

**Junior and Senior  
Kindergarten (JK/SK)  
Handbook  
Roden Public School**

We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.



Dear Roden Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to our school! We hope you and your child will find Roden Public School a vibrant and caring community where everyone is encouraged to participate, and to learn and grow together.

We know how exciting and stressful it is to start at a new school, especially for the first time. There is so much to learn and discover for parents as well as students about a new place and a new program. We hope that this handbook full of helpful tips, insights and advice from those whose own children have attended Roden Public School, together with School Council communications throughout the year, will ease your transition and keep you informed as your child progresses. There's even a section at the end about moving up into Grade School at Roden.

We have tried to gather together as much of the information we wish we'd known at the beginning. Should you have anything you feel should be added or any questions, please feel free to contact us at any time, through our Facebook page or by emailing [chair@roden.ca](mailto:chair@roden.ca).

We look forward to meeting you, and your child!

Roden School Council



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## Your School, Your Community

- **Movie Nights:** Watch a cinema release in the school Gym on a weekday evening, with popcorn and other refreshments available.
- **Parents' Social:** Join us at a local eating and drinking establishment to get to know each other better.
- **Dance-A-Thon:** Students spend a part of their school day in the Gym enjoying a professional DJ, lighting rig and maybe even watching their teachers get up on stage!
- **Winter and Spring Concerts:** The school hosts two concerts per year in the evening after school. Attendance is free and all students are involved in at least one performance.
- **Clothing / Toy Swaps:** Drop off any lightly-used items in the week leading up to this event, then stop by on the day of to pick up some new-to-you treasures.
- **Sports Tournaments:** 3x3 tournaments with students and adults facing off against each other on a Saturday afternoon to play baseball, basketball, etc.
- **Summer Send Off / Funfair:** Towards the end of the school year, a chance to enjoy outdoor bouncy castles, cotton candy, delicious South Asian fare, games, prizes and more!

Most events rely on volunteers to make them happen - check out the Volunteering section to find out how you can help!



## Coming and Going

You should be notified in the mail which class your child is in and where to go on the first day. Kindergarten drop-off is in the dedicated area along Fairford Avenue at the North of our school. Once you are comfortable, you can leave your child in this area from 8:45am, when supervision begins, but many families wait until the classes line up and file in at 8:55am. Parents are encouraged to say goodbye at the doors, instead of coming inside; if your child needs extra support, please discuss this with the teacher.

Pick-up takes place in the same area, at 3pm. Teachers will come to the door and will release children individually, only when they have seen an appropriate adult ready to receive them. This process can take a few minutes, but is required for the safety of all students. Please be patient. If you need to collect your child early, make arrangements in advance where possible.

If you are collecting your child at lunchtime, make sure your teacher knows that you are coming - pick-up and drop off happen through these same doors. At any other times, you must make arrangements in advance and check your child out via the main office as well as with the teacher at the time.

Someone else picking them up?

If you wish for your child to be collected by someone other than you on a regular basis, please inform the

school office so that this person can be added to the list of people permitted to collect your child. You should also let the class teacher know.

If you wish someone else to collect the child on an ad hoc basis, you can inform the class teacher on the day.

## Lateness or Absence

If your child is late to class and misses morning or afternoon registration, they must first report to the school office for a late slip. This slip should then be handed in to the class teacher when the student reaches their classroom.

If you know your child will miss school for some or all of a day, please inform the school office either in person or by calling (416) 393-9555. You can leave a message.

If a child misses morning or afternoon registration, the Safe Arrival automated system will be implemented to call parents or families members, using the contact numbers you provided when registering for the school. You will need to confirm the reason for the absence using the menu options on the call. Please make sure your contact numbers are up-to-date.

Please try not to be late for pick-up. While no student under grade 4 would ever be sent home without an appropriate adult, the efficient running of the school relies on prompt collection of all students and we have no provision for after-school care in these circumstances.

## Are You Ready?

Kindergarten teachers are experienced with students arriving at all levels of skill and confidence, but it will help your child to settle in quickly (and help our staff too!) if they are confident and competent at age-appropriate skills.

Encourage your child to learn the name of their teacher and their Area number once you have been given it. This will help them to speak up in class, and, although they shouldn't be alone in the school, it means if they aren't sure where to go, they are always able to ask.

1. Students are expected to be able to dress themselves, wash their hands and use the washroom independently – you can help them by limiting wardrobe challenges (we're looking at you, overalls!) and these are skills you can usefully practise at home. Outdoor clothing can be a particular challenge for students, but kids love to learn the 'coat-flip' and the independence of dressing themselves. Our staff do understand that some students still need extra support and encouragement at times.
2. Let your child know their backpack is their responsibility. They should be able to carry and pack / unpack it themselves. Practise opening and closing bags and lunchboxes, so they are confident doing it in school.
3. Student backpacks should include the following when you drop them off at school: a labelled lunch container, a labelled water bottle, an extra change of labelled clothes in a

plastic bag (the bag is used for soiled clothes) and an extra pair of labelled indoor running shoes. Running shoes are mandatory for Gym class. The clothes and shoes can be left in school in the child's cubby. A 14" (inch) backpack is a good size for most new Kindergarten students.

4. If your child is staying in school for lunch, it's best to send them in with something they are used to eating. If you usually have a hot meal at lunchtime, that might mean practising with sandwiches or finger foods for a few weeks in August. Don't worry if a lot of food comes home in the first few days of school; it takes some students a while to settle into the routine of eating on a schedule and with their friends around them.
5. Students are not allowed to bring toys, jewellery, etc. to school. This prevents conflict amongst students or the risk of the item being lost/broken. Please keep much-loved objects safe at home. Practise before school starts by leaving loved items, such as a favourite stuffed toy, at home when going shopping, to the park or to visit family and friends.
6. Consider having your child's hearing and vision checked before school starts. Problems with hearing and vision can make learning more difficult and are most easily treated when identified early. You should also ensure that their vaccinations are up to date.
7. Consider visiting the Early ON drop-in centre in school during May and June, in order to introduce yourself and your child to our community. More information is available elsewhere in this book.

