



Countdown to Kindergarten—Preparing for the Adventure of School | Issue 2, 2026

204.669.4043 • kinderlinks@retsd.mb.ca • Supported by Child and Youth Services, Department of Families

COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN

Starting kindergarten is a big step for both you and your child. As a parent or caregiver, you want your child to have a happy, successful school life. In River East Transcona School Division, we're ready to help your family prepare for the adventure of school. Kinder Links is pleased to offer many fantastic (and FREE!) programs geared towards getting your child excited to start kindergarten.

LITERACY LINKS VISITS

Literacy Links Visits are FREE and take place at Maple Leaf School at 251 McIvor Ave., Westview School at 600 Hoka St., and École Neil Campbell at 845 Golspie St. Parents and caregivers are required to stay onsite to play, learn, and support their child(ren). Siblings are welcome to attend but must be registered in advance.

To register for Literacy Links Visits, please complete the online form: [Literacy Links Visits Registration Form](#).

Literacy Links visits are interactive, play-based sessions designed to help your child get ready for school. Each visit is about 45 minutes in length and offered in a small group setting. Book a total of four FREE visits!

Literacy Links Visits are filled with interesting educational activities, stories, and art experiences that will enhance your child(ren)'s skills and understanding of the concepts of print, rhyming, sound recognition, and early math. Young participants will also get to practise fine motor skills, like using scissors and printing letters in their name. Take-home activities will be provided at the end of each session to continue the fun after your visit.



During June, Literacy Links Visits are offered once per week for four consecutive weeks at Maple Leaf School (Monday-Thursday), Westview School (Monday-Thursday), and École Neil Campbell (Thursday & Friday).

Select the dates that work best for your family:

- Mondays from June 1–22
- Tuesdays from June 2–23
- Wednesdays from June 3–24
- Thursdays from June 4–25
- Fridays from June 5–26

Available appointment times are:

Mornings

- 9:30–10:15 a.m.
- 10:30–11:15 a.m.
- 11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Afternoons

- (Maple Leaf & Westview School)
- 1–1:45 p.m.
- 2–2:45 p.m.
- 3–3:45 p.m.



Evenings

- (Mon. to Thurs., Maple Leaf & Westview School)
- 4:15–5 p.m.
- 5:15–6 p.m.
- 6:15–7 p.m.

During July, families are welcome to select from the following Literacy Links visiting options:

July 6–31

- (pick your own dates—4 dates in total)
- 9:30–10:15 a.m.
- 1–1:45 p.m.
- Maple Leaf School

July 6–9

- (4 consecutive days)
- 9:30–10:15 a.m.
- 5:15–6 p.m.
- Westview School

July 13–16

- (4 consecutive days)
- 9:30–10:15 a.m.
- Westview School

July 13–16

- (4 consecutive days)
- 5:15–6 p.m.
- Maple Leaf School

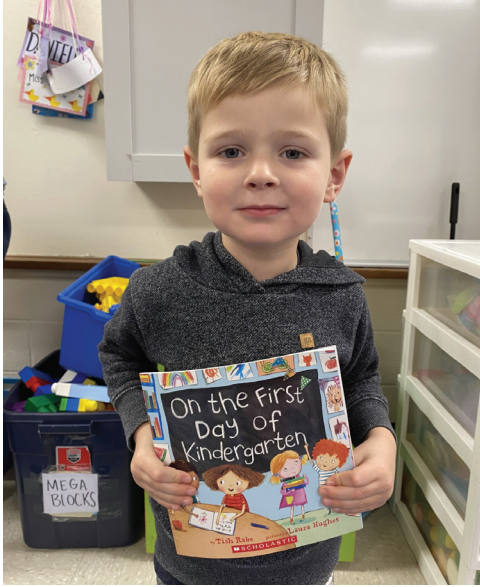
July 20–23

- (4 consecutive days)
- 5:15–6 p.m.
- Maple Leaf School



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SUMMER CAMPS

Summer camps are FREE! Parents and caregivers are required to stay onsite to play, learn, and support their child(ren). Siblings are welcome to attend but must be registered in advance.

