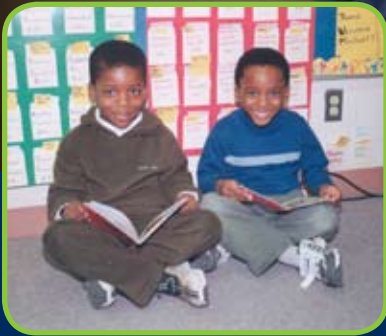


# Welcome to Dufferin-Peel's Catholic Schools



Journey into Learning... Journey into Faith



## Table of Contents

Welcome to Dufferin-Peel Catholic Schools	1
Welcome to Kindergarten	2
Your Role as the Parent	3
Preparing Your Child	4
Faith Formation	5
The Kindergarten Program	6-9
Assessment for Learning	10
Reporting	10
Journeying with the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations	11-18
Support Services	19

## Welcome to Dufferin-Peel Catholic Schools!

You and your child are joining a community of faith and learning that stretches back for over 170 years in Ontario.

Catholic schools in Ontario pre-date confederation. Generations of religious and lay people have served the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical and social needs of Catholic children. Generations of Catholic parents have worked and sacrificed to ensure that Catholic schools would remain an enduring gift to the future no matter what political or social pressures arose.

Catholic schools have been such a success in Ontario that they are now one of the four publicly funded school systems in Ontario – guided by the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops through the Institute for Catholic Education and governed by your elected members of the Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association.

The Catholic schools of Dufferin-Peel stand together with parents and local parishes to ensure that the next generation of Catholic children is ready to take its place as Gospel witnesses in the local and global community. From the first day of school, the faculty and staff of our schools promise to journey with you and your child. We promise to collaborate with you in guiding your child to becoming a Catholic school graduate who can fulfill the baptismal call to love God and to follow God's will according to the example of Jesus Christ.

May God bless you and your child as you embark on this journey of learning – this journey of faith.

### **Mission**

*The Mission of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, in partnership with the family and church, is to provide, in a responsible manner, a Catholic education which develops spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, social, and physical capabilities of each individual to live fully today and to meet the challenges of the future, thus enriching the community.*

## Welcome to Kindergarten!

We welcome you and your child to Kindergarten – the first, exciting years of school.

Kindergarten is a time of wonder and imagination. We look forward to our partnership - home, school and parish working together to ensure a successful beginning to a successful journey into learning and faith.

We promise to provide a safe, caring, inclusive and healthy environment. We promise to build upon your child's experiences, to cultivate your child's interests, to encourage your child's creativity and to guide your child's learning through play.

Kindergarten marks the beginning of a journey that culminates when your child leaves us in order to offer all those gifts and talents that have been cultivated throughout the school years for the good of the local and the global community.

As your child journeys through the school years in Dufferin-Peel, we promise to do our part to cultivate the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations – to encourage your child to become:

- A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community
- An Effective Communicator
- A Reflective and Creative Thinker
- A Self-Directed, Responsible, Life-Long Learner
- A Collaborative Contributor
- A Caring Family Member
- A Responsible Citizen



## Your Role as the Parent

Catholic schools provide many opportunities for you to participate in your child's academic and faith formation.

Your experiences as an active participant will reap great rewards for both you and your child.

- Before your child begins school in Kindergarten, a classroom visit will allow you the opportunity to share information about your son/daughter and initiate the process of building a relationship with the school community.
- Open House is held early in the school year. This will give you an opportunity to once again interact with the teacher, see your child's classroom and meet other parents.
- Catholic School Advisory Council meetings are an excellent avenue for becoming more knowledgeable about the school, as well as providing you with an opportunity to have input into decisions made by the Council for the good of the school.
- Many schools offer volunteer programs, with activities ranging from working in classrooms, assisting individual students, committee work and trip volunteers. The school will welcome your willingness to get involved.
- Celebrate your child's learning and progress by attending parent/teacher interviews.
- Be sure to check your child's backpack daily for any correspondence from the school. Talk to your child about school events and share school newsletters with them.

***"Whoever welcomes this child  
in my name welcomes me..."  
Luke 9:48***

## Preparing Your Child

The first day of Kindergarten is a special beginning for your child, and for you as a parent. It is an event that has likely been the topic discussed for many months. It can also be a time of mixed emotions for your child, who at times will express feelings of excitement as well as fear about coming to school. Be assured that these feelings are to be expected and are probably not unlike your own feelings as you anticipate your child's beginning school for the first time. We will work together to make the transition from home to school a positive experience for you and your child.