## First Day Tips

The first day of school can be exciting and scary for both students and their families. Try to remember that your teachers have 'seen it all before' and are experienced in handling all the emotions your family arrives with! Staff at Roden do recognise that some students need additional support, especially during morning drop-off. You are more than welcome to discuss this process with them.

1. Arrive early, before 8:45am, to avoid the morning rush. This will help make it less overwhelming for your whole family and allow your child to 'settle in' to the schoolyard before you say goodbye. Kindergarten starts at 8:55am.
2. Before school starts, check the name of your class teacher and Area number. You should also have received instructions telling you where to meet on the first day. Note: This might be slightly different from the normal procedure.
3. Our building is air-conditioned in Summer and heated in Winter, but students need to bring appropriate clothing for the weather because they spend part of each day outside. Layers are great, just make sure everything is labelled! Staff are not permitted to apply sunscreen, so if you consider this appropriate you should apply it before school.

4. When your family arrives, you will be greeted by your child's teacher/ECE and be given instructions on what to do next. For example, where your child should put their bag.
5. Kindergarten and Junior students are encouraged to bring a change of clothes to store in their backpack or cubby, just in case. Make sure they know this is available to them.
6. Where possible, you are encouraged to say goodbye to your child before they enter school. This usually allows for a smoother transition, even for those students/families who are nervous or worried about the first day. Consider sending your child with a small, non-valuable 'token' of you, such as a friendship bracelet or a photo in their backpack.

## The Kindergarten Class

Kindergarten at Roden is made up of 4 classes. Each Kindergarten class is a mixed class of Junior Kindergarten (3-4 years old in September) and Senior Kindergarten (4-5 years old) students and is staffed by a teacher and an Early Childhood Educator (ECE), enabling students to receive a greater level of attention in these early years. The 4 classes share outdoor recess time in their dedicated Kindergarten yard and often cooperate for field trips.

Students remain in their allocated class area and with their teachers for most of the day. Specialist teachers and rooms are provided for Gym, Music and Library. Each area has washrooms and sinks adjacent to the classroom.

## Getting to School

Most Roden students walk or cycle to school because of our small catchment area. Please be aware, however, that the roads around the school can be very busy at drop-off and pick-up times and take extra care for your own safety and others', however you choose to travel.

Bike racks are provided outside the main doors on both the Hiawatha and Ashdale sides of the building. Kindergarten students can park their bikes inside the 'cage' by the Kindergarten doors. Speak to a member of staff if you're not sure where to put a bike or scooter.

Dogs (other than service animals) are not allowed on school grounds at any time; please leave them outside the gates or at home.

On the south side of the schoolyard, between the school and Gerrard Street, is a small parking lot. This is available for school users to park for free between 8am and 6pm. At other times you will need a ticket. There are also a few spaces of street parking on each road around the perimeter of the school. These get very busy, so we ask you to be patient and allow extra time for parking in these areas.

Please comply with posted parking restrictions both in

the parking lot and on the surrounding streets as these are strenuously enforced and are there to protect the safety of our students.

If you are driving west on Fairford Ave. to school, please note there are no left turns onto Ashdale Road or onto Woodfield Road from Fairford before 9am.

A few road safety law reminders: double-parking and parking on sidewalks is not allowed. Please follow the posted school zone reduced speed limits. Vehicles are not allowed to idle more than 1 minute maximum by the school (even in Winter). Turn your vehicle off when parked. Always make a full stop at stop signs, and lastly remind your child to cross the street at designated areas, not between parked cars.

**Let's work together to keep our community safe.**



## A Few Rules

Ask a Grade 1 student and they will tell you there are three rules at Roden:

- 1. Respect!** Have respect for your peers, for the adults in the school and for the building and belongings around you.
- 2. Responsibility!** Take responsibility for your own behaviour and your own belongings. Students may also be given age-appropriate extra responsibilities, such as feeding the class pet, welcoming visitors or carrying the attendance sheet to the school office.
- 3. Try Your Best!** Staff are aware that our students are learning and developing at different rates and in different ways. Whether they are trying to read a challenging book, spell a difficult word or simply sit still and listen, students will not always get it right, but they should always try their best.

Of course, there are a few more detailed rules too, but for the most part they can be explained through the three Principles above and are exactly what you would expect (at least from an adult point of view). If you are unsure about how to handle a situation in school, you can always contact your class teacher, the main office or the Principal, but hopefully the list below will help with some common situations.

**Footwear:** Ensure your child has proper footwear for the weather - recess is almost always outside, so rainboots, snow boots, etc, are important for your child. However, they should also bring a pair of closed-toed comfortable shoes to change into indoors. These are mandatory for Gym class but are really useful everyday to keep our school cleaner and our kids more comfortable. They can be left at school in your child's cubby.

**Clothing:** TDSB has a rule that children should not wear any clothing that might be deemed offensive or abusive. If your kids wants to wear a costume, or express themselves in a creative way, that's fine - provided they will be comfortable for the entire day, won't be distracted or distracting, and can participate in all class activities including Gym.

