

Welcome To KINDERGARTEN

Bentley School ■ Phone: 403 - 748 - 3770 ■ <https://bentley.wolfcreek.ab.ca/>

Welcome Message from Mrs. Cole 😊



Welcome to Kindergarten! My name is Darci Cole, and I am excited to be your child's Kindergarten teacher this year! We are going to have an incredible year, filled with fun, discovery and new learning adventures.

I grew up on a dairy and grain farm just outside of Bentley. I now reside on an acreage between Bentley and Sylvan Lake with my husband and our 3 wonderful daughters. As a family, we enjoy spending our winters in the hockey arena or on the ski hill, and our summers in the garden, at the beach or on a muddy dirt bike trail.

I began my teaching career in a small, K-9 school in Bluffton, where I taught grades 2 through 6. In 2021, I joined the amazing staff at Bentley School, teaching grade 4. I moved to Kindergarten last year and had the most wonderful and rewarding year. I am so excited for the opportunity to guide your child through such an important year of growth and learning. I look forward to meeting you and your child soon!

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at darci.cole@wolfcreek.ab.ca or 403-748-3770 ext. 4134.

Kindergarten Structure

Your child has been placed in the **Tuesday/Thursday** full day program at Bentley School. In addition to Tuesdays and Thursdays, your child will also come to a handful of extra Fridays throughout the school year; please put these dates in your calendar:

Extra Fridays

October 27, December 1, January 26, February 16, March 8, May 10 and June 7

Meet the Teacher Night

I will be hosting a *Meet the Teacher Night* on Thursday, August 31st. Feel free to drop in with your child anytime between 6:00 pm and 7:00 p.m. Looking forward to seeing you!

How Does Staggered Entry Work?

In 2020, Bentley School moved to a staggered entry for the first week of school. With a staggered entry, children will have a chance to become familiar with their teacher and classroom in a small group setting. This also allows the teacher and support staff an opportunity to get to know the children better, including their strengths and needs. During our staggered entry week, the day your child attends is based on their last name. For the first week of school, your child will attend **ONLY ONE** of the following days: Tuesday, September 5th or Thursday, September 7th.

★ If your child's last name starts with letter A-L, they'll come to school on Tues. Sept. 5th

★ If your child's last name starts with letter M-Z, they'll come to school on Thur. Sept. 7th

The hours for the staggered entry day are 9:00 am – 11:00 am. Students must be brought to school and picked up by a parent or guardian on their designated day, as **no busing is provided this week for Kindergarten.**

When does the first full day of Kindergarten start?

Our first full day of Kindergarten, with busing, starts on **Tuesday, September 12th!** Please ensure you are registered for busing through your PowerSchool Online Payments portal on the homepage of our website.

Where do I drop my child off?

Drop off and pick-up will be at the North doors (E2) of the elementary school. If you are driving, please park in the North parking lot and do your best to make drop-off and pick-up as brief as possible. 😊

Bus Riders: For the first part of the school year, we will have a staff member collect your child from the bus and bring them to the Kindergarten entrance. We will also have a staff member take all bus riders at the end of the day and place them on their correct bus. If there is a last minute change in regards to your child's regular pick-up schedule, please contact the office. Please note, we cannot guarantee that emails sent to your child's classroom teacher will be read in time.

What time does school start & end?

The Kindergarten doors are open at 8:20 am and classes start at 8:30 am. If you are running late for drop-off in the morning and the doors are locked, there is a doorbell just outside our entrance that you can ring to alert us in the classroom. At the end of the day, bus riders will be escorted to their bus at approximately 3:05 pm. Students being picked up are dismissed between 3:05 and 3:15 pm. Please note, students who do not ride the bus *cannot* leave the school without a parent/guardian or older sibling.

What do I do if my child is going to be absent?

If your child is going to be away, late or picked up early, the best practice is to or email the office at bentley@wolfcreek.ab.ca and cc myself at darci.cole@wolfcreek.ab.ca. Alternatively, you can call the office at 403-748-3770. Please note that our absence management system will notify you if you do not call in to excuse your child's absence.

How do I pay my school fees?

Kindergarten school fees are \$80, which covers most of the supplies students will use throughout the year and a technology fee. There may be additional fees charged later in the year for field trips. Payments can be made through the PowerSchool & Online Payments parent portal on the homepage of our website. Cash or cheques payable to "Wolf Creek Public Schools" can also be taken in at the office.

How do I keep up-to-date with school activities/events?

Once a month, Bentley School will email a newsletter to all parents. You can also subscribe to the online calendar at <https://bentley.wolfcreek.ab.ca/calendar>. You might also want to follow *Bentley School - Home of the Panthers* on Facebook and *bentleyschool1* on Instagram for school related updates, information and pictures!

For Kindergarten specific dates and information, I will be primarily communicating with parents via email and Seesaw. The Seesaw app is a wonderful communication platform which I will use to share information, reminders, photos, videos and assessments. You will receive an invite to access your child's Seesaw account in the fall. I will also be sending home a calendar of events every month.

