



Will My Child Be Ready for Elementary School?

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More and more parents are recognizing the importance of enrolling their children in preschool to help them develop the right foundation for success in elementary school and beyond. The best programs go beyond helping children master basic academic skills by supporting their development as happy, confident, well-rounded individuals.

Research shows that from birth to age 5, changes and growth in all areas of development are rapid. Children form strong neural connections during this time as a result of experiences they have with everyone and everything they encounter. The quality of those early interactions determines how children continue to learn and form relationships, which strongly influences their future success and happiness.

"Informed parents look for preschool, pre-K and kindergarten programs that take a balanced approach to developing motor, social-emotional, creative and academic skills," said Dr. Mary Zurn, vice president of education for Primrose Schools. "It takes quality instruction, a well-rounded curriculum and a positive teacher relationship to prepare a child to succeed."

- **Academics:** It's important to go beyond concentrating only on basic math and reading skills. Academic success is not just about memorization – it requires learning how to think critically, use mathematical concepts, express curiosity and develop competence in all language skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- **Technology:** In today's technology-rich world, children need to have a grasp on technology as a tool for creative expression and problem solving. Computers equipped with developmentally-appropriate educational software and online resources should be integrated into the classroom.
- **Physical Development:** Children who participate in daily physical activity develop basic motor skills like throwing, jumping and balance that help them become healthy adults. Physical activity also creates neural connections that support academic achievement.
- **Music and Art:** Young children naturally engage in "art" or spontaneous, creative play, but when educators involve children in music and art activities regularly from an early age, they are also promoting cognitive and emotional development.
- **Social-Emotional Development:** Preschool programs should focus on supporting the development of social and life skills, as well as executive function, which has received a lot of attention lately from researchers who say that it will help your child establish positive relationships and make a successful transition to elementary school.

Will your child be ready to enter elementary school? Selecting the right child care or preschool program is a critical step in helping your child succeed. Plan to tour schools at least one year in advance so you have plenty of time to apply and enroll your child. To learn more about the Primrose School of Algonquin, visit www.PrimroseAlgonquin.com.