

ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER

February 2026

Dates to Remember:

January 30 - Parent Connection Day - Regular Program is Not operating.
February 2 - Groundhog Day
February 7 - Outdoor Family Event 9-11:30am
February 14 - Valentine's Day
February 16 - Family Day -School is Closed
February 17 - Lunar New Year - Year of the Horse
February 17 Ramadan Begins at Sunset
February 18 - Ash Wednesday
February 20 - Parent Coffee Hour
February 25 - Pink Shirt Day

Weekly Menu

February 2-6 Week #2
February 9-13 Week #3
February 17-20 Week #4
February 23-27 Week #1
Menus posted on the website

Parent Coffee Hour

Friday, February 20th we will be hosting a **Parent Coffee Chat Time** from 9:30 -11:00am in the church parlour downstairs. Susan Butler an OT from Kidsability will be here to chat about picky eating. Hope you can join us!

Winter Outdoor Event with Bienenstock

Join the St. John's Team and a Team from Bienenstock

Natural Playgrounds on

Saturday February 7th , 2026 from 9:00am until 11:30am for some outdoor learning experiences and fun time with your family!

We will explore the opportunities that winter has to offer while showcasing the importance of outdoor unstructured free play. Let us take advantage of what 'mother nature' has so generously provided; cold weather, snow and ice and learn how to keep children engaged, happy and warm. We will focus on the tools and loose parts that are needed to support big body play, problem-solving and social skills during the winter months. Activities include repurposing Christmas trees, creating shelters, converting mud kitchens into snow and ice utopias, turning slippery surfaces into manageable learning experiences, and being creative with our playground's snowy palette. Work with what you have and be amazed by the children's engagement and smiling faces!

Come dressed for the weather!

We hope you and your family are able to join us outdoors for this exciting opportunity!

ST. JOHN'S STAFF WOULD LIKE TO SAY; “THANK YOU!”

Words cannot express our gratitude to our St. John's families for their generosity this holiday season.

When all the packages from amazon where showing up at the door, we were overjoyed by the generosity of our families. We are deeply grateful for the new toys, craft supplies and materials that we have received for our classrooms, along with year end donations. These items both large and small are so valuable for our everyday program here at St. John's. It means so much that you would take the time to think of us and the needs of the children we serve.

We are continually thankful for your support of our program everyday and your kind words of thanks and gratitude to our team mean the world to us.

Thank you again from all of us here at St. John's Nursery School.

Riley's Family

Alister's Family

Walter's Family

Carter's Family

Isabelle's Family

Sutton and Bowen's Family

Lily's Family

Walker and Reid's Family

Mai's Family

Camryn's Family

Stevie's Family

German's Family

Grace's Family



Georgia's Family

Lachlan's Family

Slinger Solutions

Colter and Cash's Family

Beau's Family

Marie's Family **Allison - previous staff**

Xterra Construction - Alumni



New Faces Around The School

Please join us as we welcome Lexi and Michelle. They are both students of WLU studying in the Bachelor of Education Program.



Lexi has joined the Seedling room in the morning and Maple in the afternoon Thursdayd until April 23rd.



Michelle has joined the Oak room all day on Thursdays until April 9th.

Registration for 2026-2027

St. John's registration for the upcoming school year for inhouse families will begin on March 2nd 2026. We will send out a link to all families currently attending our program to confirm if your child is returning for the 2026-2027 school year you will need to select which program and days you would like your child to attend. This is when you can also register younger siblings.

We will continue to operate our 6 hour program with 2 time slots: 9am-3pm, or 9:30m-3:30pm Monday through Thursday and Fridays 9am-12:30pm (including lunch). We will also offer our ½ day morning preschool program with 2 timeslots: 9am-12:00 (no lunch) and 9am-12:30 (includes lunch). And the Toddler program will be 9:00am-12:00pm (no lunch).

Registration will be open to our general OneList beginning March 23rd, 2026.

Children born in 2021 and 2022 qualify to attend all day kindergarten in the school board starting September. If your child is off to school in the fall, you will need to contact your local elementary school to register them. Kindergarten registration is currently happening in Waterloo Region. We can assist you in finding your local school if you are unsure how to find out.

