

Onoway Elementary

Kindergarten

Handbook

2022-23

“Let the Journey Begin”



Northern Gateway
Public Schools

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WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN AT ONOWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This first year may well determine the direction of future learning for your child. The purpose of this handbook is to share with you how we will be working with your child to ensure they receive a sound *education* in a safe manner.

The Kindergarten program at Onoway Elementary School is designed to meet the unique needs of five-year olds. It provides for these needs in a child-centered environment that is equipped with a wealth of concrete, open-ended instructional materials and methods.

OES MOTTO TOUCHING TOMORROW TODAY

We are a Community Minded School with a Strong and Active School Council. The Onoway Elementary School Council has a valuable role to play in the operation of our school activities. New parents are encouraged to join. See website for more information and meeting dates.

At OES we aim to nurture the potential of all students in an environment that values self-worth, relationships and resilience.

Students are given opportunities to develop at their own pace and challenge themselves in a safe and supportive environment.

STAGGERED ENTRY

Your child's first day will only be a half day and you will be responsible for dropping them off and picking them up. Bring school supplies and a snack. We will meet outside by the Kindergarten entrance door. The office will inform you (in August) of your child's first half day. This information will be mailed or emailed to you so keep a lookout for it.



SCHOOL SUPPLIES

If you have ordered from Write-On Stationery, your child's supplies will be delivered directly to the classroom in August.



WRITE-ON STATIONERY

If you are purchasing them yourself please send them to school with your child on their first half day.

Students will NOT be sharing crayons, pencils etc so please label all of their personal items.



COMMUNICATION

Communication is crucial for us to be able to build relationships. We will do everything we can to keep you informed about what is happening at school and to address your questions and concerns. Email, text, and Instant Messaging through an app called Seesaw will be the primary communication tools used. More information on Seesaw will be provided at the beginning of the school year. Please ensure your teacher has the email account you plan on checking everyday. A plastic pouch that the school has purchased will be used as a 'mailbag' for student work/correspondence/information. It will be sent home daily in your child's backpack. **Please check their "mailbag" and return it to school in their backpack everyday.** Be sure to update the office and your teacher when you have a change of address, email or phone number.

STUDENT SAFETY

All doors are locked during the day. The Kindergarten door has its own doorbell for students to use if they arrive late. Classroom doors lock when shut. Safe playground procedures are in place. Supervisors are diligent and always visible with their yellow striped vests. Safety measures are in place for regular Fire Drills, Hour Zero Lock Down Procedures as well as any potential government mandated Covid Protocols.



OPTIONAL SAFETY PROCEDURES - (OES will follow Alberta Health Services provincial mandates if Covid is still a concern in our province this coming Fall)

- Cleaning and safety protocols will be in effect or increased as deemed necessary
- Our grade level will be considered a cohort and interaction with other students or class cohorts will be minimal or non-existent.
- Transmission control will be specifically taught and enforced (proper hand washing, sneezing into the sleeve, avoidance of face touching, and physical distancing as much as possible)
- We will be washing and/or sanitizing hands several times throughout the day (before and after entering the building/classroom, before and after using toys, utensils, manipulatives, and before and after washroom and snack times).
 - Students with Covid symptoms, according to the AHS checklist (eg: coughing, runny nose, sore throat, fever) are to remain home. If your child displays these symptoms during the day they will be sent to the office and you will be called to pick them up. If your child has a pre-existing condition such as allergies or asthma, please let the school know.

KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

We will be develop a classroom community where students feel accepted and where they can take ownership and pride in themselves and their classroom. Students are encouraged to be responsible, respectful, safe, helpful and courteous to each other. They are also encouraged to challenge themselves and appreciate their gifts, talents and accomplishments. Our school embraces the Seven Sacred Teachings which are based on traditional Indigenous teachings of love, respect, humility, courage, honesty, wisdom and truth. These teachings help students understand important character traits and how upholding these values helps them grow as individuals while positively contributing to their community. Other Basic Kindergarten expectations are as follows:

1. Listen and follow directions
2. Keep your hands and feet in your own space
3. Raise your hand to talk so not to interrupt others
4. Move safely from place to place
5. Clean up and take care of personal and school belongings



OVERARCHING KINDERGARTEN THEMES

The Kindergarten program aims to develop independence, awareness, and self esteem in a fun and stimulating environment. The programme provides routines and activities to stimulate children's thinking, promote both literacy and numeracy development, fine and gross motor skills, social interactions, relationships and independent behaviour. Kindergarten students are provided with opportunities to:

- Explore in a fun environment
- Grow and develop at their own pace
- Challenge themselves in a safe and supportive environment
- Develop knowledge and skills, and attitudes in a variety of areas
- Demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills
- Practice Self- Regulation Skills
- Develop desirable personal characteristics and decision-making skills
- Know how to learn and work independently and as part of a team
- Demonstrate competence in using information technologies
- Demonstrate initiative, leadership, flexibility, and persistence
- Have the desire to be a lifelong learner

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Everyday students will:

Work on using effective communication skills.