How do I volunteer at the school?

In Kindergarten, we welcome volunteers in the classroom! All volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Application Form, Criminal Record Declaration Form and Vulnerable Sector Check Application (in certain circumstances). These forms can be found at <https://bentley.wolfcreek.ab.ca/parents/volunteer-information>.

Student Demographic Update Forms

It is very important for us to have updated information regarding your child. All registered students will receive a student demographic update form emailed to their parents at the end of August. These forms are mandatory and *must* be completed. Please follow the instructions provided in the email. Throughout the year, please notify us of any changes to your phone numbers, address, emergency contacts, etc, by calling the school.

Supplies for Kindergarten

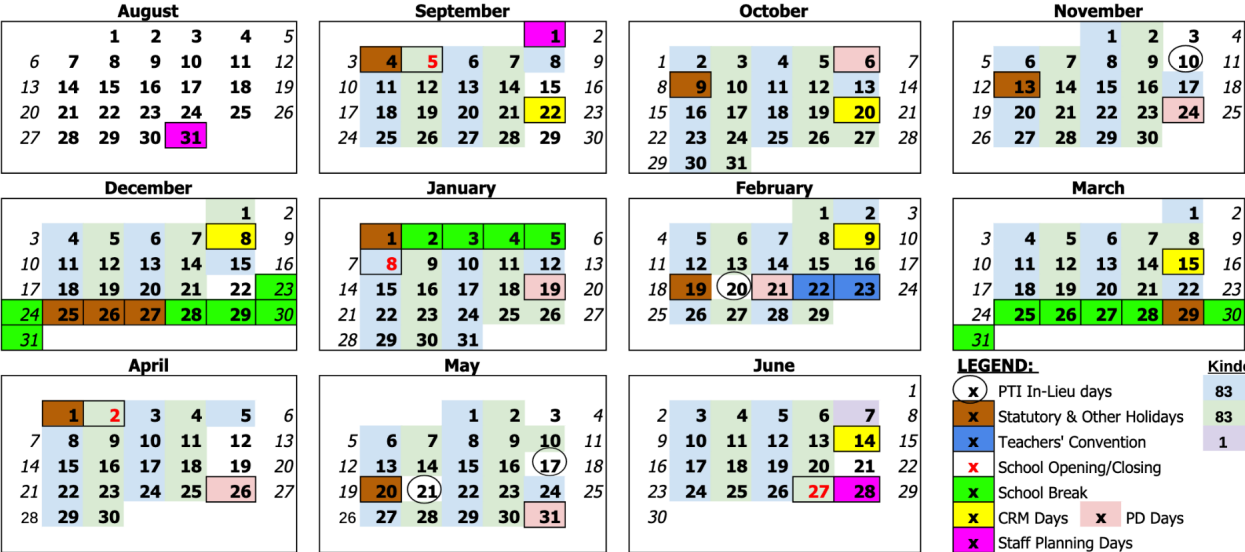
- ☐ A complete set of spare clothes including underwear, socks, pants and a sweater. Please store these in a Ziploc bag with your child's name on it. These extra clothes will remain in their locker.
- ☐ Running shoes with velcro and non-marking soles (indoor shoes). Please print your child's name on the outside heel as it is easier for them to find that way.
- ☐ A *large* backpack that is big enough to hold your child's lunch kit, snow pants, mittens, toques, etc.
- ☐ A lunch kit that students can open independently and doesn't take up too much room in their backpack.
- ☐ One box of Kleenex that will be shared with the class.
- ☐ One box of 10-15 large (one gallon) Ziploc brand bags.

★ *Please bring all supplies mentioned above to your child's staggered entry day, and make sure that EVERYTHING is labelled so belongings don't get lost or mixed up.*

