

Waterloo Co-operative PRESCHOOL



Next Steps
May 2019

We have lots of exciting events happening this month. Join us and take the opportunity to connect with other families at WCP!

May highlights

Join us on Wednesday, May 8 and Thursday, May 9 for a **Mother's Day Tea**. See page 4 for more information.

Our **Annual Train Trip** is scheduled for Thursday, May 16.

Please note that the preschool will be closed Monday, May 20 for **Victoria Day**.

We'll be hosting another **Open House** on Thursday, May 23.

Our **Spring Social** is scheduled for Saturday, May 25. Learn more on page 4.

On Thursday, May 30, we're welcoming a **bee expert** to the KinderPrep class. All WCP families are welcome to join us. See page 4 for details.

Fall enrollment is still open

We still have spot in all of our classes, but space is limited. If you know someone who might be interested in joining our preschool community, invite encourage them to enrol today! Registration information can be found on our website at www.waterloopreschool.org/register.

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Check out our new online calendar!

Visit

www.waterloopreschool.org/calendar.

A Letter from Teacher Tracey

Our licensing review

Licensing came in April and we had an excellent review! Our program advisor was happy and commented on all of the great things going on at our preschool. The child guidance and implementation record covered a lot of what was needed to show compliance to our Program Statement and child guidance practices.

We determined we could simplify the classroom by reducing the number of toys to encourage more intentional play. We want to use the outdoors as a classroom, so we anticipate more time outside.

Thank you everyone for being great team players. It takes a group of people who want to work cooperatively to do such a great job!

Scholastic orders due May 23

Place your Scholastic order online at www.scholastic.ca and use the code "CLIFFORD" to get a free book (\$6 or less). Orders must be for \$30 or more to qualify for this promotion. Orders are due **Thursday, May 23 at noon**.

Looking for more than just books? Scholastic also offers a range of educational materials, such as flashcards, craft kits, games and workbooks. Search "critical thinking and problem solving," "kits," "STEM" and "skills" to explore these exciting projects.

Your Scholastic order supports the preschool by allowing teachers to order free books for the classroom as well as books to give to the children as gifts. If you have any questions about Scholastic orders, please reach out to Michelle at michellemalin@yahoo.ca.



Adopt a Grandparent program

The Adopt a Grandparent program is scheduled to begin in the KinderPrep class Tuesday, May 7. Grandparents will have vulnerable sector checks, immunizations and a brief orientation regarding child guidance practices and individual student plans (ISPs).

We're extending an invitation to biological grandparents as well! If you're interested in joining the program, reach out to Teacher Tracey by email at waterloopreschool.teacher@gmail.com for information on how to complete the relevant paperwork.

Classroom volunteers

Our volunteers from Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College have now completed their time with us. We are grateful for their help and the quality programming they helped us develop.

Lesley, our new KW Habilitation volunteer, will be in the KinderPrep class on Tuesday afternoons starting April 30. Welcome Lesley!

Goodbye and thanks!

At the end of the year, we're also saying goodbye to Marilyn Woolner, our resource consultant from KW Habilitation, and Susan Morgan, our speech language pathologist from

KidsAbility. Both Marilyn and Susan are retiring at the end of June. They have been a tremendous help and an asset to our preschool over the past several years. We will miss them dearly and appreciate their compassion for children and dedication to families and children's individual needs.

A note for duty parents

Now that our student volunteers are done for the year, we rely on our duty parents to help complete all the essential tasks required around the classroom.

Ratios and outdoor play

Our teacher to student ratios are 1:8 for preschool and 1:5 for toddlers. It's important that we maintain these ratios, even when outside. Please note that duty parents and volunteers do not count toward ratios and must be supervised by the teachers, so they cannot take children indoors to use the washroom when the rest of the class is outside. However, duty parents who are Level C first aid certified are permitted to take children indoors during outside play.