Kindergarten Registration

Families can register their child(ren) for:

- a) Kindergarten
- b) Before and After School Programs

Kindergarten plays a crucial role in laying a strong foundation for learning within a safe and caring play-based setting. It allows students to develop essential skills in literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional learning.

Who can register for Kindergarten?

Children born in 2021 and 2022 are eligible for Kindergarten · Children born in 2021 are eligible for Senior Kindergarten If your child is already enrolled in Kindergarten, you do not need to register again. After completing the online registration, you will be invited to an appointment to review your registration documents at your local public school.

[Register Today](#)

Income Tax Receipts for 2024:

Income tax receipts for 2025 are now available to be viewed and printed through your Kindertales portal. If you can not view your receipt, or if there is an error or any other concerns, please reach out to [Marianne](#).

How to access the tax receipt through Kindertales:

Log into the Kindertales web portal (<https://app.kindertales.com>) via computer or laptop and follow the below link guide;

<https://family.kindertales.com/accessing-your-tax-receipt>

If you do not see the Billing option/data, then most likely the billing is assigned to your partner's account.

Kindertales Monthly Charitable Donation receipts will be emailed to you in February.

Dressing for the Weather

This winter has been full of snow already but now the very cold wind chills are starting too. It may be too cold at drop off time to play outside but we may go out later in the day if the weather warms up. It is important to leave all your child's outdoor clothing each day. Thank you.

Parent Connection Day

Thank you everyone for your understanding regarding the closure of our regular program on Friday, January 30th for our parent connection day. We had a great response from families attending our meetings and the educators valued the time to connect with each of you. Thank you again to the families for supporting this parent/educator connection time.

Key Fobs

All adults who drop off and pick up children at the centre are required to have a key fob. (exceptions for those one off drops off/pick-ups by someone that does not normally come)

We understand that from time to time key fobs may be forgotten at home. However, there is not always someone available in the office to let people in when the buzzer is used. This results in educators needing to step away from supervising and engaging with the children to answer the door.

To help keep our focus on the children and maintain smooth transitions, we kindly ask that everyone please remember to use their key fob when entering the centre. If your key fob has been misplaced or lost, please see Kim in the office for assistance. We are happy to provide extra Key Fobs.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Black History Month

Feb 1, 2026 to Feb 28, 2026

Black History Month is a time to celebrate and highlight Black History and culture, and to honour the ancestors and leaders of Black communities, their accomplishments and their continued fight for liberation. Together, let's educate one month, and celebrate every month.

Black History acknowledgement is also a time for all people in Canada to reflect and educate ourselves on the history of Black enslavement and the ongoing discrimination and criminalization of people of African descent, and to remember that anti-Black racism still exists.

We will be providing many different books in our leading library and our classroom to help bring some knowledge into our program rooms.

Please feel free to check one out to share at home during story time!



Ramadan



Ramadan will begin on February 18th, 2026, and will end on or around sunset on March 19, 2026. Ramadan is a month in the Islamic lunar calendar during which Muslims abstain from food and drink from pre-dawn until sunset each day.

How is Ramadan celebrated?

Ramadan is a quiet, reflective time of worship, prayer, helping others, and spending time with loved ones.

“Ramadan Mubarek” and “Ramadan Kareem” are common greetings during the holy month and mean “Have a Blessed or Generous Ramadan.”

Muslims that are 12 or older fast during Ramadan, not eating or drinking anything between sunrise and sunset. Fasting reminds Muslims to appreciate their blessings and to help those in need.

Families get up for an early meal before the sun rises called suhoor, and the fast is broken with an evening meal after the sun sets called iftar.

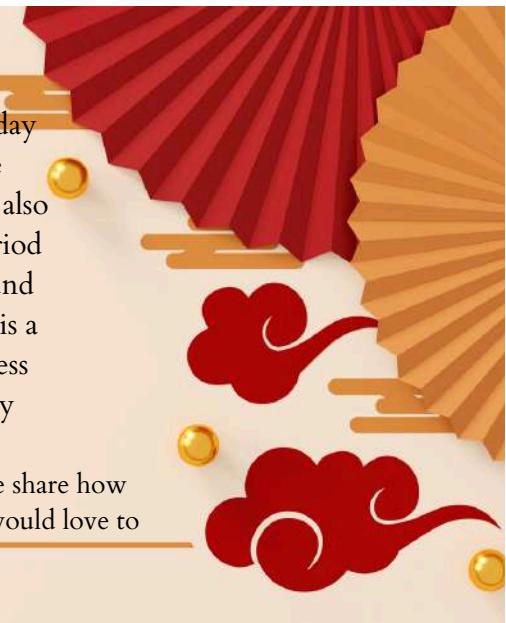
If your family is celebrating Ramadan, please share how your family celebrates with a story and photos. We would be happy to share this with our St. John’s community.