To register for a summer camp, please complete the online registration form: [Summer Camp Registration Form](#).

Kinder Camp

Kindergarten, here we come! Together, we'll explore rhythm and rhyme, as well as letters and numbers, with lively songs, stories, and games. Participants will enjoy turning on their listening ears to become "Sound Detectives" and figure out the special sound of the day, along with getting creative through a colourful art experience. Kinder Camp provides an excellent opportunity to make new friends and talk about how much fun kindergarten will be!

Fraturdays, June 5–26

10–11:30 a.m.

1–2:30 p.m.

Maple Leaf School

Monday to Friday, July 6–10

10–11:30 a.m.

Westview School

Monday to Thursday, July 6–9

5:45–7 p.m.

Westview School

Monday to Friday, July 13–17

10–11:30 a.m.

Maple Leaf School

Monday to Thursday, July 13–16

5:45–7 p.m.

Maple Leaf School

Monday to Friday, July 20–24

10–11:30 a.m.

Westview School

Monday to Friday, July 27–31

1–2:30 p.m.

Maple Leaf School

Busy Bees

Are you buzzin' with excitement to start kindergarten and meet some great new friends? At this special summer camp, participants will create BEE-eautiful

artwork, get playful with numbers, and enjoy an alphabet-inspired dance party. Campers will also learn about BEE-ing a good friend and managing their emotions as they get ready to start school. Circle time fun includes songs, stories, and a puppet show.

Monday to Friday, July 6–10

10–11:30 a.m.

1–2:30 p.m.

Maple Leaf School

Monday to Friday, July 13–17

10–11:30 a.m.

1–2:30 p.m.

Westview School

Monday to Friday, July 20–24

10–11:30 a.m.

Maple Leaf School

Monday to Thursday, July 20–23

5:45–7 p.m.

Maple Leaf School

Monday to Friday, July 27–31

1–2:30 p.m.

Maple Leaf School



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Creative Crayons

Add a splash of colour to your day with an art-inspired camp adventure! Through songs, stories and interesting art activities, Creative Crayons is a joyful way for kids to develop their fine motor skills and self-confidence as they get ready to start school. Children will love getting messy as they explore art through different colours, textures, and engaging sensory experiences. This camp features time for painting, drawing, collaging, making recycled material crafts and opportunities for little artists to use their imaginations to create beauty and express themselves.

Monday to Friday, July 20–24

1–2:30 p.m.
Westview School

Monday to Friday, July 27–31

10–11:30 a.m.
Maple Leaf School

Tuesday to Thursday, Aug. 4–6

10–11:30 a.m.
Maple Leaf School



SUMMER SPECIAL EVENTS

Countdown to Kindergarten Summer Special Events are FREE! Parents and caregivers are required to stay onsite to play, learn, and support their child(ren). Siblings are welcome to attend but must be registered in advance.

To register for Summer Special Events, please complete the online registration form: [Summer Special Events Registration Form 2026](#).

Alphabet Explorers

Join us on an alphabet-inspired adventure filled with great rhymes and books, educational games, and amazing art experiences. Using blocks, Play-Doh, and magnets, we'll play and learn about letters together. Young participants will also enjoy singing different versions of the alphabet song!

Friday, June 12

1–2:30 p.m.
Westview School

Thursday, July 2

1–2:30 p.m.
Maple Leaf School



Going on a Picnic Storytime

Celebrate the start of summer with a picnic playdate with your pals at Kinder Links! This special storytime is packed full of songs, educational games and stories about tasty picnic foods and little ants who'd love to join our party. Get ready to play 'Guess what's in the picnic basket' and count watermelon seeds.

Monday, June 29

10–11:30 a.m.
Maple Leaf School

Tuesday, June 30

10–11:30 a.m.
Westview School

Mr. Golden Sun—Stories & Ice Cream

Join us for "fun in the sun" as we sing songs about ice cream, waves at the beach, and swimming! We've selected some sun-sational stories about summer adventures, as well as educational games and crafts.

