



EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCESS POLICY

Date Approved: 1999 06 09

Projected Review Date: 2001 06

Policy Statement: It is the policy of The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board that all Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten Students participate in the Early Identification Process.

RESPONSIBILITY: Superintendent of Education with responsibility for Early Learning

DEFINITION: Early Identification is a process to identify the needs and abilities of early learners. It is designed to support the child and the classroom teacher by providing appropriate supports when necessary. The process includes a general screening of all pupils at entry, a finer screening of certain children and a full assessment of a few children.

INTERIM OPERATING PROCEDURES:

For this Procedural Model, plans have been prepared for children related to their previous education experiences. Four classifications of pupils were considered:

1.0 Children registering in Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten who have had no previous school experience.

1.1 Early Identification Procedures for Junior Kindergarten Pupils

- Spring (Pre-entry)- Orientations for Parents-held at each Elementary School.
- Spring (Pre-entry)- Orientation Visits to the classroom (optional)-arranged by individual Elementary Schools and Kindergarten staff.
- Spring (Pre-entry)- School Entry Meetings for Children with exceptionalities- Coordinated by the Early Childhood Education Consultant in collaboration with the appropriate community preschool agencies.
- Spring (Pre-entry)- School Intake Information Forms will be shared with school personnel for students who are entering Junior Kindergarten who have previously attended a Childcare under the Umbrella Family and Child Centres of Hamilton- assessments completed by the Early Childhood Education staff and shared with receiving Kindergarten Teacher.
- September-Delayed Enrolment to permit School Visit (completion of Social History Form; and Teacher Observation Form)-arranged by school secretary or Kindergarten Teacher and held at each Elementary School.
- September-Gradual Staggered Entry-arranged by school secretary or Kindergarten Teacher.
- February- Information sharing with Parents during Observation and Parent Interviews- classroom teacher responsible.

- June- Anecdotal Report Card- classroom teacher responsible
- Ongoing throughout the School Year-All Support Services available from the Board-contact made by each school's Learning Resource Team.
- June or September - Observations of each child shared (may include the use of the Assessment Guide)- provisions made by the Principal for the Kindergarten Teacher to meet with next teacher.

1.2 Early Identification Procedures for Senior Kindergarten Pupils Without Junior Kindergarten Experience

- Spring (Pre-entry)- Orientations for Parents-held at each Elementary School.
- Spring (Pre-entry)- Orientation Visits to the classroom (optional)-arranged by individual Elementary Schools and Kindergarten staff.
- Spring (Pre-entry)- School Entry Meetings for Children with exceptionalities- Coordinated by the Early Childhood Education Consultant in collaboration with the appropriate community preschool agencies.
- Spring (Pre-entry)- School Intake Information Forms will be shared with school personnel for students who are entering Junior Kindergarten who have previously attended a Childcare under the Umbrella Family and Child Centres of Hamilton-assessments completed by the Early Childhood Education staff and shared with receiving Kindergarten Teacher.
- September-Delayed Enrolment to permit School Visit (completion of Social History Form; and Teacher Observation Form)-arranged by school secretary or Kindergarten Teacher and held at each Elementary School.
- September- Gradual Staggered Entry-arranged by school secretary or Kindergarten Teacher.
- November- Review the progress of all children-Principal and/or Vice-Principal and the Kindergarten Teacher.
- November- Information sharing with Parents during Observation and Parent Interviews- classroom teacher responsible.
- March- Anecdotal Reports- classroom teacher responsible
- June- Anecdotal Report- classroom teacher responsible
- Ongoing throughout the School Year-All Support Services available from the Board-contact made by each school's Learning Resource Team.
- Ongoing throughout the School Year- Consultation between teacher and principal for children who require immediate intervention and/or program modification
- June or September - Observations of each child shared (may include the use of the Assessment Guide)- provisions made by the Principal for the Kindergarten Teacher to meet with next teacher.