HAPPY LUNAR NEW YEAR!

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Lunar New Year is the kick off to the 16-day Spring Festival. Prepare to be swept into the exhilarating spirit of the 2026 Fire Horse Year, also known as the Red Horse Year (赤馬年) – a period pulsating with passion, dynamism, and profound cultural depth. In Chinese tradition, the horse is a potent emblem of strength, swiftness, boundless freedom, and unyielding perseverance. Happy celebrations to all who celebrate.

If your family is celebrating Lunar New Year, please share how your family celebrates with a story and photos. We would love to share with our St. John’s Community.



Pink Shirt Day

This year, Pink Shirt Day/Anti-Bullying Day is on February 25th. It is a day when people come together by wearing pink shirts to school or work to show they are against bullying. Let’s support anti-bullying by wearing a pink shirt to school on Wednesday, February 25th.



This year’s theme is SPRINKLE KINDNESS!



Valentine's Day

You are welcome to bring in Valentine's cards for your children's classroom friends. We ask that you refrain from bringing in any food items as we have many food allergies and restrictions.

Please only write your child's name on the Valentine, not who it is for.



The Oak Room has 24 children each day.

The Maple Room has 24 children each day.

The Seedling Room has 15 children each day.

Family Day

St. John's will be closed for Family Day on Monday, February 16th.

Enjoy the day with your family. If you would like to share about your time together, please forward any photos and a description to Marianne (admin@stjohnsns.ca) We will pass them along to your child's educator and add them to their portfolio binder.



Thank you in advance for sharing your experiences with us!

CWELCC Fee Update

At the beginning of this school year, St. John's implemented a new daily fee schedule for the 2025–2026 school year. This schedule included not charging families for statutory holidays or for our Christmas and March Break closures.

Since implementing this change, we have received clarification regarding the CWELCC funding formula. As an employer, we are required to pay our educators for all statutory holidays. Under CWELCC, funding is not provided for non-operational days unless parent fees are charged for those days. This means that statutory holiday wages cannot be covered through funding alone when families are not charged.

With this new information, the Board of Directors has carefully reviewed our fee structure and determined that a return to our previous model is necessary to ensure the program remains financially sustainable while continuing to fairly compensate our educators.

What this means for families:

- Starting April 2026, St. John's will return to charging fees for statutory holidays and closures.
- For the remainder of the 2025–2026 school year, families will only be impacted by:
 - The two Easter statutory holiday closures in April
 - One statutory holiday in May
- Beginning in the 2026–2027 school year, fees will be charged for:
 - All statutory holidays
 - Christmas Break closures
 - March Break closures

We understand that changes to fees can be challenging, and we appreciate your understanding and ongoing support. Our goal is to maintain a high-quality program while ensuring long-term stability for our staff and school community.

Exciting Update about a Renovation



As you can see in the photos, these are are in need of some updates. Right now, each staff does have a desk to complete their work and have their lunch, but the staff is not calming or relaxing. As educators, we want our classrooms to be inviting and welcoming for the children and families, but we forget how important this is for ourselves to have a calm and relaxing space for our breaks too. Thank you to Christine and our Board of Directors for seeing the value in investing in our staff area so that we can create a warm, relaxing place for the staff to recharge and be ready for their time with the children.

After many, many years of this space in our school changing and evolving, it is time for a refresh and update.

We are excited to announce that we will be having our staff room and toy/equipment storage area renovated in February. We are looking forward to having shelving and appropriate storage for toys/equipment that are not being used.

We are also excited to update our staff area so that everyone can feel a sense of belonging while on their breaks or completing documentation.