Listen to and join in the reading of stories, songs, and poems.

Respond to stories through discussion, art, drama, music, and movement.

Explore letters, sounds, words and experiment with writing

Participate in reading activities (individual, small and large group).

MATH and SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT and ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Children have the opportunity to:

Develop number concepts

Count and match numerals

Sort and classify and measure

Identify, reproduce, extend and create patterns

Use senses to explore experiment, question, observe, predict and discuss the world around them (living things, color, shapes, size, texture, etc.)

PHYSICAL SKILLS AND WELLBEING

Students will:

Develop muscular control and coordination

Develop a sense of rhythm

Learn and practice safety rules

Learn to care for their body and value physical health and nutrition

Develop sportsmanship, fair play, and perseverance skills



PERSONAL- SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT and CITIZENSHIP and IDENTITY

Children will have to opportunity to:

Learn in a group setting

Share and take turns

Respect the rights and property of others

Feel a sense of belonging

Learn how to be a good citizen

Experience joy and satisfaction from self-expression and success

Learn about diversity and discover their unique traits and talents

Explore their capabilities and ask for assistance when needed

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Your child will have the opportunity to:

Explore through movement

Learn about various instruments and sounds

Explore different art media- paint, clay crayons, etc.

Express themselves creatively through music, movement, art, and drama.

ABC's of KINDERGARTEN

A **ABSENCES:** If your child will be absent or late please call the office or send an email through the attendance notification tab on the Onoway Elementary School Website. Regular attendance in Kindergarten is essential.

ARRIVAL: School doors open at 8:45 a.m. School starts and attendance will be taken at 8:57 a.m. If your child arrives after 8:57 am they are to go to the office to get a welcome slip to give to their teacher. The main door will be locked so they will be required to ring the doorbell. The Kindergarten door locks automatically at preset times. Training will take place so students know what to do if they arrive and the Kindergarten door is already locked.

ASSEMBLIES: Whole school assemblies are usually held during the last week of each month. Updates about assemblies will be sent to parents letting them know if the assemblies will be in person or online.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a natural, ongoing, and important part of daily learning. By questioning and talking to the students, listening to the language they use, and observing their behavior, we gain information about your child's level of skill and understanding. Assessment in Kindergarten is based on observation during learning activities, centers, projects, independent work, and informal and formal interviews with students. Students will be assessed according to their individual progress. Notes and checklists are used to record observations. Sample work and informal assessment tools are collected and gathered in a student file. Some formal testing will also be used to assess each child's progress. Assessments will directly reflect student's progress and learning in relation to the curricular outcomes.

B **BATHROOMS:** The students are free to go to the bathroom as the need arises. We have our own separate bathroom located in between our two classrooms, as well as access to the washrooms directly across from our classrooms in the atrium.

BIRTHDAYS: Please try and make birthday party arrangements outside of school if possible. At this time it has been decided that parents will NOT be allowed to send food in that is to be shared with the class.

BUS NOTES: If your child will not be on the bus at the end of the day make sure you have notified your bus driver of this change. If it is an emergency you can notify the office early in the day and they will get a note to your bus driver.

BUSSING: For the first few weeks of school, Kindergarten students will be met at the buses in the morning and taken to their bus at the end of the day. They are dismissed

earlier than Grade 1- 6 students so they can be on their bus prior to the Elementary and High School students being dismissed. Parents are to notify your child's teacher or the office of bussing changes as soon as possible to avoid confusion at the end of the day. Students will not be given permission to ride home on a different bus other than their own. If your child will not be on the bus at the end of the day make sure you have notified your bus driver of this change. If it is an emergency you can notify the office early in the day and they will get a note to your child's bus driver.

C **CALENDAR**: Please check the school calendar/website on a regular basis.

Occasionally, changes and updates are made to the year's schedule. * The Friday rotations may not always alternate evenly. Check carefully!