### **Helpful Hints for Preparing Your Child:**

- Raise the topic of going to school in a positive, non-threatening way to alleviate fears.
- To help your child prepare for the routines of school, develop morning and lunch routines before school begins.
- Let your child know that many familiar home story, craft and play activities also take place at school.
- To familiarize your child with the school, take walks through the neighbourhood in the summer. Show your child the route to school and the school grounds.
- Take some time to play in the school yard.
- Your initial visit with the teacher is an effective way to ease anxiety. You can communicate any concerns about anxiety or other behaviour that you feel the teacher may encounter with your child.
- Reinforce the positive aspects of the first day by reassuring your child that you will be thinking of them, and looking forward to hearing all about how great the day was. When you say good-bye to your child on the first day, make it quick, light and reassuring.

## Faith Formation

The Church reminds us that you, as parents, are your child's first teachers of the faith. By your example of prayer, worship and daily living, you have set your child on the road to knowing the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

In Kindergarten, we join the partnership of home and parish to continue your child's faith formation. Our formal religious education program, designed by the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, begins in Kindergarten and continues right through to the end of Grade 12. We will offer your child developmentally appropriate, distinctly Catholic experiences of sacred scripture, Church teaching, morality, family life, prayer, liturgy, and the sacraments. We have the honour of accompanying you and your child through the preparations for First Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation. By the end of Grade 12, we will also offer your child a Catholic perspective on world religions as well as the vocations of work, matrimony and holy orders.

The Kindergarten Religion Program called, *In God's Image*, affirms your child in all areas of his or her growth, and celebrates the wonder of childhood as a trace of God. The metaphor "a trace of God" is used throughout the program to express how the activities, growth and very being of the child are gifts and reminders of God. *In God's Image* nurtures the faith of four and five year-olds as they discover themselves in the traces of the goodness and beauty of God through all of their senses.

Religion and Family Life expectations are described not only in terms of knowledge and skills, but in terms of values, attitudes and actions. In the Catholic schools of Dufferin-Peel, faith formation is not restricted to religion time. Our teachers are trained as catechists - to imbue the whole curriculum with a sense of the sacred. Staff and students actively seek 'traces of God' throughout each day.

***"A Catholic school is one  
in which God and His truth are integrated  
into the entire syllabus, curriculum  
and life of the school."***

***Archbishop Philip Pocock***

## The Kindergarten Program

In addition to the core faith formation program, *The Kindergarten Program (2006)*, a Ministry of Education document, provides a framework of expectations for six other areas of learning in Kindergarten. These areas are:

- Personal and Social Development
- Language
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Health and Physical Activity
- The Arts

Developmentally appropriate play is an essential and very valuable part of the Kindergarten program. Purposeful play is the child's way of working and learning. Children acquire many skills through play. They try new roles, solve problems, learn how to make sense of the environment, and practice social skills. Play teaches children about themselves, about getting along with others and about basic concepts that they'll use every day of their lives.

In the area of **Personal and Social Development**, children will:

- demonstrate a sense of identity and a positive self-image;
- demonstrate a beginning understanding of the diversity in individuals, families, schools, and the wider community;
- demonstrate independence, self-regulation, and a willingness to take responsibility in learning and other activities;
- demonstrate an ability to use problem-solving skills in a variety of social contexts;
- identify and use social skills in play and other contexts;
- demonstrate an awareness of their surroundings.



In the area of **Language**, children will:

- communicate by talking and by listening and speaking to others for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts;
- demonstrate understanding and critical awareness of a variety of written materials that are read by and with the teacher;
- use reading strategies that are appropriate for beginning readers in order to make sense of a variety of written materials;
- communicate in writing, using strategies that are appropriate for beginners;
- demonstrate a beginning understanding and critical awareness of media texts.

In the area of **Mathematics**, children will:

- demonstrate an understanding of number, using concrete materials to explore and investigate counting, quantity, and number relationships;
- measure and compare length, mass, capacity, area, temperature of objects/materials, and the passage of time, using non-standard units, through free exploration, focused exploration, and guided activity;
- describe, sort, classify, and compare two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional figures, and describe the location and movement of objects through investigation;
- explore, recognize, describe, and create patterns, using a variety of materials in different contexts;
- sort, classify, and display a variety of concrete objects, collect data, begin to read and describe displays of data, and begin to explore the concept of probability in everyday contexts.

