

# École Olds Elementary School

Orchestrating Early Success...



# Kindergarten Handbook for Parents



École Olds Elementary School

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## Welcome to Kindergarten at OES

Welcome to kindergarten! The kindergarten program at École Olds Elementary School has a long standing tradition of orchestrating early success for children. Key components of our program include:

- **Learning Through Play** – Young children are naturally curious and eager to learn. They benefit from organized activities, purposeful play and cooperation with others.
- **Parents as Partners** – As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher. You play a central role in the life of your child. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by all, especially your child.
- **Additional Supports for Learning** – Full-time educational assistants in each kindergarten classroom help our teachers provide outstanding support to all children, including those with special needs. Also, specialists in music and physical education teach the children on a weekly basis.



In order to make your entry into kindergarten as painless as possible, we have compiled some information we hope will be useful to you and your child.

## Learning Centres

The bright and colorful classrooms at École Olds Elementary School offer a wide variety of learning centres to our children. Some of these centres include:

- **Art** – with painting and drawing materials for children to explore and express feelings.
- **Construction** – with blocks, toys, and tools for children to design, create, and build
- **Cooking** – with snacks and special foods for children to prepare and share.
- **Dramatic play** – with props, puppets, and dress-up clothes for children to imagine.
- **Games** – with puzzles and games for children to share and problem solve.
- **Library** – with a variety of books and tapes for children to read and listen to.
- **Math** – with manipulative materials and tasks for children to sort, count, classify, measure, and learn number sense.
- **Music** – with instruments and materials for children to express their feelings.
- **Physical Activity** – with outstanding playgrounds for children to play games and develop physical skills.
- **Sand and Water** – with cups, spoons, toys and funnels for children to measure and solve problems.
- **Science** – with microscopes, magnifying glasses, seeds, plants, rocks, and bugs for children to observe and investigate.
- **Writing** – with paper, pencils, markers, crayons, and computers for children to express their thoughts and ideas.



## Monthly Themes



<u>Month</u>	<u>Theme</u>
I'm Special	September
Harvest/Fall	October
Our Community	November
Christmas	December
Winter/Machines	January
Friendship	February
Fairy Tales	March
Spring	April
Metamorphosis	May
Celebration	June



## Helping Your Child Succeed

Here are some quality experiences that you can create at home for your child:

1. Language Skills
  - Identify colors and shapes
  - Understand words like over, under, between, before, and after
  - Retell events or stories
2. Appreciation of Stories and Books
  - Read stories each and every day
  - Make predictions about how stories will end
  - Read and sing nursery rhymes
3. Alphabet and Letter Sounds
  - Learn the alphabet
  - Print, trace and copy his/her name
  - Match pictures with initial letters
4. Numbers
  - Count every day
  - Recite his/her phone number and birthday
  - Play card games like Fish and Old Maid
  - Understand words like longer, shorter, bigger, smaller, etc.

Also, kindergarten can be exhausting for children, especially the first few months. Please ensure that your child gets plenty of sleep.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How can I enroll my child in kindergarten at OES?

- Parents can register by stopping by the OES office or by downloading the appropriate forms online at [www.oldselementary.ca](http://www.oldselementary.ca).
- Children born prior to December 31, 2005 are eligible for kindergarten registration for the 2010-2011 school year.

### How often will my child attend kindergarten?

- Your child will attend kindergarten from 8:35 a.m. – 3:10 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and some Fridays or Tuesday, Thursday, and some Fridays.
- A detailed calendar is provided to you during our “Welcome to Kindergarten” orientation during the month of May.

### What will my child need for his/her first day of kindergarten?

- A backpack or carrying bag large enough to hold a lunch, large books, and papers
- An indoor pair of running shoes with velcro closing
- A lunch in a clearly labeled bag or box
- Play clothes (please do not wear your Sunday best to school)
- Adequate outdoor clothing (snow pants, toques, mitts, rubber boots, splashpants, etc.)
- An extra change of clothes for wet days
- Everything belonging to your child must have his/her name on it. This includes shoes, mitts, boots, toques, and backpacks.

### What library services are available to my child?

- Library books are chosen weekly by kindergarten students and must be returned weekly. The children pick these out themselves so don't be surprised if occasionally the selection seems too advanced. The librarian offers guidance with the choice of books, but some children like to “experiment” during the first few visits.
- There is a parent resource centre in the library. Everyone is welcome to use the available information. We have numerous items on parenting, including videos.

### What should I do if my child will be absent or late?

- Please contact the school prior to 8:30 a.m.
- The school telephone number is **556-8477**.
- We also encourage you to leave messages on our answering machine which is in operation 24 hours a day.



### When should I sign my child in or out at the office?

- Children should be signed in at the office if they arrive at school later than 8:40 a.m.
- Children must be signed out at the office if they leave the school before 3:10 p.m.
- These procedures are put in place for the safety and security of all children.
- Parents are responsible for letting the bus driver know if their child will not be riding the bus after school.

**Are there school fees for kindergarten?**

- No, all kindergarten fees are paid for by the school.
- Milk and yogurt tickets are available for students. One ticket costs \$5.00 and purchases milk/yogurt products.

**When I volunteer where do I go?**

- Please stop by the office to sign in before you go to the kindergarten classroom.
- At the classroom, you will be asked to sign an Oath of Confidentiality and Declaration Form indicating that you have not been convicted of an offense. These procedures are put in place for the safety and security of all children under the Criminal Code of Canada.