CELEBRATIONS: Special celebrations, such as Halloween, will be recognized in the classroom by doing theme-related activities. Notifications will be sent to parents prior to each event.

CELEBRATION OF LEARNING: Students and their parents will participate in "Student-Led Conferences" in March (providing Covid rules have been lifted). During this time students will demonstrate their abilities in various curricular tasks. Seesaw will also be used to demonstrate student learning.

CLOTHING/ EXTRA CLOTHING: Please ensure your child has appropriate clothing for the weather. Sometimes Kindergarten children require a change in clothing during the day, due to accidents. Please send a set of dry clothes in a labeled zip lock bag that we can keep at school in case of an emergency.

D **DIFFERENTIATION**: Because all children are unique they may be at varied instructional levels. Instruction will be administered so the individual needs of all students can be met.

E **EMAIL** will be the primary form of communication. Please check it regularly.

F **FIELD TRIPS**: Physical field trips are optional and will depend on Covid regulations.

FOOTWEAR: Students need inside running shoes that will stay at school. They should be good for doing physical activities.. Students **MUST** be able to put shoes on and take them off independently. If your child cannot tie their shoes on their own please send velcro shoes.

G GROWTH MINDSET We work to train our brains to have a growth mindset. This means we understand that it's okay to make mistakes, that we learn best by doing hard things, and that effort is more important than perfection. Look for more information throughout the year to help foster your child's growth mindset.

H HOMEWORK: Students are encouraged to participate in nightly learning activities (about 10 minutes each night) by going over work their child brings home, reading to them, listening to them "read" or retell the stories in their own words, review letter sounds, practice writing (their name, letters, numbers, words, sentences, stories), practice sight words and number concepts.

HOT LUNCH Students will have the opportunity to purchase a hot lunch once every other month. Cost for a hot lunch and drink ranges from \$6.00 - \$8.00. You will be notified when your child's class has an opportunity to order. School Council takes this project on and local businesses usually provide the food.

HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS It is a fact that we learn best when we make connections to our everyday lives, and a holiday is often the most important thing happening in a kindergartner's world. In our classroom, we use that to our advantage! We use the excitement of holidays and seasons to make learning more fun, so we do many holiday-themed games and activities. We also have class parties for Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day.

I INDEPENDENCE is a goal for students because it builds self-esteem and self-confidence. Kindergarten students are very capable of doing many things on their own and they are encouraged to do as much as they can for themselves. Please work on the following skills with your child: putting on outside coats and boots, zipping their coat and packing and zipping their own backpack.

ILLNESS Being in a classroom and school, surrounded by a lot of children, can lead to germs spreading rather quickly. Unfortunately, no matter how much we ask that the students wash their hands...kids get sick. If your child is sick call or email the school or your child's teacher to let them know the situation and keep your child home.

J JUICE BAR: On non-covid years the school has a juice bar where snack items are sold. The items range from .50 - \$1.00. More information on the juice bar will be available in the fall.

K **KEEP CONNECTED:** Read your emails, check the Family Seesaw app, check the OES and Northern Gateway websites and follow OES on facebook. Check your child's mailbag and backpack each night. Talk to your child about their day.

L **LIBRARY:** Your child will meet with the Learning Commons Teacher and have access to a variety of library books. They will be able to sign one book out per week.

LUNCH/SNACKS/MICROWAVE: Students will be given time to eat a morning snack, and an afternoon snack, in addition to their midday lunch. Please send healthy choices such as yogurt, cheese, fruit, and veggies. Please ensure food items do not require boiled water. To avoid unnecessary contamination it is important that students are able to open their own food packages and containers. Please practice with them at home. Ability to use a microwave in class will be determined at a later date.

M **MAILBAGS:** Student work/correspondence/information will be sent home daily in your child's "mailbag". **Please check your child's "mailbag" and return it to school in their backpack everyday.**

MEDICINE: Medications of a non-prescription nature shall not be distributed to any students be the classroom teacher. In exceptional circumstances, prescription medication may be administered by the principal or designate. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide sufficient reason, in writing, for special consideration. Please do not send medication to school with your Kindergarten child.

MONEY: Please ensure any money sent to school with your child for any reason needs to be placed in their mailbag in an envelope or zip-lock bag labeled with their name. Be sure to send a note along stating what the money is for. Use the School Cash Online system whenever possible.

