

Welcome to Kindergarten at Anne McClymont Elementary School



A Handbook for Parents

Child's Name: _____

Mini Session Group: **Group A / Group B**

(*Refer to page 7 for more information on Mini-Sessions)

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 23

Our Mission: To educate students in a safe, inspirations learning environment where each student develops the knowledge and skills to be a lifelong learner and a healthy productive member of our global society.

CENTRAL OKANAGAN

"Together We Learn"

THE PRIMARY YEARS

In the Primary grades the growth of children's knowledge and understanding of themselves and their world continues. At Anne McClymont, we strive to provide a safe, stimulating, and caring learning environment. The programs offered to primary children reflect an understanding that children learn through active involvement and play, and that children represent their knowledge in a variety of ways. Learning is social in nature, and language development plays an essential role in learning.

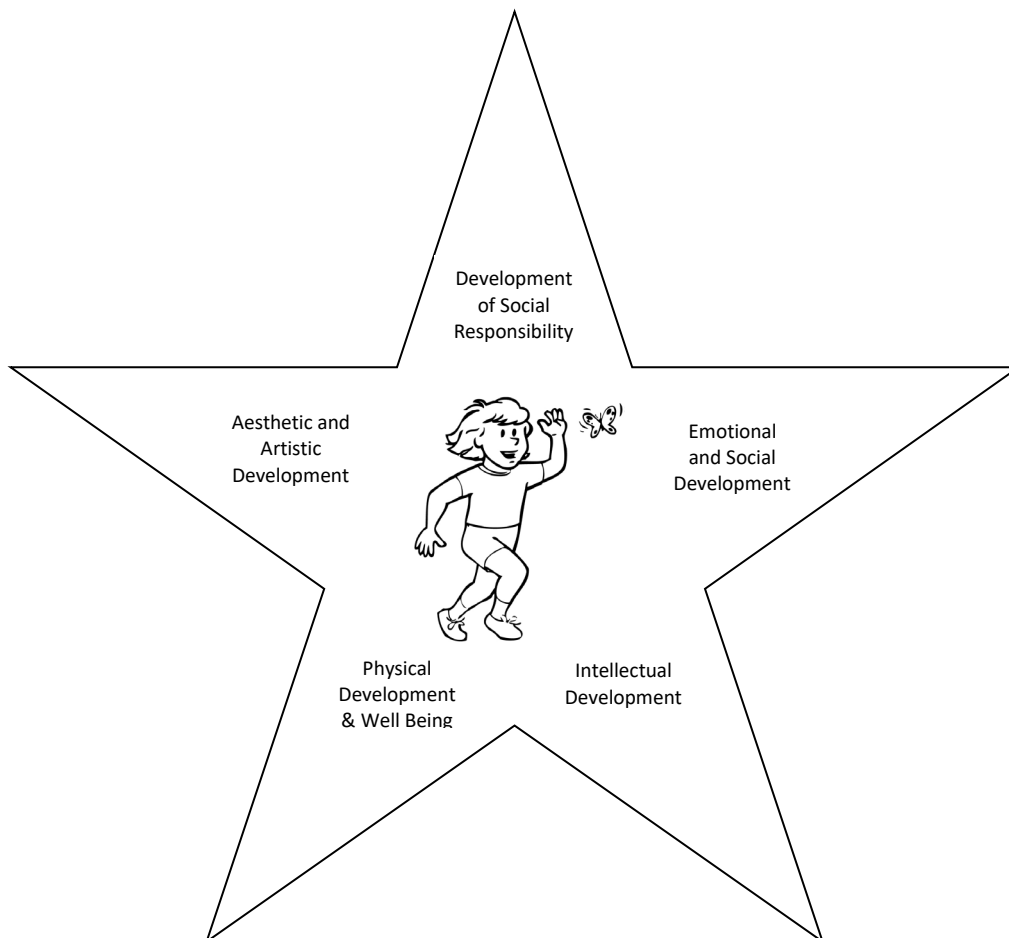
Assessment and evaluation are ongoing, support the child's learning, and assist the teacher in making appropriate educational decisions for each child. We value parents as partners in their child's education. Teachers and parents consult and collaborate to create for the child a climate of respect, success, and joy necessary for lifelong learning.