DEI Work

DEI stands for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. It refers to organizational frameworks aimed at promoting fair treatment and full participation of all individuals, particularly those from historically underrepresented groups.

Diversity involves the presence of various characteristics within the workforce, such as race, gender, ethnicity, and age.

Equity focuses on fairness and justice, ensuring equal opportunities and treatment.

Inclusion emphasizes creating a culture where all employees feel valued and heard.

These concepts are increasingly important in to address systemic inequalities and foster a more inclusive environment. Here at St. John's the staff and our board our dedicated to identifying any areas in our organization that may need to be addressed.



Our staff spent a Friday afternoon in December discussing St. John's and all the wonderful things that we are already doing to support DEI around our school. This work does not stop here. Over the next year we will be working through these 7 different areas and focusing on what we are already doing and how we can improve. We will create commitments and have these posted for families to view.



Illuminating Care - Staff Book Study

Over the past few months, the staff have been reading Illuminating Care. We have choosing different chapters to read and then discuss as a group. The following are throughs and quotes from the staff on Self-Care.

"We recognize the basic fundamental rule that in order to care for others, we must also have our own care needs met."
(quote from Illuminating Care) ~ Melissa

Many of the things that brought me to this field over 30 years are still the same- connections with families, working with like minded educators moving the work forward and continually learning and improving our practice together ~ Christine

Balancing Care - We scaffold care to fit the learning needs of the children. Our self knowledge about tendencies and experiences with care help us find balance. Sometimes doing too much for a child is hindering not helping. Giving them time to try to do things on their own helps them learn and grow. We need to find our balance so that we are not OVER or UNDER caring. ~ Sam

The Part I found helpful was care is not perfect. We seek a balance, but that doesn't always mean we accomplish it. We often watch a child struggle and we want to rush in and help to remove their discomfort. Then we realize the challenge they are facing is helping them develop independence. There are also times when we need to rush in and care but sometimes we get it wrong. Care is not perfect. ~ Kathy

"Working with an open heart prepares us to be warriors of care." This quote spoke to me as I am the type of person who leads with my heart in everything I do. My heart is always open to caring for everyone around me. ~ Marianne

After reading the Self- Care chapter of 'Illuminating Care' and reflecting, it has brought me back to thinking about why I got into the field of Early Learning and Care and what has kept me here. Facilitating environments and relationships with children, families, and educators to support them to be their authentic selves. To know that they are seen, heard and care for each day drive my practice. 'Illuminating Care' speak to my heart and is an important aspect of working with young children. ~ Kim L.

Listen as layers of a onion. Slowing down our program. What's the hurry? Why are we rushing through transitions and other parts of the day? Slowing down and listening is a form of care. ~ Heather

Be present, it's okay to stop and listen. A new intention to listen more and speak less. Choosing silence, questions, smiles and expression. ~ Jen

What I took from reading this chapter is that our self care is as important as the children's and to make sure to take care of ourselves to be our best selves for the children in our care. ~ Amber

In reading Illuminating Care, the book has reaffirmed my choice, more then 40 years ago, to work in child care. Carol Garboden Murrary states, "Care as the universal human condition and values the virtue of caring, such as empathy, compassion, love and trust." These are my personal child care values. ~ Donalee

"True Self-Care is the difference between doing care and living care." (quote from Illuminating Care)
Inclusiveness of Care - by care for care itself, we care for children better and we nurture the teachers as well. The care of the children is linked to the care of the teachers. ~ Kim G.

I have been convicted of this regarding my life at work and at home with my young family: the need to slow down. "I am beginning to see that my brain does not fully distinguish between worrying and hurrying, and I think that is why hurry and fear go together. Hurry triggers responses of urgency, danger, and emergency. Hurry lacks trust in the processes of life and the belief that everything has its own right timing. As we juggle the many responsibilities of teaching and caring, the pace at which we move threatens to prompt us and our children in unsettling ways. Children need us to slow down. Families need us to slow down. Teachers need us to slow down." (quote from Illuminating Care) ~ Matt

Exploring the potential power/weakness of care, I found myself wondering about where I fall on these spectrum. Am I giving too much care while I ignore my needs? Do I find myself being empathic or taking emotions too seriously? The visual of the chart alone is great for my self reflection! ~ Arleigh