

Thames Valley District School Board



Kindergarten *Here I Come!*



Thames Valley
District School Board

We are excited to
WELCOME YOU
and YOUR CHILD to
THAMES VALLEY!



At **TVDSB**, we welcome all children who are turning **four or five** years old. Kindergarten is a **two-year program** where children attend **full day, every day** from Monday through Friday.

We believe that all children are **curious**, **competent** and **capable** learners and understand that starting school is an **important milestone** for children and their caregivers. We strive to create school communities that **affirm** and **represent the identities** of all students.

Essential Conditions for Learning

At TVDSB we understand the importance of creating **safe** and **caring** learning environments. The **Essential Conditions for Learning triangle** focuses on the values of **safety, relationships, compassion, and a strength-based approach.**

Caring and **consistent** relationships between you, your child and school staff act as the **foundation** when creating a classroom where your child feels safe, connected, and regulated. When these strategies and practices are used within the classroom, overall **mental health and well-being is supported, allowing for your child to be available for learning.**

For more information about the Essential Conditions for Learning, please visit <https://bit.ly/SafeSchoolsTVDSB>.

Essential Conditions for Learning

LEARN

Get **REGULATED**

Be **CONNECTED**

Feel **SAFE**

RELATIONSHIPS



My Child Identifies as First Nations, Inuit or Metis

There are some supports available for students and children who identify as Indigenous. Please connect with the Principal or the Kindergarten Educator Team at your school for more information.

“Every student should have the opportunity to succeed personally and academically, regardless of background, identity or personal circumstances.” - Ontario’s Educational Equity Action Plan, 2017

The KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

The Kindergarten Program views children as capable and competent learners. Over the course of the school day your child will be offered learning experiences through play such as; exploring with sand, water, blocks, dramatic play and creative art materials.

Children are encouraged to use their imagination and natural curiosity and are supported as they learn at their own pace.

Technology in the classroom is used as a tool to support inquiry-based learning, guide explicit instruction, and to provide a window into off-site learning opportunities.

“Play nourishes every aspect of children’s development. ...Play develops the foundation of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional skills necessary for success in school and in life. It “paves the way for learning.”

-(Canadian Council on Learning, 2006, p. 2)



Learning in KINDERGARTEN

Learning expectations in Kindergarten are connected with four “frames.” These frames reflect the integrated way that children naturally learn.



Belonging and Contributing

Focuses on children’s sense of connectedness to others and to the world around them. Children develop their abilities to form relationships, express themselves, contribute to a group and affirm identities within their classroom, the wider community and the natural world.



Self-Regulation and Well-Being

This frame focuses on children respecting themselves and others and promoting social, emotional, mental and physical well-being in themselves and others. Physical activity will be a regular part of your child’s routine at school. An active lifestyle fosters positive attitudes, mental health and well-being.



Demonstrating Mathematics and Literacy Behaviours

Literacy behaviours are the various ways in which children use language, images and materials to communicate ideas and emotions. The ways that children communicate are diverse and are influenced by their background experiences. The Kindergarten program values and encourages the use of a child’s home language(s). Mathematics behaviours are seen in the ways children use numbers and patterns during play and inquiry.