2.0 Children continuing with their education in Kindergarten after having experienced Junior Kindergarten.

2.1 Early Identification Procedures for Senior Kindergarten Pupils With Junior Kindergarten Experience

- September-Delayed Enrolment of up to two days maximum.
- September- Gradual Staggered Entry-arranged by school secretary or Kindergarten Teacher.
- November- Review the progress of all children-Principal and/or Vice-Principal and the Kindergarten Teacher.
- November- Information sharing with Parents during Observation and Parent Interviews- classroom teacher responsible.

- March- Anecdotal Reports– classroom teacher responsible
- June- Anecdotal Report- classroom teacher responsible
- Ongoing throughout the School Year-All Support Services available from the Board-contact made by each school’s Learning Resource Team.
- Ongoing throughout the School Year- Consultation between teacher and principal for children who require immediate intervention and/or program modification
- June or September - Observations of each child shared (may include the use of the Assessment Guide)- provisions made by the Principal for the Kindergarten Teacher to meet with next teacher.

3.0 Children entering at the Primary Division Level (Grade 1).

3.1 Early Identification Procedures for Pupils entering Grade One without Kindergarten Experience

- Spring (Pre-entry)- School Entry Meetings for Children who have not attended Kindergarten- Coordinated by the Early Childhood Education Consultant in collaboration with the appropriate community preschool agencies.
- Spring (Pre-entry)- School Entry Meetings for Children with exceptionalities- Coordinated by the Early Childhood Education Consultant in collaboration with the appropriate community preschool agencies.
- November- Review the progress of all children-Principal and/or Vice-Principal and the grade one teacher.
- November-Optional parent observations are encouraged.
- Ongoing throughout the School Year-All Support Services available from the Board-contact made by each school’s Learning Resource Team.
- Ongoing throughout the School Year- Consultation between teacher and principal for children who require immediate intervention and/or program modification.
- Information sharing with the parents during interviews and written reports in accordance to the requirements set by the Ministry of Education and Training, (three times per year)- classroom teacher.

4.0 Registration Procedures:

- 4.1 School office staff will ensure that the **Student Registration Form** is completed.
- 4.2 It is expected that the majority of beginning students will be registered in the spring preceding their first year of attendance.
- 4.3 It is not necessary to repeat the registration process for pupils attending Kindergarten who have already attended Junior Kindergarten and who have completed these forms previously.
- 4.4 A Parent Information Package is to be given out at this time - package should include Public Health booklet (Kids Starting School), Speech and Language questionnaire, and any relevant school information (see checklist).

5.0 School Visits – Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten (Pre-Entry)

- 5.1 School visits of the Kindergarten children are arranged by the Teacher and/or secretary and usually take place within the first 6 school days of September.
- 5.2 The teacher obtains pertinent information about the child and the family, useful in understanding the child and assessing his/her developmental needs.
- 5.3 The teacher interacts positively with and observes the child using the **Teacher Observation Form**.
- 5.4 Guidelines for the interview are provided in the **Procedure for September School Visit**. It is hoped that this interview will give the teacher initial information about the child's attention span, receptive and expressive language ability, general level of comprehension, coordination, attitude, and general interests.
- 5.5 The **Social History Form** and the **Teacher Observation Form** are to be completed at this time for students who have not attended Junior Kindergarten.

6.0 Delayed and Staggered Entry

- 6.1 **Delayed Entry** in September occurs in order to provide Kindergarten teachers with time to assess those children with no previous school experience. **Staggered Entry** begins once all **School Visits** are completed.
- 6.2 There will be 6 days **Delayed Entry** for children with no previous school experience.
- 6.3 There will be a maximum of 2 days **Delayed Entry** for Senior Kindergarten children when more than 2/3 of the class has attended Junior Kindergarten.
- 6.4 ½ of the classes would attend for one full session on each of the two days after the completion of school visits for half day every day programs, and four days for full day alternate day programs.