**Costumes:** If you child wears a costume to school, please leave at home anything which could be considered a weapon. You will also want to ensure that they are able to use the washroom whilst wearing it.  
**Play-Fighting:** Kids love to be creative and imaginative at recess, and this is to be encouraged. However, for the safety of all students, rough-housing and **Play-Fighting** are not permitted in the school. It goes without saying, real fighting is banned too!

**Trading / Swapping:** We love how generous many of

our students are, but please discourage them from trading and swapping during school hours. This includes everything from toys and cards to food.

**Valentine's and other gifts:** There is absolutely no obligation to bring in treats and gifts for holidays such as Christmas, Valentine's Day or your child's birthday. However, if you choose to do so, please ensure that there is one for each child in the class and be aware of allergens.

**Allergens:** Please never send anything into school that contains nuts or peanuts, fish or seafood. Staff and students have severe allergies and this can be very dangerous for them. Your teacher may also notify you of other items to avoid specific to the class. We know it can be inconvenient to check labels, but this is nothing compared to the health of our community.

**Valuables:** Students are not encouraged to bring money, jewellery or toys to school. Keep precious items at home to avoid them getting lost, or causing upset and jealousy in the playground.

**Pets:** Dogs (other than service animals) are not allowed on school grounds at any time; please leave them outside the gates or at home.

**Use your voice, not your hands:** If somebody is doing something your child does not like, they should say

so in a loud and clear voice. Students are encouraged to express themselves and make their needs known. If this does not resolve the situation, they should inform an adult, such as their teacher or lunch supervisor.

## A Day in Kindergarten

Roden runs a five day timetable. This means that scheduled classes, such as Gym, Library etc, and many extra-curricular activities, might be timetabled on Day 1 rather than Mondays. Over the course of a year, this means classes are not disproportionately affected by holidays and PA days, which generally Fall on Mondays and Fridays. However, as a parent, it can be a bit confusing to know which number day it is! Generally, this doesn't matter much in Kindergarten; it comes into its own when you are trying to help remember Math books on Day 3 and Science homework on Day 5.

Kindergarten students spend much of their time on "play-based learning", using the various activity centres in their classrooms, including sand/water tables, building blocks, puzzles, pretend kitchens, etc. They also have 'carpet time' discussions, stories and presentations and table time, practising reading and writing.

There is no nap time in Kindergarten. A good night's sleep routine is very important as it will ensure your child is ready to tackle a full day of active learning. Especially in the first few months, your child may find the days very tiring. We appreciate that after-school care is necessary for many families, but where possible most parents find it better not to schedule too many extra activities for their child during the week, allowing them to wind down and relax before bedtime.

## And A Year...

Students attend school from the day after Labour Day to the last-but-one weekday before Canada Day, except for a two week break at the end of December and a week off in March. Students also have no school on provincial and national holidays, together with around 6 PA days on which staff have professional development sessions. You can find a full calendar with term dates, along with lots of extra information, at the website for Toronto District School Board. [www.TDSB.on.ca](http://www.TDSB.on.ca).

Many families find that students in Kindergarten and the lower Grades struggle with the long terms and are more emotional and tired a few weeks before the longer breaks. Don't worry, students make it through - but you might want to build in extra relaxation, breaks, and of course lots of love and patience.





## Curriculum

Although you can help them get ready for Kindergarten with some of the tips mentioned elsewhere, don't worry about how academically advanced your child is when they come to Roden.

Kindergarten is a place where much of the education comes through playing and discovery rather than traditional lessons. Your support throughout these early years will help prepare your child for the rest of their time in school, and set up great lifelong habits.

## Social Skills

A lot of learning in Kindergarten is about social skills rather than academics. Many students are learning for the first time to be away from home, to share and interact with other children and with adults who are not family members, and to make friends. They are learning to be independent and to follow rules, they are even learning to learn.

As they pass through Kindergarten, most of our students develop real friendships with other students in their class. While we recognise it's not always possible, play dates outside school hours can really help these friendships develop and allow students to learn how to share not only communal school equipment, but also toys that belong to one or other [child].

While many students Fall into the stereotype of mumbling "It was OK" when asked about their school day, others are keen to tell you every detail, or will open up at a quieter time, perhaps over dinner or in bed. Listening to them and showing you care are great ways to encourage further communication, which can only be a good thing as your child moves up through school and encounters challenges you want them to share.

## Reading

It is never too early to get your kids excited about reading! Reading is an excellent way to spend quality one-on-one quiet time with your child, and it's a skill that supports so much of their learning.

Students are not expected to be able to read when they arrive at Roden, although many arrive knowing some or all of the alphabet. Our Kindergarten teachers have a range of incredible strategies that help students on the road to learning from games and puzzles to a Library of 'levelled' reading books to bring home, and of course lots of practice in class.

Starting in mid-September there is a great, FREE Read-Up Club in the school Library on Tuesdays between 3:30pm and 4:30pm. Students (JK and up) are given book bags with three different books at their reading level to take home and practice. JK students often start with read-aloud books which you can read to them or

simple sight word books you can help your child read (Level A or DRA 1 Reader Books).

Read-Up Club is a wonderful way to get your child excited about reading, in a relaxed and encouraging atmosphere. Volunteers are available on-site to read with students during the club and Reading professionals can help answer any questions you may have.

The friendly Toronto Public Library Gerrard-Ashdale branch is located next door to our school. Sign your child up for a Library card and start a lifelong reading habit.

## **Math**

Numbers and counting are incorporated into all sorts of areas of learning in our Kindergarten classrooms. For example, students might count the days they've been at school or the seeds in a pumpkin. They conduct surveys among their peers, for example to find out everyone's favourite vegetable or candy, and do experiments such as testing whether items float or sink.