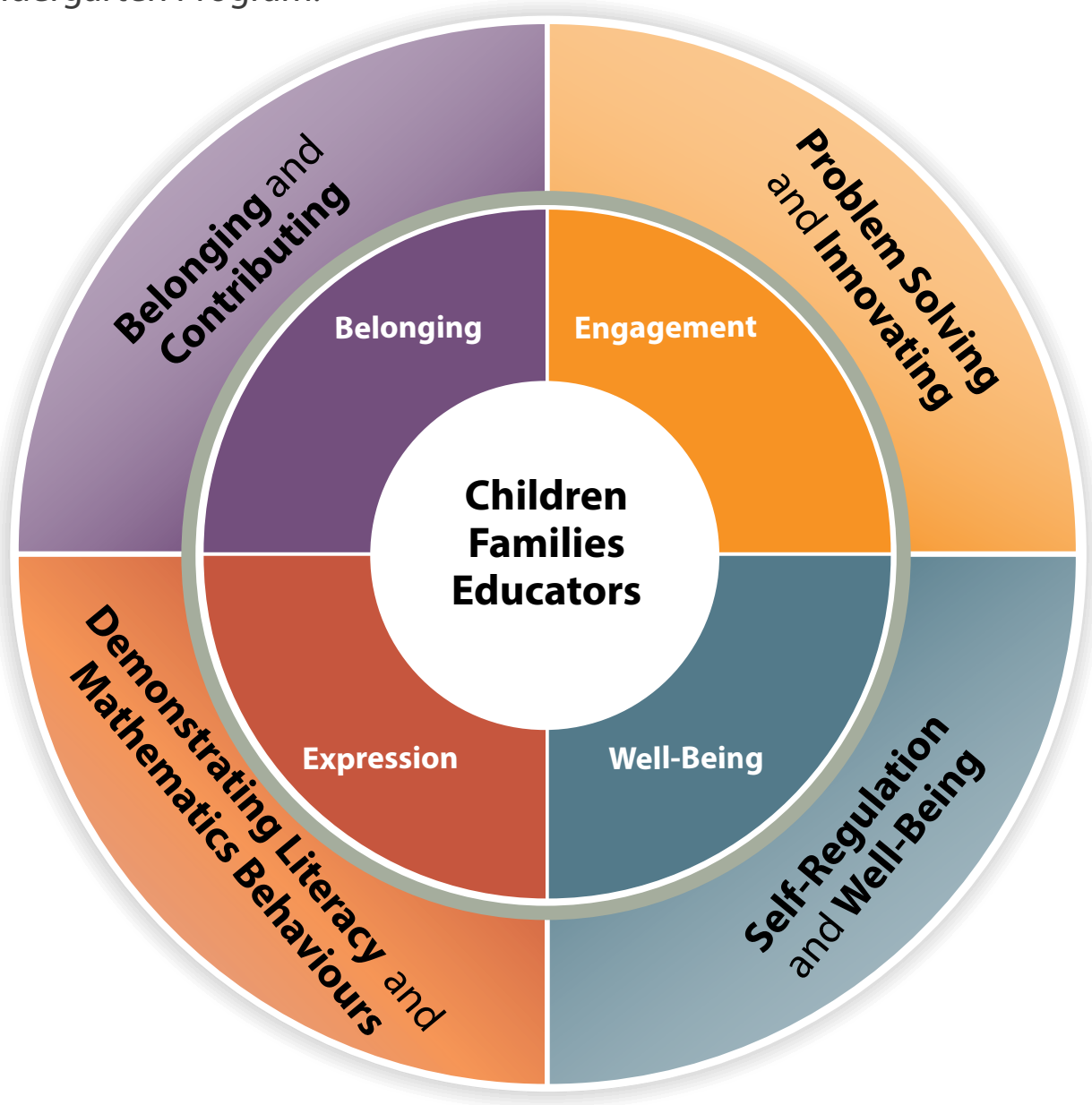


Problem-Solving and Innovating

Children develop the habit of applying creative, analytical and critical-thinking skills in all aspects of their lives through hands-on investigation, focused and free exploration, observation, questioning, and predicting.

Assessment in KINDERGARTEN

Your child will receive a Communication of Learning at three points in the school year. One in the late Fall, next in January and a third in June. These reports provide information about your child's progress and contain information about their learning in relation to the Four Frames of the Kindergarten Program.

