



**STUDENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK
2024-2025**

**McGirr Elementary School
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Nanaimo,
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Welcome to a new school year!

With each year we look forward to meeting our new families and welcoming back returning families. Caregivers, students, and staff all contribute to our school to make it, “...A Great Place to Learn”. I hope you have an amazing year.

Mr. Robbie Dhillon, Principal

McGirr Mission Statement

As a school community of staff, students, and parents, we commit to virtues such as courtesy, excellence, respect, and responsibility. Through the active promotion of these values we will instill the attitudes, knowledge, and skills for lifelong learning.

BC Curriculum *(from the Ministry Website)*

At the heart of British Columbia’s redesigned core competencies curriculum are the literacy and numeracy foundations, essential learning, and Core Competencies.

Literacy and Numeracy Focus

The redesign of curriculum reinforces the current views in BC on the need for strong foundations in literacy and numeracy. Literacy and numeracy foundations—text literacy (reading and writing), number and financial literacy, visual literacy, and digital literacy—are fundamental requirements for full social and economic participation in today’s world. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed through applications in all curricular areas. Literacy and numeracy performance expectations are described in the BC performance standards.

Essential Learning

The redesigned curricula are described as concept based and competency driven. They place more emphasis on the deeper understanding of concepts and the application of processes than on the memorization of isolated facts and information. The learning standards and big ideas for each area of learning identify what is essential—what students are expected to know, be able to do, and understand at each grade.

Core Competencies

Core Competencies are at the centre of the curriculum redesign in BC. Core Competencies are sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies that all students need to develop in order to engage in deeper learning. **The Core Competencies include thinking, communication, and social and personal competencies.** Competencies are embedded and evident within the learning standards. They come into play when students are engaged in “doing” in any area of learning. Together, the literacy and numeracy foundations, essential learning, and Core Competencies contribute to the development of educated citizens.

Curriculum Model

The curriculum model is made up of three elements: Content, Curricular Competencies, and Big Ideas. Teachers combine the three elements in ways they see fit to personalize learning in their classrooms. **Content:** What students are expected to know

Curricular Competencies: What students are expected to do

Big Ideas: What students are expected to understand

The model pulls together the best from modern learning theories and BC teachers’ advice. At the outset, BC educators said, curriculum needs to:

- be flexible to better enable teachers to innovate
- focus on higher-order learning
- address Core Competencies
- integrate Aboriginal world views and knowledge
- respect the unique nature of disciplines while supporting cross-curricular learning

Principles of Learning

These three principles guide all aspects of educational practice including curriculum development, instructional planning and practice, resource selection, school and classroom organization, assessment, evaluation, and reporting. These are:
Learning requires the active participation of the student
People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates
Learning is both an individual and a group process.

McGirr School Plan and Goals

This school year we will be focusing on the goal of Numeracy and for helping students become more resilient. Our complete School Plan will be posted on

our school web site (by the end of October):
<http://schools.sd68.bc.ca/mcge>.

NLPS Strategic Plan

The Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (School District 68) has a Strategic Plan that guides all financial and educational decisions by the Board. The goals of our strategic plan are:

1. Continuous Improvement of Instruction and Assessment
2. Safe, caring and healthy learning and working environment that is inclusive of the diversity of our entire learning community
3. To be a leader in Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability
4. Truth and reconciliation. It is best viewed here:

https://www.sd68.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Strategic-Plan_FINAL_2019-23.pdf

The Primary Years (K to 3)

The School provides a secure transition from learning at home to learning at school.

Children who enter kindergarten are inquisitive, imaginative, active, and eager to learn. They enjoy exploring, experimenting, and playing and working with others in a safe, stimulating environment that promotes confidence in their ability to learn. Teachers organize learning to accommodate the full range of children's interests, learning needs and diverse social backgrounds.

The curriculum for these years is designed to:

- support the development of children aesthetically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.
- foster the development of imagination.
- encourage children to share, co-operate, develop friendships, and appreciate their own and others' abilities and cultural identity and heritage
- develop traits and attitudes that contribute to career awareness and development, such as taking pride in one's work, working effectively with others, and understanding the relationship of work to everyday life.

Intermediate (4 - 7)

Between Grades 4 and 7, students' progress from childhood to adolescence. They experience physical, emotional, and intellectual changes. This period is characterized by fluctuations in behaviour, attitudes,

and social growth and development. The influence of peers has an effect on their actions and decision-making processes. In the area of intellectual growth, they progress from concrete to abstract thought. This growth pattern varies widely amongst individuals.

