

Parent Handbook

2025-2026

**Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study (JICS) Laboratory School
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto**

Contact: School Office 416-934-4517

<https://www.jicsfamily.com> <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/>

School Closure

St George's Campus <https://www.utoronto.ca/campus-status>

Or see Twitter feed on www.JICSfamily.com

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Purpose of this Handbook

With this handbook, we communicate JICS policies and norms to the parent community. Here you will also learn about traditions and new endeavors. The JICS Parent Handbook is a **must-read document for each parent**. Parents, you are required to sign a Questionnaire in your Parent Portal (MySchool) to acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agreed to the information in the Parent Handbook.

School's Purpose

Since the 1920s, the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study, at the University of Toronto, has been a research and education centre focused on the understanding, education, and care of young children.

The JICS Lab School's connection to the University influences everything from our high academic standards to the spirit of inquiry that pervades our classrooms. The University provides our faculty with professional development opportunities, resources, research support and library facilities which make our lively community of professional learners a unique school workplace. The children in our classes benefit from these University connections both directly and indirectly on a daily basis.

The school contributes on many levels to the academic work of the University by linking educational theory and practice for the benefit of:

- ✓ Teacher Candidates in the Master of Arts Child Studies in Education program at OISE & other teacher preparation programs at OISE;
- ✓ Researchers: The JICS Lab School serves as a site for research that is carried out by the academic staff and teacher candidates from the Institute itself, by scholars from other departments at the University of Toronto and other academic institutions, and by the JICS teachers. The JICS teachers regularly present at international educational conferences such as American Educational Research Association (AERA) and are co-authors on academic journal publications;
- ✓ Professional Visitors: The JICS Lab School welcomes thousands of visitors from the Ministry of Education and other ministries, public school boards, national and international researchers, OISE visiting scholars, policy makers, teachers, and teacher-educators;
- ✓ In-service teachers through the publication and dissemination of resources such as “Natural Curiosity: A Resource for Teachers 2nd Edition” and The Robertson Program for Inquiry-based Teaching in Math and Science;
- ✓ Educational policy makers: The JICS Lab School works closely with the Student Achievement Division and the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat of the Ministry of Education and the Ontario Principals’ Association to create professional learning resources.

School's Philosophy & Principles

The JICS Lab School's philosophy rests on three tenets: the "security theory" of Dr. William Blatz, the institute's first director; theories of developmental psychology; and the social constructivist theories of John Dewey. More about our three-part philosophy and our 7 Principles can be found here:

<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/about/philosophy-principles>

School's Commitment to Providing Exemplary Education

Since our first school year in 1925-1926, the JICS Lab School has been committed to the education of young children. Incorporating the developmental, social, and cognitive findings of Child Study with influences from progressive education, the JICS Lab School has long been an exemplar of and an advocate for secure, caring, consistent, inquiry-based learning throughout the elementary years.

- Every student is viewed as an individual, unique in his or her combination of developmental readiness, culture, lifestyle, learning approaches, temperament, and special talents.
- Our program and teaching reflect our belief that students have different needs at different developmental stages. Our approach is both rigorous and flexible, encouraging the construction of knowledge by teaching students to formulate questions, analyze, and solve problems.
- The JICS Lab School is committed to helping each student master important subject matter, learn to think critically and creatively, understand the values and traditions which underlie our global society, and develop a sense of personal and community responsibility.
- The JICS Lab School is a community of students and teachers, responsible to each other. We work in partnership with each parent to support and enhance the learning of each student.
- The JICS Lab School provides an environment that fosters research and professional inquiry. The school makes a significant contribution to the education, human development, and applied psychology work within our university and in the wider educational community in Canada and internationally.
- The JICS Lab School serves a role in preparing pre-service teachers for their professional life through its contributions to the Master of Arts in Child Study and Education (MA CSE) program, providing both practicum experience, mentoring, and course instruction by our teaching staff.

School's Commitment to Diversity

At JICS Lab School, our commitment to diversity is rooted in Dr. Blatz's security theory, which highlights the importance of a secure environment for optimal learning. We believe that students (and adults) thrive when they feel safe to take risks, knowing their ideas will be respected and their contributions valued. Our community celebrates both differences and similarities, embracing the unique perspectives each individual brings to our shared experiences.

We nurture a respectful and inclusive school culture by attentively considering individual experiences, our curriculum, admissions process, and daily interactions. Partnering with families, we aim to broaden children's

views of themselves and others by ensuring they see reflections of their own backgrounds as well as diverse perspectives.

We explicitly teach, practice, and value open-mindedness and awareness, fostering respect for all aspects of diversity, including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, national origin, family composition, sexual orientation, physical/health and psychological differences, and political affiliation. We encourage our students to be active citizens, questioning and countering various forms of prejudice.

Our commitment extends to studying and implementing anti-racist and anti-oppressive approaches. We strive to uncover and address unconscious biases at both individual and systemic levels, engage critically with social injustices, and work towards positive social transformation.

We believe that diversity of ideas is as crucial to knowledge development as biodiversity is to ecosystem success. Understanding an idea involves engaging with surrounding ideas, including contrasting ones, creating a rich environment for intellectual growth.

Throughout the school year, we invite parents to enrich our learning by sharing their identities with us. Parents collaborate with classroom teachers to celebrate and acknowledge events such as Orange Shirt Day/National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Jewish holidays, Black/Islamic/Hindu/Asian Heritage/History Months, Lunar New Year, Diwali, Eid, PRIDE, and other festivities and commemorative days.

The JICS Lab School is committed to equity and inclusion, proactively and reactively addressing all forms of racism and discrimination in developmentally appropriate ways with children. We acknowledge our imperfections and the importance of listening deeply to the voices of our students, parents, and staff to inform our diversity and equity efforts. We invite parents to share their experiences, thoughts, concerns, and suggestions with us.

School's Commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report

The JICS Lab School is committed to listening and responding actively to the [Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) and diverse Indigenous voices across Turtle Island. We are committed to unlearning and relearning the true history of this country alongside Indigenous educators and students. Our work to bring environmental and land-based education into the heart of Canadian educational settings, will always be in the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation. Parents are encouraged to learn more about our commitment to Indigenous Education and the Teaching Bundel that was gifted to the JICS Lab School from The Seven Generations Educational Institute (an Aboriginal-owned and controlled institution co-founded by the ten bands in the Rainy Lake Tribal area in Treaty 3 territory) here: <https://www.jicsfamily.com/truth-and-reconciliation>

Absences

Parents are asked to contact the School Office (416-934-4517) before 8:45am to report the reason for their child's absence. There is 24-hour call answering at the JICS Lab School. If the School Office Administrator has not heard from an absent child's parents, they will reach out to the parents by 9:30am, or as soon as possible, to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing.

Please notify the teacher and principals regarding extended planned absences from school (travel, sabbatical, etc.). While these can be wonderful learning experiences for children, the curriculum taught through the JICS inquiry-approach pedagogy cannot be reproduced for a child who is absent nor are teachers able to provide supplementary learning materials. All tuition payments are non-refundable.

Admissions Policy

The JICS Lab School is committed to diversity in all forms. Three principles underlie ongoing efforts to build a unique learning community and create diverse, gender-balanced, equitable classrooms with broad-based populations representing cultural, economic, academic, and social diversity:

1. The JICS Lab School aims to represent Toronto's diversity, including its indigenous and multi-ethnic dimensions.
2. The JICS Lab School strives for economic diversity by providing limited needs-based financial support.
3. The JICS Lab School classrooms are gender-balanced.

A full copy of the policy is available on our website: <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/admissions/>

Anaphylaxis

The JICS Lab School is a nut-free school. We request that all families abide by this policy.

In packing your child's lunch, please check that all ingredients listed are free of nuts and nut warnings. Classroom teachers will communicate any other anaphylactic allergies that affect your child's class.

It is the responsibility of parents with anaphylactic children to identify their child/ren to the school using the health information Questionnaire in your Parent Portal (MySchool). On this form parents are asked to provide information regarding the child's allergens and history of reactions to the specified triggers. We also request a photo of the child and permission to administer epinephrine in the event of an anaphylactic reaction. The parents are required to send in two epinephrine auto-injectors that will be effective throughout the school year. If your child attends Daycare, please provide another Epi-pen to be stored in the Daycare Office.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

- Parents are required to use the Toronto Public Health COVID-19 Screening for children each morning each morning (<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/9173-Screening-Poster-Child-Care-Day-Camp-School.pdf>) to determine whether their child/ren can come to school.
- Parents are asked to contact the School Office (416-934-4517) before 8:45am to report the reason for their child's absence. There is 24-hour call answering at the JICS Lab School. If the School Office Administrator has not heard from an absent child's parents, they will reach out to the parents by 9:30am or as soon as possible.
- The playground is dedicated to Kindergarten children from 8:35 to 9:30am and Nursery arrival each morning.
- School doors and school yard gate are open at 8:35am.

- Registered Daycare students enter through 45 Walmer Rd front doors beginning at 7:45am. More details will be communicated by the daycare.

Kiss & Drive Drop-off Protocol

There is a staff supervised “Kiss & Drive” drop-off zone at our 45 Walmer Road side from 8:35-8:45am.

- Please treat Walmer Road as northbound only during arrival and dismissal.
- Parents are asked to drive northbound on Walmer to the school and create a queue of vehicles.
- Staff on duty will assist child getting out of the vehicle and walking to their entrance point.
- Parents are asked to remain inside the vehicle and immediately exit the drop-off area once children have entered the school area to ease congestion and maintain flow. Please ensure that your child’s bag/lunch is accessible by your child.
- **PLEASE DO NOT BLOCK THE DRIVEWAY OF OUR NEIGHBOURS TO THE SOUTH OR NORTH OF 45 WALMER ROAD.**
- It is the responsibility of parents to share the Kiss & Drive Protocols with all caregivers dropping off their child/ren.
- Students/families walking/biking will integrate into the staggered flow into the building/yard as instructed by the staff on duty.
- There will be no parking on Walmer Road in front of the school for morning drop-off, 8:35-8:45am. Nursery caregivers may park in this area beginning at 8:45am to escort the child into the Nursery classroom.
- A list of local paid parking can be found here: <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/contact/>

School Entrances

- **Nursery, JK, SK, & GRADE 1** enter SCHOOL YARD GATE
- **GRADES 2 to 6** enter 45 WALMER RD FRONT DOORS

Morning Arrival Time: JK to Grade 6

Arrival is from 8:35-8:45am. Students in Grades 1 to 6 will travel directly into the school to their classroom for supervised quiet activity time until the start of the school day at 8:45am.

Morning Arrival Time: Nursery

Arrival is from 8:45-9:00am. Parents and caregivers of Nursery students are asked to enter the school yard and escort their child to the south schoolyard entrance to the school into the Nursery classroom.

Late Arrival (JK to Grade 6)

Children who arrive late (after 8:45am), must be brought to the reception at 45 Walmer Road as all other entrances will be locked at 8:45am. The receptionist will provide an “I’m happy to have arrived!” slip to the child. Our office will update the class register for your child from “absent” to “late.”