You can encourage Math learning by counting with them at home - maybe they could put out the right number of plates for dinner, or estimate how many cheerios are left in their breakfast bowl.

## **Dexterity / Writing**

Very few students arrive in Kindergarten able to write, but by the end of SK, most can legibly write their own name and a short sentence about what they did over the weekend. They practice with playdough tools, painting and drawing, moving on to safety scissors and holding a pencil or pen to form letters. In SK, students have daily writing practice during class.

Although students are not given homework in Kindergarten, you can encourage them to practise these skills by drawing and colouring, sticking stickers or cutting up an old magazine. As they gain confidence, signing a birthday card or writing a short letter to a family member can be fun ways to get extra practice.

## **Confidence and Responsibility**

Each teacher arranges it differently, but all Kindergarten classes at Roden have some version of 'Special Helper', a student allocated to each day and encouraged to help the Teacher with jobs like feeding the class fish, taking the attendance folder to the main office and making a "Show and Share" presentation to the class.

Perhaps there are a few big-kid jobs the child could do at home to help you out, or you can celebrate their 'Special Helper' day by letting them choose what to have for

dinner or with another treat.

## **The World Around Us**

### **Music**

Music lessons are a lot of fun for most Kindergarten students and are generally a great way for the children to express themselves. You might learn a new song or two yourself as they come home humming a new favourite! In Kindergarten, Music classes mostly revolve around singing, but students are also encouraged to start noticing the beat and rhythm of the Music, and to join in with actions.

Do your best to attend the school concerts which usually take place in December and May. Students help to choose which piece they will perform and it is a proud moment when you see them file onto stage to fidget, mumble and generally sing!

### **Self-Restraint and Self-care**

Emotional regulation can be difficult for all of us. As adults we continue to struggle and learn how to deal with our own feelings and the feelings of those around us. We can teach our children that although this is an ongoing project for everyone, we can value how we feel and what social interactions can look like. The goal is to empower our children to respect themselves and others.

In Kindergarten, students are encouraged to learn and use the words they need to stand up for themselves, and to listen to others. Students may also be taught some simple coping mechanisms, such as deep breathing, singing and moving their bodies.

You can encourage your child by discussing values such as kindness, sharing, co-operating, listening, taking turns, being patient and boundary making.

Encourage your child to share their voice, in both positive ways and ways that help them to be confident, even if this means saying, 'no, thank you'. You can model these behaviours, and help to support their self-confidence. Give your child lots of opportunities to play with other children so that they may learn these skills. Ask your child what they should do if another child pushes, hits, kicks, bites them, or says something rude. They shouldn't push, hit, kick, bite or be rude back, but instead say 'stop' or 'no' firmly, then go and find an adult to help address the situation.



# EATING & DRINKING

Ensure that your child comes to school with a full water bottle each day. Although they will have access to a drinking fountain, lining up with the class and taking a quick sip is unlikely to provide them with enough to drink during the school day.

### **Breakfast Club**

Roden is very fortunate to have a Breakfast Club program, open to all students from 8:30am to 8:50am. The Breakfast Club is located on the main floor of the school by the Ashdale doors. It offers healthy free breakfasts made on site every weekday.

The Breakfast Club is a NOT a care service. All young students who use the Breakfast Club are required to be supervised by their own parent/guardian.

### **Snacks**

A morning and afternoon snack is provided to all JK/SK students, free of charge, through our 'snack program'. This is usually veggie sticks, fruit or a piece of bagel or crackers.

The snack program usually takes a week or so to get started in the Fall, so feel free to send in a small snack for the first few days of school.

### **Lunch**

All TDSB schools encourage families to take their children home for lunch to give them a break from the school day. However, realistically most parents work and the majority of students stay for lunch at school. If you do wish to collect your child, let their teacher know and you can collect them at 11:45am from the Kindergarten doors where you pick up each day.

JK/SK students eat lunch under the care of Lunch Supervisors in their classrooms around 11:45am to 12:15pm, then go outside for a recess until 12:45pm. If you take your child out of school, please return them at this time, checking in with the member of staff on duty in the yard or classroom.

### **What to pack?**

Try to keep snacks and lunches healthy, easy and quick to eat. Finger foods are great as they are easy to eat without much fuss or mess. Especially in the first few weeks, provide something your child is used to eating and enjoying, that fills them up and gives them lots of energy for the rest of the day. If in doubt, we recommend providing a little more food than you expect your child to eat, then tweaking quantities based on what comes home.

Students are encouraged to have 'litter-free' lunches and to take anything they don't eat home, so that you can see what has and hasn't been eaten. Keep this in mind when packing things like yogurt and apple sauce. If they do not have resealable lids, they will leak all over your child's bag.

**Due to severe food allergies at our school, nuts, fish and seafood are banned.**

Remember to practice with your child so that they are comfortable opening and closing any containers you might use for their lunch.

### **After-School Challenges**

After a long active day at school, kids become very hungry. Many parents bring an extra snack to eat right at pick-up, to reduce the chance of the child having a 'hangry' attack on the way home.

Be prepared, especially in the early months of Kindergarten for your child to be extremely tired after school. You may discover that they need to eat dinner and go to bed much earlier than normal. Don't worry, your child will eventually transition back into their normal routine as they adjust to the busy school schedule.



### **The Rest of the Building**

**As a Kindergarten family, you will mostly interact with the dedicated area at the north side of the school, along Fairford Avenue. Your child will be taken to the rest of the building for classes, and eventually you will discover it too!**

### **Finding Your Way Around**

In our experience, students find their way around school pretty quickly, but for many parents what is where remains a mystery for much longer, so here is a quick guide. The main floor is made up of the Kindergarten classrooms, Library and Administrative offices, as well as the Early ON Drop-in Centre and the Breakfast Club room. Steps lead down to a Music room and to the Gym.