During the intermediate years, students need considerable support in order to deal with the changes they experience. Flexibility in classroom organization and methods of instruction is required to meet the challenges of these critically important years in the school system.

As students move through the intermediate years, they develop competency in basic skills and reach higher levels of proficiency in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. In Grade 5, all students must begin to study French as a Second Language.

The curriculum for these years is designed to:

- emphasize basic areas of learning to increase students' literacy and numeracy skills.
- extend the development of creativity.
- use opportunities for learning that exist outside schools.
- develop a work ethic and further understanding of career opportunities.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS PROGRESS

In Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools, we have moved from a model of 'reporting to parents' to 'communicating student learning with parents' on an ongoing basis. We are supporting educators to provide parents with timely and responsive communication of student learning throughout the year, following district policies and procedures. Parents will receive three written reports (approx Dec, March and June) that include descriptive written comments and a summary of student progress. Student progress will be reported in relation to widely held grade level expectations and the Learning Standard's from the BC Curriculum. Parents will also receive two informal updates, including a Formative Assessment Sessions (usually in October)

Kindergarten Entry in September

- For Kindergarten students, gradual entry will take place during the first weeks of September. This system provides an opportunity for a positive orientation for each child. It consists of an orientation and also meeting with students in smaller groups prior to full day



start. Note: specific information for this September has been sent out to family's direction

Homework

Homework is a task assigned to the student to do on his/her own time, after school hours, as an extension of his/her classroom work.

Homework can be of many types:

- a. completion of tasks
- b. long range projects.
- c. daily or weekly reinforcement or practice of newly learned skills
- d. reading

Teachers may assign homework to:

- a. encourage self-discipline and responsibility
- b. foster good study habits, and enable the student to finish work not completed during the instructional time
- c. Homework can also keep parents informed of the work done by the students.

The following time ranges are general guidelines:

- Grades 1-7 - 10 minutes per night per grade level (e.g., grade 2 = 20 minutes)

Some students require more time and more practice for learning to occur. Homework can help to reinforce the core concepts of the concepts and skills introduced in class.

2024-2025 School Calendar

First day of class, Gr 1-7 (11 AM-12 PM) Tues Sep 3
 PAC (7 PM) Mon Sep 16
 Photo Day (individual photo)..... Mon Sep 23
 Truth and Reconciliation (school closed)..... Mon Sep 30
 Thanksgiving (school closed) Mon. Oct 14
 Scholastic Book Fair Mon Oct 21-Thurs Oct 24
 PAC (7 PM) Mon Oct 21
Early Dismissal (1:00 PM)..... Mon Oct 21
Early Dismissal (1:00 PM)..... Tues Oct 22
Early Dismissal (1:00 PM)..... Wed Oct 23
 Formative Assessment Sessions (1:15-3:15 PM) Wed Oct 23
 Formative Assessment Sessions (5:30-7:00 PM) Wed Oct 23
Early Dismissal (1:00 PM)..... Thurs Oct 24
 Pro-D [province wide] (students do not attend) ..Fri. Oct 25
 Photo Retakes..... Mon Oct 28
 Pro-D Day..... Fri Nov 8
 Remembrance Day (school closed) Mon Nov 11
 PAC (7 PM) Mon Nov 18
 Progress Report Term #1 issued Wed Nov 27
 Curriculum Implementation (students don't attend)..... Fri Dec 6

PAC (7 PM) Mon Dec 16
 Last Day before Holiday Fri. Dec 20
 First Day back Mon Jan 6
 PAC (7 PM) Mon Jan 20
 Pro-D Day (students do not attend) Mon Feb 3
 Pro-D Day (students do not attend) Tues Feb 4
 PAC (7 PM) Mon Feb 10
 BC Family Day (school closed) Mon Feb 17
 PAC (7 PM) (tentative) Mon Mar 10
 Progress Report Term #2 issued Wed Mar 12
 Last Day before Spring Break/Easter..... Fri. Mar 14
 First Day back Mon Mar 31
 PAC (7 PM) Mon Apr 14
 Good Friday Fri Apr 18
 Easter Monday Mon Apr 21
 Class photos (all divisions, plus Gr 7/staff pic) TBD
 Pro-D (students do not attend)..... Mon May 5
 PAC (7 PM) Mon May 12
 Scholastic Book Fair..... Tues May 13 to Fri May 16
 Victoria Day (school closed) Mon May 19
 PAC (7 PM) Mon Jun 16
 Summative Reports Thurs Jun 26
 Last Day of School (school dismissed at 2:10).... Thurs Jun 26
 Administration Day Fri Jun 27
if dates change these are communicated through the office