The beginning of each school day is an important time for your child. There is strong evidence of academic, social, and emotional benefits for those students who are in the classroom as the day begins. Please assist us by maintaining *your efforts for your child to arrive in a safe and timely manner to be ready for the start of the school day.*

Dismissal Procedures

- If children need to be picked up from school for an appointment during the day, parents wait in reception for the child/ren to be brought to reception.

JK to Grade 6

Daily Dismissal Time: 3:30pm

- Grades 1 to 6 students will exit through the School Yard Gate. We ask that parents/caregivers wait outside the school gate.
- There will be staff members on duty at the gate.
- JK and SK children are in the school yard for their final recess at 2:45pm. Pick up for kindergarten students may occur anytime during this recess, but we ask that all kindergarten children be collected by 3:25pm, prior to older students being dismissed into the yard at 3:30. This eases congestion and allows for a smoother transition for all involved.
- Any students NOT picked-up by 3:30pm will be brought to reception and their parents contacted.
- For the safety and wellbeing of the child, students who have not been picked up by 3:40pm will be taken to the Daycare for after school care, where they will be supervised, receive a snack, and will join their peers in after school activities until they are picked up. Daycare fees will apply. Parents can pick up children directly from the Daycare by coming to the front door of 45 Walmer and calling 647-518-6887. The occasional flex care rate for Daycare is \$35/day.
- Grade 4 to 6 children: Although our preference is for children to be picked up by a caregiver, we recognize that children benefit from opportunities to develop independence and make sound judgements. We also recognize the challenge for adults who are driving to find a legal parking spot at that time of day. If you would like for your child/ren (Grades 4 to 6 only) to leave school property unaccompanied by an adult, please sign the Questionnaire in your Parent Portal (MySchool). The teacher on duty will have a list of students who have parental permission to leave school property at dismissal.
- A daycare staff member will be outside to collect any children registered for daycare who may have forgotten to go directly to the daycare. Kindergarten children are escorted to the daycare.
- The yard must be clear by 3:30pm so that the Daycare can move forward with licensed programming.

JK to Grade 6 (Wednesdays) Children not attending Wednesday Afternoon Program

Dismissal times: Details for 2025-2026 school year, coming soon.

Dismissal Procedure: Nursery

The Nursery Team will communicate dismissal location and procedures to parents directly.

Parking & Driving

- There is no onsite parking available at JICS Lab School and the public streets around the building are largely no parking zones. A list of public parking lots near the school can be found on the [visitor's page](#) of our website.
- The front of the school at 45 Walmer Rd is reserved for a Kiss and Drive program each morning (8:35-8:45am) to ensure the safety of all children arriving at school. This space is for cars that are moving through in order to drop children off to JICS staff members who are outside on the sidewalk receiving students and taking them to the supervised playground. Parents cannot leave their cars in the Kiss and Drive zone as it blocks all waiting vehicles from approaching the school and creates an unsafe drop off zone.
- All families are requested to use Walmer Road as a one-way street heading north. This eases congestion and blockages that often occur at peak times and improves safety for our children.
- **PLEASE DO NOT BLOCK THE DRIVEWAY OF OUR NEIGHBOURS TO THE SOUTH OR NORTH OF 45 WALMER ROAD.**
- It is the responsibility of parents to share the Kiss & Drive Protocols with all caregivers dropping off their child/ren.
- If you are picking up your child before dismissal, please enter the front doors of 45 Walmer Rd and wait in the reception area until your child is brought to you.
- If you are parking to attend a Parent Breakfast, school event, meeting, we encourage you to use legal street parking or public parking lots.

Assessment

In our inquiry-based classrooms, the teacher assesses student progress on a continuous basis throughout the school year, collecting and using a wide range of information to provide an informed and comprehensive picture of the student's learning. Enabling students to express their understanding in differentiated ways is crucial for many reasons, but especially for the following:

- The teachers' ability to differentiate instruction and assessment as a means of helping students understand how they can improve is closely related to the feelings that students have about themselves as learners specifically, and about learning in general (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010a).
- "Using multiple sources of evidence increases the reliability and validity of the evaluation of student learning" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010a).

Some examples of varied and authentic assessment sources include but are not limited to: student questions; inquiry lab books; portfolios; visual art, and anecdotal observations.

Behaviour Code

The JICS Lab School Behaviour Code can be found in our JICSfamily website for easy reference:

<https://www.jicsfamily.com/behaviour-code>

It is our expectation that all members of the school community (students, teachers, staff, and parents) show respect and kindness in all interactions.

We highly recommend that all parents view the “School-Home Collaboration – Responding to (mis)behaviour or concerns from your child” Parent Education Session recorded on May 2023 to learn about the JICS practices regarding addressing 'mis' behaviour, strategies used to support children, and the school’s purpose and hopes when communicating about child's behaviour to parents: <https://www.jicsfamily.com/parent-ed>

Birthday Policy

JICS Lab School has a tradition to celebrate each child’s birthday. Considering the various safety, equity, emotional, and other birthday issues, **birthday celebrations do not include food**. We want to assure you that we will celebrate each child in a special way and teachers will establish and let you know the details of their plans for each grade. This “no-food-from-home” birthday policy does not change the pleasure we take in acknowledging your child’s special day.

JICS Lab School has the following practice pertaining to the celebration of birthdays: in keeping with our philosophy of nurturing kindness, we encourage care in handling all children’s feelings about birthday party inclusion. Please do not feel that you and your child need to invite the whole class. **However, if only some children are being invited to a birthday party, we ask families to mail or email invitations from home and to discuss appropriate non-exclusion conversations amongst peers.** If all students in the class are invited, invitations for a birthday party may be distributed at school.

As well, we ask that students are not collected as a group for birthday parties from the school yard (dismissal), unless everyone in the class is invited. Thank you for helping us to maintain the social and emotional security of all our students.

Please avoid planning birthday parties that interrupt the Wednesday Afternoon Program.

Calendar

First day of school and daycare is Tuesday, September 2, 2025.

The Nursery children’s entry will be staggered over a few days beginning on September 2. Children continue to attend school *every day* after their start date. The Nursery teacher will notify you of your start date in the summer.

To view JICS Lab School Monthly Calendar for all the school events and the Lab School Holidays:
<https://www.jicsfamily.com/school-calendar>

Follow instructions at the bottom of this page to add the calendar events to your computer or phone.

Descriptions of Annual JICS Family Events: <https://www.jicsfamily.com/annualfamilyevents>

Canadian Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)

In addition to the ongoing formative and summative assessments used by teachers (see Assessment Section of Parent Handbook), the JICS Lab School participates in the Canadian Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) in Grades 1 to 6. This is a series of standardized, normed tests in Mathematics and Language Art completed for research purposes.

Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care (CWELCC)

Ontario signed the CWELCC agreement on March 28, 2022 with the Government of Canada. The JICS Lab School is in support of the new subsidy that will provide more accessible childcare for Ontario families at large. At JICS, we have made the decision to opt out of the CWELCC for the time being regarding our licensed Nursery Program. The JICS Nursery is the entry year for the school, and it is our expectation that children who enter Nursery will be able to transition to JK and to the grades beyond, ultimately graduating from the school in Grade 6. We are not yet able to offer tuition subsidies in the kindergarten and primary grades. As a lab school, we take great pride in the quality of our staffing - with a qualified OCT teacher, 2 ECE teachers, and an assistant in the Nursery (beyond the minimum licensing staffing requirements). Our independence and autonomy allow us to provide exemplary programming enriched with quality resources.

Class Breakfasts

Section is being revised for 2025-2026 school year. Update expected August 2025.

Communication between School and Parents

The JICS Lab School feels that open communication with parents is important for the welfare of the child. Direct communication between parents and the school is achieved in several ways.

- Correspondence from the school office is sent electronically. We gather email addresses from each family for this purpose.
- A weekly information email "POST" with important information is sent to parents (every Thursday) and archived in the [JICSFamily.com](https://www.jicsfamily.com) website. You will receive an email notice through the school database of new postings.
- The JICS Family website, dedicated to current families, is a complete gathering of information about the Lab School. Please visit our site at: www.jicsfamily.com
- Early in the Fall, Curriculum Night is held to explain the class curriculum to parents. This is one of the most important forms of communication and all parents are expected to attend.
- Parent Teacher Interviews take place in the Fall and Spring Terms.
- Parents or teachers can request interviews at any time throughout the school year.
- Report cards are prepared by the child's teachers twice a year. A First Term Report is available online to download in December, and a Final Report is available online to download in late June.

- Parents' thoughts and suggestions are always welcomed by the teachers and the principal.
- Parents can communicate with teachers and administration in person, by phone, or email. To ensure professional and organized communication, we kindly ask that texting not be used as a method of contact between parents and teachers/staff.
- The Parents' Association provides a forum for information and discussion.
- Regular school newsletters and letters from the principal and teachers extend our communications with parents.

Communication between Parents (chat rooms/email)

At JICS, we work hard to create a culture of mutual respect and open communication.

We understand that many parent cohorts use WhatsApp and similar platforms to communicate. It is important to adhere to our Behaviour Code Expectation: all members of the school community should show respect and kindness in all interactions.

Please remember that while these platforms can be helpful, they can also spread misinformation, create anxiety, and harm the sense of community we work hard to foster and sustain. In some cases, they may even unintentionally damage the reputations of staff members and can lead to divisiveness among parents. If parents have a concern, they should communicate directly with the level closest to the event or situation to achieve resolution. The resolution of a concern should proceed from communicating with the Teacher to communicating with the Principal/s as needed. For Parent Rep communication, we strongly encourage the use of email for sharing information to ensure clear, respectful, and productive communication.

Please refer to the “Parent Concern Process” section for further information regarding how to communicate questions or concerns about the school.

Concussion Protocols

Research indicates that a concussion can have a significant impact on a student’s cognitive and physical abilities and overall well-being. The JICS Lab School takes all injuries very seriously and follows the Ministry of Education’s revised Policy/Program Memorandum No. 158 (2019): [School Board Policies on Concussion](#). We are committed to developing awareness on the seriousness of concussions, concussion prevention, identification, monitoring, and management by sharing information and following protocols with students, parents/guardians, teachers, and staff. The Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport developed by Parachute and its Concussion Expert Advisory Committee can be viewed [here](#).

Contact Information

The JICS Lab School

Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School
45 Walmer Road
Toronto, ON M5R 2X2
Tel: 416-934-4517

Faculty and Staff

Here is the link to the JICS Lab School Faculty and Staff email addresses:

<https://www.jicsfamily.com/welcome-and-staff>

Please note:

- All teachers can be contacted by calling the school office: 416-934-4517 and leaving a message.
- Email to teachers is answered in a timely way but is not a reliable contact for same-day response.

Daycare

Anne Marie Bartoli, director

416-934-4522

Daycare Cell: 647-518-6887

The Parents' Association and Class Reps

The JICS Parents' Association is a volunteer, not-for-profit organization managed by the PA's elected executive, along with the Principal and Vice Principal. Since 1968, the PA has had charitable status that allows it to issue charitable receipts for donations used to advance its purposes. The purpose of the PA is to provide educational resources and programs that advance the education of the students, and to build, foster, and support the JICS parent community. The PA promotes open and transparent parent-school communications; stimulates and organize parent engagement and volunteerism; and facilitates fundraising and events.

