



DUFFERIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Kindergarten Handbook

Dear parents/guardians,

Welcome to Raft River Elementary School. You are about to embark on your child's first experience with formal education. We hope that their participation in the Kindergarten Program will be a rewarding and beneficial educational experience for your son or daughter.

This guidebook has been prepared to acquaint you with some of the services and expectations you might encounter in Kindergarten at Dufferin Elementary School. I urge you to read the contents carefully.

The best educational experience occurs when both parents and teachers work cooperatively together. As professionals we are dedicated to providing the very best programs for your child. You can help by sharing information that will help us meet the educational needs of your youngsters. It is through this sharing in a mutually open and trusting environment that the best possible education will occur.

Parents as Partners

The Kindergarten Program at Dufferin Elementary School is designed to provide appropriate learning experiences for each child. Instruction is provided individually, in small groups and in large group settings. The goal of the Kindergarten Program is to develop the child in the areas of physical, social, emotional, and academic skills. There is a need for the school and parents to work together to assist each child in reaching his or her potential. Parents should feel free to call the school if they have any questions.

You can help!

- Help your child look forward to school. Kindergarten is an enjoyable learning experience.
- Provide opportunities to help at home. In school we help each other.
- Help your child develop good manners by using words like: please, thank you, and excuse me.
- Encourage your child to share things with others and clean up after themselves.
- Teach self-reliance by encouraging self-help skills such as dressing oneself.
- Teach your children to buckle belts, fasten snaps, zip up zippers and button coats and sweaters.
- Teach children to tie their own shoes – or provide them with velcro shoes.
- Read and discuss stories with your child. Develop good listening habits.
- Show an interest in the things brought home from school.

A Few Reminders

- Mark all clothing: Coat, hat, mitts, shoes, boots, sweater, etc with your child's name.
- A loop sewn on coats, etc make them easier to hang up.
- Sending a smock or old shirt (for painting, etc) they can leave at school can help protect clothing.
- It is important to arrive on time for school.

Supporting Your Child

Children come to school from different kinds of environments. They bring into the classroom many experiences and varied attitudes toward life. There are also differences among children in their physical growth, as well as intellectual and social maturity. Children who enter Kindergarten are at various stages of development. When children enter Kindergarten, each responds differently to the new demands that are made of him or her to concentrate and to become a more social and productive members of a given group. It is, therefore, important for the parent to recognize the emotional and physical energy that goes into this process of adjustment.

Most children have mixed feelings when they enter school. They are excited, curious, full of wonder and somewhat anxious. Teachers attempt to make all children feel that they are accepted members of the group. All children are given an opportunity to successfully move ahead in the learning process through tasks within the range of their own levels of ability, experience and emotional readiness. All children are encouraged to express feelings as constructively as possible. All children are guided towards self-discipline so they will achieve in the classroom and develop their potential as fully as possible.

Concerning your role in getting your child ready for school, you have actually been preparing your child for school for many years. As the time gets nearer you might wish to concentrate on developing readiness in the following areas:

- Sharing toys and materials.
- Taking turns.
- Accepting guidance and directives from the classroom teacher and other adults.
- Having the opportunity to make choices and decisions.
- Learning to help others and to ask for help when it is needed.
- Developing fine and gross motor coordination with activities such as cutting, gluing, coloring, skipping, jumping and hopping.
- Learning the routine of completing tasks and cleaning up after various activities.
- Practicing self-care activities.

Attachment / Separation Anxiety

Coming to school for the first time is an important event both for the parents and the child. Parents sometimes have ambivalent feelings about sending their child off to school. The child on the other hand may have some difficulties separating from the parent. If you see minor symptoms of tension, do not get alarmed. Discuss it with the teacher or guidance counselor. Most children love school. It is important to recognize some of the feelings involved in the initial adjustment and act cooperatively to meet the child's emotional needs.

It is important that you give your child a chance to adapt to being at school without you. Parents in the classroom can cause a distraction and can create difficulties for your child adjusting being at school as

time goes on. Each child has different needs and it is important to consult with the classroom teacher on how to deal with separation anxiety if it happens to you.

School Breaks

Kindergarten students are required to take their breaks during regular break times at the school. Most children interact with various age groups on a regular basis, whether it is older siblings, cousins or friends. Playground and school interactions with other children of various ages are important to a child's development as they learn to get along and play together appropriately. These skills are important within their community and the school community as they move through their school years. The earlier they begin developing these social skills, the more success they will have in the future.