

Kindergarten Guidelines

For Reopening 2020



The Kindergarten program at Lakehead Public Schools is designed to support the holistic development of our youngest learners. These COVID-19 guidelines have been established with safety in mind as well as maintaining the integrity of the play-based program. Exploration and building of independence are crucial to early development, so we are relying on the creativity of our educators to work within these guidelines but also create conditions for optimal student learning and curiosity.

As we all know, COVID-19 information and protocols are constantly changing. Please be advised that this is a working document and may change depending on new guidance from either the Ministry of Education or the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

Teaching and Learning

The following guidelines should be used guide the planning of program delivery in Kindergarten:

- Gentle entry will happen as usual – educator teams should contact parents to setup a visit with the child and one parent on September 3rd or 4th. These visits can take place outside in play areas weather permitting, or in the classroom providing parents follow all appropriate protocols.
- Student Drop off/Pick up will occur through Kindergarten entrances where possible – or set up an outdoor meeting space (specifically for morning drop offs).
- Outdoor exploration and learning should occur as much as possible (weather permitting)
- Home Reading programs should utilize digital texts or paper copies that do not return to school (e.g. A to Z reading books)
- Communication bags are not to be utilized. Instead, educator teams will use digital tools (e.g. Seesaw) to communicate with families, to avoid the transfer of items between home and school. Schools may still send home paper documents/letters with children.
- Educators should focus on explicit teaching/lessons for students that demonstrate proper hygiene and washing of hands in between centre use
- Playdough can be used if they are in individualized containers (e.g. baggies – labelled with Student names)
- NO cooperative, GROUP based sand or water tables. Water/Sand play can ONLY be used if provided in individual basins, and basins must be washed in between student use (For example: 3 students at a star table, each with their own bucket of water, exploring floating and sinking with set group of items, OR Individual containers of Kinetic Sand – clearly labelled with students names)
- Individually label student bins/bags for supplies (markers, glue stick, scissors)
- Students can flow throughout classroom as they would in typical year, apart from appropriate handwashing/sanitizing in between transitions.

Physical Space and the Environment

The following guidelines should be used to guide the physical setup of the classroom:

- Cubbies/Hooks are for singular use and spaced out if possible
- Large Carpet allowed (daily cleaning as per recommendations by TBDHU)
- Carpet spots clearly labelled/identified and properly spaced facing frontwards
- No plush toys, puppets or dress up clothing
- Shared objects: Use of shared objects (for example, gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited when possible, or the objects should be cleaned between each use.
- Multiple areas of interest can be set up to support spacing of students (example: if students are very interested in a specific provocation, educator team sets up multiple areas with that same provocation)

Personal Health and Safety

The following recommendations will help ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff:

- 3 students (star tables) per table for snack/lunch/small groupings
- Only 3 chairs at each table for spacing
- Chairs cleaned daily
- Students wash hands in between transitions to new centres
- Facemasks encouraged for students, mandatory for educators
- Educators must wear face shields or goggles in addition to masks when working closely with children
- Snacks and lunches must be packed so that students can easily open packaging
- Lunches must not require microwave heating (bag lunch style)
- Personal items should be clearly labelled with student name to avoid clothing mix ups, etc. This includes masks if parents send them to school.