Here is the link to the Parents' Association Executive and the Class Reps:

<https://www.jicsfamily.com/paexecandclassreps>

Daycare

A licensed Daycare program is available to all JICS students who are registered (**drop-ins cannot be accepted**). The Daycare opens at 7:45 am and closes at 6:00 pm. To register, please visit the [Daycare webpage](#). The Daycare Supervisor, Anne Marie Bartoli, can be reached at 416-934-4522. The Daycare cell is 647-518-6887.

Dismissal Procedure

Please see [Arrival & Dismissal](#) Procedures section of Parent Handbook

Diversity

Please see School's Commitment to Diversity section of Parent Handbook

Emergency Communication

In the event of a school wide emergency, we will communicate information immediately via email and text the PA Exec and Parent Reps.

Should parents be concerned about adverse weather conditions and/or school closure, information can be found on the University of Toronto Campus Status webpage (St. George Campus) <https://www.utoronto.ca/campus-status> or on our JICS Twitter feed which can be found on the right side of our website: http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/ics/Laboratory_School/index.html.

The JICS Lab School remains open if the University of Toronto is open.

Employing JICS Staff

Lab School staff, including Daycare staff members, do not work for current JICS families outside the school and the school day for reasons of conflict of commitment/interest.

Extracurricular Activities – School Clubs, Sports Teams

Please see <https://www.jicsfamily.com/clubs> for a list of all the great extracurricular opportunities for our students. Every child who is interested in joining a club or sports team can fully participate.

Clubs for students in Grades 4 to 6 are created based on students' interests and they are designed to be developmentally appropriate.

Sports teams typically begin in Grade 3. JICS participates in TDSB and independent school sports competitions. Competitive sports activities with other schools begin in Grade 5.

Extra curriculars are a worthwhile endeavor for students to explore as they have many benefits, both short and long term.

Participating in any extracurricular activity offers a variety of positive experiences with different peer groups. They provide children the opportunity to socialize outside of the school day and about a range of topics that are of interest to them. Children also have the chance to develop or enhance their leadership skills. They can build lasting bonds with other children over shared interests.

Extra curriculars also help with self-confidence and positive attitudes. When children find a passion or hobby and can take ownership of an activity, they feel successful, their confidence soars, they become surer of themselves, and can build stronger connections with their peers through positive play. Extra curriculars also help with creating lasting healthy habits that can benefit the mental and physical health of children. Learning ways of staying active, expressing ideas in a large group, working together with peers, eating well when on the go, and other things of this nature will all impact their decisions for themselves well into their future.

Lastly, participating in extra curriculars can expose children to different ideas and opinions and ways of seeing the world. Nurturing their curiosity and sense of wonder, or empathy and care for others through volunteer work can help school-aged children make meaningful connections with their communities and individuals or landscapes within it.

Field Trips

Field trips are encouraged at JICS. Funding for class trips (excluding overnight junior grade trips) is included in the tuition. Families are required to complete online a “Field Trip Permission Form” form each year. This permission form is an umbrella permission – parents do not sign permission forms for each trip. For some day trips and all overnight trips, parents will receive medical forms and medical power of attorney forms to sign as required by the trip provider.

Extracurricular trips (such as sporting events) require separate parental consent forms to be signed. The organizing teacher will send these to parents.

There are overnight field trips that occur annually in the Junior Grades.

Class field trips and in-class workshops are chosen for their relevance to curriculum needs, their quality, and the developmental fit with the class. Field trip choices are not shaped by parents’ wishes or by parental offers to pay for tickets. Trips to watch classmates perform are not usually seen as viable because of the need for curriculum links. Please check with Richard if you have any questions.

Fire Drills & Lock Down Practice

Regular fire drills are conducted throughout the year. Please keep all exits and halls free of strollers, bicycles, and rollerblades. Strollers and bikes may be left in the front yard at the bike stands. Children need to always wear shoes in school for safety reasons. All staff are trained in a standby procedure in case of an emergency requiring lock down security.

Food

Food is an important part of some celebrations including class breakfasts and cultural/religious events. We have students who have life-threatening food allergies. It is IMPERATIVE that all food brought to school has been pre-approved by the classroom teacher and/or principals and that a list of ingredients is provided for package food, baked/homemade food.

Birthday celebrations

We have a ‘no-food’ policy for birthday celebrations at JICS.

Lunch

We request that all families provide a nutritious, balanced, litter-less lunch for their children. The Canada Food Guide suggests that everyone has plenty of vegetables and fruits, eats protein-rich foods, chooses whole grain foods, and makes water their drink of choice. The [Canada Food Guide](https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/) is available to view at: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/> Grade 1 – 6 students eat in the lunchroom in two lunch periods. Kindergarten children eat in their classroom each day. Nursery children who remain in daycare for the afternoon, eat in their classroom.

The Parents' Association have selected The Lunch Mom (TLM) to be the provider of a voluntary hot lunch program at JICS. These lunches are offered each day. Information regarding registration and payment can be found at <https://www.thelunchmom.com>

Each student is strongly encouraged to bring their own water bottle that is labeled, kept with them during the day, and not shared.

Microwave use is not permitted.

Snacks

Nursery, JK, and SK participate in a healthy and nutritious nut-free snack program, administered by the child's teacher every morning. For Grades 1 to 6, students are invited to bring a healthy, **nut-free**, snack from home or order from The Lunch Mom <https://www.thelunchmom.com>

In addition, we avoid sweet treats in all classrooms, preferring wholesome snacks whenever possible. Please be in touch with classroom teachers if you have any questions.

We prefer that students do not eat candy while at school. However, individual portions of treats may be packed in student lunches or snacks from home. Students are not permitted to share candy, treats, or gum with others.

The school provides refreshing treats that are nut-free on the Terry Fox Run, Games Day, and Grade 6 Graduation Day.

"Green" Events Guidelines

The JICS Lab School is committed to participating in sustainable and environmentally conscious practices. The Green Events Guidelines were created to support staff and parents as they plan events that include serving food and drinks. The Green Event Guidelines is a resource to be used for all events and gatherings to ensure we are conscious and thoughtful about the impact we are having on the environment. Together, we aim to reduce the usage of single-use items and appropriately manage our waste following the lead of the University of Toronto's four-stream system: plastics, paper, garbage, and compost.

Guidelines for Greener Events, Meetings, Class Breakfasts, and School-wide Functions with Food

- Strive for a low waste event: provide reusables, and limit single-use items.
- Encourage attendees to bring reusable bottles/mugs.
- Serve beverages in re-fillable jugs. (Remember: U of T is a bottled water free campus!)
- Provide specific waste sorting instructions at the event via signage, presentation slide, or announcement.
- Ensure recycling and waste bins are available and clearly labeled. Request additional bins if necessary, by submitting a service order.
- Donate leftovers or bring empty containers for take-away to avoid food waste.

Things to Consider:

- There is a cart to help transfer items from the staff lounge or the server to where you are hosting your event.
- For class breakfasts:

- Please arrange for 2 or 3 parents to stay and help clean up the classroom, as well as take the cart of dirty dishes to the kitchen, then load and start the dishwasher.
- Please remember to return later to unload the dishwasher and put all the dishware away.
- Leftovers can be placed in the kitchen and labeled with the date. Please ask the receptionist to send out a whole-school email.

Message to Class Reps

As a school, we are moving towards sustainable practices when hosting events that involve food. For several years, the school has participated in the Ontario EcoSchools program in which we document our steps towards reducing our ecological impact and building an environmentally responsible school community. We achieved a Gold standing but there is much more we can be doing!

Moving forward, for class breakfasts, we would appreciate your support to implement the following sustainable practices.

The following reusable items are available for class breakfasts in the school servery:

- *Plates*
- *Cutlery and serving spoons*
- *Mugs*
- *1 glass pitcher*
- *Large white-sugar container*
- *Coffee and hot water percolators are available at the school.*
- *Please purchase milk and creamer cartons vs. single use coffee creamers.*

Gifts/Cards for Teachers & Staff

It is important to note that there is no expectation of gift-giving for teachers or staff. We must be mindful and respectful of the diverse attitudes toward gifting and the varying economic statuses within our community at JICS. Parents teaching children how to create a thank you card is a valuable lesson that will benefit them throughout their lives. A list of teachers (classroom and specialty) and staff who work with your child can be found on the JICSfamily website: <https://www.jicsfamily.com/welcome-and-staff>. You might want to share the webpage with your child and ask them to identify whom they would like to thank.

All teachers appreciate feeling valued by receiving feedback from parents regarding the exemplary teaching and care provided to the children. There are several times during the year—such as overnight trips, Winter Holidays, and Year-End—when parents may wish to particularly express their gratitude. While it can be convenient for parents to pool together a suggested amount to offer a gift from the group, teachers particularly appreciate cards and/or gifts from individual children that are handmade or personal, as this allows them to thank the students directly. Any request for parents to contribute to a group gift must remain optional and be handled with discretion, respecting the diverse financial circumstances within our community and ensuring that all families feel comfortable and included.

Gifts to teacher-candidates are not necessary as the class often creates a keepsake of their experience together.

The Parents' Association Exec organizes Teacher Appreciation events (coffee, treat days, lunches) throughout the school year on behalf of the JICS Parents. These events are advertised in the Thursday POST.

Health and Safety Measures

A. Guidelines

- The health, safety, and well-being of students, faculty, staff, and families are our highest priority.
- Government Pandemic Emergency Orders, Ministries of Health, UofT, and education guidelines are strictly followed.
- The JICS Lab School provides exemplary, research-based and research-informing instruction and teaching. We believe that in-person school learning, direct connection with classmates, and strong relationships with teachers best support the cognitive and social/emotional development and wellbeing of students. We know that remote (online) learning is not an acceptable alternative to in-person learning.
- There is continual analysis of our approaches and Sick Kids recommendations to help determine best practices for the school year.
- We have ongoing identification and mitigation of potential risks as much as possible, while acknowledging the limitations of attempting to create a perfectly safe and zero risk environment.

The Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Lab School recognizes that no human interactions are without risks, whether it is the cold and flu season, chicken pox, or other childhood diseases that are commonly spread in school settings. These risks are magnified in a pandemic, but the principles remain the same: stay home if ill and maintain strong hand hygiene and clean environments. Our health and safety protocols have taken into account as many situations and risks as possible, but we cannot entirely prevent an infection, including flu, colds, and respiratory viruses. We are committed to creating a clean and safe space for our students and our staff, and to minimizing the risk of infection as much as possible. We also recognize that a child's emotional wellbeing is equally important for their development as their physical health. To that end, we will continuously evaluate risks while supporting our children's emotional needs for social interactions and connection.

B. Vaccination

We have a heightened responsibility to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect our students, staff, and their families. Due to the unique nature of in-person learning which necessitates close contact with other students and staff members, our policy is that all students and School staff are vaccinated with certain exemptions.