Friday, July 3

1–2:30 p.m.
Maple Leaf School

Thursday, Aug. 6

1–2:30 p.m.
Maple Leaf School



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Off To School We Go—Outdoor Adventures

With the new school year just around the corner, Off To School We Go—Outdoor Adventures is a fun and active way to get excited about starting school. This event features playtime with the parachute, group movement games and favourite songs and stories about kindergarten. Try out the school's play structure and chat with some great new friends! Families are encouraged to bring a blanket or lawn chair for circle time in the school field.

Thursday, July 2

10–11:30 a.m.

Westview School

Wednesday, Aug. 5

1–2:30 p.m.

Maple Leaf School

Oodles of Doodles

Get ready for messy, creative fun at Oodles of Doodles! Little artists will have the opportunity to make 2–3 crafts and collage activities using chalk, markers, pompoms, and more.

Our time together includes a parent-child circle time featuring favourite songs and rhymes, group stories, and book sharing.

Friday, July 3

10–11:30 a.m.

Westview School

Tuesday, Aug. 4

1–2:30 p.m.

Maple Leaf School

Painter's Playhouse

Paint some beautiful masterpieces! Young artists will create unique art exploring different textures and rich colours, using fingers, feet, paintbrushes, and interesting household items. This program also features a circle time filled with rhymes, stories, colours, shapes, and interactive games.

Friday, June 19

1–2:30 p.m.

Westview School

Thursday, July 2

10–11:30 a.m.

Maple Leaf School

School Bells Music & Storytime

School bells will soon be ringing throughout RETSD! Join the Countdown to Kindergarten team for a merry session filled with school songs, rhymes and art experiences. Together we'll play musical instruments, read kindergarten-themed stories, and enjoy numeracy games and activities.

Friday, June 5

1–2:30 p.m.

Westview School

Friday, July 3

10–11:30 a.m.

Maple Leaf School

Up, Up & Away Storytime

Time is sure to FLY as we have fun at this new story time experience!

Through songs and stories, young aviators will embark on an exciting adventure featuring planes, helicopters, kites, balloons, and other interesting things that soar through the skies. This high-energy program is filled with your favourite Kinder Links songs, active games, and a flight-themed art experience.

Monday, June 29

10–11:30 a.m.

Westview School

Tuesday, June 30

10–11:30 a.m.

Maple Leaf School

DROP IN GROUPS

No registration required

Wee Play & Learn—Drop-In Group

Let's shake out those wiggles and share some giggles as we play, learn, and enjoy each other's company. This relaxed drop-in program features free play with toys, puzzles, and Play-Doh, and the opportunity to make a craft. Our time together ends with a lively circle time filled with favourite songs and stories.

WESTVIEW SCHOOL

Please enter the building using the Ravelston Ave. W. entrance doors. Kinder Links Classroom (Room 26)

Fridays, June 5–26

10 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

Westview School

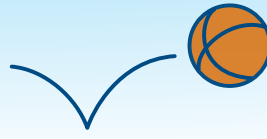
MAPLE LEAF SCHOOL

Please enter the building off the side parking lot door closest to McIvor Ave. Kinder Links Classroom (Room 17)

Monday to Friday, July 6–Aug. 6

10:30 a.m.–12 p.m.

Maple Leaf School



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WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN BAGS

Every family registering for kindergarten in 2026 will receive a FREE bag full of interesting materials, resources, and educational activities. This can be enjoyed by both parents and children during the months leading up to kindergarten. The contents of the Welcome to Kindergarten bag have been carefully chosen by our staff to give your child the opportunity to practise their skills and get excited for starting school in the fall! Items in the bag include an interactive calendar, crayons, scissors with instructions for use, math-related items such as cards and dice, and a pencil with a sharpener. A variety of parenting resources are also included.

Does Your Child Have Additional Support Needs?

