

Welcome to Rousseau!



Teachers and ECEs:

- ELP1: Aviva Dunsiger and Paula Crockett
- ELP2: Stacey Bishop and Denise Carte Combs
- ELP3: Suzy Sebeslav

Thank you for coming. Watch for an email in early July sharing your child's class assignment and family visit time. Feel free to use e-mail to communicate between now and September should the need arise, especially if you don't receive our email in July. **Please ensure we have your current e-mail -- if you haven't received an email from us yet then we probably don't have it!**

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Tues. Sept. 4, 2018: One hour visit for JK and SK students who are new to Rousseau. The time of your visit will be included in the email. Parent(s) stay with children.

Wed. Sept. 5, 2018: First day of school for all JK and SK students!

Full-Day Kindergarten: The Power of Play Based Learning

- http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesKIN/OtherResources/Play_pubV5.pdf

Often Asked Question? “So, they just play?”

Dr. Katz is an international leader in early childhood education who, for decades, has lectured and taught all over the world. She shares her ideas about experiences that children should often have. Here are some of them.

- being intellectually engaged and challenged
- applying developing skills in meaningful ways
- confidence in their own intellectual powers and questions
- extended conversations and interactions with adults and peers
- asking questions, making predictions and hypotheses
- sustained involvement with worthwhile topics (projects children come back to for days and weeks)
- feeling of belonging to community and school

Dr. Katz cautions early childhood educators about pushing early academic skills at the expense of developing broader more intellectual goals, cultivated quite naturally through children’s own play.

Video- Defending the Early Years: “Lively Minds” (4 minutes)

Imposing premature formal instruction hurts the children by killing their true intellectual capabilities and ultimately their optimal learning

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e53S8dnh0I>

Dr. Katz also urges teachers of young children to have “continuous contingent interactions” with young children, explaining that recent brain research has shown how neurological connections happen when children engage in extended, meaningful conversations – back and forth exchanges where one person’s response is contingent on what the other has to say.

We can extend these conversations, in a meaningful way, to home as well via classroom communication. Whether it be via an email, newsletter or a classroom blog, current, relevant communication of learning that takes place in the classroom allows parents to not only take a peek into their child’s day, but to follow up those experiences with meaningful conversations that help expand, deepen and consolidate learning. Here are our current kindergarten blogs for you to see what’s happening in our rooms right now!

www.mrsraymond.commonshwdsb.on.ca and <http://mrscrockett.commonshwdsb.on.ca/>

You may ask; so what about reading, writing and arithmetic? Those academic skills will happen in accordance with students’ readiness and all embedded within the context of play and inquiry, as our Kindergarten Program Document emphasizes. Your child will most definitely be exposed to letters, sounds, words, numbers, shapes, measurement, science, art and a full spectrum of learning, but it will be driven by students’ interests and readiness, and its purpose afforded by their play.

Visit Ontario Ministry of Education: Full-Day Kindergarten Program <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten/>

General Housekeeping

Key Word Here: INDEPENDENCE

Every parent asks us, “what can I do to help my child prepare for and be successful in JK?” Here is the answer: allow your child to build self-help skills. Whether it’s in the bathroom, getting outdoor gear on, opening snack wrappers, or making age-appropriate choices, allow the time for your preschooler to work at it, problem solve, find a way and build self-reliance. You are likely used to doing things quickly and well for your child, but in Kindergarten, our day is really set up to allow students to work through as much on their own as possible. With 2 educators and up to 30 students, we count on our kids to be self-sufficient. We will be patient and supportive as they work away at new skills and will celebrate the confidence when they do it for themselves!