C. Remote Learning

Remote learning is when all the students in a grade and their teachers will need to work from home. If this is a reality we are required to face, we have the experience and resources to address that challenge. The JICS Lab School faculty know that remote (online) learning is not an acceptable alternative to in-person learning. We join our health care colleagues in advocating for children to be in school, as they need the supports, relationships, comfort, care, and safety that schools provide. Remote learning is developmentally inappropriate for children.

D. Monitoring of Student Health at School

During the school day, should a student exhibit any symptoms of illness, they will be taken to the office to be assessed. If the student is deemed unwell or symptomatic by the administrative staff, a parent or emergency contact will be notified to pick up the child ASAP.

F. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- The JICS classrooms are high-density indoor spaces where physical distancing is not possible.
- We ask everyone to respect each other's PPE decisions, comfort levels, and health needs. Mandatory mask requirements may be reinstated at short notice in the event public health guidance or recommendations change.

G. Cleaning and Sanitization

- Hand sanitizer stations are installed throughout the school.
- Routine sanitizing of facilities and high touch surfaces takes place throughout the day.
- Daily professional deep cleaning takes place at the end of day.

H. Air Quality

Wall-mounted AERA MAX Professional air purifiers are located in every classroom and specialty class. These four-stage "true HEPA filtration system" air purifiers remove 99.99% of coronavirus. This is in addition to the existing MERV-13 filtration ventilation in renovated classrooms.

Homework Policy

Research shows that much of what is assigned as homework in elementary years is counter-productive and may harm young students' attitudes towards learning (Dr. Harris Cooper, Duke University). Considering this research, and our own experience and philosophy as an educational institute exploring best practice, we take a developmental approach to homework.

For all our children, this is what we value most for their time outside of school:

- Fresh air, sunshine, and time in nature
- Play
- Exercise
- Creative activities
- Fun time with friends
- Quiet time alone
- Quality family time
- Reading and sharing stories together
- Getting a good night's sleep

Across all the grades, there will be requests from teachers to connect learning between home and school. These "homework" requests are used to foster positive attitudes and engagement with learning, provide a link between school learning and home learning, and in our junior grades, allow for the growth of developmentally appropriate time management skills.

In Early Years' Focus and Primary Grades (Nursery to Gr 3), these request for "homework" may include:

- Being read to and reading
- Ways to engage families in school-based learning
- Ways to promote parental awareness of the class focus

In our Junior Grades (Gr 4 to 6), we build upon our expectations of children's time outside of school in these developmentally appropriate ways. Homework in these grades may include a focus on:

- Reading, Math, Literacy, and communication skills
- Organization and thinking skills
- Spelling
- Social Sciences
- Current affairs
- Presentations of homework to teachers and peers during class time, adding to the collaborative knowledge building of the classroom community

Homework at JICS is **not**:

- Designed to take up all of the child's out of school time
- Designed to teach unfamiliar curriculum concepts
- Cause stress or discord at home
- A replacement for quality family time
- The same for all learners

If parents are looking for other ways to support their children's learning outside of school, we offer these suggestions:

- playing games together to consolidate learning
- cooking together, crafting, and creating
- playing music together
- reading and sharing a love of stories
- getting outside in nature together

Homework Tips for Parents in Junior Grades:

- When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers. Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Too much help may teach your child that when the going gets rough, someone will do the work for them. Remember that growing independence is one goal of homework.
- If your child finds the assigned independent work too challenging, rather than taking the responsibility of teaching your child yourself, let the teacher know the next day so that the instructions may be clarified, or the homework modified. Too much parent involvement can prevent homework from having positive effects. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong learning skills.
- After spending what you think is a reasonable amount of time on homework, call it a night. A note to the teacher is handed in explaining how much time was spent would be helpful. Children should not work on homework past (or near!) their bedtime.

- Be positive about homework. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
- Help your child with time management. Help your child to do homework well before bedtime. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with classmates.
- Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework. Help your child think about what works best for their concentration and focus.
- When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, please find the time to do this. This shows your child that the school and home are a team.
- Help your child figure out what is 'hard' homework and what is 'easy' homework. This is helpful for time management at home and for teachers to understand each child's learning style and needs.
- Relate homework to life experiences. Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do in your life. If your child is reading, you can too.
- Stay informed. Talk with your child's teacher. Make sure you know the purpose of homework and what your child's teacher's expectations are.

Adapted from the [Canadian Council on Learning](#) – *Lessons in Learning: Parents' Role in their Children's Homework*.

Illness Policy

If your child is feeling unwell, we kindly ask that they remain at home until they are fully recovered and well enough to participate in all school activities. This helps us maintain a healthy school environment for all students and staff.

Parents/guardians are asked to notify the School Office of any absence due to illness by **8:45 a.m.** by calling **416-934-4517**. The JICS Lab School has 24-hour voicemail service available for your convenience. If the School Office Administrator has not heard from an absent child's parents, they will reach out to the parents by 9:30am, or as soon as possible, to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing.

When should my child stay home?

Please keep your child at home if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Fever (must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning)
- Vomiting or diarrhea (should be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning)
- Persistent cough or difficulty breathing
- Rash of unknown cause
- Red or irritated eyes with discharge

- Sore throat with fever or difficulty swallowing
- Any other symptoms that prevent your child from fully participating in school activities

If your child is diagnosed with a communicable illness (e.g., strep throat, pink eye, COVID-19, influenza), please inform the School Office and follow your healthcare provider's guidance regarding the appropriate return date.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our school community safe and healthy.

Lice

A professional lice check expert visits the school periodically to do a school-wide lice check. The school notifies parents of children if evidence of head lice has been found so that children can be picked up. Before returning to class, the children must be free of nits and must report to the school office to ensure their status. All parents are encouraged to keep a continual check at home and are required to report any case of lice or nits to the school office.

The JICS Lab School is grateful to the Parents' Association for funding our annual school lice checks.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items are collected with the hope of finding their owners. Labelling your child's clothing and items helps! Please encourage your child to check for all belongings. Please ask the receptionist for the location of the lost and found rack/bins. After the last day of school each term, unclaimed items are regularly donated to local charities.

Math Teaching in Half Groups

At JICS, Math is usually taught in half groups, JK to Grade 6. Half the children attend a specialty subject (French, Art, Library, etc.) and the other half remain in the class for math instruction. Working with 11 or 12 children at a time creates an environment that allows teachers to design learning experiences that are more directly catered to student needs. Furthermore, with smaller group numbers, students receive meaningful and immediate feedback to further progress and deepen their learning.

Often Math is one area within the classroom where the skill, comfort, and confidence level of students varies the most. Being able to provide most of our math instruction in small groups allows teachers to address the needs of the students in a more individualized way. It provides an opportunity to offer more direct instruction and scaffolding for students who are approaching grade level and providing them with hands-on opportunities and time to solidify their knowledge of a math concept before moving on. For students who are easily grasping all the grade level math concepts, they have an opportunity to work with some more challenging tasks and show their understanding by applying their math knowledge to specific activities and challenges. Both groups are involved in learning Math in a problem-based environment, but are provided with tasks that will challenge, yet not frustrate them. By working in a group of students with a similar skill set, and working at their level, students build the confidence and comfort needed to feel successful about their own math abilities.

Media Use in the Classroom

At the JICS Lab School, film and other forms of media such as images, clips, music, and podcasts are used to enrich the children's learning experiences. Below are some of students' ways teachers may use media in their programming:

- As a provocation/hook: Media may be used as an inspiration that motivates students to think, wonder, or discuss a specific topic.
- As an authoritative source: Media may be used to bring information to the students that provide them with foundational knowledge they need to move forward in their learning. The goal can be to simply build their knowledge base or more specifically enable them to further develop their own theories.
- To bring the students experiences that are otherwise out of reach: Media can provide exposure to experiences or scientific phenomena that are not possible to replicate in the classroom. Such visual sources of information can be powerful learning tools for students.
- To help children make real-life connections to concepts learned in class: It is important for students to be able to make connections between what they are learning about in school and the relevance of their learning to the world surrounding them. Being connected to experts who have used, for example, scientific knowledge to be innovative is important and meaningful. For example, in a unit on Light the students might learn how dentists and welders use reflection to carry out their work. They might visually experience how reflective materials work in the dark and more strongly connect to the connection between reflection and safety. A final example is the students might learn about innovative work such as the mirror box therapy for phantom limbs.
- To provide equal access to information for all students (Universal Design): Some children who have difficulty reading and or writing can absorb and retain information presented visually and orally thus increasing their level of authentic participation in the curriculum. This benefits all students.
- To enrich learning: In general, media can be used very effectively to enrich learning in any curriculum area. This is the particular the case in French instruction. Films provide a rich linguistic experience for a child who rarely hears the French language used in complex and extended communication, and to offer another form of listening practice. They offer a balance of linguistic repetition and novelty in social and communicative context to allow children to both apply what they have learned in the class and build a broader linguistic context. Films show children that French serves the same purpose for French speakers as English serves for English speakers. Through this realization, they develop a more complete understanding of what language is. Films are chosen very carefully to provide a context and an experience of the language and culture. Plot and pronunciation clarity, as well as speed of delivery are some of the many criteria used by the teachers.

Media Use at Home (Texting and Virtual Games that Utilize Texting)

At JICS, we believe that text messaging between young children is developmentally inappropriate, and it can be the cause of many problems. While we understand that texting parents may be necessary for child safety, **WE STRONGLY DISCOURAGE** this type of communication between children before the age of 13.

Although we do not feel elementary-aged children have the social maturity to engage in online chatting or texting groups, for children who are permitted by their parents to engage in texting, we have become aware

of some issues that are upsetting to children. The issues are about exclusion, who is in charge, language, and the content of the texting. These issues can influence the children's wellbeing at school.

If your child is texting, we suggest that you speak about the following:

What is the purpose of the texting group?

Is being a part of the group positive for everyone?

Is the group meeting the needs of all members?

What about the group is working or not working?

Is this group including some and excluding others?

What might it feel like for students not on the chat to hear about the chat at school?

Are people using appropriate language?

Is the group a place for positive, friendly, and fun interactions or is the group being used for other purposes?

What happens when there are problems in the group?

Who is making decisions for the group? Does this feel okay for everyone?

Who decides who gets to join and stay in the group? Could this power be shared by all?

What protocols could the group have when there are problems so that they are solved in a way that feels good to everyone?

Again, we want to stress that we **strongly discourage texting** between children before the age of 13. If your child is allowed to text, parents are encouraged to review the texts regularly.

We highly recommend parents to read Jonathan Haidt's book "The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness" which provides research-based guidance for both parents and schools.

Our school Behaviour Code is founded on Dr. Blatz's security theory (that every child needs and deserves to feel psychologically and emotionally secure), as well as the Vivian Paley's notion (author and former University of Chicago's Lab School educator) that social inclusion is critical in school communities and the saying from her famous book, "You Can't Say You Can't Play." For some older children who have parental permission to play on multiplayer gaming apps and virtual worlds, the same emphasis on inclusion should apply. That children are kind and respectful to each other at school is expected and it is the responsibility of the school staff to foster, monitor, and support. Outside of school, we rely on parents for this supervision, and to determine that multiplayer gaming apps are safe and developmentally appropriate. We encourage parents to review the virtual spaces where your children are interacting with their peers and talk to them about online safety and citizenship.