Concerned that your child may require additional support to participate in educational programming in kindergarten? Contact Lindsay Lawrence, director of student services, at 204.669.5643.

Is Your Child Anxious?

As excited as your child may be about starting school, they may also be feeling a little bit anxious or worried. This is quite normal; after all, this is a pretty big life change for both of you! Here are some things you can do to help increase your child's comfort level and decrease anxiety.

Acknowledge your child's feelings of fear or uncertainty. Help your child to name these feelings and then problem-solve together. "It sounds like you're worried about starting school. Sometimes I get worried, too, when I'm trying something new. Here's an idea that works for me."

Practise or rehearse the first day. Go



through your daily routine as if it was the actual day—waking up, getting dressed, eating breakfast, brushing teeth, and leaving the house on time. If your child is walking to school, take the route with them. When you arrive at the school, spend some time on the playground so it starts to feel familiar; then, pretend it's "home time" and you've arrived to pick them up. If your child will be taking the bus, do the same thing, except your route will take you to the bus stop.

Keep your daily routine as regular as possible. Predictable, orderly daily routines help children feel safe and

confident, and allow them to step easily from the comfort of the home to the classroom. Bedtime is a great time to have a sincere conversation with your child. Use this opportunity to listen with your heart, as well as your head, and send them to sleep feeling safe and cherished.

Be positive and optimistic. Make sure the attitude you are presenting to your child about this transition is positive and optimistic. Going to school is a normal part of everyone's life. If your child sees that you are feeling confident and at ease about this new venture, they will eventually feel that way, too.



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RHYME TIME

Help your child get excited for kindergarten by singing these special songs at home together.

Kindergarten, Here We Come

Tune: Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Kindergarten, here we come
We know we'll have so much fun
Lots of things to make and do
Reading, writing, counting, too
Kindergarten, here we come
We know we'll have so much fun

Kindergarten in the Fall

Tune: She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain

We'll be going to kindergarten
In the fall-Hooray!
We'll be going to kindergarten
In the fall-Hooray!
Oh, we are going to school
And it's going to be so cool
Yes, we're going to kindergarten
In the fall—Hooray!



STORY TIME

Cuddle up together with a good book about kindergarten. Visit your local library to pick up some nice kindergarten stories, including: *The Night Before Kindergarten* by Natasha Wing, *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn, and *Kindergarten Rocks* by Katie Davis.

A TIME FOR LEARNING & JOY

Learning to Be a Friend

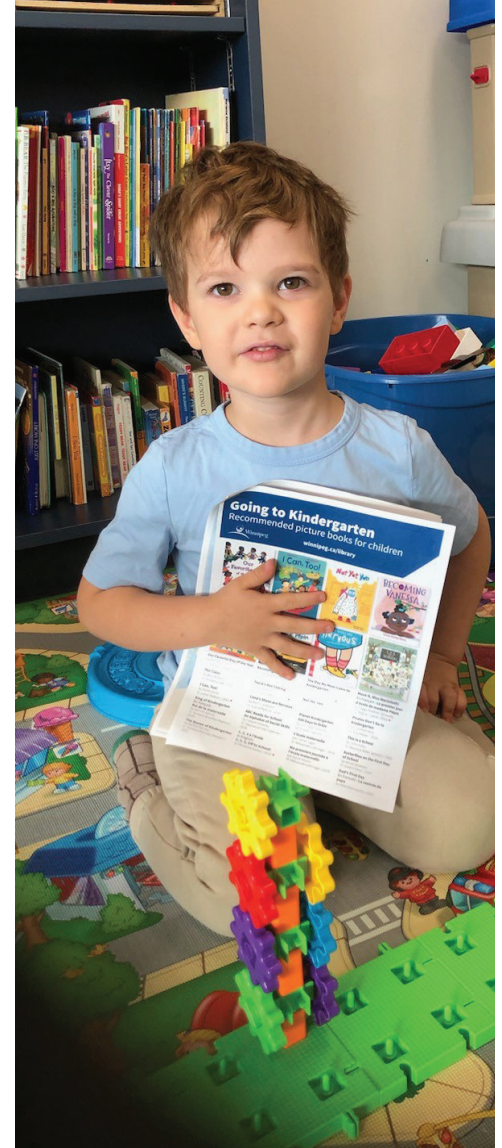
- Encourage your child to include others when they play.
- Praise your child when they are helpful or kind to others.
- Plan play times for your child with other children