**Will my child go on field trips in kindergarten?**

- Yes, field trips are an important component of kindergarten. They give the children a chance to actively explore the theme they are currently learning about in the classroom. There are a number of field trips each year; most are walking tours.
- In the event that we require drivers due to inclement weather, we require drivers to have \$1,000,000 PLPD coverage and one seatbelt for each child riding in the vehicle. Students are not permitted to sit in front of air bags.

**What does my child do when he/she gets to school each morning?**

- Morning playground supervision begins each day at 8:25 a.m.
- Upon arrival at school in the morning, children are directed to put their backpacks on their place on the boot rack and then go outside. They are not permitted to wait or play in the mudrooms, hallways, or classrooms.
- We ask for your cooperation in keeping our school clean. When parents come into the hallways we ask that they remove wet or muddy footwear. Thank you.

**How will the teacher keep me informed?**

- Your child's teacher will send out monthly newsletters and important updates in a folder called "Important Letters Folder".
- Please check your child's folder every day after school.
- School newsletters are available on our website at [www.oldselementary.ca](http://www.oldselementary.ca).

**How do OES teachers handle birthday party invitations?**

- Please have your child give the invitations to the teacher for distribution to avoid hurt feelings.

**Who should I speak to if I have a question or a concern?**

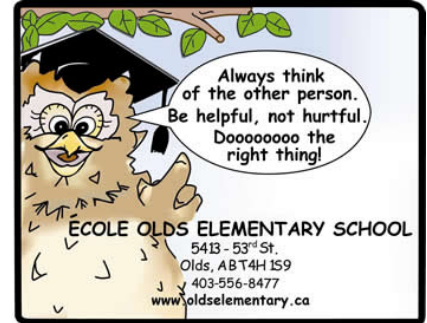
- It is important for all parents to contact the teacher directly in the event of a question or a concern.

## Hooper's Code

Hooper is our school mascot. He is loved by all and carries an important message about the way we should treat others. Here is what Hooper teaches us:

*"I will always think of the other person.  
Before I say or do something, I will ask myself:  
Will this be helpful or hurtful?  
Do the right thing!"*

Our Golden Rule, thinking of the other person, helps make OES a caring place for children to learn and grow.



## Parent Volunteers – Your Child's Special Day

**Overview:** Approximately once per month, parents will be scheduled to come into the classroom as a parent helper. The parent volunteer will be interacting and helping in the classroom. The benefit your child receives is enormous. A calendar will be sent home showing the next month's schedule. If there is a conflict, parents are asked to please try to trade or make arrangements for another relative or friend to come in. Please inform your child's teacher of the change in arrangements.

**Special Person:** Your child is the "Special Person" for this time period (morning or afternoon). The parents provide a nutritious snack for the class and their child gets to talk about it with the children, and of course, consume it! We ask that parents send a nutritious snack that provides:

- 1 small portion per child; and
- Approximately 2 Litres of a healthy beverage such as milk or juice.

The special person gets to use the mystery box, be first in line, help the teacher in a variety of ways and other self-esteem builders. Children look forward to this day all month.

**The Mystery Box:** The "Mystery Box" is a "Show and Tell" activity where children bring an item they wish to share with the class. The item can be anything they like (i.e., a rock from the garden, a spoon from the kitchen, a toy, a picture). The "Special Person" is the child that brings the mystery item on their special day. Please bag the item so it cannot be seen before it is placed in the mystery box. The other children attempt to guess what it is by asking question (Is it a toy? Is it red?)

**In Summary:** Your child will appreciate your presence in the classroom. If you have a few minutes to stop in, please do. **You are always welcome.** If you are available to assist in the classroom on short notice, please let the teacher know. Occasionally circumstances arise where we need someone at the last minute.

# Volunteer Ethics and Guidelines

## A Volunteer's Code of Ethics

All volunteers are provided with a code of ethics, which they are asked to follow. These are elements critical to the operation of the school.

1. Respect the confidentiality of the teacher and the children. Refrain from discussing matters outside the school situation. If you have any questions or concerns, please share them with the teacher.
2. Practice tolerance and understanding towards the children and teachers with whom you come into contact. Be sensitive to the teaching role. Strive for acceptance of all the children.
3. Be dependable. If you agree to undertake a task, follow through by attending at the times and dates arranged. Be realistic about the amount of time you can spend. If you must be late or absent, arrange for an acceptable substitute.

## Guidelines for Parent Volunteers

- ✚ Help children with coats and shoes at arrival and dismissal times. Encourage them to do things for themselves and help them learn how.
- ✚ Spend some time observing before interacting with the children.
- ✚ Encourage friendliness and cooperation among children.
- ✚ Respect a child's right to sometimes work alone.
- ✚ Help a child choose and get started in an activity.
- ✚ Where necessary, enforce rules at centres (e.g., number of children allowed) and help children learn routines.
- ✚ Talk to the children about what they are doing. Help them learn and understand from the experience.
- ✚ Be available to help in emergencies such as cleaning up spills and soothing a child.
- ✚ Let the teacher know if her help is needed in settling a dispute or with an upset child.
- ✚ Play a game with a child or a group of children and encourage learning of social and intellectual skills.
- ✚ Try to be gentle in manner and tone.
- ✚ Expect children to make mistakes and have accidents. Encourage them to be careful to clean up after spills but avoid scolding.
- ✚ Never compare a child to someone else, praise him/her for his/her own accomplishments.
- ✚ Praise a child when he/she accomplishes something important to him/her, no matter how insignificant it may appear to you.
- ✚ Learn to accept a child for what he is so that the child may in turn accept you as a responsive person.