



Kindergarten Orientation:FAQ'S

Frequently Asked Questions to support *Administrators' and Educators' as they welcome new Kindergarten families into their school.* *The term parent is intended to be inclusive of parent, guardian or caregiver. From this point in the document the term parent will be used.

Q. When does Kindergarten registration begin?

A. Registration begins the first Monday of February.

Q. Does my child have to be Catholic in order to attend a Catholic school?

A. Generally, children attending Catholic schools are baptized Roman Catholic. All non-Catholic admissions are required to follow the "Non-Catholic Admissions Process". Please refer to the board website for admissions at: <https://www.hwcdsb.ca/board/policies>

Q. Can my child attend school if they are not toilet-trained?

A. Yes. Toileting can be an issue for a brief period of time at the start of the year for some children, especially if it is their first time away from home. It can be upsetting for the child, the other students and the staff. Our priority is to respect the child and to help support their toilet learning practice while they get comfortable in the classroom.

If a child is developing typically, they should be ready to learn to use the toilet by age 4. If a child is not ready to learn to use the toilet by age 4, the Canadian Pediatric Society recommends the child see their doctor. Find more information at http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/toilet_learning

Once the child has seen a doctor, and any medical reasons for not being ready to toilet train are ruled out, a plan needs to be put in place with the family to ensure the success of the child during the day.

Here are some basic suggestions:

- Talk with the family to learn about the child's specific needs. What do they do at home? What did they do in their early years program?
- Explain to the child how to find the bathroom. Ensure they can locate the washroom and feel comfortable going there when they need to.
- Provide the family with resources about toilet learning in a format most useful to the family, taking into account their level of reading and language. This may take the form of a conversation, website, handouts, etc.
- Stay consistent between home and school to increase the child's chance of success.
- Develop a plan with the family about what will happen if there is a toileting challenge and the child is unable to change their clothes independently. See some possible considerations in the plan below:

Possible family plan consideration re: toileting challenge:

- A change of clothes will always be available where the child can access them
- The child will be encouraged to go into the washroom and change their own clothes
- If necessary, educators will supervise/coach the child through the process of changing clothes
- Parents should encourage independent dressing at home so the child is gaining this skill
- If the child cannot change their own clothes and extra support is needed, the family may be contacted



Q. Can my child attend school if they are not vaccinated?

- A. As a parent, keeping your kids safe and healthy is your number one priority. All children attending school between ages 4 to 17 need to be immunized according to Ontario's Immunization Schedule. Immunization protects children from many serious diseases that are easily spread in schools. Find more information at: <https://www.hwcdsb.ca/board/policies>

Q. Why is it important to collect Aboriginal student self-identification data?

- A. Self-Identification allows for the following:
- Development, implementation and evaluation of programs
 - Helps all students benefit from the richness of Aboriginal cultures and contributions
 - Supports student achievement

Q. What supports exist for Aboriginal students and their families?

- A. HWCDSB has an Aboriginal Community Liaison who can support schools to develop sustainable relationships so we can enhance engagement in learning.

HWCDSB has an Aboriginal Social Worker who can provide support to students and their families with a culturally relevant approach.

Q. My child has allergies? How do you keep them safe?

- A. HWCDSB's Anaphylaxis Policy statement explains that:
- In accordance with "Sabrina's Law: An Act to Protect Anaphylactic Pupils-2005", it is the policy of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board that each school within the Board's jurisdiction will have an Allergy-Anaphylaxis Management Plan and that each individual student has been identified as being at risk of anaphylaxis will have an Individual Emergency Allergy/Anaphylaxis Action Plan and an **Individual Allergy/Anaphylaxis Accommodation Plan**.

Find more information at: <https://www.hwcdsb.ca/board/policies/?fileID=121652>

Q. If I have a concern, how do I communicate with school staff?

- A. Schools use different methods of communication with families, which will vary depending on the situation. A two-way flow of communication is important. Parent concerns are often addressed in a face-to-face or phone conversations. HWCDSB values parents' voices within an environment where they are welcomed and respected.



Q. What should I pack in my child's lunch?

A. Eat Right Ontario provides parents with resources and information to support their child's healthy eating while at school. Learn more at <http://goo.gl/sduM97>

Q. How can I help prepare my child for school?

A. At kindergarten registration, each family receives a Welcome to Kindergarten folder with materials to support the child and the family through the registration process. Materials also provide suggestions to support the child as the first day of school approaches. Our website, <http://www.hwcdsb.ca/learn/kindergarten/>

Q. What will my child wear to school?

A. All Catholic school children wear uniforms. School personnel will provide you with ordering information at the time of registration.

Q. Can I send my child to Kindergarten part-time?

A. Ontario's Ministry of Education supports a parent or guardian who seeks to have their child attend kindergarten part time. At HWCDSB, we recommend that a parent/guardian opting for part-time Kindergarten attendance have their child arrive at the start of each school day and finish their day at a consistent time until the family decided to increase attendance. Kindergarten is optional, but once registered, regular attendance is expected. If there is an attendance issue, clarify the expectations with the parent/guardian; if the issue persists, contact your school Social Worker.
Learn more at <http://goo.gl/NsX3RY>

Resources:

Full Day Kindergarten Fact Sheet
www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten/EarlyLearnFS.pdf