

SMUS

JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2023-2024



St. Michaels
University School -
Junior School

820 Victoria Avenue
Victoria, BC
V8S 4N3

Telephone:
(250) 598-3922

Email:
jroffice@smus.ca

Website:
www.smus.ca



Junior Kindergarten

Dear Junior Kindergarten Families:

We are thrilled to welcome you and your child to the SMUS Junior Kindergarten in September. This is an exciting time for the school and for your family. We are honoured to be a part of your child's educational journey.

Our Reggio Emilia philosophy places the emphasis on a child-centred approach to learning that encourages curiosity, creativity, and exploration in a safe and nurturing environment. Over the past year, we have been designing the spaces for our Junior Kindergarten and our teachers have been dedicated to planning a program that will build on your child's interests and passions.

To ease the transition over the next few months, we will provide you with information, opportunities to ask questions, and invite families to community building events to get to know us and each other. Our priority is to help set you and your child up for success as you prepare for the start of Junior Kindergarten.

We look forward to partnering with you as your child begins their SMUS journey.

Warm regards,

Mrs. Becky Anderson, BSc, MEd
Junior School Director
St. Michaels University Junior School





Junior Kindergarten

About Us

At St. Michaels University School, our Mission, our Vision and our Values are core to who we are as a school. They guide us and give purpose to the education we provide.

Our Vision:

To learn, to lead, to serve.

Our Mission:

Our school seeks the excellence in all of us, with passion and compassion. We are a community shaped by the pursuit of truth and goodness, providing outstanding preparation for life.

Our Values:

Respect, Courage, Honesty, Service

Junior Kindergarten Program

Our Reggio-inspired Junior Kindergarten is designed to help children discover their own excellence in an engaging and joyful environment that values each child's capabilities and provides a developmentally appropriate place to grow and learn. Children in Junior Kindergarten are valued as capable, intelligent, competent citizens of the SMUS community.

Through play and exploration, children will build skills and language that will support collaboration, problem solving, and cooperation. Focusing on social-emotional learning, children will form friendships, learn to express themselves, be creative, and develop a growth mindset. These skills will serve them well through the years.

The two groups, 3-year-old and 4-year-old, will each have their own special classrooms and teacher. There will be times in the day when the children are all together and times when there are specific activities for each group.





Junior Kindergarten Family Handbook

Staff Information:

Junior School Director - **Becky Anderson** (becky.anderson@smus.ca)
Junior School Assistant Director - **Nicole Tripp** (nicole.tripp@smus.ca)
Junior Kindergarten Teacher - **Angela Ireland** (angela.ireland@smus.ca)
Junior Kindergarten Teacher - **Jennifer Flaherty** (jennifer.flaherty@smus.ca)
French Teacher - **Stephanie Geehan** (stephanie.geehan@smus.ca)
Assistant to the Director - **Delina Squire** (delina.squire@smus.ca)
Administrative Assistant - **Christine Shewchuk** (christine.shewchuk@smus.ca)
Admissions Associate - **Sarah Lund** (sarah.lund@smus.ca)
Facilities / Custodian - **Dave Ewing** (jroffice@smus.ca)
General Information & Attendance Junior School Office (jroffice@smus.ca)
Office Phone: 250-598-3922

SMUS Website Information:

Press control and click on the title

[SMUS Website](#)

The SMUS website is updated regularly and contains information for families

[Links for Current Parents](#)

SMUS Parent Handbook (online August 2023)

[SMUS Calendar](#)

Data security or SMUS privacy policy questions, please contact
Rita Lord, Chief Financial Officer 250-370-6191 or rita.lord@smus.ca



Junior Kindergarten Family Handbook

Daily Routines:

Daily routines are valued in the Junior Kindergarten program as they provide structure, predictability, and a sense of security for young children.

Arrival/Dismissal:

The pick-up and drop times differ slightly between the Junior Kindergarten program and the Junior School K-5 program. Our goal is to create a calm start to the day for all children.