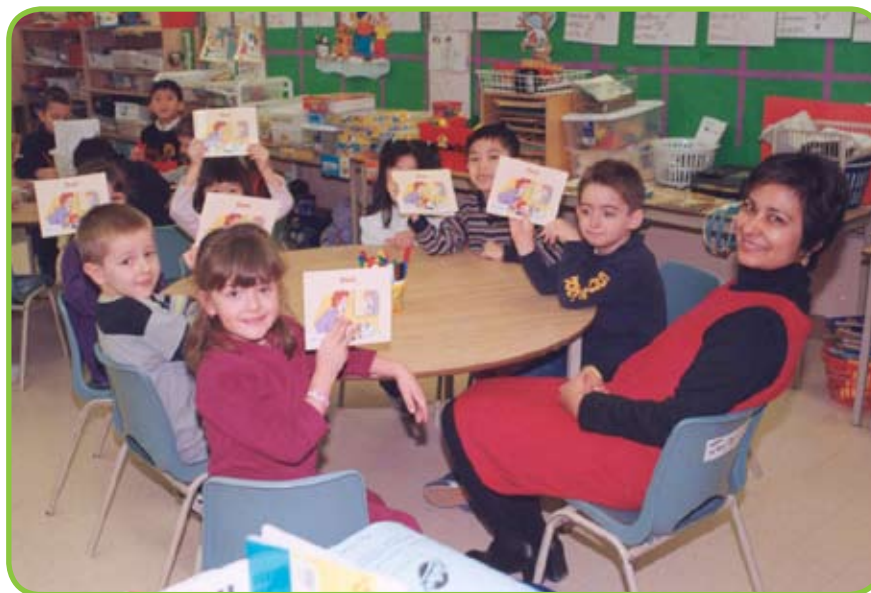


In the area of **Science and Technology**, children will:

- demonstrate an awareness of the natural and human-made environment through hands-on investigations, observation, questioning, and sharing of their findings;
- conduct simple investigations through free exploration, focused exploration, and guided activity, using inquiry skills (observing, questioning, planning an investigation, carrying out the investigation, and communicating findings);
- demonstrate an understanding of and care for the natural world;
- investigate and talk about the characteristics and functions of some common materials, and use these materials safely;
- recognize and use safely some common forms of technology.

In the area of **Health and Physical Activity**, children will:

- demonstrate an awareness of health and safety practices for themselves and others and a basic awareness of their own well-being;
- participate willingly in a variety of activities that require the use of both large and small muscles;
- develop control of large muscles (gross-motor control) in a variety of contexts;
- develop control of small muscles (fine-motor control) in a variety of contexts.



In the area of the **Arts**, children will:

- demonstrate an awareness of themselves as artists through engaging in activities in visual arts, music, drama, and dance;
- demonstrate basic knowledge and skills gained through exposure to the arts and activities in the arts;
- use problem-solving strategies when experimenting with the skills, materials, processes, and techniques used in the arts both individually and with others;
- express responses to a variety of art forms, including those from other cultures;
- communicate their ideas through various art forms.

A Kindergarten Child's Inquiry Process	What Children Do...	What the Teacher does...
<p><b>Initial Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• noticing, wondering, playing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raise questions about objects and events around them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• observe and listen</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exploration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploring, observing, questioning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explore objects and events around them and observe the results</li> <li>• make observations using all of their senses and ask questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guide children with thoughtful, open-ended questions</li> <li>• encourage children to observe and talk among themselves and to the teacher</li> </ul>
<p><b>Investigation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning, using observations, reflecting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather, compare, sort, classify, order, interpret, describe observable characteristics and properties, notice patterns, and draw conclusions, using a variety of simple tools and materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a rich variety of materials and resources, and strategically question and observe children to clarify, expand, or discover the children's thinking</li> <li>• model how to plan, observe, and reflect</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sharing findings, discussing ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work individually and with others, share and discuss ideas, and listen to new ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listen to the children to help them make connections between prior knowledge and new discoveries</li> <li>• demonstrate how to share and discuss new ideas</li> </ul>

## Assessment For Learning

The primary goal of assessment and evaluation is to support student learning and achievement; promoting success for all students. A Catholic worldview holds that the child has an active role to play in achieving his or her full potential. Therefore, we place an emphasis on assessment FOR learning. We accompany the child and create experiences that allow the child to understand what she knows and what she can do next to continue to learn.

We recognize the unique dignity and worth of each child. Our goal is always to build up the child – to emphasize what he knows and can do rather than what he does not know or cannot do.

Kindergarten teachers assess children on an ongoing basis in the context of everyday classroom activities, using a variety of methods. The major tool used in Kindergarten is observation, although a variety of other methods may also be used. It is also important to seek the children's own views.