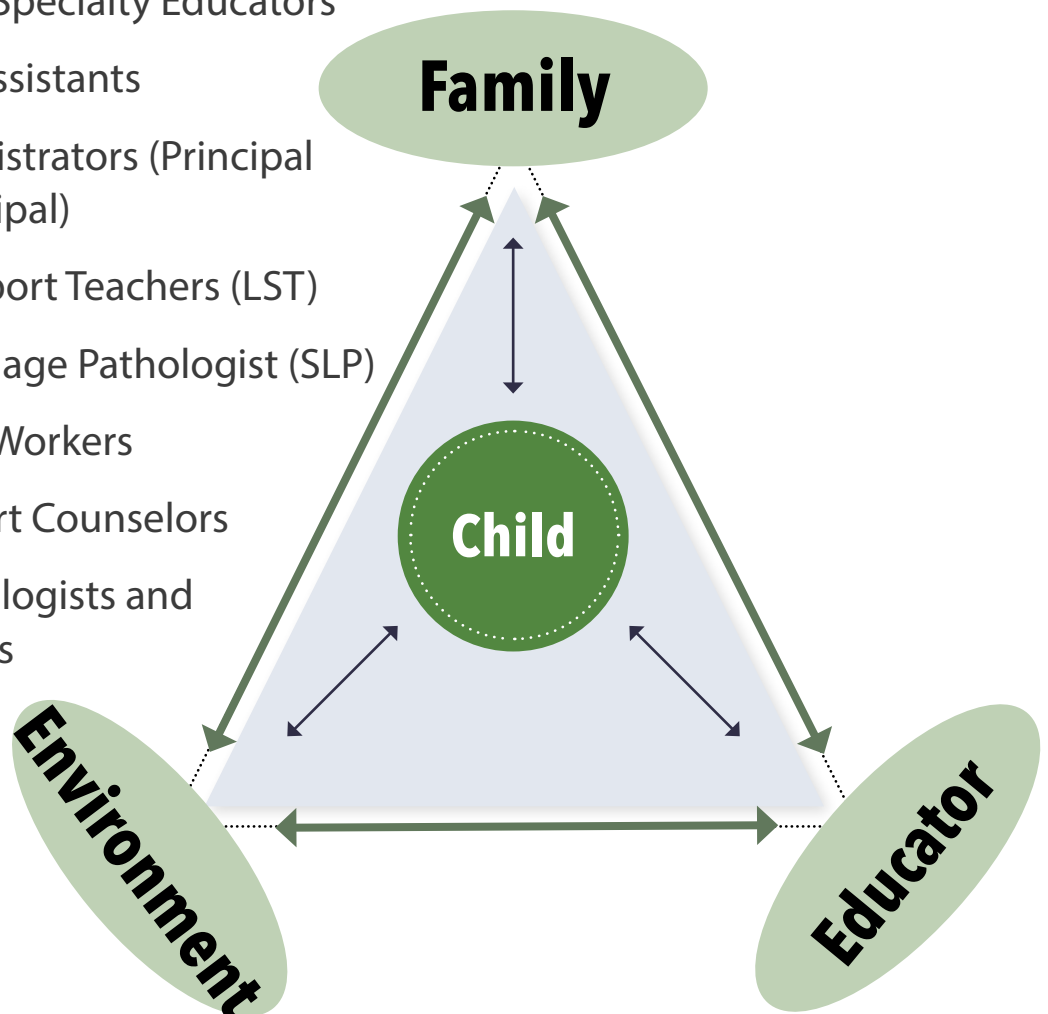


The **KINDERGARTEN** Educator Team

In most Kindergarten classrooms you will find an Educator team consisting of an Ontario Certified Teacher (OCT) and Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE). This team works together to engage your child in inquiry-based learning activities and explicit lessons every day. The educator team also works with you, and will provide feedback on an ongoing basis.

Other services and staff in the school might include:

- Kindergarten Specialty Educators
- Educational Assistants
- School Administrators (Principal and Vice Principal)
- Learning Support Teachers (LST)
- Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)
- School Social Workers
- School Support Counselors
- School Psychologists and Psychometrists



Supporting the Transition to School

Offer your child opportunities to practice independent routines such as; dressing themselves, opening lunch containers and completing washroom routines.

- It is important that your child attends school regularly to establish relationships and adjust to daily routines.
- Book an eye exam, hearing test, dental visit and check up at the family doctor.
- Literacy development begins with oral language. Honour your home language and use it for various purposes.
- Read to your child and have them share stories with you.
- Talk to your child about starting Kindergarten. Use books when possible to help them label and speak about feelings.
- Practice positive coping strategies to alleviate stress and worry (ie. breathing activities). When saying goodbye on the first day be positive, reassure that they will have a great day and that you look forward to hearing about their day.

What to **Bring**

- A backpack that is regular size.
- Lunch and snacks that are nut-free with containers that children can independently open.
- Thermos for warm meals, if your child enjoys them.
- An extra set of clothes.
- Indoor and outdoor shoes with rubber soles that are easy for your child to put on independently (velcro).

- Please label all items with your child's name to help when items are misplaced.
- Outdoor clothing for all weather conditions.
- Learning happens inside the classroom as well as in the outdoor environment. Children spend a portion of each day learning through play outside with their class. It is important to send clothing that will help your child be comfortable and protected from the elements as they explore the outdoors. This might include a sun hat and water bottle for warm weather or snow pants, hat and mittens for cold days.

*If you need support in obtaining these items please connect with the school Principal.