Medical Information

- We require a medical information Questionnaire to be completed annually for all children attending the school in your Parent Portal (MySchool)
- It is the responsibility of parents with children who have medical conditions (diabetes, seizures, asthma etc.) to identify their children to the school using the medical Questionnaire in your Parent Portal (MySchool)

- If your child requires medication to be administered at school, parents are required to complete the Permission to Administer Medication Form. This form can be picked up from the School Office or by emailing the School Office Administrator.
- All medication provided to the school is administered in the School Office.
- Medication must be provided in original packaging. Prescriptions must include prescription number.

Nursery Policies

See Appendix A.

Ontario Student Record (OSR)

An OSR is established for each student who enrolls in a public school in Ontario in accordance with The Education Act. The OSR holds the annual report cards and the file will be transferred when the student transfers to another school.

Outreach

Outreach and environmental/social awareness are an integral part of the JICS experience. The school maintains a highly active and intentional program that is developmentally appropriate. The children and faculty work together on projects such as spreading awareness, advocacy, works of charity, collecting donations, and environmental clean-up. Many projects involve the entire school community and provide the organizing class an opportunity to act as community leaders. In true JICS fashion, the projects are the ideas of the children. Here are some of the outreach and community service work that has taken place at JICS:

- Terry Fox Run
- UNICEF
- Thanksgiving food drive
- Out of the Cold Program
- Bullying awareness rallies
- Pink Day
- Covenant House
- Collecting books for the Children's Book Bank
- Collecting backpacks and school supplies for a local refugee centre
- Green Team
- Yellow Fish Project
- Choir performances at local retirement home

We have much to be proud of in our awareness and our commitment to various organizations and causes. Thank you to all the parents for your ongoing support.

Every single family and staff member in the school has important causes and needs that they are passionate about. We are a caring community with many who are helping to improve the welfare and happiness of others. It is the policy of the school not to canvas our families for support or for donations beyond the scope of the children's outreach choices.

Parent Concern Process

In our day-to-day communication with parents, we strive to resolve issues as they arise. However, from time to time a parent may feel that an issue has not been addressed or resolved in a satisfactory manner and may wish to pursue the matter further. All issues should be addressed initially at the level closest to the event to achieve resolution. The resolution of a concern should proceed from Classroom Teacher / Specialty Teacher to the Principal as needed. In consultation with the Principal, a mediated solution process may be arranged in exceptional circumstances.

Parents' Association

The JICS Parents' Association (PA) is a vital link between home and school and includes all JICS families. There are regular Parents' Association Council meetings to which all parents are invited. Parent volunteers are involved in a wide range of activities at the school and these volunteers are coordinated through the Parents' Association. The PA also supports many parent/teacher committees, policy and decision making, the funding of needed purchases to enhance the school program, arranges occasional speakers, provides class representatives for each grade, and provides a forum for parent discussion. The administration of this association is provided by an Executive Committee.

The Parents' Association Executive Committee members and class reps information can be found here:

<https://www.jicsfamily.com/paexecandclassreps>

For more information regarding the Parents' Association, please visit our website:

<https://www.jicsfamily.com/about-the-pa>

Parental Involvement

JICS parents are unique. They have chosen the JICS Lab School understanding of our public purpose: to improve public school education. They are curious and informed individuals who care about and recognize the importance of public-school education and support the role of the Lab School (research, teacher education, curriculum development, etc.) in exploring and disseminating what is possible.

We value ways that parents can connect with JICS. The Parents' Association and their parent committees are some of the best ways to come to know the school and to strengthen its very special family community.

Throughout the year, there will be many opportunities for parents to contribute to their child's learning experience at school. Teachers will be in touch with requests for volunteers. We understand that the ability for involvement differs for each family and since our top priority is inclusivity, we continue to strive for all families to be involved in ways that work for them. All contributions big and small are recognized and appreciated.

Parking & Driving

Please refer to [Arrival & Dismissal Procedures](#) section of Parent Handbook.

A list of local paid parking can be found here: <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/contact/>

Photo Permissions

As a laboratory school, part of our mandate is dissemination of our work through our website, a visitor program, and presentations to interested educators. All JICS families have given consent for the JICS Lab School faculty to show images and video of their child/ren without identifying them by name for the purpose of dissemination. The photographs and recordings may be posted on the JICS websites (Lab School, MA CSE Program, Laidlaw Research Centre, Natural Curiosity, Robertson Program, International Association of Laboratory Schools) and social media sites, for an indeterminate period or may be used in paper or electronic ways by the Institute. Teachers also photograph and videotape students for educational purposes, documentation, assessment, and professional development.

Throughout the year, many photo opportunities arise at the JICS Lab School with our many visitors, media requests, other departments at U of T, and researchers in the classroom. Any time an image of JICS children is requested, for these purposes, photo permission will be obtained from parents.

Privacy Policy

The JICS Lab School is committed to protecting the privacy of our constituents. We know that maintaining the trust of our constituents is important for all parties, and we recognize that, to maintain this trust, we must be responsible, transparent, and accountable in how we treat the personal information that is shared with us. Information about our privacy practices can be found here: <https://www.jicsfamily.com/privacypolicy>

Program Curricular Goals & Expectations

A detailed statement of information outlining the Curriculum Principles and Academic Program at JICS is available on our website at <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/our-curriculum-practices/>

Public Health Protocols

The JICS Lab School follows the recommendations and protocols of Public Health. In the event of a health emergency or public health concern, the JICS Lab School will be in touch with parents immediately. We work directly with Public Health to provide all needed information and care.

Psycho-Educational Assessments

If your child is struggling behaviourally or academically, the Special Ed Team (special ed teacher, classroom teacher, social worker, and administration) may recommend that parents seek a psycho-educational assessment. At times, parents pursue a psycho-educational assessment independently. JICS has a long history of working with many psychologists and we have found that some provide the level of detail that we and parents find to be helpful. Please consult with us for a list of suggested specialists. This comprehensive evaluation is designed to measure a child's cognitive processing abilities (including logical reasoning, memory,

attention, and executive functioning), their current level of academic knowledge in various subject areas, and to screen social, behavioural, and emotional functioning. This assessment can specifically define both your child's strengths and areas of weakness, allowing the strengths to be amplified and the weaknesses to be targeted and overcome. For many children, having a psycho-educational assessment performed is the first step toward not only securing a diagnosis, but also accessing a range of timely interventions and support programs. A psycho-educational assessment is an intensive process, requiring interviews, the input of parents, teachers, and the child, one-on-one testing sessions, and observations. Once the assessment has been completed, however, you will be provided with a complete report detailing your child's myriad abilities and needs. You will also be connected with essential services (where appropriate), such as occupational therapy (for improving coordination and motor functioning) and speech therapy.

Recess & Outdoor Play

At the JICS Lab School, we value outdoor playtime as a vital part of the school day. When children play freely during recess, they develop socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively. We view recess as a time for children to be as autonomous as possible. Our goal is to provide developmentally appropriate parameters that allow for independence, choice, physical challenge, solitude, exertion, and social connection. There are usually at least two adults on the playground providing recess supervision.

Children are encouraged to make decisions about their play, utilizing 3 questions to guide their choices:

- Is it safe? (for me, for others, for the equipment, for nature)
- Is it kind?
- Is it inclusive?

There is an expectation of fair play, consideration of others, and inclusion of all. JICS follows a "You can't say you can't play" policy for inclusion.

Children play outside in all-weather at JICS (including light rain, snowy days, and cold conditions). Please send your child with outdoor clothing appropriate to weather conditions. "There is no inappropriate weather, only inappropriate clothing!" We follow guidance and recommendations of Toronto Public Health.

The JICS Play Policy

- Outdoor play is a right of childhood.
- Outdoor play builds children's understanding of place and our essential connection to the Earth.
- Play deserves time.
- Self-directed play is fundamental to children's physical, emotional, and social growth, and sense of well-being.
- Kindness and respect are the basis of play within a community.
- Play embeds opportunities to practice judgement, and manage risk, safety, and the consideration and care of others.
- We strive to create equitable opportunities where all children can engage in diverse types of play, and where a range of interesting, aesthetically inspiring, and open-ended materials are made available.
- Risky play is a natural mode of testing abilities and challenging physical limits. It fosters feelings of efficacy, bravery, resilience, and competence.

- The role of the teacher is to value children's choices, help refine and support children's sense of agency, and provide a safe space to play, explore, negotiate, and be. Though adults will intervene when a perceived hazard arises, they are primarily attentive observers rather than active supervisors.
- *Play is many things: joyful, intense, quiet, rambunctious, intrinsically motivating, and deeply satisfying.*

Report Cards

Report cards are written twice a year. A First Term Report is provided to parents in December, and Final Report is provided after the last day of school in June.

Research in the Lab School

The JICS Lab School has a mandate to engage in and support a full program of research. Research is often conducted within classrooms at the school. In choosing JICS, parents recognize this mandate and are asked to sign an online consent form allowing their children to participate in research. Research is reviewed by the University of Toronto Research Ethics Committee, and the Child Research Committee at JICS. Child and parent confidentiality is observed and maintained, unless otherwise indicated in a waiver. If you choose to decline participation, our Vice Principal, Chriss Bogert, will be in touch with you to understand your concerns.

Reports of research activity in the school are available on our website at <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/research/> and at our annual Research Night.

School Closure

In the event of a school wide emergency, we will communicate information immediately via email.

Should parents be concerned about adverse weather conditions and/or school closure, information can be found on the University of Toronto Campus Status webpage (St. George Campus) <https://www.utoronto.ca/campus-status> or on our JICS Twitter feed which can be found on the right side of our website: http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/Laboratory_School/index.html.

The JICS Lab School remains open if the University of Toronto is open.

Shoes

As children play outside in all weather, parents are asked to provide children with sensible shoes that are safe and comfortable for all levels of daily physical activity. Sneakers are ideal footwear. For safety reasons, children need to be always wearing shoes; please ensure that children have 'indoor shoes' during the winter months when boots are worn outdoors. Shoes with wheels are not permitted for safety reasons.

Social Worker

The Lab School aims to support the needs of the whole child. Central to our philosophy to provide a secure environment, is an awareness that mental health and wellness is essential to learning. To support this, we

have a part-time social worker. The social worker is a licensed practitioner with many years of experience working with children, in a variety of contexts, from children's mental health centers to SickKids to private practice.

The social worker collaborates with JICS Lab School staff in ensuring the overall mental health and wellness, social emotional learning, and interpersonal skills of all the children, with a particular focus on the Junior Grades. The social worker visits classrooms and leads workshops and discussions about relevant topics related to social and emotional well-being. The social worker is also available to meet with students in small groups or individually to offer support through counselling as needed. Additionally, the social worker offers regular parent workshops on topics such as mindful parenting, navigating sibling relationships, and promoting balanced screen time. Teachers consult with the social worker about the children in their care, and the Junior Grade children themselves may ask to speak with the social worker about their own concerns. Parents can also connect with the social worker for consultation.