As part of Dufferin-Peel's admission procedure, teachers consult with parents to get to know each child as soon and as thoroughly as possible in order to provide learning opportunities that will help each child. The initial classroom visit in September and the Partners in Learning Questionnaire invite parents to be active participants in their child's learning.

## Reporting

Ongoing communication between the school and home is a crucial part of the reporting process. Kindergarten teachers constantly assess and monitor student progress. The Kindergarten report cards in combination with a formal interview, provide clear, detailed information to parents/guardians about their child's achievement, next steps for growth and what parents/guardians can do to support their child's learning.

## Journeying with the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

Your child is beginning the journey towards graduation today. Everything that happens between now and graduation is designed to prepare your child to take his or her place as a witness to the gospel message of Jesus Christ in the local and the global community.

The following outline demonstrates some ways that home and school can complement each other to guide your child on the journey to learning – the journey into faith according to the guidelines offered by the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.

### **A DISCERNING BELIEVER FORMED IN THE CATHOLIC FAITH COMMUNITY**

*Every child has the capacity for spiritual and religious growth. Four and five year olds are especially open to experiences of prayer and worship – to conversations about who God is and the signs that God is present.*

In the classroom, children will:

- find stories about saints and other faith heroes
- find children's bibles
- find symbols and images including statues, pictures, rosaries
- symbols of life including plants, and pictures of pets
- bring offerings to support the poor

At home, you can:

- get to know the name of the parish priest
- review pictures/ videos of significant spiritual celebrations including baptisms, weddings, Easter, Christmas
- get to know the volunteers who lead Children's liturgy – even lend a hand
- allow your child to participate in charitable donations of food, toys and money
- create a bit of prayer space in the bedroom or another place in the house
- share your belief that all life is good; all can be forgiven

**AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR**

*Communication is a wide ranging set of skills and abilities that encompasses listening and reading, speaking and writing. These skills are developmental in nature – that is they emerge as the child is physically and intellectually ready. No two children develop at the same rate. We look at what we know to be typical at particular ages.*

**LISTENING**

In the classroom, children will:

- increase vocabulary
- develop listening concentration
- extend concepts
- develop comparisons, sequences and note details
- expand reading skills
- develop awareness of feelings of others through story

At home, you can:

- help you child to question messages in ads during favourite TV shows
- remind your child that others deserve to be heard
- talk about what you can learn by listening – What did you hear? Did you hear what I heard?

**READING**

In the classroom, children will:

- learn to read pictures, words, and stories
- note details and make comparisons
- make evaluations and note sequences
- recognize rhythm, rhyme, and similar sounds
- realize words are symbols that carry messages
- practise how to handle books

At home, you can:

- read to your child as often as you can; have your child listen quietly while being read a story or a poem and try to make it a daily habit
- establish a regular reading time
- keep a tub of books in an easy to reach spot
- teach your child his/her first and last name
- keep magnetic letters on the fridge and have your child arrange the letters of his/her name in sequence
- make your own alphabet book
- identify letters and words on everyday products e.g. cereal boxes, shirts, juice boxes
- read alphabet books from the library
- make reading fun - use different voices and expressions

### **SPEAKING**

In the classroom, children will:

- interact with other speakers for the purposes of conveying a message
- create coherent dialogue
- respond appropriately to conversation cues
- tell stories

At home you can:

- share with your child personal experiences and feelings in relation to daily occurrences
- encourage your child to ask appropriate questions during discussions
- allow your child to retell a story or give information
- ensure your child looks at the person who is speaking and listens carefully
- encourage your child to speak and watch to see that others have understood him/her

## WRITING

In the classroom, children will:

- learn how to form letters and numbers
- learn to form text from left to right
- learn to represent sounds
- learn to represent a story with letters, words and illustrations

At home you can:

- make the shopping list together; ask what is the first sound in words such as milk, butter, and cookie
- have your child dictate a story about a trip, a family outing, or a special occasion
- label objects around the house e.g. table, chair, door; mix up the labels and have you child put them in the correct place
- use finger paint, pudding, salt or whipped cream to write
- make lists, signs, labels and notes together
- print letters and make pictures on various types of paper

\*English Language Learners: If English is not the primary language spoken at home, please model good reading and writing strategies in the primary language. Parents/caregivers should be assured that these practices contribute greatly to their child's English literacy development.