Please arrive on time

Please remember to arrive 15 minutes before class to help the teachers prepare for the day and be ready to be actively involved in the program. We rely on duty parents to help out on and tidy up the playground, clean tables after snack and do dishes, and assist with any classroom supervision needs, especially transitions.

Helping to facilitate transitions

To ensure safe travel between the playground and the classroom, we need one person at the gate to block children from the road (usually a staff member) and a duty parent to stand at the driveway to help children around the corner of the parking lot. On the way into the building, watch to make sure fingers don't get pinched in the door. Children should be encouraged to tap the button once to help keep the door open, but please be aware that it could close and that the children are not strong enough to keep it open.

Preparing for kindergarten

Many children will be starting kindergarten in the fall. There can be a lot to think about during this important transition. The teachers are a valuable resource as you navigate this next stage in your child's life. We can help with:

Connecting with other families

It can be helpful to connect with other families going through the transition to kindergarten. Teachers are unable to disclose information about other children, but parents are welcome to share information about what schools their children are attending. If you'd like to exchange information with other parents, we encourage you to chat in the hall. There will also be sheets in the hallway for you to add your name and which school your child will be attending in fall.

Alternatives to traditional kindergarten programs

Also keep in mind that parents have a variety of options for the kindergarten years. We offer a KinderPrep program with smaller classes of 12 students to two teachers. It's a great alternative or addition to the regular school system. If you feel your child would benefit from another year in a licensed preschool environment, we are here to support your child's individual needs. We aim to help children progress towards their goals and next steps developmentally.

There are also many other options in our community, such as forest schools, enrichment programs, French-English schools and private schools. If you'd like more specific information, let the teachers know. They can help you find the information you need to make the best choice for your child and family.

Support services available

We have recently learned that children can continue to benefit from the services we get from our partnerships with KW Habilitation and KidsAbility only while enrolled in a licensed childcare program. We can continue to support children with the aid of these services until age six or until the child is out of licensed childcare. Once a child is out of licensed childcare and enrolled in school, any needs would fall under the school board's system. If you feel your child would benefit from these services before making the transition to kindergarten, please let the teachers know.

We're here to help!

As always, if you want to discuss the transition to kindergarten or any other issue, please reach out to arrange a time to meet with the teachers either in person or by emailing waterloopreschool.teacher@gmail.com.

Teacher Tracey

Do we have the most current information about **your child's immunizations**? Please be sure to keep the preschool up-to-date with two copies of your child's most recent immunization record. Questions and documents can be forwarded to Lauren, our membership officer, at waterloopreschool.membership@gmail.com.

Learn about bees and honey with the KinderPrep class

We're hosting a bee demonstration during our KinderPrep class on **Thursday, May 30** and are extending the invitation to all families at WCP.

Jodi from Huckleberry Hives will be with us on the playground from 2:15 to 3:30 on Thursday, May 30. She will bring an observation hive (where live bees are safely contained) as well as visuals and hive components to show the children. We will also play a bee game to learn more about how hives work. This event will run rain or shine, so come dressed for the weather.

This is a WCP-funded event, and there is no cost to families. If your child is in a preschool or toddler class, they are welcome to attend with a parent. Interested parents and siblings of children in our KinderPrep class are welcome to join us as well. In either case, please note that you must stay with your child for the duration of the event and are responsible for their safety. Teachers are in ratio for the KinderPrep class and cannot be responsible for additional children.



If your child is in a preschool or toddler class, or you're bringing a sibling of a child in the KinderPrep class (over the age of two), please **sign up by Friday, May 17** using the sheet outside the red classroom door. Since this is part of our regular KinderPrep programming, children in this class do not need to sign up.

Annual Spring Social

Our annual Spring Social will take place **Saturday, May 25** from **10:30 am to 1:30 pm**. Join us at the picnic shelter at Waterloo Park (near the west entrance off Westmount Drive). Activities and games will be set up, and you are also free to explore the park.