Parents are asked to contact their classroom teacher to initiate a referral for their child to meet with the social worker, or to speak with the Vice-Principal about how the social worker may be helpful to your child or family. If a child meets with the social worker individually, she will be in touch with parents after the first counselling session, with recommendations for outside support or a plan for further sessions at school, and follow-up after that as needed. Confidentiality of the students and families will be respected.

Staffing

Our mandate as an educational research institute is to provide exemplary education to our students and we know that our teachers are our greatest asset. JICS teachers are highly skilled and experienced, and they are experts in child development and pedagogy. Lab School teachers are either University of Toronto employees or they are seconded from various Boards of Education in Ontario.

Seconded teachers bring their knowledge and experience to the Lab School for 1 to 4 year periods and return to their Boards. It is the policy of the JICS Lab School to maintain a mix of university appointed and seconded teachers.

It is vital to our professional development that we learn with and from exemplary teachers from the public boards. We have a long and successful history of seconding teachers. These teachers bring their unique ideas, a diversity of experience, and best practices to JICS and they influence and inspire our development as a faculty.

After a secondment has concluded, teachers return to their respective boards. The reintegration of seconded teachers into the public-school setting, along with graduates from the Child Study and Education Master of Arts Teacher Ed Program, are some of the ways that the JICS Lab School serves our public purpose.

Staffing decisions (grade level, specialty subject) are made by the administration each year taking into consideration several factors: request/requirement for grade change, maternity leave, academic leave, secondment approval, cohort needs, research, etc. As a “learning institute” that models life-long learning and explores what is possible, we believe it is important for teachers to remain in a grade for 2-5 years.

The staffing list is published online during the Summer.

Here is the link to the JICS Lab School Faculty and Staff: <https://www.jicsfamily.com/welcome-and-staff>

Teacher Candidates

Teacher education is an important mandate of the Institute. The JICS Lab School provides exceptional mentorship to teacher-candidates from the OISE MA CSE Program throughout the grades. The JK to Grade 6 cohorts receive one second-year MA student per term (one intern in the fall term and one intern in the winter term) and 2-3 first-year teacher-candidates. These teacher-candidates work very closely with your children and are considered teachers.

Telephone, Cell-Use, Smartwatch Policy

After-school play dates are best arranged from home in advance of the school day. In necessary situations, a child needs the permission of a teacher to use the School Office telephone.

Personal cell phones or smartwatches are not encouraged for children at JICS unless students (Grades 4 to 6) require the phones to travel safely and independently to and from school with parental permission. **During the school day, student cell phones and smartwatches (that allow calling or texting) are stored by the classroom teacher.** Students are not permitted to use their cell phone and/or smartwatch during the school day or on school property. All student calls must be made with permission using the School Office telephone.

Timetable

Nursery Arrival	8:45am to 9:00am
Nursery Dismissal	11:45am
JK to Grade 6 Arrival	8:35am to 8:45am
JK to Grade 6 Dismissal	3:30pm

Children not attending Wednesday Afternoon Program:

Dismissal Time: Details for 2025-2026 school year, coming soon.

Any parental requests for long-term modification to the school schedule for a child to attend classes/programs outside of JICS must be sent to the Principal for approval.

Toys From Home

Beyond items brought in to share in the classroom and in inquiry, toys from home are not encouraged. They are not allowed in classrooms nor during recess time.

Tuition Information

Information about tuition for the current school year is here: <https://www.jicsfamily.com/feesinformation>

The tuition balance for the upcoming school year should be delivered to the School Office Administrator between Monday, August 18 to Friday, August 29, 9:00am to 4:00pm, at 45 Walmer Road.

Tuition Fees are payable to the University of Toronto.

Where applicable, **certificates for income tax purposes** (for non-instructional supervised time) will be sent out by regular mail from the General Accounting Department at the University of Toronto late in February. There is a \$25 administrative fee for duplicates or replacement certificates.

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General Accounting Department, Accounts Receivable Section
University of Toronto
150 College St – 3rd Flr – Rm 350 Phone: 416-978-2073
Toronto, ON M5S 3E2

The school fees and payment schedule are set by the University of Toronto.

- A non-refundable deposit of \$5,000 is due upon offer of admission or at re-enrolment in January. All deposits paid will be deducted from total amount.
- A second non-refundable payment representing 50% of the balance is due in April. The remaining balance is due before the first day of school. Cheques are payable to The University of Toronto.
- Any outstanding balances after the start of school will be subject to an interest charge of 18% per annum calculated monthly until the final payment has been received by the University. The University will send parents a fees invoice via email.
- Fees that are not paid by December 1st are considered by the University to be in arrears and are shown as deficit against the JICS Lab School. This has an impact on budgets and fees for the following year and for this reason, the December 1st payment deadline must be considered firm.
- At any time, please feel free to contact the principal to discuss your plans for fee payment.
- When the number of school days in a year in any grade, Nursery to Grade 6, is reduced for any reason or the school is required to provide distance-education, no refunds of tuition will be made and no credit on future enrolment will be allowed.

The school fees do not represent the full costs of educating a child at the JICS Lab School. The University of Toronto deducts what it recognizes the JICS Lab School's contributions to the academic work of the University. Please refer to the **School's Purpose** section of the Parent Handbook for more information.

Tuition Support

The JICS Lab School is committed to needs-based financial support that will both enable increased diversity and retain current laboratory school families. Five forms of tuition assistance options support these goals through the Diana Rankin/Muncaster Family Support Fund.

Information regarding the different forms of support and the applications process can be found here:

<https://www.jicsfamily.com/financialassistance>

Wednesday Afternoon Program (WAP)

The Wednesday Afternoon Program (WAP) is an **optional, non-academic extracurricular program** offered to students from **Junior Kindergarten (JK) to Grade 6** on Wednesday afternoons throughout the school year.

This time (Wednesday afternoons) is reserved for **teachers, specialty educators, and administrators** to engage in professional development, curriculum planning, and student-focused discussions. Regular academic instruction does not take place on Wednesday afternoons.

Program Details

The WAP provides students with opportunities to explore creative, physical, and social activities in a relaxed and engaging environment. The program of activities is **developed over the summer**, and families will receive detailed information before the start of the school year.

Additional details for 2025-2026 school year, coming soon.

Withdrawal Policy

For New Students

A letter of acceptance is offered to each enrolling family. If the family returns the signed form with the cheque payable to the University of Toronto (non-refundable deposit and non-refundable enrolment) within the determined time frame, the spot is filled. The balance of the tuition is paid in April and September and is non-refundable at any point in time. Should a child withdraw from the program before September or during the school year, no part of the paid tuition is refundable.

For Enrolled Students

A re-enrolment form is sent to each family with a deadline to complete and return the form in January of the current school year. On the form, parents indicate whether their child/ren will return or will not return to the JICS Lab School the following school year. In order to secure the spot, the returning family is required to include a \$5,000 non-refundable deposit for each child with the re-enrolment form by the due date. Cheques are payable to the University of Toronto. A second non-refundable payment representing 50% of the balance is due in April. The remaining balance is due before September 1. Should a child withdraw from the program before September or during the school year, no part of the tuition is refundable.

For Enrolled Students – Extended Planned Absences (*sabbaticals, travel, etc.*)

Families who wish to withdraw their child/ren at any other time during the school year are requested to notify the school in writing by emailing the Principal, Richard Messina. However, as noted above, all tuition payments are non-refundable.

Appendices

Appendix A: Nursery Policies



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study

OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

JICS Licensed Nursery, Information for Parents

In 1925-1926, our school began as a Nursery. The Nursery program still belongs within the community and administration of our whole school. In addition to these supports and standards, the Nursery is also licensed under the [Child Care and Early Years Act 2014](#). All programs for young children are now regulated by the Ontario Government to ensure quality of care, developmentally appropriate programs, and safety for all children. As required by the act we have a number of written policies outlining how we ensure the standards of care recognized by the province. Policies regarding program implementation, anaphylaxis, supervision of student teachers and volunteers, administration of medication and other aspects of our work related to sanitary practices and safety can now be found here in the Parent Handbook, which is posted on our website:

<https://www.jicsfamily.com/nursery>

Program information

The Nursery Program is a morning only preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds.

The Nursery Program runs from 8:45 – 11:45am every weekday.

The Nursery program starts in September after the Labour Day weekend and ends in mid-June each year. It follows the Lab School calendar of holidays: <https://www.jicsfamily.com/school-calendar>. Nursery parents will be notified in the summer by an email from the Nursery teacher about their start day, as we stagger the arrival of the children on their first few days to ease their transition to school.

Nursery Program Statement

The Philosophy and Purpose of the School

For 100 years, the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School at the University of Toronto has been committed to the education of young children. Incorporating the developmental, social and cognitive findings of Child Study with influences from progressive education, the JICS Lab School has long been an exemplar of and an advocate for secure, caring, consistent, inquiry-based learning throughout the elementary years.

- Every student is viewed as individual, unique in his or her combination of developmental readiness, culture, lifestyle, learning style, temperament, and special talents.
- Our program and teaching reflect our belief that students have different needs at different developmental stages. Our approach is both rigorous and flexible, encouraging the construction of knowledge by teaching students to formulate questions, analyze and solve problems.

- The JICS Lab School is committed to helping each student master important subject matter, learn to think critically and creatively, understand the values and traditions which underlie our global society, and develop a sense of personal and community responsibility.
- The JICS Lab School is a community of students and teachers, responsible to each other. We work in partnership with each parent to support and enhance the learning of each student.
- The JICS Lab School provides an environment that fosters research and professional inquiry. The school makes a significant contribution to the education, human development and applied psychology work within our university and in the wider educational community in Canada and internationally.
- The JICS Lab School serves a role in preparing pre-service teachers for their professional life through its contributions to the Master of Arts in Child Study and Education program, providing both practicum experience, mentoring and course instruction by our teaching staff.

The Nursery Program

The Nursery offers a morning program for three- and four-year-olds. The aim of the program is to offer a nurturing environment that provides children the opportunity to learn and grow in a safe and secure setting. In this individualized program, children are strongly accepted and appreciated for who they are as we encourage them to try new things and openly express their ideas and feelings. Diversity is valued and celebrated.

The nursery curriculum is designed to meet the strengths, needs, and interests of each child. The program is founded on the belief that young children learn best through free and active experimentation and exploration of materials and ideas as they discover the world around them. Children are supported through challenges and encouraged to reason through problems that arise. There is a strong emphasis on creativity; imaginative play is highly valued. In their interactions with peers, children are helped to understand other viewpoints as they negotiate conflict and discover the joys of social play. Essential to all early learning - social, emotional and academic - are the strong relationships formed between adults and children, among children, and between home and school.

As we develop a curriculum that responds to the ongoing needs and interests of the group, we seek to offer children a balance between spontaneous, child-initiated activities and more structured teacher-led learning. Much of the morning is designed as a play-based program, supporting children's deep engagement in a variety of learning activities; these may include building, art, problem-solving, science exploration, fine-motor activities, reading and story-telling, dramatic play and outdoor play. The program is further enhanced by the integration of specialist teachers in the areas of music, creative movement, visual art, library and physical education.

Special visitors and field trips enrich the learning by connecting the class with the wider community. Special guests may include storytellers or artists or even a parent with expertise in a relevant field. Each year resources from the Patrick Harvey Arts Fund are used to provide exciting arts opportunities for all the students of the school.

