

# Parent Handbook

## 2023-2024

**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](http://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 form in School Forms Online (SFO) to acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agreed to the information in 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 1925, 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 Anti-Racism

The JICS Lab School is committed to equity and inclusion, and we acknowledge the importance of pro-actively and re-actively addressing all forms of racism/discrimination in developmentally appropriate ways with the children and adults throughout the year. We know that we often get things wrong. We know we need to hear and deeply listen to the voices of our teachers/staff, students, and parent community, and make sure our diversity and equity efforts are informed by these voices. We invite you to reach out and inform us about your experiences, thoughts, concerns, suggestions. [Here is a link](#) to our statements on anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, and Islamophobia.

## 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.

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.

### 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 medical forms in the School Forms Online (SFO) registration. 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. All Nursery families driving to the school must park elsewhere and bring their child to the Nursery classroom. A list of local paid parking can be found here: <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/contact/>
- There is no supervised “Kiss & Drive” at 56 Spadina side for Grades 4-6 arrivals. Parents who are driving their child/ren to Spadina must find an alternate location to park in order to walk to the entrance of 56 Spadina.



## School Entrances

- **Nursery, JK & SK** enter SCHOOL YARD GATE
- **GRADES 1, 2 & 3** enter 45 WALMER RD FRONT DOORS
- **SIBLINGS** IN GRADES 4-6 OF Nursery to GR 3 students enter 45 WALMER RD FRONT DOORS
- **GRADES 4, 5 & 6** enter 56 SPADINA ENTRANCE

## 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. *(During the playground renovations, Nursery caregivers are asked to enter through the front door of 45 Walmer Road.)*

## 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.
- Each grade has a designated dismissal exit to ensure each child is safely picked up.

## JK to Grade 6 (Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays)

*Dismissal time: 3:30pm*

- Grades 1 to 3 students and their siblings in Grades 4 to 6 will exit through the School Yard Gate. We ask that parents/caregivers wait outside the school gate. *(During the playground renovations, Grade 1 to 3 and their older siblings will be exit through the front doors of 45 Walmer Road.)*

- Grades 4 to 6 students without younger siblings will exit 56 Spadina.
- There will be staff members on duty at each of the 2 designated pick-up location.
- JK and SK children are in the school yard for their final recess at 3:00pm. 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.
- 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 form on School Forms Online (SFO). 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.
- Children who have not been picked up will be admitted to Daycare for supervision. Daycare fees will apply.

### **JK to Grade 6 (Wednesday)**

*Dismissal time 12:00pm (Children not attending Wednesday Afternoon Program)*

- 1) JK to Grade 3 students and any of their older siblings will exit through the School Yard Gate. *(Until the completion of the playground renovations, JK – Gr 3 will exit through the front doors of Walmer Road.)*
- 2) Grade 4 to 6 students without younger siblings will exit 56 Spadina.

There will be staff members on duty at each of the 2 designated pick-up locations:

- 1) School Yard Gate at 45 Walmer Rd
- 2) 56 Spadina Entrance

### **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 an inquiry-based classroom, 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>

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 5, 2023.

The Nursery children's entry will be staggered over a few days beginning on September 5. Children continue to attend school *every day* after their start date.

To view JICS Lab School Monthly Calendar for all the school events and the Lab School Holidays:

<https://www.jicsfamily.com/school-calendar>

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 completely 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. As you know, 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**

Parent/Class Breakfasts are a tradition at JICS. Please refer to Food Section of Parent Handbook regarding ingredients. Breakfasts consist of a morning gathering in a classroom in which parents and children (and often siblings of class members) share a (nut-free) potluck breakfast. They usually start a little earlier than our usual school day start, so that parents and children alike can enjoy some breakfast together and then move on to the rest of the day's activities. Siblings are required to return to their classroom by 8:45am so as not to miss their learning. Parent reps and classroom teachers should send proposed dates for class breakfasts to the school principal in advance to ensure that there are no conflicts with other school events.

## **Class Lists + School Directory**

You can access a school directory and make any necessary changes to your contact information online in the Family Access Module (FAM) <https://familyaccess.inresonance.com/oise-utoronto/index.php>

## **Communication with 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](http://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](http://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.
- 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. These are archived on the JICS family website.

## 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 PA 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

### *Our Mission in Action: Providing Mirrors and Windows*

At the JICS Lab School, we celebrate our differences as well as our similarities. The idea that individuals brings a unique and valuable dimension to our shared experience drives the relationships in our community. To us, growing and learning among individuals who share widely divergent life stories, and appreciating their respective cultures, is an invaluable aspect of a true education.

