

## ABOUT THIS CHART

This chart provides an overview of Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten programs across Canada's provinces and territories, highlighting key similarities and differences in how early learning is structured and funded.

It shows whether programs are publicly or privately operated, their typical schedules (full-day or part-day), the age groups served, and enrollment eligibility criteria. The chart indicates whether attendance is mandatory or optional and includes data on participation rates among eligible children.

In addition, it outlines curriculum and pedagogy guidelines, staff qualifications and roles, and whether programs receive federal support through the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) agreements. It also includes whether parents pay fees.

Overall, this chart is a valuable resource for policymakers, educators, and parents. It sheds light on regional differences, identifies service gaps, and highlights opportunities for improvement in early learning programs.

# KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Newfoundland and Labrador         | KINDERGARTEN   | PRE-KINDERGARTEN  |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Program Name                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>   | <a href="#">Pre-Kindergarten</a>  |
| Operator                          | School-operated  | Community-operated  |
| Operating Hours                   | Full school day/year   | Child-care hours  |
| Age Eligibility                   | 5 years old by Dec. 31   | 4 years old by Dec. 31  |
| Compulsory Attendance             | No   | No  |
| Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024) | <a href="#">87.3%/4,165</a>  | <a href="#">600 spaces</a>  |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy Guide       | <a href="#">Completely Kindergarten: Kindergarten Curriculum Guide – Interim Edition</a> | <a href="#">Navigating the Early Years.</a>   |
| Staffing                          | Certified Primary Teachers   | Early Childhood Educators Level III & assistant. Primary teachers if no Early Childhood Educators available.  |
| Educator Qualifications           | B.Ed. or equivalent  | ECE diploma and one-year post diploma, B.Ed.  |
| ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$            | No   | Yes   |
| Parents Fees Charged              | No   | Yes   |
| Notes                             |  | Delivered by non-profit child care providers. 30 locations (600 spaces) planned in 2023, with full implementation by March 2026. Expansion schedule delayed due to staffing shortage. |

# KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Prince Edward Island              | KINDERGARTEN   | PRE-KINDERGARTEN   |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Program Name                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>   | <a href="#">Pre-Kindergarten</a>   |
| Operator                          | School-operated  | Community-operated   |
| Operating Hours                   | Full school day  | Part-day   |
| Age Eligibility/Who Attends       | 5 years old by Dec. 31. Children born between Sept, and Dec. may be enrolled the following year. | 4 years old by Dec. 31   |
| Compulsory                        | Yes  | No   |
| Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024) | <a href="#">82.8%/1,365</a>  | 79%/1,119*   |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy Guide       | <a href="#">PEI Kindergarten Curriculum</a>  | <a href="#">PEI Early Learning Framework</a>   |
| Staffing                          | Certified Primary Teachers   | Early Childhood Educators  |
| Educator Qualifications           | BA and primary specialty   | ECE diploma  |
| ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$            | No   | Yes  |
| Parents Fees Charged              | No   | No   |
| Notes                             |  | Government funded, 15 hours per week offered in licensed child care centres. Children are often enrolled in the centre's full day child care program. Fees charged for the child care portion of the day. Pre-K runs the school year, however Pre-K aged children can access early learning and child care all year round. |

\* Personal communication PEI Department of Education and Early Years

# KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Nova Scotia                       | KINDERGARTEN   | PRE-KINDERGARTEN   |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Program Name                      | <a href="#">Grade Primary</a>  | <a href="#">Pre-Primary Program</a>  |
| Operator                          | School-operated  | School-Operated  |
| Operating Hours                   | Full school day/years  | Full school day/year   |
| Age Eligibility/Who Attends       | 5 years old by Dec. 31. Children born between Sept, and Dec. may be enrolled the following year. | 4 years old by Dec. 31   |
| Compulsory                        | Yes  | No   |
| Attendance % / Spaces (2024-2025) | <a href="#">92.5%/8,522</a>  | <a href="#">78%/6,292</a>  |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy Guide       | <a href="#">Nova Scotia Primary Curriculum</a>   | <a href="#">Early Learning Framework</a>   |
| Staffing                          | Certified Primary Teachers   | Two Early Childhood Educators for 20 children. Third staff if more than 20 children to a maximum of 24 children per classroom.   |
| Educator Qualifications           | BA and specialty   | ECE-BA or ECE diploma  |
| ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$            | No   | No   |
| Parents Fees Charged              | No   | No   |
| Notes                             |  | Nova Scotia <a href="#">Before and After Programs</a> (regulated child care and recreation programs) follow Program and Delivery Standards that emphasize outdoor play, movement and physical literacy. <a href="#">Subsidies available.</a> |

# KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| New Brunswick |  | KINDERGARTEN   | PRE-KINDERGARTEN  |
|---------------|--|--|---|
|               | <b>Program Name</b>                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>   | <a href="#">Prototype for 4-year-old vulnerable children</a>  |
|               | <b>Operator</b>                          | School-operated  | Community-operated  |
|               | <b>Operating Hours</b>                   | Full school day/year   | Part-day  |
|               | <b>Age Eligibility/Who Attends</b>       | 5 years old by Dec. 31. Children born between Sept, and Dec. may be enrolled the following year.             | 4 years old   |
|               | <b>Compulsory</b>                        | Yes  | No  |
|               | <b>Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024)</b> | <a href="#">94.9%/7027</a>   | <a href="#">79</a>  |
|               | <b>Curriculum &amp; Pedagogy Guide</b>   | New Brunswick Curriculum ( <a href="#">Primary Block</a> ) and <a href="#">L'inscription à la maternelle</a> | <a href="#">Curriculum: New Brunswick Curriculum Framework and Le Curriculum éducatif Services de garde francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick</a> |
|               | <b>Staffing</b>                          | Certified Primary Teachers   | Early Childhood Educators and Assistants.   |
|               | <b>Educator Qualifications</b>           | B.Ed.  | One year post-secondary certificate in early childhood development.   |
|               | <b>ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$</b>            | No   | No  |
|               | <b>Parents Fees Charged</b>              | No   | Yes   |
|               | <b>Notes</b>                             |  | Five-year prototype in licensed Designated Early Learning Centres for 100 vulnerable children not eligible for regular child care funding.    |

## KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Quebec                            | KINDERGARTEN  | PRE-KINDERGARTEN  |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Program Name                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>                                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten for 4-Year-Olds</a> (La maternelle)  |
| Operator                          | School-operated   | School-operated   |
| Operating Hours                   | Full school day/year  | Full school day/year  |
| Age Eligibility/Who Attends       | 5 years old by Sept. 30   | 4 years old by Sept. 30   |
| Compulsory                        | No  | No  |
| Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024) | <a href="#">98.3%/86,082</a>                                      | <a href="#">19,183</a>  |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy Guide       | <a href="#">Quebec Pre-School Education Program</a>               | <a href="#">Preschool Cycle Program</a> aligns with the mandated educational program for regulated child care   |
| Staffing                          | Certified Primary Teachers  | Primary teacher and part-time Early Childhood Educator and/or child development specialist  |
| Educator Qualifications           | B.Ed and/or Bachelor's in Childhood Development                   | BA with EC specialty and ECE diploma  |
| ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$            | N/A*  | N/A*  |
| Parents Fees Charged              | No  | No  |
| Notes                             | School-based before-and-after child care offered by school boards | <a href="#">Education Act</a> amended in 2019 to move from targeted to universal Pre-Kindergarten. Government-funded, phased-in by school boards. School board operated before- and after-school programs required if sufficient demand. Parent fee for before- and after-school: \$8.50/day. |

\*Quebec receives CWELCC funding but is not bound by federal agreement.

# KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Ontario                                  | KINDERGARTEN   | PRE-KINDERGARTEN   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Program Name</b>                      | <a href="#">Senior Kindergarten</a>  | <a href="#">Junior Kindergarten</a>  |
| <b>Operator</b>                          | School-operated  | School-operated  |
| <b>Operating Hours</b>                   | Full school day/year   | Full-day during the school year  |
| <b>Age Eligibility/Who Attends</b>       | 5 years old by Dec. 31   | 4 years old by Dec. 31   |
| <b>Compulsory</b>                        | No   | No   |
| <b>Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024)</b> | <a href="#">88.4%/133,065</a>  | <a href="#">86%/123,460</a>  |
| <b>Curriculum &amp; Pedagogy Guide</b>   | <a href="#">The 2016 Kindergarten Program Document</a><br>New <a href="#">Back-to-Basics</a> Kindergarten Curriculum (under review).                       | <a href="#">The 2016 Kindergarten Program Document</a><br>New <a href="#">Back-to-Basics</a> Kindergarten Curriculum (under review).                       |
| <b>Staffing</b>                          | Teaching team of primary teacher & early childhood educator. Teacher only in classes with 16 or fewer children. Junior and senior classes may be combined. | Teaching team of primary teacher & early childhood educator. Teacher only in classes with 16 or fewer children. Junior and senior classes may be combined. |
| <b>Educator Qualifications</b>           | B.Ed. and ECE with 2-year diploma  | B.Ed. and ECE with 2-year diploma  |
| <b>ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$</b>            | No   | No   |
| <b>Parents Fees Charged</b>              | No   | No   |
| <b>Notes</b>                             | Before-and-after school licensed child care, or recreation programs, etc. are offered by community organizations, municipalities or school boards.         | Before-and-after school licensed child care, or recreation programs, etc. are offered by community organizations, municipalities or school boards.         |

# KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Manitoba |  | KINDERGARTEN   | PRE-KINDERGARTEN   |
|----------|--|--|--|
|          | <b>Program</b>                           | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>   | <a href="#">Nursery School/Junior Kindergarten</a>   |
|          | <b>Operator</b>                          | School-operated  | School-operated  |
|          | <b>Operating Hours</b>                   | Half-day in most schools, Full school day/year for <a href="#">Louis Reil School Division starting in 2024/2025</a> , Full school day/year in <a href="#">Franco-Manitoban School Division schools</a> . | Part-day during the school year  |
|          | <b>Age Eligibility/Who Attends</b>       | 5 years old by Dec. 31   | 3 and 4 year olds in some school districts   |
|          | <b>Compulsory</b>                        | No   | No   |
|          | <b>Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024)</b> | <a href="#">83%/15,046</a>   | <a href="#">2,162</a>  |
|          | <b>Curriculum &amp; Pedagogy Guide</b>   | <a href="#">Manitoba Kindergarten Curriculum</a>   | <a href="#">Early Returns: Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Preschool Centres and Nursery Schools</a><br><br><a href="#">Early Returns: Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Infant Programs</a> |
|          | <b>Staffing</b>                          | Certified Primary Teachers   | Usually a primary teacher, some have a teacher or an Early Childhood Educator or a teaching team   |
|          | <b>Educator Qualifications</b>           | BA and education specialty   | BA with ECE specialty  |
|          | <b>ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$</b>            | No   | No   |
|          | <b>Parents Fees Charged</b>              | No   | No   |
|          | <b>Notes</b>                             |  | Oversight and funding provided by some school districts (not the Ministry of Education and Early Childhood Learning).  |



# KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Saskatchewan                             | KINDERGARTEN   | PRE-KINDERGARTEN  | PRE-KINDERGARTEN  |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Program Name</b>                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>   | <a href="#">Pre-Kindergarten</a>  | <a href="#">Early Learning Intensive Support Pilot (ELISP)</a>  |
| <b>Operator</b>                          | School-operated  | School-operated   | School-based  |
| <b>Operating Hours</b>                   | Half-day/school year. Full school day/year in Francophone schools  | 12 hours per week during the school year  | 12 hours per week during the school year  |
| <b>Age Eligibility/Who Attends</b>       | School divisions establish age of entry  | 3 and 4 years old in vulnerable communities                                     | 3 and 4 years old with developmental delays   |
| <b>Compulsory</b>                        | No   | No  | No  |
| <b>Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024)</b> | <a href="#">87%/13,688</a>   | <a href="#">5,056</a>   | N/A   |
| <b>Curriculum &amp; Pedagogy Guide</b>   | <a href="#">Saskatchewan Kindergarten Curriculum</a>   | <a href="#">Essential Learning Experiences in Pre-Kindergarten</a>              | <a href="#">Essential Learning Experiences in Pre-Kindergarten</a>  |
| <b>Staffing</b>                          | Certified Teachers   | Qualified teacher and assistant (often with ECE qualifications) for 16 children | Qualified teacher and assistant (often with ECE qualifications) for 16 children, with additional support staff as needed  |
| <b>Educator Qualifications</b>           | BA   | BA with ECE specialty   | BA with ECE specialty   |
| <b>ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$</b>            | No   | No  | No  |
| <b>Parents Fees Charged</b>              | No   | No  | No  |
| <b>Notes</b>                             | <a href="#">25 Saskatoon</a> schools offer full day kindergarten funded by Saskatoon Public Schools Foundation, as part of a demonstration project to demonstrate benefits and improve Grade 3 reading competency. | Offered in <a href="#">316 schools</a> located in vulnerable communities.       | Government-funded pilot in selected communities providing intensive support for children with physical or neurodevelopmental delays. Children are integrated into Pre-Kindergarten classes. |

## KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Alberta                           | KINDERGARTEN   | PRE-KINDERGARTEN   |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Program Name                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a> (Included in Early Childhood Services)                                      | <a href="#">Early Childhood Services</a>   |
| Operator                          | Public and private operators   | Public and private operators   |
| Operating Hours                   | Half-day/school year.  | Part-day/school year   |
| Age Eligibility/Who Attends       | <a href="#">5 years old by Dec. 31</a>   | 2.8 to 4 years old with exceptionalities   |
| Compulsory                        | No   | No   |
| Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024) | <a href="#">70,099</a> *   |  |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy Guide       | Curriculum or Programs of Study are determined by <a href="#">Alberta Education</a>                      | <a href="#">Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12</a>   |
| Staffing                          | Certified Primary Teachers   | Primary teachers and depending on circumstances assistants with ECE qualifications   |
| Educator Qualifications           | B.Ed. or equivalent  | B.Ed. or equivalent  |
| ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$            | No   | Yes, if operated by licensed child care  |
| Parents Fees Charged              | No   | No   |
| Notes                             | <a href="#">14 schools</a> operated by the Calgary School Board offer Full-day Kindergarten in 2024/2025 | Government funded, offered by local school boards and/or private ECS operators in a variety of settings including schools, ECS sites, & licensed child care. Targeted to children with mild, moderate or severe disabilities/delays, who are gifted and talented or who are English language learners. |

\*Alberta doesn't separate kindergarten and pre-kindergarten enrolment. The figure includes children 2.8 to 5 years old.

## KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| British Columbia                  | KINDERGARTEN  | PRE-KINDERGARTEN  | PRE-KINDERGARTEN  |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Program Name                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>  | <a href="#">JustB4</a>  | <a href="#">StrongStart BC</a>  |
| Operator                          | School-operated   | School-operated, licensed pre-school  | School-operated outreach program  |
| Operating Hours                   | Full school day/year  | Part-day/ school year   | 3-4 hours, 5 days per week during school year   |
| Age Eligibility/Who Attends       | 5 years old by Dec. 31  | 4 years old in school catchment area  | 0-5 years old   |
| Compulsory                        | No  | No  | No  |
| Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024) | <a href="#">99%/45,682</a>  | 270-400 estimate*   | 30,000 estimate*  |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy Guide       | <a href="#">BC's Curriculum</a>   | <a href="#">BC Early Learning Framework (incorporates Primary Curriculum's Core Competencies)</a>   | <a href="#">BC Early Learning Framework (incorporates Primary Curriculum's Core Competencies)</a>             |
| Staffing                          | Certified Primary Teachers  | Early Childhood Educators working in part-day StrongStart BC, staff most JustB4 programs.   | Early Childhood Educators   |
| Educator Qualifications           | BA and education specialty  | Early Childhood Education Diploma   | Early Childhood Education Diploma   |
| ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$            | Yes, for care outside school hours  | Yes, for half day.  | No  |
| Parents Fees Charged              | No  | Yes   | No  |
| Notes                             | <a href="#">Seamless day kindergarten</a> program in 45 schools. Classrooms must meet child care licensing standards. Students attend SDK with 2 full-time certified ECEs and a primary teacher. Part of <a href="#">ChildCareBC</a> initiatives. | Government-funded, pilot project offered in 45 schools, in 33 school districts in conjunction with part-day <a href="#">StrongStart BC</a> . Provincial funding to end June 2025. | <a href="#">329 StrongStart BC programs</a> . Designed to attract at-risk, vulnerable, and isolated families. |

