soup going in the cart, plates on the table, etc.)

Senior Kindergarten

Skills to Master	Ideas to help your child grow
Social Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can transition well when separating from parents Ask for help when needed Interact kindly with peers Takes turns, shares with others, and listens to others Can dress himself/herself Uses good hygiene habits and table manners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leave child at Sunday school or with a babysitter for short periods Coach "please" and "thank you" Organize play days and coach sharing Practice putting on coat and shoes Coach bathroom habits (washing hands, privacy, etc) Play games that require waiting and taking turns

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses bathroom unassisted 	
Motor Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses scissors, crayons, pencils, and glue sticks • Can sit on a chair and carpet spot for a developmentally appropriate amount of time (7-10 minutes). • Can open and close lunch containers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice cutting out simple shapes • Colouring pictures • Practice opening and closing the same containers that will come to school • Practice activities that require sitting in one spot for 7-10 minutes (eg. during story time or meal time)
Verbal Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks in sentences • Expresses ideas and opinions so that others can understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice communication and conversation skills • Ask your child questions • Wait for your child to form sentences before you help
Literacy Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks at books and can talk about what they see • Recognize all lowercase and uppercase letters and sounds • Can print his/her name • Can print all capital letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly reads a variety of books aloud • Learn the alphabet together and ask them what sound various letters make • Practice printing his/her name • Model and practice printing capital letters (eg. print a word in capitals and have your child trace it)
Mathematic Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies and can draw a square, circle, and triangle • Recognizes numbers 1-10 • Can count aloud from 1-20 • Recognizes and names colours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice drawing shapes • Ask, "What colour is it?" about various items/pictures • Practice counting from 1-20 • Count items aloud (ex. cans of soup in cart, plates on table)

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Children are God's image-bearers. As Christian teachers, our desire is to see students develop responsibility and accountability. JKCS endeavours to model discipline in a positive way.

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 toward helping the child. A meeting with parents, teacher, and the 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. Headache, runny nose, difficulty breathing, sore throat, coughing, unusual flush, pallor, unusual facial expression, fever, diarrhea, 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.

Medical Information

If your child has a medical condition (e.g., asthma, allergies, diabetes, etc.) or requires the administration of medication during the school day, please fill out the appropriate form. Medical forms can be found on the JKCS website [HERE](#).

Prescription medications or other medications sent to the school will be kept in a locked drawer in the office area for your child.

If your child requires one-time medication for headache or minor pain during school hours, the Welcome Desk staff will always call home to request permission from you first.

Absence/Early Pick Up

If your child will be absent, please phone (905-829-8048) or [email](#) the Welcome Desk by 8:30 a.m. Staff are required to follow up on all children who are absent without notice. This can be time-consuming, so it is very helpful to notify the school in advance.

If you need to pick up your child early from school, you must notify the office by 12:00 PM.

After School Pick Up

If you are **not** picking up older siblings, we recommend arriving by 3:15 PM to help ensure a smooth and efficient dismissal process and allow for a quicker exit from the parking lot.

Vacation

For a short-term absence due to a vacation, the parent is asked to submit a [Student Vacation Form](#) to the office. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the teachers, so additional work may be assigned to allow the student to stay current with the rest of the class.

Before and After School Care is provided at JKCS

For any JKCS parents who require it, both before and after school care are available.

- Our "Before School" Care Runs from 7:00 - 8:20 am.
- Our "After School" Care Runs from 3:45 - 6:00 pm.

Reserve a spot by filling out the BASC Registration [Form](#)

For prices and policies, please click [here](#).

Classroom Connection

Keep up to date with all the exciting learning, events, and announcements by checking our **Classroom Connections**—a Google Doc regularly updated by your child's teacher. You'll find important dates, classroom news, and even photos of your child in action. Look out for the link from your teachers on the first day of school.

REPORTING SCHOOL PROGRESS

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

1. Both JK and SK will receive three Learning Reports - a Learning Progress Report in the fall and two full Term Learning Reports at the end of Term 1 in January, and at the end of Term 2 in June.
2. Parent-Teacher Learning Conferences will happen in the fall after the Fall Progress Report and again following the Learning Term Report at the completion of Term 1.
3. Parents are welcome to discuss their 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 their artwork and other papers, and ask them to tell you about their 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 backpacks are 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** – Each child is given special attention at school on their birthday. Please note that food treats are not permitted for birthday celebrations in accordance with the JKCS Nutrition Policy. It is also a school policy that invitations for birthday celebrations 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 that 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, water bottle and any personal items taken to school. This practice ensures that lost or misplaced items are returned to your child as soon as possible.