KINDERGARTEN IS...

a unique opportunity for your child to experience the joys and challenges of beginning school in a warm, caring and stimulating environment.

The Kindergarten program follows the prescribed Ministry curriculum. At Anne McClymont Elementary School your child will be exposed to a wide variety of experiences which include foundational math and literacy activities, critical thinking skills, physical education, music, drama, activities with science and technology, arts and crafts, cooperative play, large and small group teaching times, and field trips.

The Kindergarten program is developed around the following five areas:



QUESTIONS PARENTS OFTEN ASK...

- **How will I know if my child is ready for Kindergarten?**

Not all children are ready for Kindergarten at age 5 and you know your child best. Kindergarten readiness is not based solely on letter and number knowledge. Social abilities, such as playing well with others, asking for help, and separating easily from loved ones, are equally important. As well, if your child was delayed in reaching some of the earlier developmental milestones such as crawling, walking or talking, that may affect their readiness for learning. In some instances, an extra year at home may be beneficial to your child's future success. **Formal entrance into school may be deferred by one year.** If you have any doubts about your child's readiness for school, feel free contact the school administration to discuss your concerns.

- **Why did the Province of BC move to Full-Day Kindergarten?**

Research shows that a high quality, play-based kindergarten program has long-term benefits for children's academic and social skills and helps them to succeed in school and in life. Full day kindergarten is another step towards building a strong foundation for lifelong learning, in a nurturing, play-based environment. Full-day learning is associated with improved literacy and numeracy, smoother transitions to Grade 1, and increased post-secondary graduation rates.

- **How will my child's individual needs be met?**

Our Kindergarten teachers provide well-balanced educational programs, which support the development of the whole child. The classrooms are equipped with many interesting and stimulating educational tools and programs and activities are designed to meet the varied needs of all students. Additional support services are available to all students if required, such as, learning assistance, speech and language therapy, and counselling.

- **How can parents help their child develop age-appropriate language and literacy skills?**

There are optimum times during the pre-school years for language skills to be stimulated. For language skills to develop fully, children need to have opportunities to hear and practice language. Talk with your child about anything and everything, model speaking in sentences, and encourage them to also speak in sentences. Limit TV watching and the playing of video games, as these activities do not encourage your child to interact with others. Read to your child every day and talk about what you are reading pointing out interesting details in pictures. Tell your child stories and encourage him/her to add to the story, as this stimulates their interest and enjoyment of books and stories.



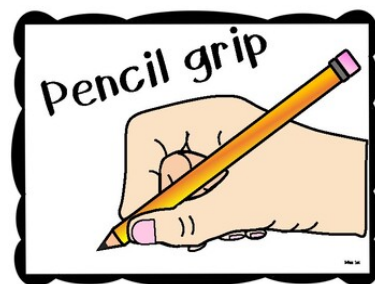
- **Will my child learn to read in Kindergarten?**

The best answer to this question is that your child will learn to read when he/she is ready. Kindergarten children will learn the alphabet - both letter names and sounds. Students are exposed to a lot of print through daily routines, and some students will begin to recognize high frequency words. Formal reading instruction begins in Grade 1.

- **Will my child learn to print in Kindergarten?**

Children are provided with opportunities to develop their fine motor skills such as cutting, pasting, drawing, and tracing. Correct pencil and scissor grip is very important.

As letters are introduced, students learn to form them correctly. An alphabet and number chart will be provided in your handout for your use at home. We encourage you to help your child form letters and numbers in the same way. Begin practicing with the first word your child should easily recognize: **their name**. Do this by practicing proper upper- and lower-case letters instead of all uppercase letters. This will make transition to kindergarten much easier!



- **How will my child's progress be monitored and reported?**

Formal report cards are sent home three times throughout the year, and Parent – Teacher conferences are scheduled twice throughout the year. The reports cards provide parents with a very clear indication of how their child is progressing in relation to the expected learning outcomes for Kindergarten. Teachers collect work samples and make regular observations of each student and will contact you directly if they have any concerns about your child. Please feel free to contact your child's Kindergarten teacher should you have any questions regarding your child's progress.

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

Keep your child at home. Children do not enjoy school or learn when they are ill. The good health of the other children will be affected if your child attends when they are ill. A good rule of thumb is to wait 24 hours after a child's fever has broken and/or after they have thrown up.

