

Developmental stages for our shared work on

Expected School-wide Learning Results

September 2016

Developmental level	Physical growth	Growth in thinking	Social growth	Emotional growth
Early Childhood and Kindergarten (EC/K) Benchmark age: 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross motor skills allow for coordinated movement Fine motor skills emerging Fluent speech emerging – vocabulary of 1,500 words+ Body is adult proportioned Visual tracking and binocular vision well developed Very active, needs rest periods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sorts objects based on size, shape, color Rote counts up 100 and recognises numerals Knows the alphabet Asks innumerable questions Eager to learn – curious and inquisitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social play Enjoys one or two focus friendships Likes making people laugh Subservient to parent/carer/teacher requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views the world from a personal perspective Shows affection and caring toward others Needs comfort and reassurance from adults; prefers parent self-control over emotional swings emerging expresses pride in accomplishments
Early Elementary (G1 – G2) Benchmark age: 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow steady physical growth Good gross motor skills Developing fine motor skills Very active, but still needs rest periods Brain reaches 95% adult size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More interested in the process rather than the product of learning activities Thinking is concrete and concrete activities are preferred Progress in basic literacy and numeracy Eager to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages in more activities outside the home May have several ‘best friends’ Competitive Imaginative fantasy play Boastful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued focus on self; cannot imagine clearly what others are thinking/feeling Moving away from dependence on parents Need reassurance/praise from adults Needs rules for games; not ready to accept losing Inconsistent maturity
Late Elementary (G3 – G5) Benchmark age: 9 – 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow steady physical growth Improving fine and gross motor skills Very active and enthusiastic Early maturers may be uncomfortable with rapid physical growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concrete thinking dominates Moving toward understanding abstract ideas Beginning to think logically and symbolically Dichotomous thinking Basic literacy and numeracy are well developed Capacity for self-evaluation Wide range of reading ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in others – aware of differences The opinions of peers are becoming important Enjoy being in groups of others similar to themselves Show gender preferences in friend and activity selection Spends a lot of time in talk and discussion competitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look to adults for approval Follow rules out of respect for adults Difficulty understanding another person’s thinking, but understand the benefits of pleasing others Responsibility for actions is emerging Need to feel accepted and valued by others Sensitive to criticism
Middle School (G6 – G8) Benchmark age: 13 – 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good gross and fine motor skills Highly variable but rapid physical growth Rapid changes in physical appearance Puberty in progress Clumsiness associated with growth Slower developing individuals may be uneasy about their growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift from concrete to abstract thinking Dichotomous thinking Interest in their own ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing independence of parents and family Mature friendship skills across genders Strong peer group formation Friends set the rules of behaviour Need to conform to peers in dress and action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self conscious and insecure Approval by peers is important Mood swings and changes in thinking associated with hormone changes Emerging self-knowledge and self-discovery
High School (G9 – G12) Benchmark age: 17 – 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puberty complete (for majority) Neural growth, increasing transmission speed and synaptic pruning continue Continued development of the brain’s pre-frontal cortex which manages impulses, emotions and helps form judgments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to think abstractly, systemically and about the future Difficulty understanding compromise Exploration and preparation for post-secondary goals Goals set by the individual (not others) Initiate and carry out activities without supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent of parents and family Ability to understand and empathise with others Well developed relationship skills Friendships are sincere, close and long-lasting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise abilities and talents Strong sense of individual identity Formation of post-secondary goals Body image awareness

Note that the developmental levels do not necessarily correspond to the phases of the curriculum, or the physical grouping of grade levels (sometimes based on physical design) in all our schools. Schools using the International Baccalaureate, for example will find that the MYP and IBDP do not align well with the Middle and High School stages. Benchmark age refers to the chronological age of the oldest students in this developmental level. This is not offered as a scientific analysis of these benchmark ages, but to give an idea of some of the widely recognized generalized characteristics of children of these ages.