

# Graminia School

## KINDERGARTEN

## HANDBOOK



*Meet the Future: Be the Best You Can Be*

## ALL HE DID WAS PLAY

My son went off to kindergarten, it was his first school day.

I waited for him to return to see what he would say.

Reading, writing, counting – social studies too

Are all important subjects I'm sure he'll have to do.

But he came home quite happily, whistling all the way

School is really wonderful – all we do is play!

“Didn't you study science sometime throughout the day?”

“No!” he replied, quiet mystified, “all we did was play.”

“But, John and Jim and Sam and me we made some little boats

And we put them in the water to see which one would float.

And then we blew some bubbles. Oh that was great fun too!

And held them up into the light to see the colors through.”

“What about the alphabet? What did the teacher say?”

“Nothing,” he replied, quite mystified, all we did was play.”

“But we had secret messages – you had to be quite smart

To match the symbols to the words you found upon a chart.

And them in pans all filled with sand we traced our names just so...

It was quite fun to feel the way each letter had to go.”

“And what of math and counting skills – did you have none today?”

“No,” he replied quite mystified, all we did was play.”

“But we had to choose a color and stick it on the card

So we could see who rode or walked into our own schoolyard!

And then I went into the store, I was in charge, you know

And counted out the change for Sue – I put on quite a show!”

And did you know a little pie cut once and once again

Made four quite good size pieces, for me, Sam, Sue, and Ben?

Now Mom, I really want to go and have a little rest.

I'm oh so awfully tired from trying to do my best.”

And off he went into his room, singing all the way.

How could he be so tired, when all he did was play?

I must go to the school quite soon and set this teacher straight.

Our children need the basics now – there is not time to wait!

I sent my son to school to learn; not while his time away.

Imagine wasting all that time just letting children play.

~Elizabeth Stoddart~

# Graminia School Kindergarten Program



The kindergarten program at Graminia School is based on the following beliefs relating to your children, their learning, and their home and community environments:

- Children develop through similar stages but at individual rates. Our kindergarten program provides learning experiences that meet individual and group needs, interest, and developmental levels.
- Young children are naturally curious and eager to learn. They benefit from developing positive relationships with others, including children of their own age. Our program provides opportunities for children to learn about their environment through organized activities, purposeful play, and cooperation with others.
- Our kindergarten program supports and respects the dignity and worth of the family and encourages parents to participate in their children's education.
- The kindergarten experience is very special because it forms the basis for all future learning. In this first year of formal instruction, children are introduced to the academic and social life in a school setting. The kindergarten environment will provide them with an opportunity to grow socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually through developmentally appropriate practices.
- Your support and encouragement is vital to your child's success. Becoming involved in your child's learning can greatly affect the degree to which your child succeeds. It is truly a parent-teacher-child educational partnership.
- This year your child will be embarking on the journey to joyful learning in kindergarten. He/She will share many new experiences with teachers and peers. Each and every child will be appreciated and celebrated for their individual differences, strengths, and talents. Your child will flourish in a safe and nurturing environment where there is mutual respect for one another. It is our hope that our classroom will become their "home away from home".
- Let us work together to make this year a great beginning for your child!

## Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

While there is no perfect formula that determines when children are truly ready for kindergarten, you can use this checklist to see how well your child is doing in acquiring the skills found on most kindergarten checklists.

Young children change so fast – if they can't do something this week, they may be able to do it a few weeks later.

Check the skills your child has mastered. Then re-check every month to see what additional skills your child can accomplish easily.

- Listen to stories without interrupting
- Recognize rhyming sounds
- Pay attention for a period of time to adult-directed tasks
- Understand that actions have both causes and effects
- Show understanding of general times of the day
- Cut with scissors
- Be able to hold and print with a pencil
- Trace basic shapes
- Share with others
- Be able to follow rules
- Be able to recognize authority
- Manage bathroom needs
- Button shirts, pants, coats, and zip up zippers
- Be able to control oneself
- Separate from parents without being upset
- Speak understandably
- Talk in complete sentences of five to six words
- Look at pictures and then tell stories
- Identify some alphabet letters
- Sort similar objects by color, size, and shape
- Count to ten
- Begin to print first name

If your child has acquired most of the skills on this checklist, and will be at least five years of age by December 31, 2020, he or she is probably ready for kindergarten. What teachers want to see on the first day of school are children who are capable and eager to learn.