Light snacks will be provided. Please bring along your own labelled water bottles. Packed lunches are welcome, if desired. Please do not pack nut products. We look forward to seeing you all on May 25!

Mother's Day Tea

On Wednesday, May 8 and Thursday, May 9, we're honouring moms with a special Mother's Day Tea. Moms and grandmas are invited to join us for the last half hour of class to enjoy a snack and celebrate the special bond between you and your children.

Wednesday, May 8

AM Preschool, 11 am

PM Preschool, 3 pm

Thursday, May 9

Toddler class, 10:30 am

KinderPrep, 3 pm

All aboard for our Annual Train Trip!

Our Annual Train Trip is scheduled for **Thursday, May 16**. Be sure to submit payment and pick up your tickets from Teacher Patty by **Friday, May 10**. Please remember that you are responsible for the tickets you ordered, regardless of illness or change of plans.

On the day of the trip, we'll meet at 9:50 am at the St. Jacobs Market Station (beside Value Village, 330 Farmers Market Road). Parking is available in the lot directly next to the station. The train will leave at 10:10 am and return around 11:40 am. We will be offering a snack and singing songs on the train. Please be sure to bring your own water. We look forward to this fun-filled family trip with our wonderful membership!

9 ways to get your new schooler off to a great start

Give your kids the confidence they need to put their best feet forward.



You have a lot of things to take care of before school starts. But don't forget that getting your children ready for the first day goes beyond buying their clothes and organizing their carpool schedules — they need to be mentally and emotionally prepared, too. If they're nervous or stressed when they step into the classroom, they'll have a harder time enjoying the new things they're learning. Help them step confidently into a new school year with these tips.

1. Visit your child's new school before the first day. See if you can meet the teacher, principal, and school nurse. Tour the building so she knows where key places are located, such as the bathroom, gym, library, and cafeteria.

2. Shop for school supplies together. Give him a budget and let him choose his backpack, lunch box, and other school stuff from the supply list. He'll feel proud to be making important decisions, and he'll look forward to the first day, when he can try out all his new gear.

3. Help her write a letter or draw a picture to give to her teacher on the first day to introduce herself. You may want to send the teacher a note too, letting her know about any home issues that may impact learning such as an ill family member or recent loss of a pet or loved one. If the issues are especially serious, make an appointment with the teacher so that you can talk them over.

4. Learn the rules. Ask for a copy of the school handbook and make sure he understands the school rules — what he can and can't bring to class; when he can eat, play, or talk; how he should get the teacher's attention; and what the bathroom procedures are.

5. Discuss what you'll be doing when she's in school. Reassure her that you have plenty to keep you busy and look forward to meeting her when school's over.

6. Cut down on first-morning frenzy by having everything ready ahead of time. Pack your child's lunch, help him pick out a favorite outfit the night before and lay out all his clothes and supplies so that he can grab them first thing in the morning. Don't forget socks, underwear, and shoes if you want to avoid a last-minute scramble. In addition to reducing your stress level, getting-ready routines will help your child to become a better student.

7. Ease into a school-friendly schedule. If your child's been staying up late, encourage her to go to bed and get up early at least two weeks before school starts. When the first day rolls around, getting up in time will be a snap.

8. Find a friend. If any of your child's friends from the neighborhood will be going to the same school, arrange for her to walk to the bus with them or organize a carpool — your child will see school as a fun social opportunity. If she doesn't know anyone, plan a play date with one of her future classmates, so that when school starts, she'll already see at least one familiar face.

9. Get to school early on the first few days. Your child will have plenty of time to settle in and get used to the classroom before the hustle and bustle of the school day begins. He might even have time for a reassuring one-on-one chat with his teacher. By the time the day officially starts, he'll feel like he owns the place — or at least he'll feel that it's a place where he belongs.



Adapted from article published by *Scholastic Parents*, accessed online at www.scholastic.com/parents/school-success/school-life/back-to-school/9-ways-to-get-your-new-schooler-to-great-start.