2023-2024 Bentley School Kindergarten Calendar

BENTLEY SCHOOL 2023 - 2024 School Year KINDERGARTEN CALENDAR

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|-------------------|---------------------------|--|--------------|-----------------|
| August | Aug. 31 | Staff Planning Day | Staff | Students |
| September | Sept. 1 | Staff Planning Day | 1 | 0 |
| | Sept. 4 | Labour Day | | |
| | Sept. 5 | Students' First Day | | |
| | Sept. 22 | Staff Collaboration Day | 20 | 18 |
| October | Oct. 6 | Staff Collaboration Day | | |
| | Oct. 9 | Thanksgiving Day | | |
| | Oct. 20 | Staff Collaboration Day | 21 | 19 |
| November | Nov. 10 | Staff Earned Day Off (In-Lieu for Parent-Teacher Interviews) | | |
| | Nov. 13 | Stat in Lieu - Remembrance Day | | |
| | Nov. 24 | Staff Collaboration Day | 21 | 19 |
| December | Dec. 8 | Staff Collaboration Day | | |
| | Dec. 25, 26, 27 | Christmas Stat Holidays | | |
| | Dec. 23 | Christmas Break (Dec 23- Jan 5 inclusive) | 16 | 15 |
| January | Jan. 1 | New Years Day Stat | | |
| | Jan. 8 | First day back after Holiday Break | | |
| | Jan. 19 | Staff Collaboration Day | 18 | 17 |
| | Jan. 31 | Conclusion of First Semester | | |
| | Semester One Total | | 97 | 88 |
| February | Feb. 1 | Commencement of Second Semester | | |
| | Feb. 9 | Staff Collaboration Day | | |
| | Feb. 19 | Family Day | | |
| | Feb. 20 | Staff Earned Day Off (In-Lieu for Parent-Teacher Interviews) | | |
| | Feb. 21 | Staff Collaboration Day | | |
| | Feb. 22 & 23 | Teachers' Convention | 19 | 15 |
| March | Mar. 15 | Staff Collaboration Day | | |
| | Mar. 25 | Spring Break (March 25 to April 1 inclusive) | | |
| | Mar. 29 | Good Friday | 16 | 15 |
| April | Apr. 1 | Easter Monday | | |
| | Apr. 26 | Staff Collaboration Day | 21 | 20 |
| May | May 17 | Staff Earned Day Off (In-Lieu for Parent-Teacher Interviews) | | |
| | May 20 | Victoria Day | | |
| | May 21 | Staff Earned Day Off (In-Lieu for Parent-Teacher Interviews) | | |
| | May 31 | Staff Collaboration Day | 21 | 19 |
| June | Jun. 14 | Staff Collaboration Day | | |
| | Jun. 27 | Students' Last Day | | |
| | Jun. 28 | Teacher Evaluation Day (final staff day) | 20 | 18 |
| | Semester Two Total | | 97 | 87 |
| Year Total | | | 194 | 175 |

Tips for Shopping for Your Kindergartener

- ★ Backpacks - Please ensure backpacks are big enough to hold your child's lunch kit and a pair of snow pants. Lots of pockets aren't necessary.
- ★ Please ensure your child is dressed for the weather as we go outside every day. Please label all outerwear and footwear. When buying clothing, please consider whether your child can get it on independently - this is important.
- ★ Indoor shoes - Suitable for the gym (non-marking soles). Please ensure your child can get them on and off independently. Please do not send shoes with laces.
- ★ Lunch kits and containers - Please make sure they are a suitable size, that their lunch kit fits in their backpack and that they can open containers independently. This is a great thing to practice at home over the summer!
- ★ Mittens - Mittens are much preferred over gloves as they are warmer and easier to put on. During the winter, please make sure your child has waterproof mittens every single day. Knitted or fleece mittens are not recommended, as they get coated with snow, become damp and leave little fingers cold. Have your child try on their winter coat and mittens at home to ensure they can put them on easily and independently.
- ★ Snow pants - Please ensure your child can put on and take off their snow pants on their own. Practice having your child put them on at home and pull them over top of their boots.
- ★ Coats/Toques - Coats with hoods are great, but they often fall off easily. Once winter arrives, please send a warm toque to school with your child.
- ★ Boots (winter and rubber) - Please check to make sure that your child can pull their boots on and off independently. Boots that don't need to be tied are preferable - independence is the goal!

Kindergarten Philosophy

Kindergarten is focused on the whole child, this means that in our Kindergarten classroom we will meet your child where they are at to develop their skills, attitudes and knowledge. We will use appropriate experiences and play to enrich all areas of their learning and development.

Kindergarten is a carefully planned program of unstructured and structured learning experiences that help children to develop physically, socially, emotionally, culturally and intellectually. It is important to provide a program that balances development in each area and emphasizes the process of learning.

Kindergarten provides a warm, friendly environment where each child works to meet personal needs according to ability and previous experience. Activities emphasize the strengths, skills and interests children bring to school, and help to stimulate new interests, extend experiences and strengthen areas needing growth.

Kindergarten offers opportunities for children to learn through the manipulation of concrete materials. Experiences involve all of the child's senses, and develop through playing, observing, exploring, experimenting and discovering. These activities form the foundation which abstract concepts are built upon.

Kindergarten focuses on developing the child's ability to understand and use language. Language is used to reinforce a variety of experiences that extend vocabulary, develop listening and speaking skills, and build concepts.

How can you help prepare your child for Kindergarten?

For a helpful and insightful article on how to prepare your child for Kindergarten, I'd like to encourage you to read "The Real Kindergarten Readiness" by Susie Allison, M.Ed, author of *Playing Preschool* and *Busy Toddler's Guide to Actual Parenting*:

<https://busytoddler.com/kindergarten-readiness/>

Thank you for entrusting me with your child for the upcoming school year. Kindergarten will be a great year of growth, both socially and academically. I will strive to do my best every single day, to guide your child through a variety of play opportunities, learning experiences and FUN! I am looking forward to exploring the bright, new and exciting world of Kindergarten with your child! Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely, Mrs. Darci Cole