# Q&A

## Questions Parents Often Ask....

### 1. Does the program run for the full year?

The kindergarten program follows the regular school calendar. Your child will attend either the Monday/Wednesday class or the Tuesday/Thursday kindergarten class. The kindergarten program requires a minimum of 475 instructional hours. In order to meet these requirements, the students will attend on some Fridays. **Please check the kindergarten newsletters and teacher blog regarding the Fridays that your child will attend.**

### 2. What are the fees for kindergarten?

The total fees payable will be sent home with your child the first week of school. Fees include a separate field trip/cultural fee charged by Graminia School. The Graminia Kindergarten fees for 2019-2020 were \$50.00(Field Trip Fee) plus \$6.00(Cultural Fee) for a total of \$56. For 2020-2021 we anticipate there will be an increase. Kindergarten students are bussed to Graminia School. Bussing information can be found by clicking on the link below  
<http://www.psd70.ab.ca/Bus%20Registration.php>

### 3. How can parents be involved?

Parents are most welcome to volunteer in the kindergarten classroom. A sign-up roster will be available in the classroom. Parents are also encouraged to participate at Graminia School in other areas such as the library, hot lunch program, etc. When you arrive at the school please sign in at the office and receive a volunteer lanyard that identifies you to the school population. Parents who regularly volunteer more than 10 hours per year must obtain a yearly *Criminal Records Check* issued by the RCMP. There is no cost involved for this service if you go to the Spruce Grove RCMP detachment. Please pick up the volunteer waiver form at the office. Please do not bring siblings to school when it is your turn to volunteer. If you anticipate your child (or yourself) will be anxious when you come to help, please do not sign on the roster until your child is comfortable and confident in the classroom setting.

### 4. What should my child wear to school?

Send your child to school in clothes for learning, wash and wear items are best. Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Shoes, boots, mittens, hats, etc. should all be clearly labelled with your child's name.

**5. What should I do if my child is not feeling well?**

Please keep your child at home if he/she is feeling ill. He/She will recover more quickly at home and will not infect the others in the group. Please telephone the school at (780)963-5035 to report an absence.

**6. Who do I tell if my child is not going to be riding the bus on a particular day?**

A note must be sent to the classroom teacher to inform them that your child is not going to be riding on the bus.

**7. How many children attend Graminia School?**

Graminia School has a student population of approximately 525 students ranging in age from Kindergarten to Grade 9.

**8. What information do parents receive about the progress of their child?**

There are three formal progress reports throughout the school year. In November, the Early Years Evaluation (EYE) is reviewed with parents at Parent-Teacher Interviews. In March parents can access report cards online through Power School. A Parent-Teacher Interview might also be requested. A final report card is available online at the end of June. Of course, parents may request a meeting with the teacher at any time.

**9. Does my child need to bring any supplies for the year?**

Yes. A supply list can be found on the Graminia School website.

<http://www.psd70.ab.ca/schools/graminia>

Supplies can be pre-ordered through our Staples program. Information will be available in June.

**10. What should parents do if they have a question or concern about their child or the school?**

Parents should approach the teacher first. If additional information is needed, the teacher and the parent or the parent should meet with the principal.

**11. What should my child know before they come to kindergarten?**

Have your child practice printing their first name before they come to school. The correct formation is capital letter first and lower case letters after. Exposure to lots of cutting and coloring activities is great for fine-motor development.

**12. Is my child ready for kindergarten?**

Kindergarten is your child's first formal year of education. We want it to be a successful year for them. Please consult the readiness checklist if you are questioning whether your child is ready to attend kindergarten.

## Structure of the Day

In order to maintain each child's interest level and enthusiasm, the day is planned to provide a variety of learning activities. The day is composed of directed activities, centre times, and whole group activities.

Routines are established early in the classroom. This enables the children to work with greater confidence and independence within the classroom.

Centre time is an integral part of the kindergarten program. Centres give the children the opportunity to explore and discover on their own. They develop independence as they are responsible for selecting and completing activities by themselves. The learning activities revolve around themes which are adapted to take into account the expectations of the kindergarten program statement. The kindergarten newsletter, which will come home monthly, will keep you informed on what our various themes will be.

**For September the class themes will be "Getting to Know You" and "Colours".**

Throughout the year there are several areas of study that will be interwoven into the kindergarten program. These are the alphabet, literacy skills, math, numeracy skill development, book handling, book appreciation, fine motor skills, and gross motor skill development.