### **A REFLECTIVE AND CREATIVE THINKER**

*A reflective and creative thinker creates, evaluates and adapts ideas and decisions in light of what is good. They act according to a well-formed conscience as a person of virtue.*

In the classroom, children will:

- express feelings and ideas non-verbally
- develop fine motor skills
- share space and materials
- plan and complete ideas
- manipulate different materials and explore the properties of each
- relate ideas verbally about his/her creation

At home, you can:

- provide a wide variety of used and purchased craft materials
- engage your child in helping others with simple solutions like putting the lid back on the jam jar, closing the fridge door, etc.
- use a variety of purchased and found craft materials
- allow your child to perform drawing , cutting and assembly tasks on their own – practice makes perfect

**A SELF-DIRECTED, RESPONSIBLE, LIFE-LONG LEARNER**

*Being self-directed means being able to set and pursue life goals that are in keeping with the mission and model of Jesus Christ.*

In the classroom, children will:

- choose learning centres as they are interested
- move on to new activities when they feel they have completed the learning activity
- participate in physical movement activities

At home, you can:

- allow your child to choose his/her clothes
- encourage your child to pick his/her own storybooks
- encourage your child to clean up toys and craft materials
- have your child help to prepare and pack the daily, healthy snack
- encourage your child to choose to play outside regularly

**A COLLABORATIVE CONTRIBUTOR**

*A true collaborator share one's God-given gifts and talents and acknowledges the gifts and talents that others have to offer.*

In the classroom, children will:

- develop fine motor skills
- learn concepts of form, pattern and space
- expand use of language: colour, shape and purpose
- engage in cooperative play
- take responsibility for planning, creating, and tidying up

At home, you can:

- affirm your child by reminding what they do well
- have the “what I want to be when I grow up” conversation from the point of view of how I will be great helper
- ask your child to be your helper and encourage him/her to ask for help too



**A CARING FAMILY MEMBER**

*A caring family member takes a loving, caring and respectful view of all family members and the role that family plays in society.*

In the classroom, children will:

- experience opportunities for language development
- explore a variety of dramatic play and role taking, based on family experiences
- engage in co-operative play
- take responsibility for equipment
- explore different feelings in the safety of play
- learn different ways of expressing him/herself

At home, you can:

- tell stories about when you were young
- talk about your own family members frequently
- pray with your child
- make family travel and play time a big deal
- focus on feelings in conversations about actions and consequences
- participate in family-oriented neighbourhood and community events



### **A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN**

*In the Catholic school, children are offered an apprenticeship in Christian living. They learn to prepare themselves to take their place in the local and global community as witnesses to the teachings of Jesus Christ.*

In the classroom, children will:

- develop fine and gross motor skills
- measure, construct, experiment with form, pattern and space
- expand use of language
- engage in cooperative play
- experience a variety of dramatic play and role taking
- explore properties of different matter
- reinforce the value of turn-taking and apologizing for mistakes

At home, you can:

- sing along to O Canada when you hear it played
- model and encourage turn-taking
- model and encourage taking responsibility for accidents and mistakes
- encourage conservation and care of the environment
- model courtesy to teachers, coaches and referees



## Support Services

In Dufferin-Peel, our Christ-centred world view requires that we give preferential support to those who need it most.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Students with special needs may require a specialized entry process. In order to facilitate a smooth transition for these students, parents/guardians are encouraged to share relevant assessments or information with your child's school.

### **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

A strong knowledge of your first language will help your child to learn English well, think more clearly and feel confident. To help your child strive for success, speak your first language at home, and begin to speak in English for part of your conversation. Read a variety of materials to your child, in both your language and in English. New comers will be directed to the Newcomer Reception and Assessment Centre located at:

St. Veronica School  
680 Novo Star Drive,  
Mississauga, Ontario, L5W 1C7  
Telephone: 905-361-2344  
Fax: 905-361-2345

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

Community Care Access Centre - Peel - 1-888-733-1177/905-796-0040  
Community Support Services (Orangeville) - 1-800-265-7293/519-925-5452  
Community Health (Orangeville) - 1-800-265-7293/519-941-0760

Peel Health - [www.region.peel.on.ca](http://www.region.peel.on.ca)  
Brampton/Mississauga - 905-799-7700  
Caledon - 905-584-2216

### **PRESCHOOL SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICES**

Halton and Peel Preschool Speech & Language Services  
Client Services Intake Centre - 905-855-3557  
[www.erinoakkids.ca](http://www.erinoakkids.ca)

Dufferin and Wellington "WEE Talk" - 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4676/519-846-2715  
[www.weetalk.net](http://www.weetalk.net)