You can access the school through the main doors on the Hiawatha side of the building, by pressing the buzzer and waiting to be let in. **For everyone's safety, please ensure that you always check in with the office before going elsewhere in the school.** The main office is then straight ahead of you with the Family Washroom and steps down to the Gym to your right. The Lost and Found area is in the main part of the foyer of the school (each classroom also has a small Lost and Found bin), or sometimes relocated to the lobby just inside the main

Ashdale doors. The Library is down a corridor to your left when you are standing in front of the Office. Most public events such as presentations, Council meetings and concerts are held in either the Library or the Gym.

At both ends of the building, staircases lead up to the 2nd and 3rd floors, which house our Grade 1-8 classrooms. Classes are labelled by "Area number", as the school is largely open-plan, with classrooms around the outside walls and central areas allocated to staff rooms, specialists and storage. There are student washrooms on all floors.

We have three outdoor areas. The smaller, fenced area on the Fairford side of the school for Kindergarten students includes an age-appropriate climbing structure. The larger main schoolyard can be found to the South of the school buildings, and includes a larger climbing structure together with basketball court, baseball nets and a large grassed area, together with an enclosed wildflower garden. Along the Ashdale side of the building is the outdoor Kindergarten classroom for Equinox Holistic Alternative School. This area is out of bounds to Roden students and to the public during school hours.

## Lost & Found

Around 650 students share our school building. Each school year, hundreds of items are misplaced and end up in our Lost and Found - many are never claimed and are eventually disposed of. There's a small lost and found bin in the Kindergarten area and a larger one near the main office.

Encourage your child to stop by the lost and found frequently to look for any misplaced belongings and make it the first place you check if you know something has disappeared!

If you want personal items to have any hope of making it back to your family, please label them with your child's name. If you are buying Mabel's Labels, go through the fundraising page and select Roden PS. All proceeds raised from Mabel's Labels support fundraising programs which benefit the school.

Please keep any important items at home where they are safe.

## Equinox Holistic Alternative School

Roden shares our facilities, Principal and some support staff with another TDSB school called Equinox. Equi-

nox is funded through TDSB just like Roden, but is an optional attendance school, so many of their students come from further away. Equinox staff teach through a holistic alternative model and their Kindergarten students are taught year-round in outdoor classrooms.

Students in the two schools are taught completely separately, but share a yard at recess and lunch times, and before and after school. Some events are hosted jointly by the two schools and the two School Councils work closely together as so many of our interests align. Any event hosted by one School Council is open for both communities to attend.

You can find out more about Equinox at [www.equinoxschool.ca](http://www.equinoxschool.ca)

## Roden Childcare

A private organisation runs a childcare centre in our school building, on the 2nd floor. They offer full-time care for younger children and a before / after school service to students. The waitlist is long, so make contact early if you are interested.

Many other providers, including individuals and a number of local businesses, run before and after-care which include pick-up from Roden. If you would like their contact information, please email [chair@roden.ca](mailto:chair@roden.ca).

## Early ON Drop-in Centre

Reached through the Breakfast Club, near the Ashdale doors to the building, the Early ON centre is open every morning during school termtime, from 8:45am - 12:45pm. Children from birth to Kindergarten age can enjoy a wide range of activities including painting, sand or water tables, blocks, dolls and books. Every day, we have circle time with stories and songs, as well as a free, healthy snack for all children. Twice a week, the group moves down into the Gym to get more active, and when the weather is warm, some or all of the group moves outside to explore the Kindergarten yard and climbing structure. A washroom and stroller parking as provided in the Breakfast Club room.

Parents and Caregivers are required to stay and supervise their children, and many find the social aspect is as useful for them as for the little ones! The facility is free and there's no sign-up or waitlist, just drop in and say hi.

The Early ON centre is a great way for future Kindergarteners to get to know the school, and possibly some future classmates, before arriving in September, and for little siblings to come along too.



## Stay in Touch

We've all heard the complaints - parents and guardians are either inundated with papers in the backpack or hear nothing at all from the school until the last minute! At Roden, we make every effort to make information readily available but it is ultimately your responsibility to stay informed about what is happening in your child's school. Below is a list of the type of communications you may expect in the coming year.

- **Classroom communiques** – Most teachers send out occasional papers in backpacks. These might include consent forms for school trips, information about upcoming events and requests for donations (For example, the class may need empty tissue boxes to make groundhog burrows). Make it a habit to check backpacks regularly; better still, encourage your child to take responsibility to pass on anything their teacher sends out.
- **School Newsletter** – You should receive a monthly email newsletter from the Principal covering key dates and important school information. If you don't receive it, check with the main office to make sure you're on the list.
- **School/Council Emails** – Roden School Council also has an email list which we use to send out bulletins and information. Please go to [www.roden.ca](http://www.roden.ca) and

follow the Subscribe link you find there. This enables you to learn about all the events hosted by Council, most of which are free to attend, together with all the other work Council does in the school and to represent the parent voice.

- **Facebook** – Be sure to 'Like' the Roden School Council Facebook page. This page posts several times a week with updates, updates about school activities and other important information. [www.facebook.com/RodenSC/](http://www.facebook.com/RodenSC/)
- **Posters** – Any big school community events are often promoted not only by email, newsletter and Facebook, but also posters around the school.
- **Website:** [www.Roden.ca](http://www.Roden.ca) – This website is managed by the School Council. It is regularly updated and is a great source of information about everything from events to renovations updates, extra-curricular options and health & safety news.
- **Child-specific communications**, you will receive two report cards per year, together with the possibility of attending two in-person meetings with your child's teacher

## If Issues Arise

In most situations, your child's classroom teacher is the first point of contact, followed by the school's Principal, the school superintendent and your trustee.