\*Personal communication BC Ministry of Education

# KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Nunavut                           | KINDERGARTEN  | PRE-KINDERGARTEN            |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Program Name                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>                          | No Pre-Kindergarten program |
| Operator                          | School-operated                                       |                             |
| Operating Hours                   | Half-day/school year                                  |                             |
| Age Eligibility/Who Attends       | 5 years old by Dec. 31                                |                             |
| Compulsory                        | No  |                             |
| Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024) | <a href="#">97%/747</a>                               |                             |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy Guide       | <a href="#">2019/2020 Nunavut Approved Curriculum</a> |                             |
| Staffing                          | Certified Primary Teachers                            |                             |
| Educator Qualifications           | B.Ed. or ECE Diploma                                  |                             |
| ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$            | No  |                             |
| Parents Fees Charged              | No  |                             |
| Notes                             | <a href="#">Full school day pilot</a>                 |                             |

## KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Northwest Territories  | KINDERGARTEN                      |   | PRE-KINDERGARTEN  |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
|                        | Program Name                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>  | <a href="#">Junior Kindergarten</a>                             |
|                        | Operator                          | School-operated   | School-operated   |
|                        | Operating Hours                   | Full school day/year  | Part- or full-day during the school year                        |
|                        | Age Eligibility/Who Attends       | 5 years old by Dec. 31  | Universal for 4 years old.                                      |
|                        | Compulsory                        | No  | No  |
|                        | Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024) | <a href="#">100%/564*</a>   | <a href="#">498</a>   |
|                        | Curriculum & Pedagogy Guide       | <a href="#">NWT Junior Kindergarten/Kindergarten Curriculum</a>                   | <a href="#">NWT Junior Kindergarten/Kindergarten Curriculum</a> |
|                        | Staffing                          | Certified Primary Teachers  | Primary teacher or Early Childhood Educator                     |
|                        | Educator Qualifications           | B.Ed.   | B.Ed. or ECE diploma  |
| ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$ | No                                | No  |   |
| Parents Fees Charged   | No                                | No  |   |
| Notes                  |                                   | Government-funded, provided in schools. After-school care is available for a fee. |   |

\* Personal communication. Government of the Northwest Territories. Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Because Kindergarten eligibility includes a quarter year of 4-year-olds, Kindergarten enrolment may be greater than the 5-year-old population.

# KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN IN CANADA

| Yukon                             | KINDERGARTEN  | PRE-KINDERGARTEN   |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Program Name                      | <a href="#">Kindergarten</a>  | <a href="#">Early Kindergarten</a>   |
| Operator                          | School-operated   | School-operated  |
| Operating Hours                   | Full school day/year  | Full-day during the school year  |
| Age Eligibility/Who Attends       | 5 years old by Dec. 31  | Universal for 4 years old in rural schools   |
| Compulsory                        | No  | No   |
| Attendance % / Spaces (2023-2024) | <a href="#">82.6%/400</a>   | <a href="#">68</a>   |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy Guide       | <a href="#">Yukon Curriculum</a> follows BC Curriculum                  | The Early Kindergarten program follows the BC Kindergarten Curriculum  |
| Staffing                          | Certified Teachers  | Certified teachers with a background in early childhood learning and development   |
| Educator Qualifications           | B.Ed. or equivalent   | B.Ed. or equivalent  |
| ELIGIBLE FOR CWELCC \$            | No  | No   |
| Parents Fees Charged              | No  | No   |
| Notes                             | Full day kindergarten added to <a href="#">7 communities</a> (Feb 2024) | Government-funded, provided in schools. Early Kindergarten is offered in all rural schools and in French-language schools in Whitehorse. |