<p>Special Note: As we support children to work together in respectful ways, we are mindful that our school's Behaviour Code is relevant to everyone in the community. Adults and children alike are responsible for</p>
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creating a safe and caring learning environment and for listening and speaking to one another in respectful ways.

The Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School community is committed to upholding the principles of the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Canadian Bill of Rights. All forms of discriminatory behaviour are unacceptable.

Supporting the Health, Safety, Nutrition and Well-being of Children

We know that children need a safe environment in which to play and grow. We work with a number of agencies and experts to review the safety of our spaces and practices. These include the Ministry of Education, Toronto Public Health, Toronto Fire Services, and Playscape Inspections and Consulting Services Inc. The Nursery program conducts monthly fire drill practices. Nursery teachers are watching carefully for potential safety hazards and modify the environment if needed.

As a school community we work together to prevent spread of illness. Parents are asked to follow Public Health guidelines to screen their children for symptoms before determining whether they are well enough to come to school. The Nursery spaces are cleaned and sanitized daily and undergo regular inspections from Public Health. Nursery children participate in regular handwashing including when they arrive at school, before and after eating, and after using the toilet. During an outbreak of a communicable disease, the school works closely with Public Health to follow best practice for containment of illness and communication with parents.

We provide a daily morning snack based on simple wholesome foods. We aim to provide a snack that is both delicious and nutritious. This means our snacks are free of artificial ingredients or hydrogenated fats and are generally low in sugar, including fresh fruit and vegetables. Our approach to snack is also shaped by these goals: that children feel secure and nurtured, that they are empowered to make choices, and that we cultivate their curiosity about, and enjoyment of, good food. The time children spend at the snack table is also part of our ongoing emphasis on positive social experiences; during snack we often share conversation about things that have happened in the Nursery or children share stories from home.

At the JICS Lab School, we engage the whole child, believing that each learner is an individual who brings body, mind, emotions, relationships and experiences to learning. As Nursery teachers work to foster the well-being of each child, they consider the following:

- Knowing each child, their temperament, interests, and needs
- Being aware of any challenges or stressors that a child might be facing
- Supporting the social relationships of the children in the group
- Professional knowledge in the areas of child development and self-regulation

Reflective Practice

Nursery teachers and student teachers share observations of the children and their play in daily conversation, in written observations and in meetings. These observations shape the ongoing decisions made by the Nursery teachers about the classroom environment, curriculum choices and how best to support the children.

Occasionally Nursery teachers also mentor work study students and ECE student teachers. When mentoring, the Nursery teachers meet weekly with **student teachers** to reflect on their role in the classroom and their understanding of child development, as well as work with them in their planning for the program. The Nursery teacher also works with **specialist teachers**, in informal check-in conversations and at meetings, to share information about the children and how they are responding to the specialist programs. As members of a lab school, we view our role as “**teacher-researchers**”, constantly refining our practice in response to observations made in the classroom, new research, and reflections from our colleagues.

Ongoing communication with parents is also a key aspect of our work. Parents learn more about the program through Nursery notices, school-wide newsletters and documentation posted outside the classroom or sent electronically. Parent breakfasts, field trips and open house mornings allow parents to be part of the classroom community. Parents also meet with the Nursery teacher for formal interviews twice a year; other meetings are arranged as needed. Report cards for each child are mailed to families twice a year.

Ongoing Documentation and Review

At the Lab School, we often say that all ideas are improvable. We know that policies and procedures benefit from ongoing review and revision. The Nursery staff team meet annually to review all policies and consider how the policies and practices are working. Whenever we feel it is needed, we revise our practices and policies. All Nursery teachers read over all policies when they are first hired and sign-off annually that they have reviewed all the current documents. When new policies are developed or revised, all staff read and review the updates. Our professional knowledge grows as we learn from research, from experts in the field, and as we reflect on the experience and feedback of the children and their families.

Professional Licensed Practice

Years ago, our school began as a Nursery. The Nursery program still belongs within the community and administration of our whole school. In addition to these supports and standards, the Nursery is also licensed under the *Child Care and Early Years Act*. All programs for young children are regulated by the Ontario Government to ensure quality of care, developmentally appropriate programs and safety for all children. As required by the act we have a number of **written policies** outlining how we ensure the standards of care recognized by the province. A complete set of our childcare policies can be found on our website.

“The focus [of early years curriculum] is not on teaching a body of knowledge or a predetermined set of topics. Nor is it centered on children’s achievement of a specific skill set. In the early years, programs are most effective when the content of learning is focused on supporting the development of strategies, dispositions, and skills for lifelong learning through play and inquiry. Through play and inquiry, young children practice ways of learning and interacting with the world around them that they will apply throughout their lives. Problem solving and critical thinking, communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination, initiative and citizenship are all capacities vital for success throughout school and beyond.”
- from *How Does Learning Happen?* Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years

Admission to the Nursery and Waitlist Policy

Parents may submit a free electronic application for their child to be on the admissions waitlist for the school through our website: <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/admissions>. The applications are kept on file in the JICS

Lab School office's database of student records. The Nursery class, the only year for admitting a full class of new students, has spaces for 10 girls and 10 boys. The admissions process for the Nursery class begins in January and ends in March of each year. We will contact you if we are able to consider your application in the year your child turns three years of age.

The JICS Lab School approaches applications in chronological order, bearing in mind the considerations for diversity, siblings, staff children, and the need for classes to be balanced for age and gender for both research and pedagogical reasons. An Open House/Information session is held in January/February for all families on the waiting list for Nursery who are eligible for entrance in September of that school year. For those attending the Open House who are interested in continuing the admissions process, a subsequent interview allows parents and children to visit the laboratory school to meet the Principal and ask questions. Admission offers are made by letter immediately following completion of this process.

All parents of children on the waitlist for the Nursery program will be contacted by email with the invitation to the Nursery Open House in January/February of the year that their child is eligible for a September start in Nursery. They will be asked to respond to the email by indicating one of these three options:

- 1) They will be in attendance at the open house;
- 2) They will not be in attendance, but wish to remain on our waitlist for possible acceptance in a future year; or
- 3) They will not be in attendance and are no longer interested in their child attending the JICS Lab School. Their application will be removed application from our waitlist.

For parents who are offered a spot for their child in the Nursery program, following the Open House and interview, and do not wish to accept the offer, they will also be asked if they wish to remain on the waitlist or wish their application to be removed.

When parents request for their child's application to be removed from the waitlist, the school office staff will change information on the child's electronic record from "applied" to "declined".

Beyond this, children are automatically kept on the waitlist for a placement in the school in future years, unless parents ask us in writing to remove them.

Nursery Program Fees

Information about tuition for the current school year is here: <https://www.jicsfamily.com/feesinformation>

The tuition balance for the upcoming school year should be delivered to the School Office Administrator between Monday, August 18 to Friday, August 29, 9:00am to 4:00pm, at 45 Walmer Road.

Tuition Fees are payable to the University of Toronto.

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- At any time, please feel free to contact the school to discuss your plans for fee payment.

When the number of school days in a year in any grade, Nursery to Grade 6, is reduced for any reason or the school is required to provide distance-education, no refunds of tuition will be made and no credit on future enrolment will be allowed.

The school fees do not represent the full costs of educating a child at the JICS Lab School. The University of Toronto deducts what it recognizes the JICS Lab School's contributions to the academic work of the University. Please refer to the School's Purpose section of the Parent Handbook for more information.

Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care (CWELCC)

Ontario signed the CWELCC agreement on March 28, 2022 with the Government of Canada. The JICS Lab School is in support of the new subsidy that will provide more accessible childcare for Ontario families at large. At JICS, we have made the decision to opt out of the CWELCC for the time being regarding our licensed Nursery Program. The JICS Nursery is the entry year for the school, and it is our expectation that children who enter Nursery will be able to transition to JK and to the grades beyond, ultimately graduating from the school in Grade 6. We are not yet able to offer tuition subsidies in the kindergarten and primary grades. As a Lab School, we take great pride in the quality of our staffing - with a qualified OCT teacher, 2 ECE teachers, and an assistant in the Nursery (beyond the minimum licensing staffing requirements). Our independence and autonomy allow us to provide exemplary programming enriched with quality resources.

Emergency Management Policy and Procedures Statement

The Nursery program has clear emergency management policies and procedures in place. Staff will ensure that children are kept safe, accounted for, and supervised at all times during an emergency situation.

How parents will be notified if an emergency occurs

The school office staff will notify the Nursery parents and guardians in written communication that is sent home by email about any emergency situations occurring at the school.

Supervision of Staff, Adult Students, and Volunteers Policy

Nursery Program Staff

All Nursery staff members are supervised by the Nursery Supervisor (approved as supervisors under the *Child Care and Early Years Act*) who is also the Lab School Vice-Principal and the Nursery Lead Teacher. As well, Nursery staff are members of the **Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School** and work under the leadership of the Lab School's administrative team and the expectations of the University of Toronto. Nursery staff members engage in orientation sessions at the beginning of each school year (or when beginning their work placements) that include reviews of all school policies.

- The Nursery Supervisors monitor the work of the staff in the Nursery and provide ongoing feedback in both impromptu daily meetings and scheduled staff meetings. All Nursery staff members are also part of a yearly professional review conducted by the school administration.
- ✓ All concerns and complaints regarding behaviour management practices made by anyone including staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, and others are addressed and responded to by the school administration.

Review and Sign-off

The Nursery Program Statement and Implementation Policy, as well as policies and procedures related to emergency information, anaphylaxis and allergies, administration of medication and playground safety are reviewed prior to working with children for the first time and at least annually thereafter with each staff member, student and volunteer. After reviewing the policies and procedures each person must sign and date the review and sign off sheet.

Record Retention

All records involving review of policy and procedures, as well as the monitoring of practices, will be kept on file at the Lab School for two years.

Volunteers, Work Study Students, and Practicum Students

We are fortunate to have the support, care and skills of a number of adults in the Nursery program. Some of these are Masters students in practicum placements during their teacher training. Others are university work-study students and others are volunteers.

*Note: Only employees, over the age of 18, have unsupervised access to the children. Volunteers, Work Study Students and Practicum Students are not included in adult-child ratios required by the *Child Care and Early Years Act*.*

- Student teachers are both learning in the classroom and contributing their skills and talents to the program.

- As is required by the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, student teachers have their immunization records reviewed and criminal record checks before beginning their placements.
- Children are never left in the care of a student teacher alone, qualified teachers are always present.
- Student teachers who work in the classroom are constantly monitored by the Nursery Teacher and students receive feedback daily; they are also reviewed by staff from the MA program and the Lab School who visit the classroom to watch their teaching and who meet with them outside the classroom to discuss their placements. MA students receive written evaluations part way through their placements and at the end of their placement.
- Work-Study students and volunteers add to our support of the children and the program; they also have a criminal record check and review of their immunization record. Like students in placements, volunteers and work-study students in the course of their duties are never left alone with the children. They are monitored and given ongoing feedback from Nursery teachers.
- Volunteers, Work Study Students and MA students in their placements are all given a handbook at the beginning of their work in the classroom. This handbook outlines the philosophy of the program and gives guidelines for working with the children. They also all read the Program Statement and Implementation Policy. They “review and sign-off” to acknowledge their understanding of these policies.