Nurturing a respectful and inclusive school culture means paying close attention to individual experiences, our curriculum, admission work, and our daily lives at the JICS Lab School. We partner with families to help children broaden their view of themselves and others by ensuring that they encounter mirrors of their own background and experience, as well as windows of difference.

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

We enable students to experience, understand, and support the notion that idea diversity is essential to the development of knowledge advancement, just as biodiversity is essential to the success of an ecosystem. To understand an idea is to understand the ideas that surround it, including those that stand in contrast to it. Idea diversity creates a rich environment for ideas to evolve into new and more refined forms.

Please note that Halloween costumes that could be offensive or perpetuate a stereotype of someone's culture, gender, heritage, or religion are not permitted.

Each year in February, Canadians are invited to participate in Black History Month festivities and events that honour the legacy and achievements of Black Canadians, past and present. At JICS, we learn about and celebrate Black History developmentally through the grades and at whole-school events such as assemblies with guest artists and members of the community. Black History is integrated into the Specialty Classes: Library, Music, and Visual Arts. We invite parents to suggest ways to help our students gain insight into the experiences of Black Canadians and their vital role in the community.

Throughout the school year, we invite parents to enrich our learning by sharing their culture with us. Parents work with classroom teachers to help us celebrate/acknowledge Orange Shirt Day, Jewish holidays, Lunar New Year, Diwali, Eid, PRIDE, and other festivities and commemorative days. If interested, please be in touch with your child's teacher.

The JICS Lab School is committed to equity and inclusion, and we acknowledge the importance of proactively and re-actively addressing all forms of racism/discrimination in developmentally appropriate ways with children throughout the year. We know that we often get things wrong. We know we need to hear and deeply listen to the voices of our students, parent community and staff, and make sure our diversity and equity efforts are informed by these voices. We invite parents to reach out and inform us about your experiences, thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Here is a [link](#) to our statements on anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, and Islamophobia.

In 2021, a group of parents of racialised children at JICS came together to discuss shared experiences at school and beyond. At that time, many parents were reeling from the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on our communities and the proliferation of incidents of anti-Black, anti-Asian and anti-Indigenous racism. They met to create a safe space for discussing the issues impacting their children, and to collect and convey their observations, their needs as racialised families, and any advice to the school around equity and inclusion. Since its inception, this group continues to meet and welcomes all parents of racialized children at JICS. Meetings are announced in the Parent Information POST.

## **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](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**

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 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 with, 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.

## 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 21 to Friday, September 1, 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.

Nataliya Iordakiyeva  
General Accounting Department, Accounts Receivable Section  
University of Toronto  
215 Huron Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Toronto, ON M5S 1A2  
Phone: 416-978-2073

The school fees 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 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 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.

## 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 parental consent forms to be signed online when they become available: <https://sfo.inresonance.com/oise-utoronto/>

There are several overnight field trips that occur annually in the Junior Grades. In the Fall or Winter, some Grades have travelled to camps or campsites. In the Spring, some grades have travelled to Ottawa, Montreal, or Quebec.

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 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. Children enrolled in the Wednesday Afternoon Program eat lunch in their classrooms. Nursery children who remain in daycare for the afternoon, eat in their classroom.

The Lunch Mom (TLM) is the provider of a voluntary hot lunch program at JICS. These lunches are offered Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. 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.

### ***"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.

Please see below for the types of events typically hosted at JICS and what you should keep in mind while planning.

### **Section 1: 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.
- Talk to your caterers about your low-waste goal.
- Refuse the following single-use items that we already have at the school: plates, cutlery, serving spoons, cups, stir sticks, sugar packs, bottled beverages, condiments, and individual coffee creamers.
- 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 servery to where you are hosting your event.
- Please bring serviettes for children. Children often pile food onto plates, but a serviette allows them to be mindful of what they are selecting.
- 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. Refuse the following single-use items: plates, cutlery, serving spoons, cups, stir sticks, sugar packs, bottled beverages, condiments, and individual coffee creamers.*

*The following reusable items are available for class breakfasts:*

- *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.*

## Section 2: Guidelines for Greener Lab School Classrooms

### **Event posters/advertisements:**

- Digitize event promotions, invitations, and signage; use e-invites, e-registration and digital check-in.
- Refuse to give out single-use promotional materials and handouts.
- Provide attendees with digital agenda/packages to limit printing. Additionally, project the information on presentation slides.
- Print double-sided on (postconsumer) recycled paper, if needed.