**Classroom Teacher** – The first place to go about any classroom-related question or concern is your classroom teacher. They can help you with any questions about the classroom, classroom rules and consequences, daily events, etc.

As any caregiver knows trying to have an adult conversation with kids around is hard. It is extremely challenging for teachers and staff to supervise students at the same time as trying to address your questions or concerns, especially during the busy drop-off and pick-up periods. If you want to have a discussion with your child's teacher, it is always best to email them or send a written note. This gives your child's teacher the opportunity to reply when they have a free moment with an answer and/or to set-up a specific time to speak. Putting your questions and concerns in writing is also a helpful and easy way to track, share and escalate them if required.

**Principal** – If you would like more information or if you have questions that are beyond the classroom, talk to the Principal. They can help you with: student registration, schedules, suspensions, report card concerns, code of

conduct, safety and security, budget and fundraising, and the School Council.

**Superintendents** – Superintendents are responsible for a network of schools. They support school staff and can be contacted if you have questions that have not been answered by your child's teacher or Principal or need help with things such as alternate attendance request or suspension appeals.

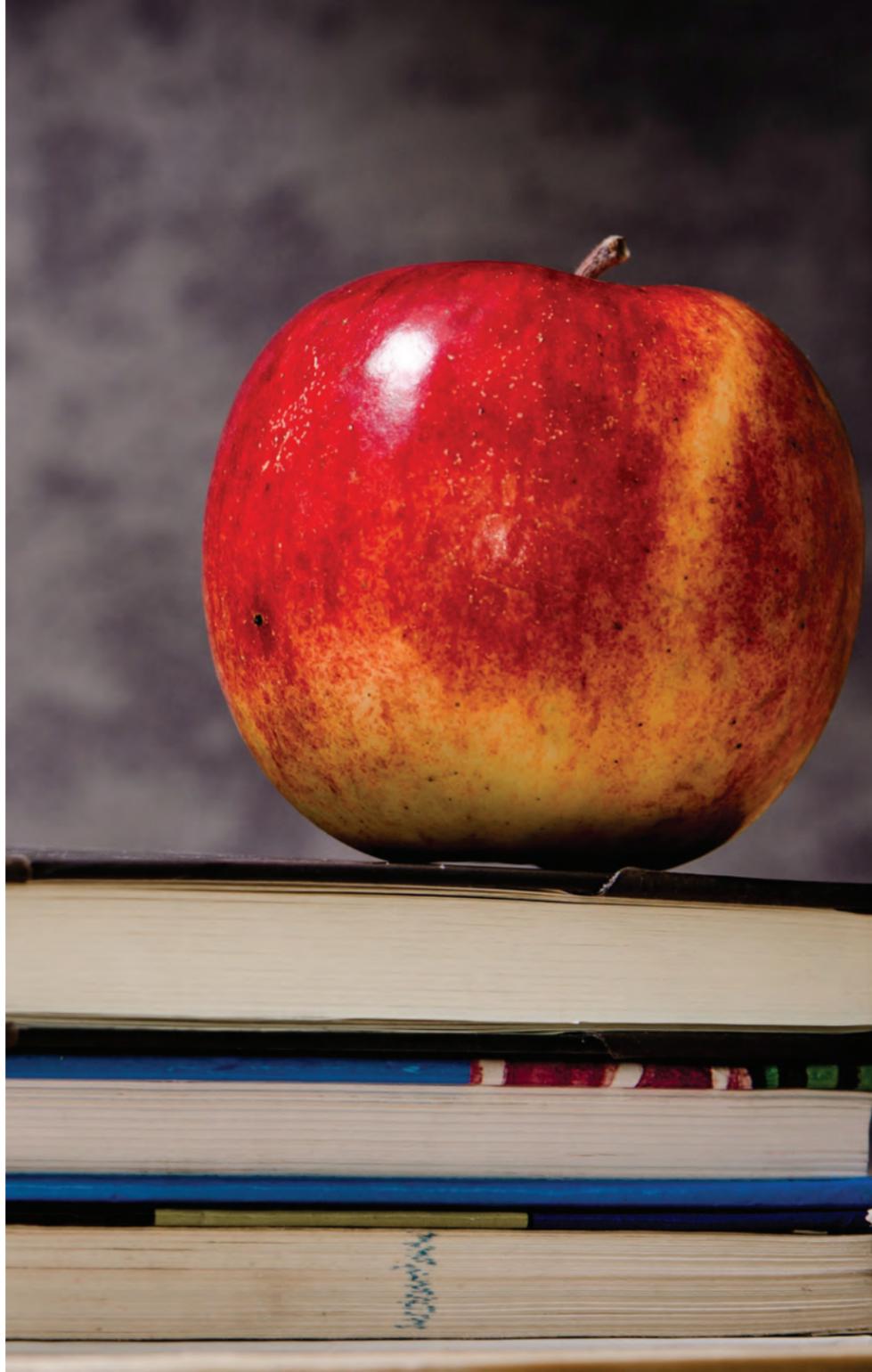
**Trustee** – Trustees are your elected community officials. They are available to help you with the following areas of TDSB: concerns about your community, ideas and suggestions for the board, items on board agendas, board policies under review, board budget, collective bargaining.

## School Council

Roden is fortunate to have an active School Council, made up of parents/guardians of students across the age range of the school, together with staff representatives.