Please register with the Absence Reporting System through **SchoolMessenger** to be able to report an absence, late or early departure. Please see the AME website at www.ame.sd23.bc.ca for more details. Alternately, you can call the office at 250-870-5133 to inform the school an absence.



HELPFUL HABITS

How to help your child develop helpful habits before school begins:

- Putting away their toys and books (*develops organizational skills and responsibility*)
- Learning to listen (*develops their ability to follow directions*)
- Doing simple chores (*develops ability to work as part of a group and responsibility*)
- Getting along with others (*develops ability to share and cooperate*)
- Develop regular bedtime schedules (*contributes to physical and mental health*)
- Dressing self (*contributes to independence*)
- Waiting their turn to talk

Start each day right by:

- Being well rested – 10-12 hours of sleep a night are optimal for primary aged children
- Being well nourished – eat well balanced, nutritious meals

Your child will need:

- 2 small nut-free nutritious snacks
- A nut-free nutritious lunch with containers he/she can open independently
- A spill-proof water bottle
- A large, sturdy backpack
- A pair of **velcro**, non-marking, inside running shoes – no shoelaces please!

Communication:

- Your child's teacher will communicate with you on a regular basis. Individual teachers use a variety of methods such as e-mail, notes, and newsletters.
- School newsletters are posted on the school website at www.ame.sd23.bc.ca on the first day of each month and are also e-mailed to parents.



THE “MINI-SESSION” GROUPS

Starting Kindergarten is an exciting time! At Anne McClymont Elementary, it is our goal to make sure that your child’s transition into public school is smooth and happy. Our team of Kindergarten teachers have planned a gradual entry, allowing them to meet your child, spend time with them and ease them into the routines of school.

Classes are not assigned at this time, as mini-session groups will be arranged. Please check the first page of this booklet to see which mini-session group your child has been assigned to (group A or B). Based on your group, your child will be assigned to a Kindergarten teacher for each mini session. After the mini sessions, you will be informed of your child's class placement by phone or email.

Once class placements have been confirmed, an interview with your child's teacher will be arranged with you. Your child must accompany you to this interview.

Gradual Entry information will also be posted on our AME website at www.ame.sd23.bc.ca. Please make a habit of checking this website regularly for information and updates!

***SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE
FOR THE YEAR WILL BE SEND
TO PARENTS***

FIRST FEW DAYS

When you arrive with your child on the first few days, please wait and greet the teachers at the lower doors by the gym. Pick up will be in the same area. Teachers will show you where the class *normally* lines up for arrival and departure. We strongly encourage you to say goodbye outside the doors, refraining from the temptation to join your child. We like to say that entry is 'for kids only'.

While snacks are not needed for the mini-session group days, please send a healthy snack with your child for the half days. A full lunch and two healthy snacks will be needed for full school days. Look for more specific directions once classes have been settled.

BUSSING

Regular bussing for kindergarten children does not begin until full-day Kindergarten sessions commence. Please accompany your child to and from the mini sessions rather than sending them on the bus with a sibling. To apply for bussing, please go to www.sd23.bc.ca and click on the Transportation icon. You will be notified by the Transportation Department once your application has been approved.



ALL I EVER NEEDED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN

By: Robert Fulghum

All I really needed to know about how to live and what to do and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School.