There are specific goals and expectations for kindergarten. Alberta Education has developed a kindergarten program statement that describes clear expectations in learning areas. They are:

1. Early Literacy
2. Early Numeracy
3. Community and Environmental Awareness (social and science)
4. Personal and Social Responsibility
5. Physical Skills and Well Being (physical education and health)
6. Creative Expression
7. Citizenship and Identity

Additional information can be found at [www.education.alberta.ca](http://www.education.alberta.ca)

## **Centres**

The following is an overview of objectives that includes those centres which are available all year long, as well as those which are developed as the need and desire arises:

### ***Listening and Viewing***

The listening centre is a quiet place for a child to...

- Develop ability in and awareness of different levels of listening
- Improve speech patterns through imitation
- Listen and view ideas of others and compare experiences
- Hear many voices and various ways of saying things
- Listen and view stories for enjoyment
- Gain information about theme topics
- Learn to operate different machines

### ***Numeracy/Literacy Table Activities***

Table games serve as a reinforcement centre that provides an opportunity for the child to...

- Tell stories in sequence
- Develop visual discrimination skills
- Classify a variety of objects
- Identify relationships between objects
- Learn to reason in many situations
- Verbally describe activities conducted in this center, thus fostering language development
- Develop problem solving skills
- Classify relationships between objects
- Discover basic math concepts through exploration and experimentation
- Use a variety of materials for weighing and measuring
- Use concrete materials to develop abstract concepts

*1, 2, 3...A, B, C...*



## ***Paint***

Painting offers the child an opportunity to...



- Plan the activity
- Receive sensory pleasure
- Discover color, shape, and texture by using various paints
- Create an expression of self
- Develop fine muscles and eye-hand coordination
- Use symbols to represent objects

## ***Writing Centre***

The book and writing centres are relaxing centres that allows the child to...

- “Read” pictures and print
- Browse through books for pleasure
- Extend understanding of various means (photographs, illustrations, words) for expressing thoughts and feelings
- Develop personal reading interests
- Use picture clues to predict fantasy or reality in a story
- Experiment with print



### ***Puzzle Centre***

Enables the child to...

- Develop concept of whole-part relationships
- Develop spatial awareness and eye-hand coordination
- Encourage good independent work habits
- Perseverance, creative problem solving, satisfaction with accomplishments

### ***Multisensory Centre (sand, water, rice, etc.)***

Enables the child to...

- Develop sensory awareness
- Introduce properties of weight and density
- Develop skills in using problem-solving, observing, identifying problems, predicting, testing predictions, and generalizing
- Manipulate materials and objects in order to move from concrete to abstract thinking

### ***Arts/Crafts/Playdough***

These creative centres provide a medium of expression and enable the child to...

- Work with a wide variety of materials
- Experiment sensory pleasure by working with different media
- Experiment with color, shape, and texture
- Create an expression of self
- Use visual expression as a means of communication

### ***Blocks/Lego***

The block centre plays an important role for the child because it helps him/her to...

- Express creativity using a variety of building materials
- Discover concepts of quantity, length, and inequality
- Plan and work with others to solve common problems
- Use building as a means of non-verbal expression
- Develop large muscle and fine motor coordination
- Improve eye-hand coordination

### ***Dramatic Play – house/office/store***

Enables the child to...

- Gain knowledge about roles of family members and community helpers through role playing
- Provide a medium for creative expression of real life and fictitious situations and characters
- Facilitate small group involvement and cooperation

### ***Puppetry/Flannel board***

Dramatic play allows the child to...

- Construct the world as he/she sees it
- Act out feelings and emotions in a comfortable setting
- Role-play real life situations
- Practice language and social skills
- Interact with other children in an informal situation
- Role-play characters from stories and films

### ***Science Centre***

Enables the child to...

- Learn and test new concepts
- Increase language development
- Observe, predict, and compare
- Draw conclusions
- Experience sensory activities
- Discover how things work

In addition to the classroom activity centres, the children take part in the school library program and have regular visits to the gymnasium.

### **Snack Time**

Two healthy snacks are encouraged for morning snack time. Students may have an optional snack time in the afternoon. Please send a labelled water bottle.



## **Lunch Times**

Currently, the lunch break at Graminia School is from 11:15am – 12:15pm. The kindergarten students will eat their lunch from 11:15am – 11:45am. They will go outside for their lunch recess from 11:45am – 12:15pm. At 12:15pm they will return to their classroom.

## **Hot Lunch**

Hot lunch orders are made online at [hotlunches.net](http://hotlunches.net). Orders are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for the following month. Any concerns regarding hot lunch may be addressed to [graminiaschoolhotlunch@gmail.com](mailto:graminiaschoolhotlunch@gmail.com)

## **Recess**

The children will be going outside for recess or physical education. We do go outside every day. There is one morning recess break from 9:30am – 9:45am. When selecting shoes and clothing to wear, remember that the children will be running, climbing, and playing games. Even in cold weather it is beneficial for children to get some fresh air. The K-4 playground is on the east side of the school. Teacher supervisors are easily identified on the playground by the orange fluorescent vests they wear.

