



Welcome to Kindergarten at Lord Strathcona Elementary!

Starting school is an exciting and sometimes overwhelming time for both families and new students -- as family members of current students, we know, and we're here to help! This package answers some of the questions other families have had about school life. Read on to gear up for a great first day!

As a caregiver to an incoming student, you are now part of the Lord Strathcona school community, including part of the Parent Advisory Committee, which acts as a connector between caregivers and the school. Sign up for PAC communications to stay in touch and learn more about how you can advocate for your family and your community.

We're looking forward to learning and growing with you!

Warmly,

Your fellow PAC members

What is the PAC?

PAC stands for Parent Advisory Committee, a volunteer-run group within each school community that links parents and the school. There is strong evidence that increased parent involvement in the school results in increased student achievement, accomplishment, satisfaction, and bonding.

You are automatically a member of the PAC, and can choose to join the board to get more involved with events, advocacy, and fundraising. All PACs strive to represent the diversity within their communities and contribute to the benefit of all students.

Stay in the know! Sign up for Strathcona PAC emails.

Find out about how to get involved with the PAC board, school events and activities, important school dates (including PAC meetings!) and fundraising opportunities to support students. www.strathconapac.ca



What time do we need to be at school?

Below is a typical schedule for a full school day. Kindergarten students typically eat lunch before other classes to allow younger students more time for transitioning between activities.

9am - School starts, students are in the classroom

If you arrive at school after 9:05am, please check in at the office. If you know you are going to be late or absent that day, call the office.

10:30-10:50am - Snack & Recess

12:10-12:55pm - Lunch

Did you know Lord Strathcona has a Hot Lunch Program? Keep reading to learn more.

3pm - School ends

Students MUST be picked up promptly at the end of the school day. Teachers will bring students who are not picked up to the office and every attempt will be made to reach their caregivers.

Where do we go on the first day?

The first weeks of kindergarten will be gradual entry, with different start and end times than a typical school day. Watch your email inbox for more information from the school regarding your young learner's schedule. If you have out-of-school care, check with your care provider for details on when students need to be picked up by parents during the gradual entry weeks.

What is the Hot Lunch Program?

Lord Strathcona is fortunate to offer a daily hot lunch, served to participating students. To participate, complete the registration form available at the school office.

This program is intended to be barrier-free, so the weekly or monthly payment amount is pay-what-you-can, at the discretion of each family. Payments can be made in cash at the office, or via SchoolCash Online.

What is SchoolCash Online?

It is the payment platform used by the Vancouver School Board (VSB). SchoolCash Online is an easy and safe online way to pay for school fees (yearly fees, field trips, hot lunch program). You can use SchoolCashOnline all the way through school until graduation. See link at the end of this document.

Is there out-of-school care?

Yes, various community centres and organizations offer before and after school care programs. Please note there is no guarantee of out-of-school care (OSC) and most places have a waitlist. Please contact each program location for more information, including adding your young learner's name to the waitlist.

- Strathcona Community Centre
- Raycam Community Centre
- YMCA at Seymour
- UGM (United Gospel Mission)

What should we bring to school?

- Nut-free snack
- Nut-free, healthy lunch

Only for students not participating in the Hot Lunch Program. Please note students do not have access to a fridge or a microwave.

- Water bottle
- Spare clothing
 - Pants, shirt, socks, underwear, in a separate bag with their name on it, appropriate for the season. We recommend school clothes that are “play and mess ready”, and won’t be missed if they are lost or damaged. There is a Lost and Found located near the office for student items that go missing.
- Rain gear on rainy days
 - If the forecast is calling for lots of rain, consider dressing your child in their rain pants for school to increase the likelihood they will put them on for recess and lunch.
- Indoor shoes
 - These will stay at school. Please no slippers, as students may walk between buildings and spend time in the gym.
- In cold weather: mitts, warm hat
 - Jackets with warm hoods are recommended to avoid children sharing hats.

Students need to be able to open their snack, water bottle and backpack without assistance, as well as put on and take off their own shoes. All supplies needed for schoolwork (paper, markers, notebooks, etc) are supplied in the classroom. There is a small yearly fee that can be paid via SchoolCash Online.

What should we leave at home?

Special items can be lost or damaged. Special toys, stuffies, etc should stay at home, except on certain days at the discretion of school staff. Speak with your child's teacher, as sometimes lovie's may be permitted for quiet time.

What should we do if we're late?

If you arrive at the school later than 9:05am, please check in at the office and fill in the "Late Arrival" sheet. If you will be later than 9:15am, please call or email the school:

What should we do if we're sick?

Same as above! Call or email the school and let them know how long you will be away.

How can I help my young learner feel excited?

Starting school is a big change in a young person's life, and their family! There are new routines, new expectations, and a lot of new people. Here are some ways your family can get school-ready:

- Practice the commute. How will you get to school? How long will it take? Try getting up and getting to the school yard as you would on a typical school day.
- Find some ways to simplify your morning. Consider having your young learner pick out their clothes before they go to bed, or helping pack their snack the night before.
- Visit the school and play in the playground, to help make the school grounds more familiar
- Encourage them to talk about their feelings. It is very common to feel both nervous and scared, and happy and proud, all at the same time.
- Consider choosing something small that they can be put in their backpack to remind them of home (for example. a photo, a small stuffie, a "lovie")
- Read books together about Kindergarten. There are many great books available at the library to check out. Ask your librarian for suggestions.

READY FOR KINDERGARTEN CHECKLIST

For Caregivers

☐ I have signed up to receive messages from the PAC



☐ I have added the Lord Strathcona school phone number to my contact list

☐ I have signed up for SchoolCash Online (available in September)



☐ I have completed the Hot Lunch Program registration form

☐ I have checked out the Vancouver School Board calendar of dates



For New Students

☐ I have a backpack and can pack it and put it on myself

☐ I can open my own lunch box, water bottle, and snack packaging

☐ I can put on and take off my own school shoes and outerwear

☐ I know where the school office is

School Contact Information

592 East Pender Street, Vancouver. The office is on the 2nd floor. Enter via Jackson Street.

- Main office phone: 604-713-4630
- General inbox: strathcona@vsb.bc.ca

To report absence or late arrival:

- By email: str-safearrival@vsb.bc.ca
- By phone: call main office phone, then press 1

Parent Advisory Committee chair: strathconaelementarypac@gmail.com