List of Prohibited Practices

The Nursery Program is licensed by the Ministry to meet the standards laid out in *Child Care and Early Years Act* (CCEYA). According to this act, we must state for parents that none of our staff will be engaged in any of these prohibited practices:

- corporal punishment of the child;
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee’s emergency management policies and procedures;
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;
or
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

No employee or volunteer of the Nursery program, or student who is on an educational placement in the Nursery, shall engage in any of the prohibited practices set out above with respect to a child receiving care in the Nursery program.

Training and Development Policy for Staff

Professional Development

Teachers at the JICS Lab School, including the Nursery teacher, pursue professional development in many ways, including a weekly Wednesday afternoon meeting. Attendance at these weekly staff meetings and planned professional development events is mandatory.

Teachers at JICS are encouraged to attend conferences and other experiences related to their professional development and report back on their learning during our Wednesday Staff Meetings. Plans to attend conferences should be discussed in advance with Richard and Chriss. Teachers use their UTFA PD Budget to pay for conference expenses and fill out the Conference Information Form.

Nursery Assistant teachers are also encouraged to attend conferences and workshops related to professional development.

All Nursery staff meet monthly to review the growth and development of the children, the daily operations of the Nursery with respect to health and safety standards and to discuss pedagogy.

All Nursery staff review all Nursery *policies* and the *Lab School Teacher Handbook* annually or before commencing employment.

All Nursery staff receive First Aid Training every three years to maintain current certification.

All Nursery staff are in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators and are hired based on their experience and ability to implement a quality childcare environment and responsibly care for young children.

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures for the Nursery Program

Purpose

This policy helps support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care in the Nursery Program. This policy will provide staff, students, and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of Nursery children, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the Nursery Program as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children. This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 of the CCEYA for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Policy

- Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Lab School Nursery Program will ensure that any child enrolled in the Nursery Program is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the Lab School may release the child to.

- Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Lab School Nursery Program will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The school will not release any Nursery children from care without supervision.
- If a parent/guardian wishes to request an additional adult to be able to pick up their Nursery, they must provide written authorization (by note or email) to the Nursery program staff and/or Lab School Office. The newly authorized adult must present identification to the Nursery program staff before the child will be released into their care.
- Where a child does not arrive at school as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Procedures

Accepting a child into the Nursery Program

1. Nursery arrival takes place between 8:40 and 8:55am. Parents/guardians/caregivers accompany their Nursery child right to the Nursery classroom where Nursery teachers will sign each child into the program. All children are expected to be in the Nursery program by 9am when school-wide attendance is completed for our school's "safe arrivals" program.
2. When accepting a child into the Nursery program at the time of drop-off, Nursery staff in the room do the following:
 - o Sign the child in on the classroom attendance record and record the time of arrival.
 - o Greet the parent/guardian/caregiver and child; gather any pertinent information about the child's wellbeing.
 - o Confirm pick-up plans and document any change in the daily written record. If the parent/guardian indicates there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian/caregiver picking up), the staff must confirm that the person is authorized in the Lab School's Student Database. Where the individual is not authorized, staff must ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email to the school office).
3. Daycare staff will bring any Nursery children who are in the before school morning care program to the Nursery room and sign them in with the Nursery program staff, passing on any pertinent information shared by parents/guardians/caregivers at drop-off.

When a child has not arrived in the Nursery Program as expected

1. If a child is going to be absent, parents are asked to contact the Lab School School Office (416-934-4517) before 8:45am to report the reason for their child's absence. There is 24-hour call answering message system at the JICS Lab School. If the School Office Administrator has not heard from an absent child's parents/guardians, they will reach out to the parents/guardians by 9:30am or as soon as possible.
2. School-wide attendance is completed at 9am on the classroom iPad and it is automatically linked to the Lab School office's database of student records. For children arriving after 9am, they must pick up an

“I’ve arrived slip” from the receptionist and give it to the Nursery program staff when they arrive in the room. This helps the Nursery program staff to know that the school office has recorded the child’s arrival. If they come to the Nursery room after 9am without an “I’ve arrived!” slip, parents/guardian/caregivers are sent to the school office to inform the office staff that their child is at school. The office staff will update the class attendance for the child from “absent” to “late”.

3. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in attendance (e.g., phone call, voice message, or email), the Nursery program staff in the classroom must:
 - a. Inform the Lab School office staff who will commence contacting the child’s parents/guardians no later than 9:30am. Using the contact information in the student database, Lab School office staff contact parents/guardians by phone and/or email until parents/guardians are reached to confirm the child’s absence.
4. Once the child’s absence has been confirmed, office staff or program staff shall document the child’s absence on the electronic attendance record, and if necessary program staff will add any additional information about the child’s absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from the Nursery Program

1. The Nursery morning program ends with outdoor play on the yard. Pick-up takes place from the yard at 11:45am. Nursery program staff sign-out the children as they are picked up by parents/guardians/caregivers, indicating the time of departure on the attendance clipboard. If the child is staying for afternoon Daycare, the Daycare staff will collect them from the yard at 11:45am and bring them back to the classroom for their lunch time.
2. The Nursery program staff who are supervising the Nursery children at the time of pick-up shall only release a child to the child’s parent/guardian or to an individual for which the parent/guardian has provided written authorization. When the Nursery program staff do not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual), they will:
 - o Check the list to see who is authorized for picking up the child
 - o Confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child’s parent/guardian/authorized individual.
 - o Where the above is not possible, they will ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual’s information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual’s name on the child’s file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)

1. If parents/caregivers are running late and unable to pick-up their child at 11:45am, they are asked to call the school office who will let the Nursery program staff know about the delay. This allows staff to reassure the child that their parent/guardian/caregiver is on the way, as they wait for their arrival.
2. Any children who have not been picked up soon after 11:45am, will be brought to the school office. A Nursery staff member will stay with the child.
3. School office staff will then call the contact number listed in the student database to confirm arrangements for picking up the child. *Note: If the child is registered in the afternoon Daycare program*

and the parent/caregiver has not arrived/been reached by 12:00pm, the child will be taken to the Daycare.

Where a child has not been picked up and the school is closed

The Nursery program ends at 11:45am and the Lab School office closes at 4pm. In the unlikely event, that the staff are unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by the time of the school office closing (4pm), the staff would:

- Alert the school principal and/or the vice-principal by phoning them
- Stay with the child, while the vice-principal or principal proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) [416-924-4646]. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

Policy on not dismissing a child from care without supervision

Staff will only release Nursery children from care to the parent/caregiver or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will Nursery children be released from care to walk home alone.

Anaphylaxis, Food Allergies, and Children's Safety

Snack is served in the Nursery each day. All adults working in the Nursery must familiarize themselves with the information about food and other allergies that is posted in the classroom.

It is the responsibility of the parents with anaphylactic children to identify their children to the school using the medical forms sent out in May. A copy of this form is included in the class emergency numbers file as well as in the school secretary's office in a red binder. On this form the parents are asked to provide information regarding the child's triggers and history of reactions to the specified triggers. This form also includes a photo of the child and permission to administer epinephrine in the event of an anaphylactic reaction. The parents are required to send in **two** epinephrine auto-injectors (one for the classroom that will travel with the child when outside, one for another area in the school) that will be effective throughout the school year.

Reducing Exposure & Communicating to Keep Children Safe

- In addition to the information gathered by the office in the May package, teachers will also communicate with parents before school begins to gain information about the allergies of the children in their care
- Teachers will work with parents and school staff members to reduce, and when possible, eliminate the child's risk of exposure to their allergens
- Modifications to school snacks and food shared at special events will be made, when possible, in order to meet these goals:
 - making these events as inclusive as possible
 - reducing the exposure of problem foods for children with food allergies
- Families in a child's cohort will be alerted should there be specific considerations to be taken into account when preparing snack, or food for special celebrations etc.
- When appropriate, children with anaphylactic food allergies will bring their own food from home
- All Nursery staff, student teachers and volunteers will be made aware of the children in the class with anaphylaxis and the allergens these children need to avoid

- In addition to reviewing each student's individual plan, all Nursery staff will also review this policy every school year prior to the arrival of the children in September
- All student teachers, work study students and volunteers will review this policy, as well as the individual plans of each student, before beginning their work with the children each year
- Anaphylaxis information, along with a photo of each child with anaphylaxis, will be posted in the classroom and kitchen. Information about every child in the school with allergies is also stored in the school office, in the emergency backpack in every classroom, in the staff and MA students lounge and in the multi-purpose/lunch room.
- Supply teachers will also be given this information in written form
- The Lab school announces a "nut-free" policy to all families and the school is a nut-free zone.

Epi-pens

- Epi-pens and other epinephrine injectors will be placed in a clear Ziploc bag labeled with a bright pink "Epi-pen stored here" sign, and will stored in the classroom's emergency backpack. The backpack with travel with the class when outside.
- Teachers will take Epi-pens and other epinephrine injectors with them when leaving the school (i.e., fieldtrips) *note: each child has a second epi-pen in the office that should be signed out for fieldtrips (i.e., bring 2 epi-pens per child)*
- Children will be monitored for symptoms indicated on their individualized plans, should they have an anaphylactic reaction 911 will be called and the procedures on the child's emergency plan will be followed. A child's individual plan will include:
 - Description of the child's allergy
 - Monitoring and avoidance strategies
 - Parent/Guardian consent for administering allergy medication
 - Emergency contact information
 - Location of Epi-Pen and back up
- If an Epi-pen is administered, a child will be immediately transferred to hospital.
- All Jackman ICS staff members are required to have current first aid certification.

Addressing Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

General

Parents/guardians are invited to regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing in the Nursery program with the Nursery teachers. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, teachers, and student teachers, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our Nursery Program maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

Procedures for Addressing Parent or Guardian Complaints

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
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Nursery Program, Curriculum, or Pedagogy	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the classroom staff directly <p>Nursery Teachers Charlotte Henderson, Debbie Young, Susan Scott, & Alicia Robillard</p> <p>Or to the administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lab School Vice Principal, Chriss Bogert - Lab School Principal, Richard Messina 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 5 business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
General, Centre- or Operations-Related E.g.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the Lab School Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lab School Vice Principal, Chriss Bogert - Lab School Principal, Richard Messina 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
Staff-, Duty parent, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly <p>or</p> <p>to the Lab School Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lab School Vice Principal, Chriss Bogert - Lab School Principal, Richard Messina <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation</p>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party <u>within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter</u>. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p>
Student- / Volunteer-Related	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student <p>or</p> <p>to the Lab School Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lab School Vice Principal, Chriss Bogert - Lab School Principal, Richard Messina <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

Escalation of Issues or Concerns

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to Dr. Jenny Jenkins, the Director of the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School, or the Dean of OISE, Dr. Erika Walker, at the University of Toronto.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Contacts

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Shama Joshi, Lab School Office Administrator: labschooloffice@utoronto.ca

Dr. Jenny Jenkins, Director of JICS: jenny.jenkins@utoronto.ca