## Section 3: Resources

- University of Toronto Sustainable Events Guidelines - <http://www.fs.utoronto.ca/sustainability-office/resources/sustainable-events-guide/>

## 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.
- 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 COVID-19. 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**

The JICS Lab School faculty and staff know that online learning is not an acceptable alternative to in person learning (<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/our-news/ontario-school-closures/>). We join our colleagues in the child health care community in advocating for children to be in school, as they need the supports, relationships, comfort, care, and safety that schools provide. Online learning is developmentally inappropriate for children.

The JICS Lab School is focused on providing exemplary education to our students. We will continue to provide a caring environment that promotes security for every student, based on relationships of trust, caring and compassion between teachers and students. Our teaching practices and learning opportunities are anchored in inquiry, developmental readiness, and emerging research.

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.

### **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 symptomatic by the administrative staff, a parent or emergency contact will be notified to pick up the symptomatic 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.
- In addition, individuals in specific circumstances may be required to wear masks, subject to changes in [provincial](#) or [federal requirements](#), such as those who have been recently exposed to COVID-19 or to someone with symptoms.
- It is vitally important that we remain vigilant, conscientious, and show kindness to one another.

### **G. Cleaning and Sanitization**

- Hand sanitizer stations are installed in each classroom 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. Windows are open to increase the flow of fresh air into 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.’

## **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. Please encourage your child to check for all belongings. After the last day of school each term, unclaimed items are regularly donated to local charities. Please ask the receptionist for the location of the lost and found rack/bins.

## **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. The following are but some ways media can be used to deepen the students' experiences in class:
  - *In Biography Studies:*
    - 🔊 To view interviews, music, or speeches of individuals
    - 🔊 To view works of Art
  - *In Social Justice Studies:*
    - 🔊 Human Rights, Indigenous Studies, UNICEF, Black History, and more
  - *To View Historical Images:*
    - 🔊 To view speeches or thought-provoking films which provide material for critical analysis of many social justice issues including but not limited to racism, sexism, ableism, and colonialism.
  - *In Current Events Programming:*
    - 🔊 As part of the planned curriculum or in spontaneous response to notable events or the children's interest.
  - *In Media Literacy Studies:*
    - 🔊 To develop a critical lens regarding images and messages found in the media (i.e. stereotyping, biases)
  - *In French:*
    - 🔊 To provide a rich linguistic experience for a child who rarely hears the language used in complex and extended communication, and to offer another form of listening practice.
    - 🔊 To 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.

- 🗨 To 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)**

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?*

We also encourage parents to review the texts regularly.

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 medical information forms to be completed annually for all children attending the school in the School Forms Online (SFO) registration.
- 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 forms in the School Forms Online (SFO) registration.
- 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.

## 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, MAC 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.

## **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!"

### ***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 Research Night in January.

## 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/ics/Laboratory\\_School/index.html](http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/ics/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, Ellie Lathrop MSW. 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 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 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 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 are stored by the classroom teacher. Students are not permitted to use their cell phones 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
Dismissal (Mon, Tues, Thur, Fri)	3:30pm
Dismissal (Wednesdays)	12:00pm

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 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**

The Wednesday Program offers a variety of intentionally non-academic arts and sports-based classes following the noon dismissal each Wednesday for Grades 1 – 6 children.

New registration information is posted before the beginning of each term on our website (Fall/Winter/Spring). Parents will receive an email in late August regarding Fall registration.

Please note that spaces are limited.

All children registered in the Wednesday Afternoon Program are dismissed from the Walmer Road playground at 3:00pm.

Kindergarten Students: Parents who are interested in regular Wednesday afternoon care for JK or SK students can register with the ICS Daycare's Creative Play Program. The Daycare Supervisor, Anne Marie Bartoli, can be reached at 416-934-4522. <https://www.jicsfamily.com/icsafterschooldaycare>

## **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 September 1. Should a child withdraw from the program before September or during the school year, no part of the tuition is refundable.

Families who wish to withdraw their child/ren at any other times during the school year are requested to notify the school in writing by emailing the Principal, Richard Messina [richard.messina@utoronto.ca](mailto:richard.messina@utoronto.ca). However, as noted above, all tuition payments are non-refundable.