July 5, 2017

Dear Birchland kindergarten families,

We are very excited to be welcoming your child to Birchland Elementary School, and we are pretty sure that many of your children are excited to be starting kindergarten, too. Our hope is the following will provide you with clear information about your child’s start at school in September. Our school office is now closed for the summer but you can reach the principal over the summer by email, at [Birchland@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:Birchland@sd43.bc.ca) . Please email us if your family plans change and your child will be attending another school. The school office reopens on Monday, August 28 and the principal and secretary will be in all of that week if you have questions.

**First Day of School**

The first day of school for 2017-2018 is important but it is for registration confirmation purposes only. We need to know our exact number of kindergarten students in order for the school district to confirm our class organization plans.

If you and your child are unable to attend on Tuesday, Sept. 5, please let us know by completing an [online absence report](https://www2010.sd43.bc.ca/eforms/_layouts/FormServer.aspx?XsnLocation=https://www2010.sd43.bc.ca/eforms/AbsenceReportForm/Forms/template.xsn&SaveLocation=https://www2010.sd43.bc.ca/eforms/AbsenceReportForm&ClientInstalled=true&Source=https://www2010.sd43.bc.ca/eforms/AbsenceReportForm/Forms/AllItems.aspx&DefaultItemOpen=1), by emailing the school at [Birchland@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:Birchland@sd43.bc.ca) or by phoning the school at 604-941-3428, so that we can ensure your child’s space at Birchland.

On Tuesday, September 5th your family will meet in the library to schedule a “Welcome Conversation” with one of the Kindergarten teachers. These will be individual parent and child interviews to get to know you and your child. This is an excellent opportunity for you to tell us about the unique strengths and needs of your child, which helps is to determine the most suitable placement for your child. At this time your child will also be placed temporarily in Group A, B, C, or D. During the first two weeks of school in September, Kindergarten students start in small groups and gradually increase the amount of time they are here to allow them to become more comfortable with school routines.

We hope to have all our classes organized by the end of the first week so that your child will begin working in the classroom and with the teacher that they will be with for this first exciting year of learning at Birchland.

Kindergarten students will begin by attending approximately 90 minutes on Wednesday, September 7 and Thursday, September 8 and then expand to either morning or afternoons. Their first full day of classes will be on Monday, September 18. A more detailed schedule of the Gradual Entry Schedule for kindergarten students at Birchland will be available on the first morning of school, Tuesday, September 5.

During the gradual entry period, please meet in the Library for both drop off and pick up. During Gradual Entry your child needs to bring Indoor shoes – no laces please and clearly labelled with your child’s name on them. School supplies are not needed until teacher’s request them, usually when full time classes begin. Our [school supplies lists](https://www.sd43.bc.ca/school/birchland/Parents/SchoolSupplies/Pages/default.aspx) are located on our website. As of Monday, September 18 all Kindergarten students will need their indoor shoes, a healthy snack and lunch in a child-sized backpack. Regular school hours are 8:55 am – 2:50 pm.

We are looking forward to getting to know your child and then learning with them during their years at Birchland.

Kind regards,

Ms. Bennett

Nancy Bennett

Acting Principal, Birchland Elementary