



Making the Move to Kindergarten

Some Simple Advice for Easing
Your Child's Transition
to Kindergarten



Shamona Creek Elementary
School

Going to Kindergarten is a Big Step

The move from preschool or daycare to Kindergarten is a major event for both you and your child.



- Your child may feel a real mix of emotions including (but certainly not limited to!) happiness, sadness, anxiety, and curiosity. You may be feeling these same emotions!
- It's a great time for the whole family to setup new routines at home. It's also a fun time for building new relationships with other families – children and parents – and teachers too!



Starting Kindergarten is an adventure and a great part of
growing up!

You Can Help Prepare Your Child and Yourself

There are many things you can do to help ease your child's transition into Kindergarten.

- Make the move a smooth one by talking about changes to your daily routine. Discussing the changes and putting them in a positive light will help reduce stress that you and your child may be feeling. Create a sense of adventure as you talk about the changes!
- Help build your child's confidence by talking about what to expect in the year to come and about how *you* may be feeling about this year. Sharing your feelings helps your child better understand his or her own feelings and models healthy behavior when it comes to dealing with new situations.
- Remember, the doubts and fears your child may be having are normal – recognizing this will help you both feel more secure.



- Make sure to create a positive attitude about school. It's the key to success in both school and life!

What Will Kindergarten Be Like?



In some ways, Kindergarten is much like preschool, but in other ways, it is not. Here's a look at some changes Kindergarten will bring.

- Kindergarten means dealing with more people, as your child becomes part of a larger school. There will be more staff and more teachers for your child to know and remember.
- There will be new settings and activities as your child takes part in "Specials" classes like Library, Art, Music, and Physical Education. Your child might also be riding a bus for the first time.
- Kindergarten class sizes are bigger. Your child may be in a class with 20 or more children. This may mean less individual attention than your child is accustomed to – making this change is a big step! But, it also means a chance to develop independent work habits, learn to work and play with a group, and learn from the diversity of students.
- There will also be more structure as most Kindergartens have a set daily routine. In addition to this routine, your child may spend more time doing science and math activities, reading and writing activities, and pencil and paper exercises.

Changes like these can help your child grow in many ways. Talk about these changes in positive ways!

How Preschool & Daycare Begin to Prepare Your Child

Most likely your child is starting to develop a variety of skills that will help him/her make the adjustments to kindergarten.

Throughout the kindergarten year, the teachers will continue to focus on and build these skills.

- Socially, he or she may be starting to follow simple directions, hold conversations and express thoughts clearly, and play and share with others. Continuing to develop these skills is a big part of the kindergarten year.
- Pre-kindergarten experiences are also building thinking skills, problem solving skills, and introducing your child to letter, word, and shape recognition activities. Through a variety of curriculum-related activities, your child's skills in these areas will continue to grow.
- Emotionally, your child has begun to use words to express feelings instead of hitting or having a tantrum. Kindergarten will be a place for your child's vocabulary to grow and a place for him or her to learn how to react to a variety of situations in appropriate ways.



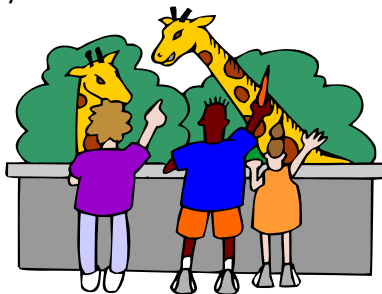
- Kindergarten provides a great environment for your child to try things more and more things independently. This emerging independence works wonders at developing your child's self-esteem and self-confidence. Kindergarten is all about developing a positive "I can do it!" attitude.
- Physically, the early educational experiences are helping to develop fine and gross motor skills like using crayons, pencils, and scissors as well as jumping, kicking, and catching a ball. Throughout the kindergarten year there will be ample opportunity to practice and hone these fine and gross motor skills.
- In addition to these many skills your child has begun to develop and will continue to work on, Kindergarten is the perfect setting to help your child grow emotionally.
- He or she may have started to learn to be aware of other's feelings. Kindergarten experiences will work to enhance this awareness and develop your child beyond the egocentric perspective to one that includes the many other perspectives around him or her.

Remind your child about the skills he or she already has – and about how those skills will help him or her be successful in Kindergarten.

Helping Your Child Prepare and Make the Change

Before Kindergarten begins, and throughout the kindergarten year, there are many ways you can help your child be successful. It is important to give your child plenty of opportunity to:

- **Play**—Give your child time to just “be a kid”—it’s how he/she learns and grows best. Provide opportunities for your child to play with classmates outside the classroom.
- **Read and Write**—Take your child to the library and set aside reading time each day. Reading can and should entail you reading aloud to your child. At this stage only a handful of children are truly reading. Even with those children it is important to read together with your child. Show your child how to tell stories and encourage him or her to make up stories either verbally or through pictures and “words”.
- **Explore the World**—Together you can visit parks, zoos, farms, and museums. You can turn your backyard into the perfect nature walk, and turn your neighborhood into the “land beyond!”



- **Have Fun with Math and Science**—Turn everyday events into an opportunity to learn. Cook with your child and show them measuring tools, shop with your child and talk about money and prices. Go ahead and plant a garden indoors or out and look at the changes over time.
- **Learn Social Skills**—Encourage your child to be polite to all people, express feelings through words and not actions, and resolve conflicts peacefully.
- **Feel Important**—Give your child simple responsibilities such as setting the table, cleaning up after him/herself after snacks and meals, and putting toys and clothes away. Be sure to recognize these efforts and not just results. In the classroom the students will be expected to do many things for themselves!

Be a positive role model as your actions shape your child’s behavior. Show your child healthy habits including healthy eating, exercise, and proper rest. Demonstrate values such as respect and honesty. Always show a positive attitude about school, learning, and life in general!

Preparing for the First Day

There are a number of things that you can do to help your child feel ready and excited for his or her first day of Kindergarten.

- Starting this summer, establish a routine that includes a set bedtime (young children need about 10-12 hours of sleep each night) and regular times for meals.
- Try to limit TV watching and set aside time for reading and relaxing with your child every day. During this “down” time, talk about school and the excitement that lies ahead.
- Go over safety rules helping your child practice saying his or her full name, street address, and phone number. Walk through getting to the bus and how to behave on the bus. It never hurts to talk about what a child should do if stopped by a stranger.

Note: Parents should never leave young children unsupervised to and from school.

- Encourage your child to practice healthy habits including washing hands after using the bathroom and before eating (a snack or a meal). You should also encourage your child to take regular baths or showers, brush teeth at least two times per day, and feel proud about wearing clean clothes. Make sure to check that your child is up-to-date on his or her immunizations.



- You can also visit the school together. Actually being at, and around, the school can help relieve worries your child may have. It’s a great idea (if you can) to visit the school the spring before it starts to see “school in action”! Check with your school’s administration to see if there are orientation events scheduled for your new Kindergartner.
- Finally, talk positively about school. Encourage your child to ask questions and share his or her feelings with you.

The transition can be (and should be!) a simple and fun time for both you and your child. By engaging in some of, or all of, these activities you are taking steps towards ensuring a positive and fun school year.

The Shamona Creek Kindergarten teachers
welcome you to Kindergarten!