N **Newsletter** will be emailed, posted on the OES website and will be found on the OES facebook page.

O **OUTSIDE RECESSES** We have 50 minutes of outdoor recess every day, unless it's raining or the wind chill is below -25 degrees. Please make sure your child has the appropriate outdoor gear for the weather. Kindergarten children are new to the school environment so extra care is taken to ensure their personal safety while on the playground. Children will be supervised during all outside breaks by OES staff and safe play is encouraged as students play with their classroom cohort.

P **PICK UP/DROP OFF:** Bus students are dismissed at 3:20 p.m and non-bus students are dismissed at 3:15 - 3:20 p.m. All Kindergarten students exit from the outside Kindergarten door. If someone different will be picking your child up after school you must let your child's teacher know by sending a note or calling the office. *If you are picking your child up during the day or after school, please park in the Parent Pick Up Loop.

Q **QUESTIONS** When talking to your child about their day question them using word such as who, what, where and when, Ask them specific questions about their day (who did you play with). Also, if you have any questions or concerns about anything that's happening in the classroom, please email or call your child's teacher.

R **REPORTING OF STUDENT PROGRESS** OES uses an online reporting system. Additional information regarding this system will be forwarded to you at a later date. In-person Parent-Student-Teacher Interviews are normally held once in the fall and then again in the spring. Dates and details regarding Interviews will be sent out prior to the scheduled dates. Informal communication about your child's progress and behaviours will be ongoing throughout the year.

READ, READ, READ The most important thing you can do to help your child be successful in school is to read aloud with him/her at least 15 minutes a day! Research shows that the more that kids are read to, the bigger their vocabulary... when they have a bigger vocabulary, it's easier for them to recognize and comprehend words as they begin reading on their own and when reading is easier, school work is easier!

S **SCHOOL CANCELLATION:** If your child is a bus student and buses are canceled due to weather or road conditions, you will be notified by your bus driver. The school is always be open for students when buses are canceled but you are responsible for transporting your child to and from school.

SCHOOL COUNCIL: The Onoway Elementary School Council meets monthly. All parents with children attending Kindergarten to grade 7 are invited to attend these meetings. See school website for meeting dates.

SIGN-OUT POLICY: A sign-out book is kept in the office at the school. Any parent, guardian, or designated person taking a student from school is required to contact the office to arrange for the child to leave. You have to let the office know when you will be arriving in the Pick Up Loop. You are also responsible for letting your bus driver know.

SKATING: TBA

T **TECHNOLOGY** The Kindergarten class has a set of iPads that will be used for various learning activities throughout the year. We will be using the SeeSaw application as part of the Kindergarten learning program. More information to follow.

U **UNITED** students progress better when parents and school are united and work together to ensure positive growth and progress in students.

V **VOLUNTEERING** Parents play a central role in the lives of their children and your support of school activities makes your child feel important and sends a message that you value school. If Covid Protocols are still in place we will not be utilizing in-school volunteers. If restrictions have been lifted a volunteer form will be sent home. Either way you can still support your child in the following ways.

Home support

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| •reading to your child everyday | •establishing regular routines |
| •prepping materials at home | •helping your child print their name
(only first letter capitalized) |
| •providing nutritious lunches | •donating materials for class projects |
| •checking backpack for notes | |
| •reinforcing proper pencil grasp | |

W **WEBSITE:** The Onoway Elementary website is an important source of information. The website address for the school is: <http://onowayelementary.ca/>
WEATHER ANNOUNCEMENTS School closure decisions are made by division office. They will also be posted on the Northern Gateway Public School's website.

WATER BOTTLES Students are required to bring their own personal water bottle - labeled with their name (water fountains will not be available for student use during the day).

X **EXTRA:** Send an extra set of clothes with your child. They will be kept at school in case of an emergency.

EXIT Kindergarten students always enter and exit through the outside Kindergarten door next to the parent pick up loop.

Y **YOU** Remember that **YOU** are your child's first and most important teacher. A few minutes reading at home each day goes a long way and shows how much you care about their education. You can help to make your child feel successful this year by discussing your child's school day with them. Ask questions like, What did you learn today? What did you work the hardest on? What was the best part of your day? or What are you getting better at? These questions cause children to reflect on their learning which in turn helps them remember new information. Don't let them say nothing. Show enthusiasm for their learning.

Z **zzzz** Kindergarten is fun, but it's also very demanding. In order for students to be able to do their best learning it is important that they get plenty of rest.