

Learning and Growing in Kindergarten



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Starting Kindergarten

Beginning in January each year, the Halton District School Board accepts registrations for Junior (Year 1) and Senior (Year 2) Kindergarten. Children turning four before December 31 can be registered in the first year of the two-year Kindergarten program. Please visit the Halton District School Board website at www.hdsb.ca to determine your home school (please refer to "Find My Local School") and access information about registration.

Vision, Purpose, and Goals

At the Halton District School Board, we believe that together we inspire every student to learn, grow, and succeed. In our schools, every student will explore and enhance their potential, passions, and strengths to thrive as contributing global citizens. Beginning in the Kindergarten years, we view children as competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential.

The Kindergarten Program is a child-centred, developmentally appropriate, integrated program of learning for four and five-year-old children. The purpose of the program is to establish a strong foundation for learning in the early years, and to do so in a safe and caring, play-based environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of all children.

The primary goals of the Kindergarten Program are:

- To establish a strong foundation for learning in the early years
- To help children make a smooth transition from home, child care, or preschool settings to school settings
- To allow children to reap the many proven benefits of learning through relationships, and through play and inquiry
- To set children on a path of lifelong learning and nurture competencies that they will need to thrive in the world today and tomorrow

Kindergarten Program

Kindergarten students in the Halton District School Board attend school full-day, five days a week. Students learn from an educator team consisting of an Ontario Certified Teacher and a Designated Early Childhood Educator.

Looking Forward

Prepare for your child's entry into Kindergarten in September by:

- Checking the Halton District School Board's website for further information - www.hdsb.ca
- Completing registration starting in January
- Reviewing the LookSee Checklist for your child (found at www.halton.ca or by calling 311). For parent information only. This is not needed for registration.
- Reporting your child's immunization with Halton Health (www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Immunizations-Preventable-Disease/Immunization/Immunization-Information-for-Families or call 311)
- Asking about your school library after registering
- Participating in a Kindergarten orientation event in the spring
- Receiving notification about entry in September
- Discussing an opportunity for a school visit for a child who is particularly anxious about starting school





Kindergarten Orientation

Parents/guardians registering children for Kindergarten in the Halton District School Board will receive notification from their school about spring orientation. This information is intended to connect families and school staff, provide information about school and Kindergarten classroom routines, and describe a “typical” day in Kindergarten.

First Day of School

Along with all other students, Junior (Year 1) and Senior (Year 2) Kindergarten students start school on the first day of school.

A Day in Kindergarten

Children, along with our Kindergarten staff, go outside in all kinds of weather, which means dressing for the weather is important.

Unless there is a medical reason, independence in toileting is highly recommended. This means the child is free of diapers and pull-ups, determines their own needs and completes toileting independently. Check the Halton Region website regarding common parenting challenges, including toileting.

Getting Ready for School

Children start school with a variety of experiences and knowledge. Families play an important role in helping children get ready for school. You can help your child prepare for Kindergarten by:

- playing, reading, singing, and talking with your child daily
- encouraging clear communication (e.g., asking questions, expressing needs)
- engaging in safe play and exploration to support curiosity and wonder
- exploring a variety of fine motor activities (e.g., painting, drawing, building, and creating)
- introducing letters, numbers, shapes, and colours
- supporting cooperation and sharing with others
- encouraging independence with using the toilet and getting dressed
- helping to manage small challenges (e.g., spending time away from family members for short periods of time)

*any of these can be done in English and/or your first language

English Language Learners and Starting Kindergarten

English language learners bring rich experiences to our Kindergarten classes. The Halton District School Board welcomes and values this diversity. Parents are encouraged to continue speaking with their child in their home language. This will give the child a strong foundation in their first language and make learning English in the classroom easier. Parents are also encouraged to continue celebrating their family and cultural traditions to add to their child’s experiences.



For more information or help with language and other services, please call the Halton Multicultural Council at (905) 842-2486.



Special Education Needs

Ensuring a well-planned and organized start to the school year is critical for children with special education needs. Schools keep families informed about the requirements and procedures necessary for September enrolment. A sample school checklist that identifies some of the requirements is included below.

School Check List for Entry of Students with Special Education Needs into Kindergarten

- Register in January to allow for a well-planned transition
- Complete the registration form and the Kindergarten Parent Questionnaire
- With parental consent, an observation visit to the preschool setting is arranged for school staff and appropriate support staff
- In-school case conferences are arranged, with parental consent, to discuss the student's strengths and needs with relevant professionals in attendance (e.g., Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN), ErinoakKids, Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK), Halton Region Children's Developmental Services, Halton Support Services, preschool staff)
- Referrals are made to LHIN for Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy or Speech Services, as appropriate
- In-school case manager is assigned
- With parental consent, relevant assessments and/or discharge reports from preschool settings and services are collected
- Consultation from preschool services is available upon request following the start of school
- On-going case conferences are held as needed
- Communication with parents is maintained

Before and After School Care

Information about Before and After School Care for Kindergarten-aged children is provided on the Halton District School Board website at www.hdsb.ca. Go to the "Parents" tab and click on "Kindergarten."

Resources for Starting School

Full-Day Kindergarten - Ontario Ministry of Education
www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten

Kindergarten Program/Curriculum - Ontario Ministry of Education
<https://www.ontario.ca/document/kindergarten-program-2016>

Halton Region Ready, Set, Go! - Preparing for Kindergarten
<https://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Children-and-Parenting/Ready-Set-Go>

Learning to Play and Playing to Learn: What Families Can Do
<https://resources.beststart.org/k27e-learning-to-play-htmlpage>



For more information, please refer to the Halton District School Board website at www.hdsb.ca.

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