



KINDERGARTEN
SD63 - Saanich School District

Frequently Asked Questions from Parents

Welcome to our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page which has been created to address the most FAQ's regarding Kindergarten. The following are responses to some of the questions asked of kindergarten teachers and administrators at the Ready Set Learn Open Houses and questions received in meetings during January 2010 by past President of Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils for Saanich (COPACS).

Please contact your neighbourhood schools, through teachers and administrators, with any questions or concerns you may have.

1. What is the process for registering my child for Kindergarten if I live within the school catchment area?

- Registration week takes place January 30th to February 3rd at your neighbourhood school. Forms received there are date stamped in the order they are received.
- **Registration after February 6th, 2012** takes place at the reception desk at the School Board Office, 2125 Keating Cross Rd., Saanichton, Monday to Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

2. If I live beyond the school catchment area or outside the boundaries for the Saanich School District what is the process for registering my child for Kindergarten?

Parents and guardians wishing a transfer to an out-of-catchment school, and live within the Saanich School District need to first register at their neighbourhood school and complete an *Application for Out-of-Attendance-Area* form.

Parents and Guardians who either live out of catchment or out of District and who currently have a child registered in a Saanich School, can register at the older child's current school.

Parents registering children for French Immersion programs should do so at Keating School (for residents in the Central and South Zone, i.e. Keating, Brentwood, Cordova Bay, Lochside and Prospect Lake) or Deep Cove School (for North Zone residents, i.e. Sidney, KELSET and Deep Cove).

Other out-of-District registrations take place the week following in-catchment registration. For the 2012/13 school year, out-of-District registration starts **February 6th, 2012** at the School Board Office at 2125 Keating Cross Road, Saanichton. Doors open at 8 a.m.

3. What are the school catchment area boundaries?

- Find your neighbourhood school at <http://www.sd63.bc.ca/resources/map-colour.pdf>
- School contact information can be found for each school on their websites at <http://www.sd63.bc.ca/>
- Or contact Alana Lushaw at the School Board Office (250-652-7300). She can enter your address into the computer and your neighbourhood school will be identified.

4. What is the District Policy regarding placement of students following registration?

- Board Policy 4000 – ‘Student Enrolment and Choice’ sets direction and states the belief that students within the school catchment area should be placed in their neighbourhood schools, when space is available. This policy also identifies a priority order for entitlement. Students are usually able to attend a school when they:
 - live in the school’s catchment area.
 - are assigned to a school by District administration.
 - have a sibling already enrolled in the school.
 - have approved enrolment in a Board-designated program.
 - are in-district, but living out-of- catchment for the school.
 - are from outside the Saanich School District.

5. Can I wait until my child is 6 and then enroll him/her in school?

- Yes.
- While the School Act stipulates school is not mandatory for 5 year olds, school attendance is mandatory at age 6.
- If you decide to wait until your child is 6 to enroll him/her, you will need to meet with the principal to discuss placement in either kindergarten or grade 1.

6. If my child is registered in Kindergarten, can he or she attend less than full-time?

- According to the *School Act*, school attendance is not mandatory for 5 year-olds. Therefore, even though you may have registered your child in a Kindergarten program, it is not mandatory that he or she attend kindergarten all day every day.
- The District recognizes the need to be flexible regarding the amount of time a parent wants the child to attend each day. We expect you will work together with school administrators and the kindergarten teacher to determine what is best for your child.

7. What if my child gets fatigued?

- Every child is different. We anticipate that some children may be fatigued in the Full Day program and that others, children who have previously experienced many transitions in a day (kindergarten plus other programs or care arrangements), will thrive.
- The teacher would address the needs of those children who need rest on an individual basis, in consultation with you.
- If the teacher thought the child was unwell, you would be contacted and arrangements/decisions made.

8. What are the advantages to children of Full Day kindergarten versus all-day-care or pre-school?

- The Saanich Board of Education, Executive, and educators throughout the District are aware of the potential benefits of Full Day Kindergarten programs for children, their families, and kindergarten teachers—benefits that include:
 - **opportunities for children** to engage in programs that follow a more developmentally appropriate and natural rhythm for the children; their day will be less-hurried. For some children, the day will be more seamless and consistent. Research has shown that high-quality, play-based kindergarten programs are beneficial to children’s emotional, social, and intellectual development.
 - **opportunities for families** that need, but cannot afford, the cost of half-day private care or fees for pre-school or community-based programs. It is estimated that the cost of such programs can be \$7500 per year (or more). This amount does not take into account potential earnings (lost to those whose need to pay for childcare). Such costs would “cancel out” money they might be able to make—money earned doing

even a 4 hour shift at minimum wage—that could mean a tremendous difference to the security and quality of life for some children and their families.

- **opportunities for teachers** because their day will be less-compressed. They will have fewer children and families to get to know and develop relationships with. They will have opportunities to explore, extend, and enrich curricular learning together.

9. How will you make sure my child will be safe—in the classroom and on the school grounds?

- The safety of all children in Saanich schools is of utmost importance. The Saanich District is committed to creating safe, caring, orderly schools with environments for learning.
- “Being safe” in school has many meanings, including physical safety and well as emotional, social, and psychological safety. Questions have been asked about the latter, in addition to physical safety and well-being. Parents and guardians can be assured: racial, ethnic, cultural differences are respected. All children and families are welcomed into Saanich schools! Our similarities and differences strengthen us and give us reason to celebrate.
- All children will be supervised during play and eating periods. While the kindergarten teacher may not directly supervise your child’s playtime (as may have been the case when he/she was in pre-school), supervising school staff will be in attendance. In addition, there may be times when the kindergarten teacher takes the children outside for playtime, time during which she/he will interact with the children and support their development through outdoor play.
- Parents/guardians have asked questions about playground restrictions, rules, and safety precautions for children in Full Day Kindergarten programs. Administrators and kindergarten teachers have asked these questions, too, and have identified supervision as a priority. Plans are currently being developed at each school.
- Questions have been asked about playgrounds and kindergarten-friendly activities: Are there going to be sandboxes with toys, shovels, and buckets? Will there be dirt piles to dig in and move around? What sort of age-specific outdoor activities will be provided? Will it be like pre-school with lots of exploration activities? All of these questions are good ones, questions that parents/guardians and educators world-wide are now asking. Possibilities for creating flexible, low-cost, and more natural environments for play are part of our ongoing conversations about what is best for young children.
- All schools have a school “Code of Conduct” based upon respect for all people, children and adults alike, to support the development of acceptable social behaviour.
- If you have questions or concerns about safety or the well-being of your child, you are encouraged to contact your child’s teacher or an administrator at the school for more information.