- **Washroom**: Help build **independence** over the summer and practice healthy habits. Put a change of clothes (pants, undies, socks) in your child’s backpack beginning on the first day of school. It will be handy to have this on hand in the event a child needs a change. All classes have access to a washroom and students may use it as needed. We will review bathroom protocol (how to knock, handwashing etc.) in the early days.
- **Lunches**: Classrooms allow large blocks of time for self-regulated mealtimes: a table is available so students may eat when they are hungry. Though they will have opportunities to eat throughout the day, students will be encouraged to sit down twice to eat. Each lunchtime should offer a balanced meal. Some parents find it helpful to label containers Lunch #1 and Lunch #2 to promote balance. We encourage children to eat their healthy foods first. Please keep treats to a minimum. We promote **independence** here as well: scissors will be available for opening packages, and we are happy to help with tricky containers, etc. A refillable water bottle is a good idea. We have a hydration station right outside our room.
- **Backpacks**: Opt for a good sized backpack, with a sturdy zipper. Again, **self-sufficiency** is the goal and struggling to make things fit is a recipe for frustration. Have your child practice getting his/her lunch, water bottle and indoor shoes in and out on his/her own, as well as zipping and unzipping.
- **Shoes**: Your child will need sensible, comfortable shoes he/she can put on and off **independently**. Flip flops and crocs are not safe for the amount of active play we have in a day, in a variety of settings. We will be in the gym a few times a week and proper running shoes are required for participation. We are also active every day and spend time outdoors regularly. As soon as weather starts to get wet or mucky, your child will need to have a pair of shoes reserved for indoors and something else for outdoors, but often having these shoes available from early on makes the transition easier.
- **Clothing**: Labels put on any items that are likely to be taken off, such as coats, hats, sweaters, splash pants, snow pants, boots etc. are very helpful. We try to reconnect children each and every day with the items that get left behind in the coat room, but they don’t always recognize their own things! The same goes for water bottles and tupperwares you want to keep track of.
- **Outdoor Play**: Outdoor play, and specifically nature play, are a big part of our daily programming. We are lucky to be situated with lots of green space surrounding us, including a lovely, child-sized forest for our exploration right at the school’s borders! Our students should dress for the weather every day, as we will likely not let a bit of rain or a chilly snowy day keep us in. Layers are wise, and we will let children self-regulate when it comes to layers on or off, as they are active and busy in the outdoors. As educators, we value the learning we see when our students are permitted to explore outdoor spaces in nature, as well as the confidence, fitness, coordination, resilience and respect for nature.

<https://rethinkingchildhood.com/2016/04/05/sir-ken-robinson-outdoor-play-dirt-is-good/> and
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FK2qD_nWoNE

School Business

Stay in Touch

- **Parent-Teacher Communication:** Our **blogs** are updated daily and are the best way to stay informed and tuned into classroom activities. Our preferred means of non-urgent home-school communication is **email** and you can expect a timely response (certainly within a day) using this method. Messages you need communicated to us quickly, (ie. within the school day) can be relayed via Mrs. Todd in the school office **905-648-6142**. Most trips and food days will be paid for using **School Cash Online**, and you will receive an information sheet to set-up a PIN number for this in September. Forms, artwork etc. will be sent home in your child's backpack as appropriate.

ELP1

adunsige@hwdsb.on.ca and pcrocket@hwdsb.on.ca

<http://mrscrockett.commons.hwdsb.on.ca/>

<https://adunsiger.com/> (Aviva's Professional Blog)

<https://self-reg.ca/author/aviva-dunsiger/> (Aviva's Contributions To The MEHRIT Centre Blog)

ELP2

sbishop@hwdsb.on.ca and dcarte@hwdsb.on.ca

www.mrsraymond.commons.hwdsb.on.ca

ELP3

Ms. Sebeslav (Ms.S) will be setting up an account for parents and children to access in the fall!

- **Stay Informed:** If you have not yet subscribed to the Rousseau website consider doing that soon so you'll be up-to-date on all events as they unfold. Follow the link provided here, and click 'follow' to receive e-mail notifications when new posts are published.

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/rousseau/>

- **Volunteering & School Council:** There will be opportunities to become involved, in your child's classroom or in school wide events as you wish. From classroom help, to field trips and so on, you will be welcomed. Watch for more information on this later in September once the dust has settled and students have weathered the transition to school. In the meantime, visit the office to get the form needed for your police check. All volunteers must have one, and it's worth it to get it now so you have it when you need it. It will be valid for the next few years.

Wishlist of Items

These are items we use daily and need to replenish regularly.

Consider picking an item or two from the list to donate to your child's classroom for communal use. Thank you!

- markers
- kleenex
- wipes
- Lysol wipes
- glue sticks
- scotch tape
- coloured tape
- masking tape
- crayola twistables
- hand soap
- j-cloths
- pony beads
- Perler Beads (ironing beads)