- ◆ Designated program hours are 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, with extended drop-off and pick-up between 8:15 am and 2:45 pm.
- ◆ Classroom doors open at 8:15 am for drop off and 2:00 pm for pick up.
- ◆ In compliance with our licensing regulations: **a preschool child is not permitted to come to the classroom or leave the classroom by themselves or with a sibling at the school.** They will need to be signed in by a parent or guardian.

Absences:

Absences are reported to the Junior School Office (jroffice@smus.ca / 250-598-3922) and classroom teachers by 8:30 am. Please support your child by ensuring they arrive to school on time. Families will be contacted to confirm unreported absences.

In the case of planned absence, families are asked to notify the school in advance, so that all children are accounted for each day. Families should also notify the school if their child is unable to attend school due to sickness or other unplanned circumstances.

Drop Off:

Drop off occurs between 8:15 - 9:00 am. Parents/guardians can park in the neighbourhood (respecting our neighbours driveways) and bring your child into the school. We will greet you and your child and welcome them to school. There will be activities prepared for the children to allow for a slow and engaging transition from home to school.

At 9:00 am the Junior Kindergarten program begins with a morning meeting and all children must arrive and be in the classroom by this time.

Pick-up Procedures:

The Junior Kindergarten program is concluded at 2:00 pm.

A parent or designated adult must come to the classroom to pick-up their Junior Kindergarten child. Children are not able to leave the school with anyone other than a person authorised by the family. If someone other than the person(s) who are authorized to pick up your child are required, please phone the school and/or email the Office and class teachers, and advise provide the name(s) and information. Please note that the school will not dismiss any student to a guardian under the age of 19 years.

We ask that Junior Kindergarten children are picked up between 2:00 and 2:45 pm. This will allow teachers to connect with parents/guardians at the end of day and begin the transition from school to home.

If families are late to pick-up, children will be kept with their classroom teacher to be supervised until the parent/guardian arrives. If families know they will be late, please inform your child's teacher and/or the Office as soon as possible.



Junior Kindergarten Family Handbook

Rhythm of the Day:

At the start of the school year, families will learn more about daily, weekly, and monthly plans and special events.

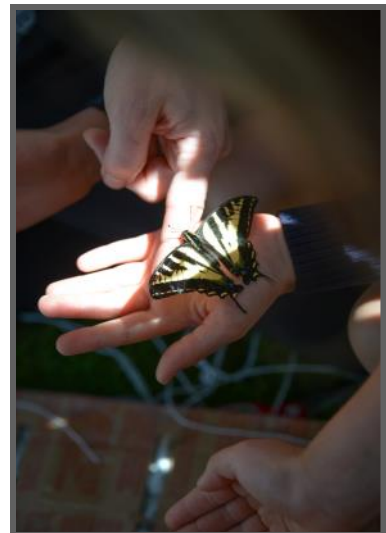
The general rhythm of the day will be:

8:15 - 9:00 am	Coordinated arrival
9:00 am	Open-ended Explorations - Children choose play experiences based on interests and provocations offered in the environment, Atelier experiences, French, may be indoor or outdoor Snack - Light snack and personal responsibility routines Nature Time - Outdoor play, neighbourhood walk, field observations
11:45 am	Lunch
12:15 pm	Rest Time - Storytime, nap, quiet rest, yoga, mindfulness
1:00 pm	Open-ended Explorations - Children choose play experiences based on interests and provocations offered in the environment; Atelier experiences, may be indoor and outdoor
1:45 pm	Closing Circle - Celebrating, Noticing, Gratitude
2:00 - 2:45 pm	Coordinated Pick up

Specialist Teachers:

The children in the Junior Kindergarten will enjoy learning with our Junior School Specialist teachers.

There may be some activities that are embedded into the learning during the week (such as French, drama, and library) and there will be other opportunities for K-5 teachers to come into the Junior Kindergarten as guests (music, PE, STEAM, Art, Outdoor Education).





Junior Kindergarten Family Handbook

Sleep/Rest Routines:

- ◆ All children will be provided with their own non-allergenic sleep mat and fitted sheet.
- ◆ Please provide a small blanket to cater to the sleep needs of your child and one cuddly toy. Storage space is very limited, so please keep items as small as possible.
- ◆ Blankets are sent home at the end of each week to be washed.
- ◆ If students do not nap, they will have a restful and quiet time.