Supporting the Transition to School

Toilet Learning

Toilet learning is different for every child and most begin toilet learning between 2 and 4 years of age. It is important for parents and caregivers to be patient and follow the child's cues through each step of the process.

According to the Canadian Pediatric Society, your child is probably ready for toilet learning when they:

- Shows an interest in the potty (by watching you, or by liking books about learning to use the potty).
- Are dry in their diaper for several hours in a row.
- Has regular and predictable bowel movements, or knows when they are urinating or having a bowel movement. For example, your child might go into another room or hide behind furniture.



- Can follow one or two simple instructions.
- Can let you know when they need to use the potty.
- Want to be independent.

Toilet learning develops over time and can take between 3 and 6 months before a child is out of diapers for good. Some ways you can help support the process are:

- Dress your child in clothes they can pull up and down easily.
- Develop a routine by having your child sit on the potty at specific times during the day, such as first thing in the morning, after meals or snacks, before and after naps, and at bedtime.
- Watch for signs that they need to use the toilet. Encourage your child to tell you when they need to go. Be sure to praise them, even if they tell you after the fact.
- Show your child how to wipe properly. Girls should wipe from front to back. Most will need you to wipe for them, especially after bowel movements, until preschool age.
- Teach your child to wash their hands after using the toilet.

Canadian Pediatric Society, 2023

Remember to praise and be patient. Rewards are not a necessary part of toilet learning and expect that accidents will happen.

At TVDSB we will support the process of toilet learning by encouraging children to use the class washroom and coach them through any routines they may still be learning.

Supporting the Transition to School

School Open Houses

In the spring, each school will host a “Welcome to Kindergarten” Open House. Caregivers and families will have the opportunity to connect with school staff to learn about the school community and neighbourhood resources.

During the Open House you will learn about:

- School start and end times
- Information about attendance
- Entry doors and classroom locations
- School contact information
- Tips about what to bring on the first day
- Drop-off information for the first day and gradual entry

For more information on your child’s school website, visit the Our School tab and the Kindergarten section.

Each school's Kindergarten tab includes:

- School-specific PowerPoint or video
- Thames Valley family videos where families share about their Kindergarten experiences
- Dr. Jean Clinton Welcome Message
- Rock the Talk - Information about oral language development
- What Will My Child Learn in Kindergarten
- Key contact information for:
 - School Office
 - Transportation
 - Before and After School Care
 - Frequently Asked Questions
- Virtual LIVE Kindergarten Information Session recording



Getting to School **Safely**

Bus

Check with your school to see if your child is eligible for bus transportation

Register for the bus at <https://www.mybigyellowbus.ca/>

Before and After School Programs

If before and after school care is required, please check with your school to find out who the provider is and how to register.

<https://www.tvdsb.ca/en/parents/Early-Years-Programs.aspx>



Community Partners

Early ON/On y Va

Are an initiative of the Ontario provincial government to offer free information, programs, and services to all parents and caregivers with children from birth to six years of age. These centres are located in London, Middlesex, Elgin and Oxford. Visit your local Early ON/On y Va centre to learn about programs to support the transition to Kindergarten.

www.tvdsb.ca/en/parents/earlyon-child-and-family-centres.aspx

Family Centres London

Offer a variety of programs and services and can be utilized by any family who is seeking assistance, care, and services. The goal of Family Centres London is to make it easier for children, youth and families to connect to services in their neighbourhood. Family Centres London can share more information about programs to support the transition to Kindergarten during the Spring and Summer.

www.tvdsb.ca/en/parents/earlyon-child-and-family-centres.aspx

Before and After School Programs

Before and after school child care is provided at most Thames Valley elementary schools for children registered in the Kindergarten Program and students 6 -12 years of age.

www.tvdsb.ca/en/parents/Early-Years-Programs.aspx

TVDSB Speech and Language Family Website

sites.google.com/gotvdsb.ca/tvdsbspeechlanguageservices/home?pli=1

School Settlement Workers

www.tvdsb.ca/en/students/settlement-workers-in-schools.aspx

School Mental Health Ontario

[/smho-smsso.ca/](http://smho-smsso.ca/)

Merrymount

www.merrymount.on.ca/

Health Unit

www.healthunit.com/

Soutwest Public Health

www.swpublichealth.ca/





For more information, contact us at:

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[tvdsb.ca/kindergarten](https://www.tvdsb.ca/kindergarten)