

Kindergarten Information Package

September 2020

Welcome to Kindergarten! This will be my 8th year teaching at Notre Dame, however I have been teaching kindergarten in our district since 2003. I grew up in Morinville, and still live here with my husband and three kids. I am looking forward to sharing in this exciting year with you and your child!

I have put together some important information to help you throughout the year. Please look over the handout, it will be posted on our class website under 2020 Kindergarten Information Package. For specific information about Covid 19 guidelines please refer to our district website <https://www.gsacrd.ab.ca/> for the latest information.

Our kindergarten hours this year are from 8:25am-11:20am and 12:15pm-3:10pm. Please ensure your child is on time for class. If your child will be absent or late our school uses Safe Arrival which allows you to report absences or lates right from your mobile device. Visit the school website <https://www.nd.gsacrd.ab.ca/about/attendance> for more information. If your child's regular routine will be changing for the day please send me an email in advance. I do not usually have time to check emails during class time, so if it is a change the day of, it is best to call the office directly at 780-939-4020. We are not permitted to let students leave with another adult without parental permission.

When dropping off your child for the start of class, please have them wait at the doors adjacent to the playground. An adult will let students in the school no earlier than 8:15am and 12:10pm(unless there is inclement weather).

If your child rides the bus, there will be an adult waiting to bring them to their door when they are dropped off. An adult will take them to the bus at the end of the day.

If you are running late for pick up/drop off you will have to go to the main doors and call the office when you arrive.

Please note we are asking parents not to let students play on the playground before/after school. Thank you for your cooperation.

Email is my primary form of communicating with parents. We are trying to minimize what goes back and forth between home and school, so paper correspondence will be minimal this year. The weekly newsletter and the link to our class calendar will be sent out via email on Sundays. Our class also has its own website where all the information is posted to keep you up to date. To find our website visit the Notre Dame main web page at www.nd.gsacrd.ab.ca and go to the quick links tab where you will find a teachers and staff button. There is also a link to the website in the signature of all my emails. If you would prefer to receive a paper copy of the newsletter and calendar please let me know.

I will also be using an app called SeeSaw in our classroom. This is an app that allows me to upload pictures and videos of things your child is doing in our class and share them with you. It is also going to be a way to share activities or "homework" that students can complete at home. It's a great way to get your child talking about their day and keep up with all the fun we are having in kindergarten. I will send more information about how to sign up later this week.

Sadly, at this time no parent volunteers are allowed in the school. If restrictions are lifted, I am always more than happy to have parents help out in the class.

We have about 15 minutes reserved for snack time everyday. Please be sure to send appropriate portions. I encourage the children to eat a healthy choice before any treats, please try to provide at least one healthy choice for your child each day. Currently we will not be recycling juice boxes and yogurt containers, they will be sent home in your child's lunch kit.

If you are sending money to school with your child for any reason, please make sure it is in a labeled envelope or Ziploc bag with your child's name and the reason the money is being sent. This helps avoid confusion. I also highly encourage parents to use the School Cash Online option. This will be available for most fees during the year.

At this time, we are unable to share food in the class. This means that we are unable to let the kids bring in a "treat" to celebrate birthdays, special days etc. We are also unable to handout prepackaged food unless someone from the school has disinfected the packaging prior to handing it out. For this reason, we will not be able to hand out anything that has been sent from home. We will still celebrate your child on their birthday, if their birthday falls on a no school day we will celebrate their unbirthday on a different day.

Throughout the year we will be doing many fun and interesting activities to make learning a second language an exciting experience for your child.

Language learning: We will be using a program called "La Roue" to learn the French alphabet. It uses actions and pictures to help the children relate to the letters and their sounds. We will be largely focusing on phonemic awareness which involves rhyming, syllables, sound recognition(beginning, middle and end sounds), segmenting and blending. "Structure de la Phrase" is another program we use to teach vocabulary and sentence structure using color coded flash cards. We will be learning many French songs(listening, not singing them) and poems each month, which will be sent home(via Seesaw) so you can practice them with your child! Each week we have a new password that is posted at the door that the children need to say in order to come into the class. I will put the meaning and pronunciation of the words in Seesaw and on the week at a glance. In the past I have had some parents concerned about not speaking French at home. If you are having trouble with any aspect of the language, please let me know and I will do my best to help you in any way I can.

English Students in the afternoon class will be using "Animated Literacy" which is very similar to the French program which uses actions and characters to learn the alphabet. We will have a strong focus on phonemic awareness as well and develop our literacy skills in a variety of ways like songs, poems and the "Words Their Way" program. As this is a dual language class, I will encourage the kids to participate in the French activities as well, however their core learning will take place in English.

Mathematics: This year we will be using guided math which will involve learning new concepts in a small group setting and then having many opportunities to apply learning during play and provocations. We will explore number concepts to 10, patterns and sorting and shapes and measurement in a variety of ways. Manipulatives and games make up a big part of our math program. We will be sure to safely distance and use our own materials during small group activities.

Social Studies: We will be exploring what makes us unique and special, community awareness and a variety of social skills.

Free Play: It is important to give the kids the opportunity to explore and learn based on their own interests. They will be given a minimum of 40 minutes per day to explore the classroom. Different spaces and provocations will be open for the kids to explore and will evolve and develop with the help of the kids throughout the year. This will also be where we develop many of our social skills. Providing meaningful play opportunities

has become more of a challenge with Covid 19 restrictions in place, however we are sanitizing play areas between AM and PM groups and have set toys for each cohort which are also cleaned daily. I have told the kids that if they would like to wear their masks during playtime they can, but it is not required.

Physical Education: We have phys ed on Mondays and Thursdays with Mrs. Lloyd in the AM and Mme Samchuk in the PM. This year a lot of phys ed classes will be outside. Please be sure your child is dressed for the weather and has proper footwear on these days.

Kindercooking: Typically, I do kindercooking with the kids once a month. We are still looking at what this might look like with restrictions, so sadly it will be on hold for now.

This is a year like no other and I'm sure there will be many changes and questions along the way! Please feel free to call or email me if you have any concerns at 780-939-4020 or email dsamchuk@gsacrd.ab.ca

Desiree Samchuk