Outdoor Play:

- ◆ The Junior Kindergarten children will not be playing outside at the same time as the rest of the Junior School. This is a licensing requirement, as well as gives our youngest children the opportunity to enjoy the outdoor space for themselves.
- ◆ All students will go outside to play in all weather. A red Muddy Buddy is part of the school uniform. Please send hats, mittens/gloves in the winter months and ensure everything is labeled with the student's name.

Washrooms & Hand Washing:

- ◆ It is required that children are toilet trained. If a child has consistent accidents at school, parents may be called to pick up their child. If consistent accidents continue at school, the child may be asked to stay home until they are fully toilet trained.
- ◆ Students have access to washrooms in each of the classrooms.
- ◆ In the event that the washroom is full, a child will be escorted to the additional washrooms down the hall with a teacher.
- ◆ There are multiple sinks in each classroom. Children will wash their hands frequently throughout the day.
- ◆ Please send to school a spare set of labelled socks and underwear in case they are needed.

Meals/Food/Allergies:

- ◆ Children bring their own healthy snacks for morning and afternoon time as well as lunch. No candy or sweet treats are allowed, including sugary drinks.
- ◆ Lunches from home should be in food containers that are easily and independently opened by the children.
- ◆ We encourage families to consider providing waste free snacks and lunches, favouring reusable food and drink containers, and washable cutlery over plastic bags, juice boxes, and throwaway utensils.
- ◆ SMUS Parent Auxiliary Hot Lunch program is offered on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays with sushi, pizza and soup and sandwiches. More information regarding costs and sign up will be provided in advance of the start of the school year by the Junior School Office.
- ◆ All students MUST bring a labelled water bottle into class they can use throughout the day.
- ◆ The Junior School is an allergy aware school so we ask that families be mindful when bringing in outside food. No nuts are allowed in the Junior School and this includes snack times. If there are other significant allergies that we all need to be aware of, we will communicate with families.



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Illness:

- ◆ If a student is sick or has an infection, they **must** be kept away from school. This is a Public Health Department requirement, which the school strictly enforces.
- ◆ If your child is not able to participate in the program at school because of illness, a phone call home will be made to request pick up.
- ◆ If your child will not be attending school due to illness or vacation, please email the Junior School office (jroffice@smus.ca) and the classroom teacher.

Student Social & Emotional Learning:

- ◆ We seek to make well-informed decisions and make a concerted effort to help the students interact comfortably, happily, safely and productively with one another.
- ◆ We use all the familiar strategies of modelling, redirection and positive reinforcement, having first established a few simple, clearly stated and consistent boundaries promoting safety for the student, for others, and for the environment.
- ◆ We endeavour to be judicious in our intervention, encouraging the students to implement strategies shared with them, and helping them to grow toward self-regulation.
- ◆ We are sensitive to the differing needs of each student and be aware of changes in their lives outside school hours.
- ◆ Since we maintain daily contact with families, any social or emotional concerns are discussed promptly.

Personal Belongings:

- ◆ Toys are not permitted to bring to school (only a small comfort toy which will remain at school for nap/rest time).

Technology Use:

- ◆ There is limited use of screen time in the classrooms. It is only used to enhance the teaching and learning where appropriate.

Family Volunteers:

- ◆ Teachers will be coordinating all family volunteer help within the classroom and will communicate classroom volunteer opportunities once the school year is underway.
- ◆ The SMUS Parent Auxiliary representative and other coordinators will facilitate sign up for volunteers for Hot Lunch duty, JS Library Learning Commons duty and other needs and events.

Emergency/Evacuation Procedures:

- ◆ Fire drills are held once a month for Junior Kindergarten students as is required by licensing. A staff member will sound the alarm and the staff will then follow the emergency evacuation procedure for the centre. Staff members have the students line up quickly and quietly. Each class brings a first aid kit, attendance sheet and will head out to the designated location.
- ◆ Junior Kindergarten will also complete hold and secure drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown procedures throughout the school year with the remainder of the K-5 school.
- ◆ In the case of an emergency, (e.g. heavy snowfall), that prevents the school from opening as scheduled, families should check the school website for the most up-to-date information: www.smus.ca prior to setting out for school.