School Council represents the voice of parents within the school, engaging on issues such as budget and staffing, safety, premises improvements and a whole lot besides. School Council also runs a number of fundraising and community-building events throughout the year and hosts a busy Facebook page @RodenSC with lots of news, updates and information.

Please look out for information, come along to an event or a meeting and join us in supporting our fantastic school.



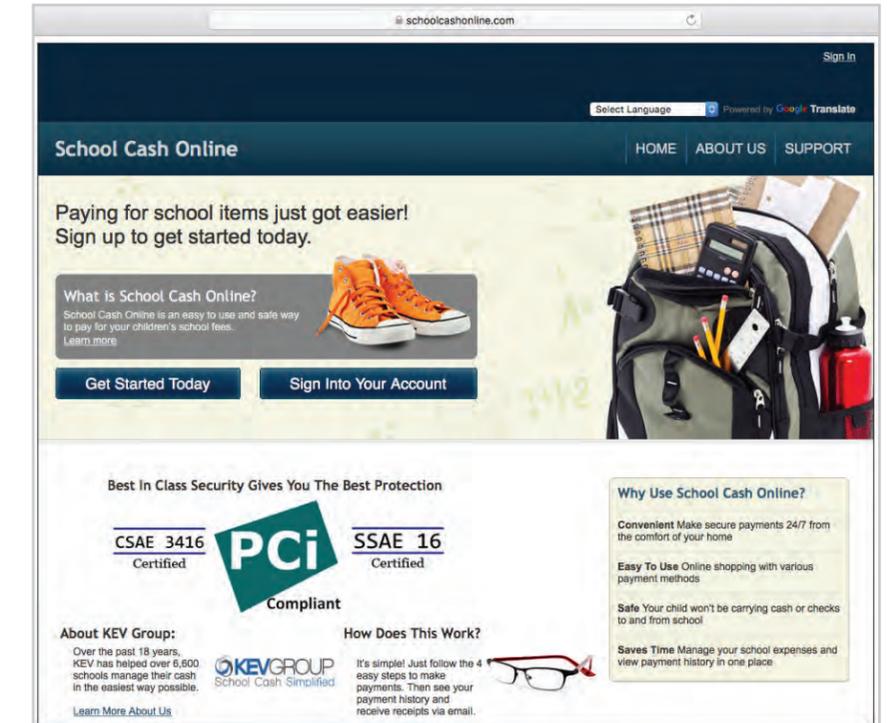
## School Cash Online

School Cash Online is a payment portal used by TDSB schools for things like field trips, events, donations and fundraisers. It even sends out payment email reminders to families. In September, your family will receive information about creating a School Cash Online account which you may log into to pay for various school items. TDSB prefers parents make payments through School Cash online rather than paying by cash to reduce the risk of error or cash going missing.

Although field trip payments are processed through School Cash Online, the online system has not yet been set-up for parents to give their permission for their child to participate. So, for now, paper permission forms are still being used. Field trip permission forms are placed in student backpacks to take home. Please review the form, fill it out and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible but AFTER you make the field trip payment (if required) online through the School Cash Online.

Roden is a diverse school, committed at all levels to improving equity and opportunities for all. If you have financial difficulties in relation to any school events or activities, please speak in confidence to the Principal or school office staff, who will be able to assist.

[www.schoolcashionline.com](http://www.schoolcashionline.com)



## Volunteering

Parents, grandparents, and family members are encouraged and needed to sign up and volunteer for a range of activities at Roden. Please consider how you might be able to help us ensure that the school is the best it can be. Some options for Volunteering include:

- **Joining a class field trip** – teachers will send out requests for volunteers along with the consent forms for the trip. This is a great way to spend some time with your child in a different environment from the usual, and to see how they interact with their teachers and peers.
- **Joining School Council** – If you have an interest in what is happening at the school and are able to spare just a few hours a month, we strongly encourage you to attend School Council meetings and even to consider joining our School Council. This is a small group of parent volunteers who arrange events, organise fundraisers and act as voice for parents on a wide range of school issues. We meet 4-6 times per year and the commitment beyond those meetings is as much or as little as you want it to be. Our first meeting, usually around the end of September, is a great opportunity to come and find out more; you can decide then and there whether to join!
- **Volunteering at Events** – The School and School Council host a range of events throughout the year, some during the school day, others in the evenings or at the weekend. These events can only happen when volunteers step up to organise, plan and run them. Email [chair@roden.ca](mailto:chair@roden.ca) or like us on Facebook to be among the first to hear about everything that's happening in your school.
- **At-home Volunteers** – Even if you never set foot into school, you can help as a volunteer. For example, you might be able to run our website, apply for a grant, organise raffle prizes, design posters or, yes, the stereotype is true, make something for a bake sale. Sign up as above to find out more.
- **In-Kind Donations** – The Breakfast Club and snack program are always looking for in-kind donations of various foodstuffs. There's usually a poster outside the Breakfast Club with more details, but if you find yourself flush with healthy, nut-free items such as bread, eggs, fruit, veggies etc, please consider dropping them off so that they can be used by these programs.



A young child is shown from the side, focused on writing on a worksheet. The child is holding a red pencil with white polka dots. The worksheet has a grid with several rows and columns, and a small drawing of a plant with colorful flowers. The background is slightly blurred, showing other children and a classroom setting.

# MOVING ON UP

After what feels like both forever and no time at all, your child will graduate from Kindergarten and be looking forward to Grade 1!

Roden has a tradition of smooth transitions, aided by a series of trials runs in the Spring of Senior Kindergarten. Students will get to meet their Grade 1 teacher and visit their new classroom upstairs, to have lunch in the Gym with all the older students and to spend a few recess breaks outside in the “Big Kids” yard. Once again, it can be the parents who feel left behind, so this section of our handbook aims to give you a chance to catch up!

