A Guide to Effective Timetabling in Kindergarten

Prepared by:
The Curriculum the Accountability Team
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The typical Kindergarten day is demanding and full of activity especially in half-day programs. Developing a quality Kindergarten program involves skilful, reflective scheduling based on the developmental needs and interests of young children and the program areas as outlined by The Kindergarten Program (Ministry of Education, 2006). When planning for a quality Kindergarten program, careful consideration is given to the effective use of time. Effective timetabling that allocates time for direct instruction, independent application and exploration throughout the day and week in all program areas contributes to the development of the whole child.

The Kindergarten Program suggests that teachers must plan for large group instruction, small group activities and individual learning activities. When planning time for large group instruction, thought must be given to:

- Attention span of the children
- Length of time they have attended school
- Familiarity with routines
- Strengths, needs and interests of children

When planning time for small group or individual learning activities, teachers should:

- Allow time for revisiting or extending activities
- Plan for a balance of teacher-initiated and child initiated learning activities
- Plan for a daily block of time for student-selected learning activities
- Consider the attention span of the children

Teacher must also plan for a daily block of time for literacy and numeracy instruction. Such instruction may take place in both large and small groups (p. 23).

A Guide to Effective Instruction in Reading, Kindergarten to Grade 3 (Ministry of Education 2003) states that Kindergarten timetables are to include a significant block of time for “literacy-related activities”- ideally 45-60 minutes daily for half day classes. In addition, the Early Math Strategy: the Report of the Expert Panel on Early Math in Ontario (Ministry of Education, 2003) suggests the provision of sufficient blocks of time devoted to math as well as threading mathematics throughout the day. It states that “In Junior and Senior Kindergarten, there should be focused time, approximately 20 minutes every day for mathematics, this may take the form of a guided or a shared experience, or of students participating in a centre focused on mathematics. In addition to this time, students should be engaged in consolidating their mathematical learning in centres within the classroom.” (p.28)
Thus when planning for effective timetables, Kindergarten teachers must give overall consideration to:

- Time for focused instruction
- Adequate time for activities involving large groups, small groups and individual learning
- A full range of learning experiences that address the needs of all children recognizing that children progress at different rates
- Designated time each day for reading, writing and mathematics
- Time for learning-based play at classroom centres in which literacy and numeracy are embedded
- A balance of quiet and more active activities
- Time for children to select activities
- Daily creative movement and physical activity

### Daily Kindergarten Opportunities

When creating an effective timetable for Kindergarten, **daily** opportunities are provided for:

- ✔ Prayer (as suggested from *In God’s Image*)
- ✔ Learning-based play at centres that address all program areas and imbed opportunities for literacy and numeracy development
- ✔ Language instruction (45-60 minutes) including: teacher read aloud, opportunities for independent reading and writing, shared reading, shared or interactive writing, phonemic awareness activities and literacy-related activities at learning centres
- ✔ Math instruction (approximately 20 minutes everyday) that may include main circle or circle activities or tabletop activities or opportunities to visit the math centre
- ✔ Student sharing (e.g. news telling, show and tell, turn and talk, author’s chair)
- ✔ Creative movement and physical activity
- ✔ The Arts (opportunities for drama, dance, visual arts or music at learning centres or during whole class instruction or small group work)

### Weekly Kindergarten Opportunities

When creating an effective timetable for Kindergarten, **weekly** opportunities are provided for:

- ✔ Integrated lessons from *In God’s Image* (two to three times a week)
- ✔ Physical Education or Outdoor play (twice a week for 30 minutes)
- ✔ Library (once a week for 20-30 minutes)
- ✔ Language instruction including guided writing, guided reading and phonics/word study work (e.g., *Animating Language and Literacy, word wall*)
- ✔ Science and technology instruction
- ✔ Vocal Music (20-30 minutes per week)
In order to meet Ministry and Board requirements, integration of program areas is key. This can be accomplished through the use of effective instructional strategies, thoughtful planning and appropriate cross-curricular materials. The integration of program areas allows the teacher to teach the required curriculum in a timely and meaningful fashion. It also deepens student learning and understanding, broadens schema and makes connections among different domains.

The following pages provide sample timetables intended to offer possible models for consideration with an awareness of local decisions regarding gym, library and vocal music scheduling and availability.

References:

A Guide to Effective Instruction in Reading, Kindergarten to Grade 3 (Ministry of Education 2003)
Learning Blocks for Literacy and Numeracy (Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, 2003)
The Kindergarten Program (Ministry of Education, 2006)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00-9:15</td>
<td>Entry Routines; Sign In, Reading Morning Message&lt;br&gt;Opening Exercises: O'Canada, Prayer and Calendar</td>
<td>Whole Class Instruction&lt;br&gt;(In God’s Image, Language, Math, Science &amp; Technology, The Arts)</td>
<td>Physical Education or Outdoor Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30-10:15</td>
<td>9:30-10:00&lt;br&gt;Library&lt;br&gt;(Children self-select from a range of activities that address all program areas.)</td>
<td>Learning-Based Play at Centres&lt;br&gt;(Children self-select from a range of activities that address all program areas.)</td>
<td>Physical Education or Outdoor Play</td>
<td>10:00-10:30&lt;br&gt;Vocal Music</td>
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<td>10:15-10:30</td>
<td>Tidy Up&lt;br&gt;Whole Class Sharing, Newstelling, Author’s Chair</td>
<td>10:15-10:30&lt;br&gt;Tidy Up&lt;br&gt;Whole Class Sharing, Newstelling, Author’s Chair</td>
<td>Physical Education or Outdoor Play</td>
<td>10:00-10:30&lt;br&gt;Vocal Music</td>
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<td>10:30-10:45</td>
<td>Fitness Break, Snack</td>
<td>10:30-10:45&lt;br&gt;Fitness Break, Snack</td>
<td>Physical Education or Outdoor Play</td>
<td>10:00-10:30&lt;br&gt;Vocal Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45-10:55</td>
<td>Independent Reading Stations</td>
<td>10:45-10:55&lt;br&gt;Independent Reading Stations</td>
<td>Physical Education or Outdoor Play</td>
<td>10:00-10:30&lt;br&gt;Vocal Music</td>
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<td>10:55-11:20</td>
<td>11:00-11:30&lt;br&gt;Math (This may include: main circle, circle activities, tabletop activity or math centre)</td>
<td>11:00-11:30&lt;br&gt;Math (This may include: main circle, circle activities, tabletop activity or math centre)</td>
<td>Physical Education or Outdoor Play</td>
<td>10:00-10:30&lt;br&gt;Vocal Music</td>
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<td>11:20-11:25</td>
<td>Music and Creative Movement, Teacher Read Aloud</td>
<td>11:20-11:25&lt;br&gt;Music and Creative Movement, Teacher Read Aloud</td>
<td>Physical Education or Outdoor Play</td>
<td>10:00-10:30&lt;br&gt;Vocal Music</td>
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<td>11:25-11:30</td>
<td>Prayers, Prepare for Dismissal</td>
<td>11:25-11:30&lt;br&gt;Prayers, Prepare for Dismissal</td>
<td>Physical Education or Outdoor Play</td>
<td>10:00-10:30&lt;br&gt;Vocal Music</td>
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### Sample Half-Day Kindergarten Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00-9:15</td>
<td>9:00-9:30</td>
<td>Entry Routines</td>
<td>Opening Exercises: O’Canada, Prayer, Calendar, Weather, Newstelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15-9:30</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Whole Class Shared Reading/Shared Writing</td>
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<td>9:30-10:15</td>
<td>Learning Based Play at Centres</td>
<td>Small Group and/or Individual Instruction with Teacher</td>
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<td>9:30-10:00 Physical Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30-10:15</td>
<td>(Children self-select from a range of activities that address all program areas.)</td>
<td>(This may include: shared/guided reading, guided writing, reading response activities, phonemic awareness/word study work, math circle, math tabletop activities, art activities, conferences etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15-10:30</td>
<td>Tidy Up</td>
<td>Whole Class Sharing, Newstelling, Author’s Chair</td>
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<td>10:00-10:30 Library</td>
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<td>10:30-10:45</td>
<td>Snack</td>
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<td>10:30-10:45</td>
<td>followed by Independent Reading Stations</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45-11:15</td>
<td>Vocal Music</td>
<td>Whole Class Instruction</td>
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<td>Whole Class Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15-11:30</td>
<td>Teacher Read Aloud, Movement &amp; Music, Drama</td>
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<td>Prayer, Prepare for Dismissal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<td>1:00-1:35</td>
<td><strong>Sign In Routines, Planning Board, Learning-Based Play at Centres</strong></td>
<td><strong>Small Group and/or Individual Instruction with Teacher</strong></td>
<td><em>(This may include: shared/guided reading, guided writing, reading response activities, phonemic awareness/word study work, math circle, math tabletop activities, art activities, conferences etc.)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1:00-1:35</strong></td>
<td><strong>1:30-2:00</strong></td>
<td><strong>Calendar, News, Student Sharing and Whole Class Instruction</strong></td>
<td><em>(In God’s Image, Language, Math, Science &amp; Technology, The Arts)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1:35-2:00</td>
<td><strong>Library</strong> 1:30-2:00</td>
<td><strong>Snack</strong> 1:30-2:00</td>
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<td><strong>Snack</strong> followed by <strong>Independent Reading Stations</strong></td>
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<td>2:00-2:15</td>
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<td><strong>Outdoor Play</strong></td>
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<td>2:15-2:30</td>
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<td>2:30-3:00</td>
<td><strong>Math</strong> <em>(Main circle, circle activities, tabletop activity or math centre)</em></td>
<td><strong>Math</strong> <em>(Main circle, circle activities, tabletop activity or math centre)</em></td>
<td><strong>Physical Education</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vocal Music</strong></td>
<td><strong>Physical Education</strong></td>
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<td>3:00-3:15</td>
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<td>3:20-3:30</td>
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<td><strong>Teacher Read Aloud, Music, Drama and Creative Movement</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1:00-1:10</td>
<td><strong>Entry Routines</strong></td>
<td><strong>Independent Reading</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1:10-1:20</td>
<td><strong>Opening Exercises: O’Canada, Prayer, Calendar, Message</strong> (Shared reading and/or writing)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:35-2:20</td>
<td><strong>Learning Based Play at Centres</strong></td>
<td><strong>Small Group and/or Individual Instruction with Teacher</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2:00-2:20 Vocal Music</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2:20-2:30</td>
<td><strong>Tidy up</strong></td>
<td><strong>Whole Class Sharing and Newstelling</strong></td>
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<td>2:30-3:00</td>
<td><strong>Physical Education</strong></td>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td><strong>Physical Education</strong></td>
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<td>3:00-3:15</td>
<td><strong>Teacher Read Aloud, Music, Drama and Movement, Prayer</strong></td>
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<td>3:15-3:30</td>
<td><strong>Outdoor Play, Dismissal from Outside</strong></td>
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