

Kindergarten Gradual Entry

with qathet School District



What is Kindergarten Gradual Entry?

A research-based approach to assist Kindergarten students in feeling comfortable and confident in their new classroom and school environment.

Gradual Entry is designed to support the best possible transition for children from their home, daycare, or preschool into their Kindergarten classroom by introducing students to explore the new space, people, and routines prior to beginning full day Kindergarten.

What are the benefits of the Kindergarten Gradual Entry Program?

- Personalized entry plans for your child's needs
- Parent and Teacher connections to better understand your child
- Small group support in getting to know routines and expectations
- Better adjustment to a child's new social and emotional school setting
- Children feel safe and comfortable with the space which leads to better independence and academic achievement

When does Gradual Entry start?

Gradual Entry begins the year prior to Kindergarten. In the year before Kindergarten, the school district hosts events for families and children to come to the school and meet staff and get familiar with the school setting. These activities are casual exploration times that have no pressure for children and may be a play date, a school function, an assembly, or a special day just for the pre-K students.

The First Three Days of Kindergarten

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
Holiday	No School for K	Gradual Entry Begins	Gradual Entry	Gradual Entry

Students will have the opportunity to get to know their teachers as well as some classmates, classroom routines and meet the staff from the school. Families can expect to engage with teachers in small groups and their child will attend for shorter designated periods of the day that are increased over the first week. This process will help to build up stamina and give each child the best opportunity for a successful transition.

**The first three days is a valuable time for attendance. If the schedule provided by the school is an issue for your family, please reach out to the school to discuss as soon as possible.*

First Full Week

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
Gradual Entry	Gradual Entry	First Full Day of K	Full Day of K	Full Day of K

Students will have the opportunity to engage with the classroom teacher for a couple short days or half days and may participate in assessment activities to help the teachers know where your child is starting on their learning journey.

If a child could benefit from an extended transition period, the school will connect with the family by the end of that Tuesday and arrange a schedule.

The first full day of attendance will be the Wednesday of that full week.

Tips to Help Prepare Your Child for Kindergarten

- Listen and talk to your child about what Kindergarten will be like.
- Highlight the positives about going to Kindergarten so that your child looks forward to going.
- Review the school picture books on each school's website that shows pictures of common spaces and areas that they will visit.
- Practice independent life skills such as opening lunch containers, putting on shoes, and using the toilet.
- Build social skills through cooperative games, sports, and helping others.
- Attend some local community or school district programs to build relationships with other children who will be starting Kindergarten at the school.

Tips for Navigating Anxious Feelings

- Arrive early and walk around the school/playground to help orient your child to the new space.
- Remain cheerful and let your child know you will be back at the end of the school day.
- Remind them about all the exciting new things that they will learn.
- Review your pick-up plan at the end of the day.
- Make your goodbye cheerful and brief and then stay away once you have left. It is best practice to say goodbye instead of sneaking away.
- Be promptly on time at the end of the class.
- Ask about what they liked in the day.



You will receive a detailed schedule from your designated **school by June 30th.**

Please note that there are opportunities to extend the gradual entry process should your child require additional support.

Q&A

My child has been in full days of daycare or preschool already. Is there the option to have my child start with full days?

Daycare and Kindergarten are different settings with very different expectations. A child may demonstrate independence and comfort attending daycare full-time but show anxious behaviour once they are in a new space with new people and new expectations.

What if we can't make the schedule provided to us for Gradual Entry?

Please reach out to the school principal who can work with your family on a plan of support.

Does a caregiver need to stay with the child the first week? Am I able to?

In the first meeting, families are asked to stay as it is an important step in showing children that school is a safe place to be and allows the parent and teacher time to connect. After the first meeting, please connect with your teacher if you'd like to visit the classroom or stay with your child.

Can my child attend Before and Afterschool care during gradual entry?

Kindergarten children are welcome to attend Before and After School Child Care the first day they attend a full school day. It is recommended that families start the following Monday to provide additional transition time, but children can attend the Wednesday that they start a full day of school. Registration is required for this program.

Is this a provincially mandated approach?

Gradual entry is not provincially mandated, but it is encouraged and most school districts in BC participate in the plan.