Learning to Be Independent

- Encourage your child to use words and politely ask for help.
- Help your child memorize their phone number and address.
- Spend a little time each day practising how to do zippers, buttons, and shoes.
- Encourage your child to look after themselves in the bathroom.

Getting Ready for the Classroom

- Make listening a family habit.
- Play memory and number games with cards and dice.
- Talk about signs in the neighbourhood.



CHILDREN WHO ARE READY FOR SCHOOL

- Are eager to try new things
- Are curious about the world
- Get along with others
- Follow rules and instructions
- Take care of their belongings
- Show an interest in books
- Know some letters of the alphabet
- Can print their own names
- Recognize numbers and can count

IT'S FREE!

Countdown to Kindergarten Preschool Growing & Learning Days

Do you have a child who will be starting kindergarten in RETSD in September 2026?

At this FREE event, your child will have the opportunity to enjoy educational games and activities with kindergarten, resource, and gym teachers, play musical instruments, and get their vision and hearing screened. Meet our friendly principals, student support staff, and community service providers to help your child get ready for the adventure of school.

The activities and screening stations take approximately 60 minutes to complete.

Angus McKay, École Neil Campbell, École Springfield Heights,
Lord Wolseley, Polson, Prince Edward, Princess Margaret
Wednesday, April 29, 4:30–6:30 p.m.
École Neil Campbell School, 845 Golspie St.

Bernie Wolfe, École Centrale, Joseph Teres School, Westview
Thursday, May 7, 4:30–6:30 p.m.
Bernie Wolfe School, 95 Bournais Dr.

Bertrun E. Glavin, École Salisbury Morse Place, Hampstead,
John de Graff, Sherwood School
Wednesday, May 13, 4:30–6:30 p.m.
École Salisbury Morse Place School, 795 Prince Rupert Ave.

École Margaret-Underhill, Harold Hatcher, Radisson, Wayoata
Thursday, May 21, 4:30–6:30 p.m.
Wayoata School, 605 Wayoata St.

École Birds Hill, Donwood, Dr. Hamilton, École Sun Valley, Emerson,
John Pritchard, Maple Leaf
Wednesday, May 27, 4:30–6:30 p.m.
Donwood School, 400 Donwood Dr.