Office Hours

Monday- Friday. 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Student Hours

Daily Schedule

8:28 Welcome Bell
 8:30 School begins
 10:00 Short Recess begins
 10:15 Short Recess ends
 11:45 Bell -Lunch begins
 12:20 Lunch ends
 2:13 School dismissal

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Insurance for Students – Students are actively involved at school – from the playground to organized sports – and sometime accidents do happen. The school district does not provide insurance for any losses and costs that arise from such accidents and we strongly recommend that parents consider purchasing student accident insurance. For more information please visit:

<https://insuremykids.com/>

Supervision

Formal staff supervision of students begins at 8:15 a.m. and 2:10 p.m. for 15 minutes before and after school daily. The school is not responsible for student supervision before and after school outside of these supervision times. For safety, students should not be sent to school too early or remain long after school unaccompanied by a parent or guardian. Any student not certain of before/after school parent plans or whereabouts- report to the office. Supervision at the end of the day is for the purposes of pick up, walk, bike home etc... Students who are on the property, should be waiting at the front of the school, near the flag poles, unless they are being supervised by their caregiver.

Student Access to the Building



Students are not allowed in the building prior to 8:30

a.m. This is a supervision issue. Students may be allowed in:

1. Subject to the approval of your classroom teacher.
2. If you are participating in a teacher sponsored activity.
3. Permissible in emergencies.
4. Students only use the front main entrance when accompanied by an adult. Otherwise they enter and exit their classrooms via the classroom outside door (*If applicable*).

Emergency Closure Procedure

The decision to close schools in School District No. 68 due to emergencies or inclement weather is *only made* by the Superintendent. School closures are announced over local radio stations THE WAVE 102.3FM at 6:45 a.m. A decision to re-open schools or to keep schools closed for the afternoon will be made by 11:00 a.m. We request that students and parents listen to the radio or check the SD 68 website for this information rather than call the school.

Periodically schools may be closed, and students dismissed during the day for snowstorms, extended power outages and other emergencies. If you have not done so already, we remind parents who are not

home during the day to make arrangements in your neighbourhood for a safe place for your children to go when such emergencies occur

Early Detection System

Early Detection is used for the safety and protection of McGirr children. **The purpose of the program is to detect as soon as possible the whereabouts of each student not in class.** For the system to operate successfully, parents are requested to:

1. Please email the office at info.mg@sd68.bc.ca or
2. Please phone the School at 250-758-8946 in the morning before 8:00 a.m. if your child is late or absent from school for any reason, or
3. Give advance notification, of dental/ medical appointments, or any changes from the usual routine

Most parents already inform the school, and this is much appreciated. The school will make contact with parents in the event of an unexcused absence.

Attendance

Research shows that regular attendance at school is the single most important variable of students reaching their learning potential. Attendance at school is important for two reasons:

1. Students miss concepts taught and assignments when absent from class.
2. If an absence with parent permission is due to any other reason except illness or medical reasons, it places a lesser value on school education for the child.

We request parents to carefully consider if you plan to take your child out of school for reasons other than those stated in the Provincial School Regulations. It is not only unfair to your child, but it is unfair to the classroom teacher who needs to take time from other teaching duties and responsibilities to assist the student upon his/her return to school.

Throughout the school year, many students are absent from classes in order to join their parents for a holiday. As a result, teachers get frequent requests to prepare assignments for these students in advance, so that they not become unduly behind in their coursework. This is often difficult to do, as many assignments relate to oral instruction in the classroom and are not necessarily a page-by-page progression in a textbook. Also, in some instances, these lessons are not prepared a week or two in advance, which results in additional work for the teacher. We recommend that children should read as much as possible and do a written book report, keep a journal of their travels, purchase workbooks from an

educational store such as Kool and Child or Chapters. It will then be the student's responsibility to "catch-up" on assignments when they return to school.

Lates

It is a life skill and common courtesy to arrive for classes early and/or on time.

Students who arrive late disrupt the operation of the classroom by requiring the attention of their teachers or classmates to assist them in getting started on their assignments or to re-teach a lesson. More importantly, they miss out on routines and important concepts and class activities that are taught first thing in the day causing them to fall behind.

Fire Drills

All schools conduct fire drills six times throughout the year. Any continuous ringing of the fire bell must be treated as a real emergency. Students evacuate the school in an orderly fashion and gather on the field a safe distance from the building. The deliberate activation of a false fire alarm is a very serious offence and will result in serious consequences.

Lost and Found



The Lost and Found box is located in the main hallway. Before taking items to a charity organization, students are given the opportunity to review the contents of the box.