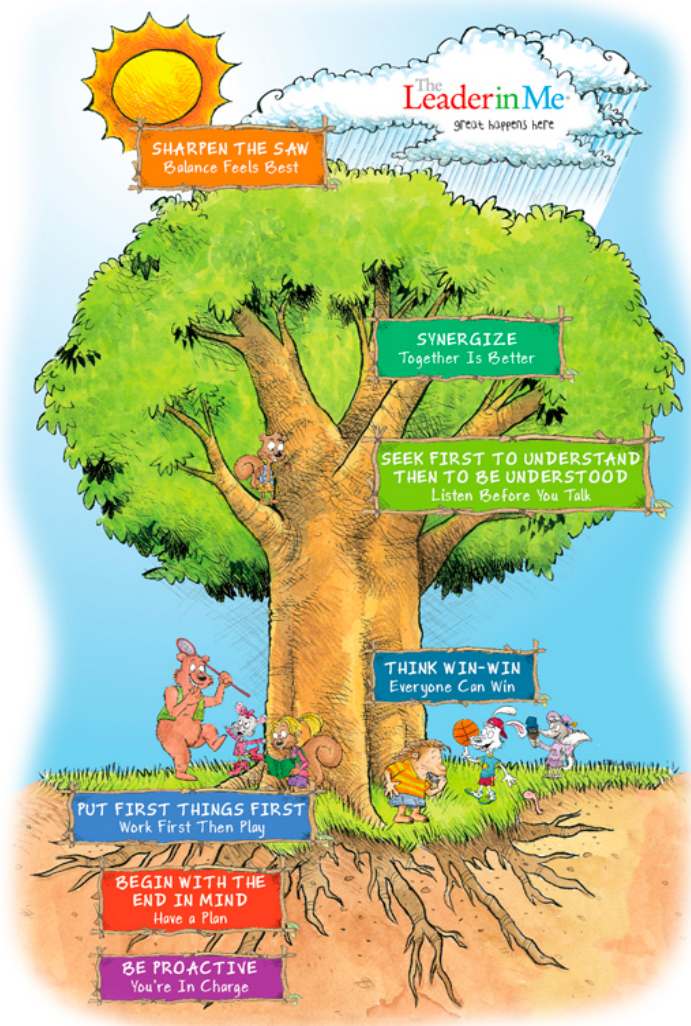
These are the things I learned:

- Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush. Warm cookies and milk are good for you. Live a balanced life - learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.
- Take a nap every afternoon.
- When you go out in the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.
- Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the styrofoam cup: the roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.
- Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the styrofoam cup - they all die. So do we.
- And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first words you learned - the biggest word of all - LOOK.
- Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and equality and sane living.
- Take any one of those items and extrapolate it into sophisticated adult terms and apply it to your family life or your work or your government or your world and it holds true and clear and firm. Think what a better world it would be if we all - *the whole world* - had cookies and milk about three o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankies for a nap. Or if all governments had a basic policy to always put things back where they found them and to clean up their own mess.
- And it is true, no matter how old you are - when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.



THE 7 HABITS OF HAPPY KIDS

Anne McClymont Elementary has been a top-rated school since opening its doors in 1994, and consistently ranks among the top elementary schools in British Columbia. While high test scores are fantastic, we know that today's students also need the skills and self-confidence to succeed as leaders in the 21st Century. They need to be able to communicate clearly, to work as a team, and to be self-motivated and analytical thinkers. In recent years' parent and staff surveys, it was noted that thinking and problem solving, along with leadership and principle-based learning are the most important skills our students need to learn. In 2015, our Goal Setting committee at AME participated in a book study on 'The Leader in Me', which is based on Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. We adopted the Leader in Me program, and believe that with introducing these teachings, along with our continued development of critical thinking, we could further reach our school goals and develop our students as lifelong learners and leaders!



SIX THINGS TO REMEMBER FOR KINDERGARTEN STARTUP

1. Your child will not need their backpack, inside shoes or snacks for the mini sessions.
2. Please check the first page of this booklet to see which mini-session group your child has been assigned to (group A or B). Based on your group, your child will be assigned to a Kindergarten teacher for each mini session. After the mini sessions, you will be informed of your child's class placement by phone or email.
3. Once class placements have been confirmed, an interview with your child's teacher will be arranged with you. Your child must accompany you to this interview.
4. September's gradual entry information is in your package. This information will also be posted on our AME website at www.ame.sd23.bc.ca . Please make a habit of checking this website regularly for information and updates!
5. **Regular bussing for kindergarten children does not begin until full-day Kindergarten sessions commence. Please accompany your child to and from the mini sessions rather than sending them on the bus with a sibling.** To apply for bussing, please go to www.sd23.bc.ca and click on the Transportation icon. You will be notified by the Transportation Department once your application has been approved
6. When full-day Kindergarten begins, your child will need:
 - 2 small nut-free nutritious snacks
 - A nut-free nutritious lunch with containers he/she can open independently
 - A spill-proof water bottle
 - A large, sturdy backpack (rule of thumb: large enough to hold a pair of snow pants and lunch kit)
 - A pair of velcro, non-marking, inside running shoes – no shoelaces please!
 - A change of clothes in a large zip-lock bag labelled with the child's first and last name (shirt, pants, underwear, and socks)



LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN SEPTEMBER!