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Special Events/Celebrations:

- ◆ More information will be communicated in advance of special celebrations and occasions that are celebrated at the Junior School by the Office during the school year. In general, during any special event or celebration, including birthday celebrations, we want to ensure that we are inclusive. If you and your child would like to bring something to school for the rest of the students in the class, we ask that you do NOT bring in any individual gifts. Instead, we ask that families choose a shared healthy snack or a handmade card to give to each student should you wish to do so.
- ◆ **Families are asked to deliver party invitations outside of school hours** - not only to prevent the loss of instructional time, but also to ensure that children who are not invited do not feel left out of celebrations.

Transition From 4 Year Old Program to SMUS Kindergarten:

- ◆ Acceptance into the SMUS Kindergarten Programme is automatic unless there is a specific and/or significant concern. Any concerns will be discussed with families prior to decisions being made and will include both classroom teachers and the Junior School Director.
- ◆ Families will be sent a letter of re-enrollment to inform the Admissions Office of their interest in having their children attend SMUS Kindergarten.

Important Home Information Changes:

- ◆ In the event that a significant change takes place in a child's home life, families must notify the staff as soon as possible. Such information is helpful when a teacher notices a change in a child's behaviour. We accept the family's own judgement concerning the kind of changes which may affect their child's behaviour, sense of security and general well-being.
- ◆ Common causes of distress include caregivers being away from home for an extended period, for any reason; a new person living in the home or providing childcare services; illness of a family member; any hospitalisation, accident or death in the family; change of the family structure; a move; death of a pet, etc.
- ◆ We would like to assure families that all confidences regarding their children/family circumstances are strictly maintained.

Custody and Court Related Orders:

- ◆ If a custody or court order exists within a family, a copy of the order should be given to the Kindergarten staff and Office with instructions therein to be followed at all times. Families need to inform Junior Kindergarten staff and Office of all custody and court order changes. These will remain confidential with the Junior Kindergarten leadership team, Office and relevant teachers.





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Junior Kindergarten Uniform:

The Junior Kindergarten uniform will be available for purchase in June 2023 at the SMUS Campus Shop at the Senior School Campus (3400 Richmond Road, Victoria BC). An email will be sent to parents/guardians when the items are available for purchase.

- ◆ The students are required to wear the SMUS school uniform and **all items** of clothing and footwear **must be labelled**.
- ◆ Students are to keep a pair of indoor runners which will be worn during the day as indoor shoes. Please ensure that your child is able to put shoes on independently. Velcro and plain neutral coloured runners are preferred. A separate pair of shoes/boots will be worn to school to accommodate the weather and outdoor play time.
- ◆ Junior Kindergarten students are required to have a spare set of labelled socks and underwear at all times for any accidents.

Tops:

Royal blue crested polo shirt

Bottoms:

Black sweatpants

Navy pleated culottes (optional)

Grey non-pleated shorts (optional)

Footwear:

Navy knee socks (worn with culottes) **or** grey knee socks (worn with shorts)

Rubber boots (navy, black or red preferred)

Indoor shoes (these stay at school) - runners with non marking soles (child must be able to put on and take off independently)

Outdoor shoes - runners with non marking soles (child must be able to put on and take off independently)

Outerwear:

Outdoor jacket (solid navy, blue or black preferred)

Royal blue crested hoodie

Red Muddy Buddy

Optional Accessories:

Hair adornments in school tartan or in solid colours (navy, black, red or white)

Sun hat/school baseball cap – in school colours

Toques, gloves – in school colours

Sunscreen

- ◆ Families are encouraged to send their children to school with sunscreen already applied and a hat, on applicable days/school term.
- ◆ In order to reapply sunscreen at school, families must provide the sunscreen with their child's name labelled on the container, along with a signed permission slip.