# IMPORTANT RULES TO FOLLOW

## **Classroom Guidelines**

1. Encourage independence! Let children experience the feeling of success when they have accomplished a task on their own.
2. Children's and adult's feelings need to be respected. Cooperation, sharing, taking turns, and consideration for others are to be promoted.
3. When an argument arises between children, the matter should be discussed, and those involved should be encouraged to arrive at an agreeable settlement.
4. The condition of the classroom is everyone's business. Everyone involved in an activity must help clean it up.
5. Conversation and the conditions which make conversing possible are to be promoted. Quiet, "inside voices" are to be encouraged.
6. Each person must be wearing indoor shoes.
7. During play, children will be discouraged from playing war, using guns (created or imaginary) or otherwise expressing disrespect for life.

## Helping from Home

Please send a backpack with your child each day, and don't forget to go through the items that your child brings home in their mailbag. Most days there will be important notes, newsletters, etc. which will keep you up to date with the program. Take time to read and share materials brought home by your child in their mailbag. Avoid asking "what did you do today?" Ask more specific questions like "How did you make that?", "What centres did you do today?", and "Where did you play today?"

Parents are encouraged to share their hobbies, special talents, and career skills. This may be through classroom visitations, assistance with special projects or even suggestions for field trip locations or guest speakers. Please let your teacher know if you would like to contribute in any way.

## Graminia School Council

Once a month parents of Graminia School students meet with the school administration and elected school council members to exchange information and ideas pertaining to the students, school, etc. School Council serves as an advisory council. These meetings are an excellent introduction to your child's schooling needs. The link to their webpage is <http://graminia.psd70.ab.ca/School%20Council.php>

## Graminia School Foundation

Graminia School Foundation provides our school with funds raised from various fundraising activities throughout the year for sports subsidies, classroom enhancements, grounds improvements, and cultural activities, to name a few. The majority of the funds raised are derived from revenues and earned bingos. Parents are asked to sign up for at least one bingo per year. The Foundation meets once a month. Please watch the school newsletter or Graminia website for dates and times of meetings.



**Bus**

Parkland School Division Transportation Department will be forwarding letters to all the kindergarten parents during the summer. If you do not receive a letter with your child's bus information, please contact the transportation department at (780)963-8452. Please attach a card or print on your child's backpack the number of the bus that they will return home on. This will help us to ensure that each child gets home safely. Please encourage your child to take the bus as soon as possible. If your child is not going to be taking the bus home a note must be sent to the school with the alternate instructions.

## On the Bus

Once on the bus, children should observe the rules set out by Parkland School Division for riding a bus. There is also to be no eating on the buses, because of allergies and the fear of someone choking.

## Tips for a Happy Kindergartener

1. Help me to learn how to listen by playing games such as “Simon Says”. Give me short directions that I must listen to first and then carry out. For example, “Walk to the door, knock two times, hop back to the chair”.
2. Help me to understand that I am speaking in words, be my secretary and let me dictate a sentence to you. I can draw a picture to go with the sentence.
3. Help me to learn which hand is right and hand is left. Encourage me to use one hand, if I have a tendency to switch back and forth. Do not insist that it be the right hand only.
4. When I ask you about a word, number, or letter, please tell me.
5. When you teach me to print my name, teach with the first letter a capital and the rest of the letters lower case.
6. Teach me the alphabet song. To help me understand that each letter has a name; help me point to each letter as I sing. To help me know that letters also make sounds, play a game like “I Spy”. For example: “I spy something in the kitchen that starts with the letter Cc”.
7. Help me to know the names of the 4 basic shapes: Circle, Triangle, Square, and Rectangle. Help me to match shapes that are the same.
8. Read me lots and lots books. Talk to me about the stories. Let me tell you about my favorite parts.
9. Play simple board games with me.
10. Here are some things we could do with books and magazines: Talk about the pictures. Remove part of a picture and ask me what’s missing. Make homemade puzzles. Help me to see likenesses, differences, colors, etc... in pictures.
11. Help me to do some simple jobs around the house. This will help me to listen well and to follow directions. Some things you could ask me to do are:
  - a) Let me help to put groceries away, as this will teach me to classify things and to put them in the right place.
  - b) Let me help to organize laundry as this will teach me how to sort things according to likenesses.
  - c) Let me dress myself. This will teach me independence and responsibility.