Earthquake Drills

Earthquake drills are done during the year. In the event of an earthquake- **Drop, Cover, and Hold On**-when the shaking stops, count to 60, and then the school is evacuated in an orderly fashion. Teachers and students move to a predetermined open space away from the school building. The school's emergency plan is activated, and the kiosk equipment is distributed.

Each September, parents will be requested to update the emergency release information on file at the school. In the event of an earthquake, students will be released only to the persons designated on the form. Each September, a refresher course will be taught to all students regarding Earthquake Safety.

Care of School Property

Students borrow library books, use iPads and laptops, and are issued textbooks. It is the student's responsibility to take care of any technology or item that is on loan from the school. A student who willfully or carelessly loses, defaces, damages or destroys any school property will be required to pay for it.

We encourage parents to put name labels on any items belonging to students and to carry books and supplies to and from school in a suitable bag.

Before and After School Parking

The area in front of the school is clearly marked as a **drop off /pick up area only**. This means that you must always stay in the driver's seat of your car. If you choose to go into the school, for any reason, you must move your car to a designated parking spot.

IF YOU NEED TO PARK USE THE PARKING LOT SPACES. PLEASE SLOW DOWN AS YOU ENTER AND EXIT OUR SCHOOL GROUNDS.

Students with Bikes, Scooters, Skateboards, etc.

1. Do not ride bicycles, scooters on school property before/ after school until 4:00 p.m.
2. Wear helmets if students are riding bicycles, or scooters.
3. Dismount and use the crosswalks.
4. Skateboards are not permitted at the school.
5. Be watchful, aware, and cautious in busy traffic areas at all times.

Expectations of Students, Staff and Parents in the Educational Process



To achieve an effective learning environment for our students, the school community must function well and work together. For the educational process to be a successful,

productive and enjoyable one:

- The child must be prepared to learn.
- The climate of the school and classroom must be positive and conducive to learning.
- The teacher must be prepared to instruct and to help the child.

Expectation of Students

- To follow all school rules and Code of Conduct

- To be courteous, to practice good manners and to exercise a sense of responsibility appropriate with their age.
- To respect the rights of others.
- To respect school property and the property of others.
- To come to school on time, properly equipped and willing to work.

Expectation of Parents

- To ensure that students attend regularly and punctually.
- To ensure that the child is prepared to work while at school.
- To be prepared to work with the child and teacher in planning and carrying out a suitable educational program.
- To work with the teacher to help their child develop responsibility, self-discipline and respect for the rights of others.

Expectation of Teachers

- To present to a group of individual students a planned educational program.
- To acknowledge the individual differences of his/her students and to make adjustments to the basic program so that each student is challenged to reach his or her potential.
- To be courteous, practice common manners and to enforce the rules of the school and the classroom consistently and with impartiality.
- To work with students and parents in planning and implementing a suitable educational program for each child.

Expectations of the Principal and VP

To administer, manage, lead and supervise the school, including:

- Placing and educational programming of all students in the school.
- General conduct of students at school, going to and from school and participating in extra-curricular activities.
- To provide guidance, advice, support, and direction to students, parents, teachers and support staff in all school matters.
 - Care and safety of all students.
 - Act as a liaison between the parents and school staff.
 - Ensure a safe, caring and orderly school environment conducive to learning.

Code of Conduct

A. Statement of Purpose

- To establish and maintain a safe, caring and orderly environment for purposeful learning.
- To clarify and publish expectations for student behaviour while at school, while going to and from school, and while attending any school function or activity at any location.

Conduct Expectations

Acceptable Conduct

- Respect for self, for others and for the school.
- Help to make the school a safe, caring and orderly place.
- Report to an adult, in a timely manner, incidents of bullying, harassment or intimidation.
- Accept responsibility for your own learning.
- Act in a manner that brings credit to the school.

Unacceptable Conduct

The following points are examples only and are not an all-inclusive list,

- Behaviours that:
 - Interfere with the learning of others.
 - Interfere with an orderly environment.
 - Create unsafe conditions.
- Acts of:
 - Bullying, harassment or intimidation.
 - Physical violence.
 - Retribution against a person who has reported incidents.
- Illegal acts, such as:
 - Theft of or damage to property.
 - Possession, use of illegal or restricted substances such as firecrackers.
 - Possession or use of weapons

Bullying

McGirr staff believes that all students, staff and volunteers should be provided a safe, secure and welcoming learning and working environment. To that end, acts of bullying and harassment is not acceptable.

Bullying is defined as an intentional action on the part of an individual, which causes emotional or physical distress of a victim. Bullying implies a power imbalance between individuals. It many involve a single incident

or a series of incidents over time.