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JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN UNIFORM SHOPPING LIST – 2023 - 2024

Tops	<input type="checkbox"/> Royal blue crested polo shirt
Bottoms	<input type="checkbox"/> Solid black fleece sweatpants <input type="checkbox"/> Navy pleated culottes (optional) <input type="checkbox"/> Grey non-pleated shorts (optional)
Footwear	<input type="checkbox"/> Navy knee socks (worn with culottes) <input type="checkbox"/> Grey knee socks (worn with shorts) <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor runners with non-marking soles in neutral colours, non-flashing. Child must be able to put on and take off shoes independently.
Outerwear	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor jacket (solid navy, blue or black preferred) <input type="checkbox"/> Royal blue crested fleece <input type="checkbox"/> Rubber boots (navy, black or red) <input type="checkbox"/> Red Muddy Buddy
Additional Items Required	<input type="checkbox"/> SMUS mesh gym bag <input type="checkbox"/> Spare socks and underwear
Optional Items	<input type="checkbox"/> Hair adornments in school tartan or in solid colours (navy, red or white) <input type="checkbox"/> Sun hat / school baseball cap - in school colours <input type="checkbox"/> Toques, gloves - in school colours

All items must be labeled with your child's name.

Campus Shop
Online Store

<https://uniforms.smus.ca/>

Used Uniform Sales
contact is

smususeduniforms@gmail.com

Campus Shop contact is
Lynne Franklin
Tel 250-370-6152
email: lynne.franklin@smus.ca

SCHOOL COLOURS:

Navy/black/red
Junior Kindergarten colours:
Royal blue/Navy/black/red



Junior Kindergarten Family Handbook

Yearly Calendar Information:

The following are start and finish times of SMUS as well as a list of the holidays throughout the year. Dates are subject to change. For updated information, please refer to the [SMUS website](#) and communication from the Junior Kindergarten teachers and the Junior School Director.

Gradual Entry Schedule:

To ease the transition into Junior Kindergarten, a gradual entry schedule for the upcoming school year will be as follows:

Date	Time	
Tues Aug 29	9:00 –10:00 am 10:30 - 11:30 am	Two small groups of parent/guardians and children
Wed Aug 30	9:00 - 10:00 am 10:30 - 11:30 am	Two small groups of parent/guardians and children
Thurs Aug 31	9:00 - 11:30 am	Full groups with or without a parent/guardian
Fri Sept 2	9:00 - 11:30 am	Full groups with or without a parent/guardian
Tues Sept 5	9:00 - 11:30 am	Full groups without a parent/guardian
Wed Sept 6	9:00 - 11:30 am	Full groups without a parent/guardian
Thurs Sept 7	9:00 - 11:30 am	Full groups without a parent/guardian
Fri Sept 8	8:15 - 2:00 pm	Regular full day with all children
Mon Sept 11	8:15 - 2:00 pm	Regular full day with all children





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Yearly Calendar Information cont'd:

The following are start and finish times of SMUS as well as a list of the holidays throughout the year. Dates are subject to change. For updated information, please refer to the [SMUS website](#) communication from the Junior Kindergarten teachers and the Junior School Director.



SMUS Holidays and Breaks:

Parent/Guardians can find additional information regarding the 2023 - 2024 SMUS school calendar [here](#)

Holidays and Breaks:

Monday, October 2	School closed for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
Friday, October 6	School closes at end of day for Thanksgiving Holiday
Wednesday, October 11	School reopens
Friday, October 20	School closed for Faculty Professional Development Day
Friday, November 10	Remembrance Day Service - Junior School closes at lunch Junior Kindergarten - full day program
Friday to Tuesday, November 10-14	- School closed for Mid-term break
Wednesday, November 15	School reopens
Thursday, December 14	School closes at end of day for the holidays
Monday, January 8, 2024	School reopens
Thursday, February 15	Junior School closes at lunch for ProD - Junior Kindergarten - full day program
Friday to Monday, February 16-19	- School closed for Mid-term break and Family Day
Tuesday, February 20	School reopens
Thursday, March 14	School closes at end of day for Spring Break and Easter Weekend
Tuesday, April 2	School reopens
Friday, May 17	School closes at end of day for Victoria Day Holiday
Wednesday, May 22	School reopens
June 21	Last day of school for Junior Kindergarten students