## Coming and Going

From Grades 1-8, students will be dropped off and picked up in the main schoolyard. You will be notified of your child’s teacher and area number, together with where to meet on the first day. After that, you can drop your child at the school gates on either Ashdale Avenue or Hiawatha Avenue, any time after supervision begins at 8:45. You can also escort them to their line-up in the schoolyard. When the second bell goes at 8:55, the class teacher will collect the line-up and lead them inside. Pick-ups, at 3:30pm for Grades 1-5, happen outside the main Hiawatha doors, with again the teacher waiting until they see an adult before releasing your child.

If you wish to take your child home for lunch, speak to

the teacher about where to collect them from at 11:45; you can return them to the schoolyard at or before 12:45 to line up in the same place as in the morning.

From Grade 4, with your consent, students are allowed to leave the premises for lunch and at the end of the day without adult supervision. Grade 6-8 students are released at 3pm.

Lateness and Absence continue to be dealt with in the same way as in Kindergarten.

## The Grade School Day

The five day timetable becomes more important as students move up the school and need to remember the correct homework on the correct day, but teachers will help to ease them into it, and students who grow up with this system generally find it easier to follow than their parents.

Family members are also welcome to attend school assemblies (involving Grades 1-8) held in the Gym at 9.30am. Find out from your child if they are involved in an assembly and would like you to watch.



<b>8:45</b>	<b>Supervision begins. Students may be left in the main schoolyard.</b>
<b>8:55</b>	<b>School begins: Students will line up near their class entry to file into school and begin the day. Parents are asked not to accompany students into school if possible, in order to maintain a clear transition into staff care.</b>
<b>9:30 - 10:10</b>	<b>Period 1 / Assembly</b>
<b>10:10 - 10:25</b>	<b>Recess</b>
<b>10:25 - 11:05</b>	<b>Period 2</b>
<b>11:05 - 11:45</b>	<b>Period 3</b>
<b>11:45 - 12:45</b>	<b>Lunch (Two servings)</b>
<b>12:45 - 1:25</b>	<b>Period 4</b>
<b>1:25 - 2:05</b>	<b>Period 5</b>
<b>2:05 - 2:20</b>	<b>Recess (Grades 1-5 only. Middle school students start Period 6)</b>
<b>2:20 - 3:00</b>	<b>Period 6. Middle school release at 3pm</b>
<b>3:00 - 3:30</b>	<b>Homeroom time. Grades 1-5 release at 3:30</b>



## Eating and Drinking

Breakfast Club remains available to Grade school students, and they continue to receive a free healthy snack in the morning (but no longer in the afternoon). All Grade school students eat lunch in the Gym (or outside on warmer days), which means it's a much busier and louder experience than eating in their Kindergarten classroom. Some students take a while to get used to the change and many families collect untouched food and ravenous children at pick-up for a while. After a few weeks, they settle in and enjoy the freedom to eat their dessert before the main course without a lunch supervisor noticing!

You should continue to send your child into school with a water bottle; they may also be asked to leave a second one at school, to use during class time.

Grade 1-8 students can also take advantage of our hot lunch program. Menus are sent out in advance for the following month and orders can be placed through school cash online (or with exact change in the school office). Hot lunches are a great way to provide your child with a healthy, tasty meal and they are very popular with the students too!

From Grade 4, students are allowed to leave the prem-

ises at lunch, provided you have given consent. This is great for their independence, but gives you a lot less oversight of what they eat.

## Extra-Curricular Activities

Students in Grade 1 and above are invited to join a huge range of extra-curricular activities during the school day. What's on offer varies from year to year, but below is a list of some that have been popular recently.

Most clubs are totally free and are hosted by a teacher / parent volunteers during lunch recess. Students are encouraged to commit for the duration in order to have a consistent group and to ensure that those who want to join are able to, so some clubs have a "three strikes" policy for persistent absence.

These clubs are advertised during morning announcements and via posters around school. Council may also alert parents via Facebook, where we become aware of a club, but for the most part you rely on your child to become aware of them and choose to attend.

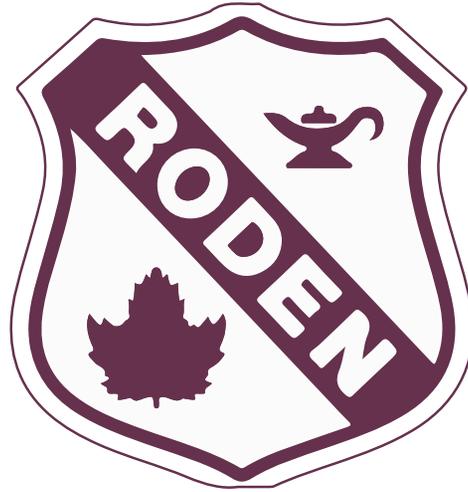
- Chess Club
- Mural Club
- Book-Publishing Club

- Maker Club
- Sports Clubs including basketball, dodgeball and Cross-Country
- Music groups, including ukelele, choir and band.

External providers are sometimes allowed to offer classes or clubs to our students on school premises. These tend to come at an extra cost and will be advertised to parents via a backpack mailout. If your child has a particular interest but you are unable to pay, check with your class teacher or the school office in confidence as some providers offer subsidies.

- Karate Kids
- TDSB Language lessons
- Read-Up Club (This is free; more information is provided elsewhere in this handbook).





Rodan Public School  
151 Hiawatha Road, Toronto ON M4L 2Y1  
416-393-8274 | [chair@rodan.ca](mailto:chair@rodan.ca) | [www.rodan.ca](http://www.rodan.ca)