7.0 Kindergarten Orientation (Pre-Entry - June)

- 7.1 An orientation session for parents/guardians of children with no previous school experience will be held in the Spring (day or evening). This visit will promote an understanding of the Kindergarten program and the unique nature of each school.
- 7.2 The Kindergarten Teacher and the Principal can make arrangements for the children to visit the Kindergarten class, either in small groups or all at one time.
- 7.3 Presentations by support personnel could include: Secretary, Public Health, Speech and Language, Social Worker, Learning Resource Teacher, Educational Assistant, Home and School representative, Trustee
- 7.4 Checklists have been provided in order for schools to prepare for Kindergarten Orientation

8.0 The Kindergarten Year – Assessment Guide

- 8.1 In order to assist Kindergarten teachers with a uniform approach to the observation and assessment process for the Kindergarten year, a detailed form is provided. This **Assessment Guide** may be used throughout the school year to record the progress of each child.
- 8.2 In addition, this form may be instrumental in assisting the teacher in preparing for communication with parents and the Grade One teacher at the end of the Kindergarten year.
- 8.3 The use of the **Assessment Guide** is optional.

9.0 Support Services

- 9.1 If a teacher evaluates a student and believes that additional support is necessary for that student, the first step in procuring that support is a discussion with the child's parents or guardians and the in-school resources such as the Principal/Vice-Principal or Learning Resource Teacher. After an in-depth review, this team may decide that it is necessary to seek more specialized assistance from resources outside the school. The Principal may request assistance from Student Support Services.
- 9.2 If, as a result of the School Meetings, more specialized professional supports are required; referrals or consultations can be co-ordinated through the various members of the school team to access appropriate resources in the community.
- 9.3 A teamwork approach will be emphasized to utilize, in the best possible ways, the training, the experience, and the knowledge of a variety of professionals, including teachers, principals/vice-principals, psychological consultants, speech/language pathologists, special education personnel, social workers, behavioural team, school nurses and other health professionals and community resources, where needed.

10.0 September School Visits

10.1 The Purpose of the September School Visits are:

- to familiarize the child with the classroom;
- to develop a rapport between teacher, parent and child in a positive environment
- to obtain a Social History;
- to obtain some general information about the child's stage of development in areas of language, mathematics, social and personal growth.

(More specific information will be gathered in the regular classroom situation during the ensuing weeks.)

10.2 Procedure

- The parent and child come to Kindergarten for a minimum of one-half hour appointment.
- Using a variety of manipulative materials (or other play materials), the teacher plays and talks with the child using the guide questions provided as examples. **The Teachers Observation** has been designed for this interview and is to be used as the primary tool to gain valuable information about the child's development.
- The teacher, in interaction with the child, will use enabling questions and encourage the child to respond in a variety of ways. While the child is playing with the materials provided, the teacher will also observe gross and fine motor co-ordination, auditory behaviour, and attention span.
- This procedure is not a test. The child's performance is not being scored, nor is it being assessed in relation to others.. It is the role of the teacher to create a relaxed and informal atmosphere. The strategy is the first step in the continuous ongoing assessment of the child and the foundation towards a trusting relationship between teacher and child.
- The child continues to play with these or other materials (picture making, lego) while the parent and teacher complete the **Social History Form**.
- It is suggested the **Parent's Guide to Kindergarten Expectations** be distributed to parents at this time.
- The teacher will provide an opportunity for parents to ask question and look around the Kindergarten room.

- The **Social History Form** and the **Teacher Observation Form** are to be retained in the Kindergarten teacher's personal records.
- After parent and child leave, the teacher immediately makes note of her observations.

11.0 RESOURCES:

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| 11.1 | Social History Form | - Appendix A. |
| 11.2 | Teacher Observations | - Appendix B. |
| 11.3 | Assessment Guide | - Appendix C |
| 11.4 | Umbrella Family and Child Care Centres of Hamilton - School Intake Information | - Appendix D |
| 11.5 | Speech and Language Questionnaire | - Appendix E |
| 11.6 | Checklist for Orientation | - Appendix F |
| 11.7 | Checklist for School Information Booklet | - Appendix G |
| 11.8 | Regional and Provincial Pre-school Initiatives | - Appendix H |

REFERENCE:

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| A Response to Ministry Memo 15/78: Identification of Children's Needs and Ministry Memo 24/79: Identification of Children's Needs | - Appendix I |
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Note: The above Resources (Appendix A – Appendix H) and Reference (Appendix I) are NOT available on the website.