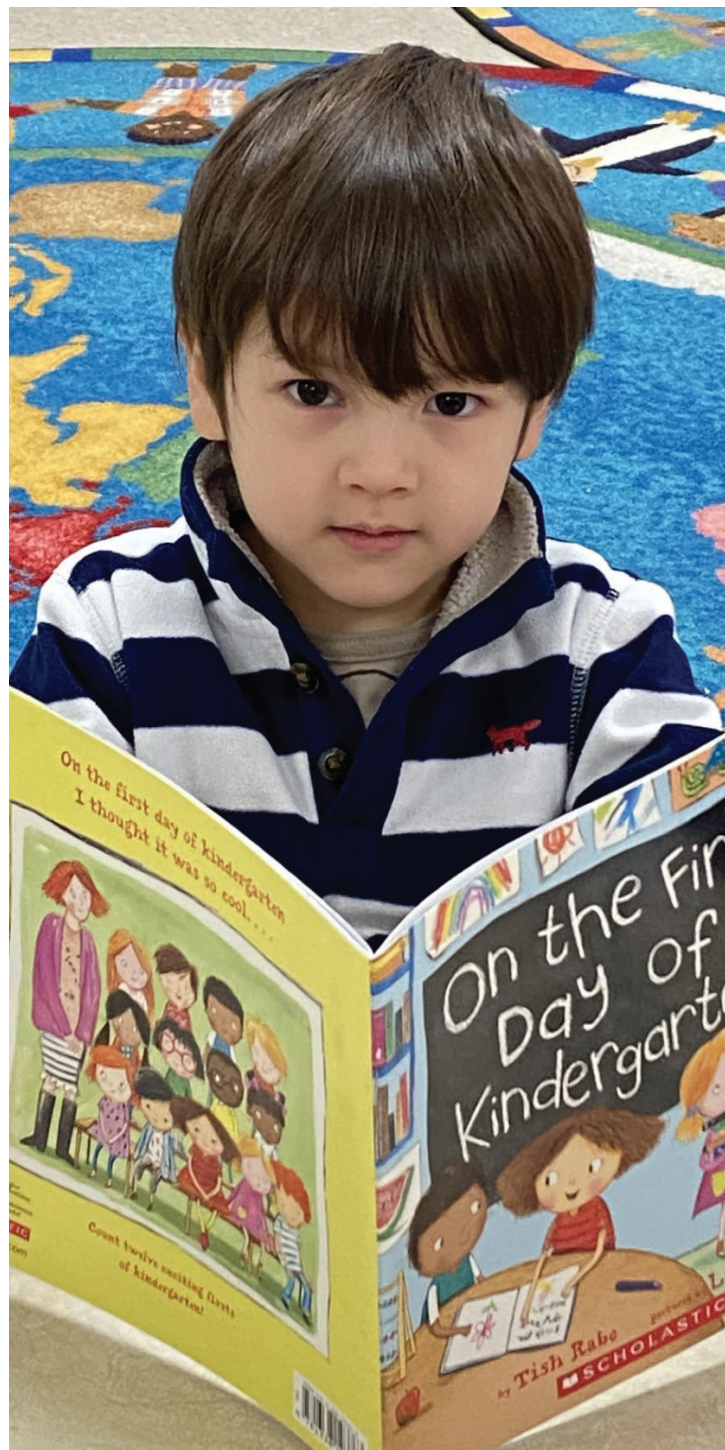
Registration for these events begins March 2, 2026

Register online:



Or call: 204.669.4043

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FREE KINDER LINKS PROGRAMS

Kinder Links programs provide young families—with children birth to age five—with the opportunity to play, learn, and connect with each other.

These FREE parent-child programs feature fun, educational ways to explore literacy, numeracy, physical health and well-being, and creativity through art experiences, rhymes, stories, activities, and games.

Kinder Links programs are an excellent way for young children to develop a lifelong passion for learning, develop their skills and self-confidence, and help prepare them for the adventure of school.

They offer a welcoming, inclusive place where parents and caregivers can meet other families from the community, develop new friendships, and share parenting resources. Join in the fun mornings, afternoons, evenings, and weekends from September to June. Visit the [Kinder Links](#) page on the RETSD website for a list of parent-child programs, special events, and parenting support workshops.

FREE BABY GIFT FOR NEW PARENTS

Did you just have a baby? RETSD and the Early Childhood Matters Parent Child Coalitions in River East and Transcona would like to help you

celebrate this wonderful event. We have a book, *I Love It When You*, which we'd love to give to you to keep and enjoy. To receive your FREE book, contact us at kinderlinks@retsd.mb.ca or 204.669.4043. Please leave us your mailing address, child's name, and child's date of birth.

THE EARLY LEARNING TEAM

We're pleased to provide early learning and family support to families living in River East Transcona. Feel free to contact us if you have questions regarding our preschool initiatives.

Ryan Francis

Assistant Superintendent—Educational Services and Planning

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Maureen Vaags

Manager of Community Initiatives

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Kelly Martino

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Co-ordinator—Preschool

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The Board of Trustees meets the first and third Tuesday of each month. You are welcome to attend, either in person or online. For more information about the Board of Trustees, visit: www.retsd.mb.ca > Your RETSD > Board of Trustees