

# Planning Entry to School for Children with Special Needs

Parents of children with special needs are often nervous about the transition from preschool services to school. Starting kindergarten is a big milestone for all children and for children with special needs it seems like there are more things to think about.

Planning for entry to school starts as much as a year before the start of school and the professionals that are supporting you and your child will have an important role in helping you with the transition. The physiotherapists or speech-language pathologists that see and know your child will be able to provide (with your consent) the school with important information about your child. They can also talk to you about the transition process and what to expect from the school board.

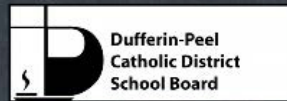
Each school board handles the transition to school differently, but a typical process will include:

- **Registration for kindergarten** – Each school invites parents to register their child between January and March each year, either online or at the local school.
  - It is your job to locate the local school board you plan to have your child attend. You can locate schools using the school finder page of the Ministry of Education website: [School Information Finder](#).
  - Some school boards use an online registration process and will use your postal code to identify the local school.
- **Disclosure of your child's special needs** – At your visit to the school, or online, you will be asked to complete a registration form with details about your child. Most

forms include a place to mention any of your child's special needs.

- The school will only find out about your child's special needs if you disclose the information. Services involved with your child can't share information with the school without your consent.
- **Meeting with staff at school** – You may be asked to a follow up meeting with the School Secretary or Principal to share more information about your child.
- It is a good idea to share information about your child's special needs as soon as possible. This will allow the school to plan a successful start for your child in September.
- Depending on your child's needs further transition meetings may be planned in the spring. Meetings may involve a few people or all the people who are supporting your child.
- **Information nights for kindergarten programs** – Many schools hold information nights for families to learn about the Kindergarten program and meet some of the school staff.
- Children are often invited to these events and it is a great opportunity to let your child see inside the school. Lots of visits to the school and classroom before September will help your child feel more comfortable in the new environment.
- **School board or Community Agency Information Sessions** – Some school boards hold information events for families of children with special needs who are starting school.
- For example, Dufferin –Peel Catholic District School Board has an event planned for January 25.

Dufferin-Peel's Special Education and Learning Services  
Department invites you to an information session for  
Children with Differing Abilities transitioning into  
Kindergarten 2018



Supporting the Transition of  
Children with Differing Abilities  
into Kindergarten 2018



**THURSDAY JANUARY 25, 2018**

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Catholic Education Centre

40 Matheson Blvd West, Mississauga

Snow Date: Monday January 29, 2018

For more information, please contact Laura Conte at 905-890-0708 Ext.24011 or  
laura.conte@dpcdsb.org



*Mark your Calendar*

**Kindergarten Registration 2018**

Monday January 15, 2018

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Wednesday January 17 - 19, 2018 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Snow Date: Tuesday January 16, 2018

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

- The Thames Valley Children Centre in London, Ontario holds a special event for families, [Parents Partnering with Educators](#) that features presentation by the public and Catholic school boards.
- **Visits to kindergarten** – Many schools arrange for individual families to have a visit to the kindergarten classroom at the end of the school year. These visits will help familiarize your child with the school.
- **School Bus orientation** – Some schools or communities have special events where your child can learn about travelling on the bus, getting on and off the bus, and

sitting in a seat. Check with your local school to find out about events in your community. For more information on preparing your child with special needs to use a bus, check the Connectability website page, A successful transition to school starts with good planning. Make sure you find out about any events in your community that will help you and your child prepare for Kindergarten. For more information on starting school, check more parent articles and tip sheets, at [Starting School](#).