Barbara Coloroso, the author of, *The Bully, The Bullied and The Bystander*”, says, “bystanders are the supporting cast who aid and abet the bully through acts of omission and commission. It is important that children recognize that they are all responsible for helping to create a safe, caring, respectful and bully-free environment.” Bystanders will have consequences if they don’t accept the responsibility of reporting incidences to teachers or supervisors.

Bullying takes three main forms:

Physical bullying – Involves hitting the victim in some way or taking or damaging a victim’s property.

Verbal bullying – Using words to hurt or humiliate others.

Relational bullying – Trying to convince peers to exclude or reject a certain person or people, and then to exclude the victims from their social connections.

Cyberbullying – Using technology and digital media through social network sites and applications for the purpose of using text and/or photos and graphics to harass, harm or embarrass another student or adult.

B. Rising Expectations

Expectations will increase for students as they become older and more mature, and as they move through successive grades. Students are expected to exhibit increased personal responsibility and self-discipline and there will be increasing consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

C. Consequences

- Responses to unacceptable conduct are pre-planned and consistent.
- Disciplinary action, wherever possible, is preventative and restorative, rather than merely punitive.
- Students are encouraged to participate in reflecting on the consequences of their actions for example, working through a “Problem-solving sheet” with a teacher or Principal.

Step 1

A discussion should occur between student and staff member. When students choose not to meet behavioural expectations, there will be natural, logical and consistent consequences. Minor indiscretions are handled by staff. Frequently the consequence will be in the form of a time-out. It may also involve completion of a “Problem Solving Sheet” where students can reflect upon their actions and consider better choices next time. Parents are often informed and are required

to sign the “Problem Solving Sheet”.

Step 2

Office Referral Forms are issued for major offences such as rough play, bullying, fighting, physical abuse of others, throwing objects, defiance of authority, disrespectful or abusive language and continual defiance of school rules. Students are referred to the Principal. Parents are informed.

Step 3

Parents are contacted for serious incidents of misbehaviour or if minor incidents persist beyond step two. Depending on the severity or frequency of the misbehaviour, students are given in-school or home suspensions for:

- persistent inappropriate behaviour, which disturbs, interrupts or disquiets the usual, orderly operation of the school
- inappropriate behaviour judged to have a harmful effect on the safety of other pupils

For the following, students can expect to be suspended immediately, from between one to five days: fighting, overt rudeness, alcohol or drug use, stealing, vandalism and any action that deliberately endangers the health and safety of others.

In addition to applying natural and logical consequences for misbehaviour, our discipline procedures include such methods as developing behaviour contracts and counselling for pupils.

D. Notification

In cases of serious breaches of the Code of Conduct, the school will advise other parties, including:

- Parents of student offenders – in every instance.
- Parents of student victims – in every instance.
- School district officials – as required by school district policy.
- Police and, or other agencies – as required by law.
- All parents may be informed when it is important to reassure members of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation or incident and are taking appropriate action to address it.

Serious Offences

School District 68 Policy No. 3201

Students committing such actions as the use or possession of drugs or alcohol, setting off false fire alarms, seriously assaulting other students or other persons, while under the jurisdiction of the school, shall be suspended by the school principal and the

parents or guardians immediately notified in writing of the circumstances.

Fireworks and Stink bombs

Possession of or use of fireworks and stink bombs of all types is illegal and not permitted on the school property.

Should any student violate this rule he/she will be automatically suspended for a length of time to be determined by the principal. Some students may also be required to have an interview with the local Fire Marshall or the Assistant Superintendent of Schools before being re-admitted to the school.

This policy is being followed for the following reasons:

1. Possession of any fireworks by minors is illegal.
2. Fireworks today tend to be more powerful and many are now classed as C-2 explosives.
3. Schools by their nature tend to be paper places. The setting off of fireworks in a school building may very well result in fire. Those classed as C-2 emit very hot gases that could easily start a fire in a classroom.
4. Stink bombs contain ammonium sulphate that is harmful to skin and eyes and internal organs.
5. Serious injury can result by accident to the person in possession or to others that may be bystanders.

Student Dress Code

The appearance of any young person is primarily the responsibility of that individual and their parents. We expect students to maintain an appearance that is not distracting to teachers or other students to the detriment of the educational process of the school. Students *are* to wear attire which:

- Is safe.
- Is free of any reference to alcohol, drugs, gangs, hate, obscenity, profanity, racism/ discrimination, sex and/or violence.
- Is not disturbing or distracting to others within the school setting.

Half-tops, flip flop sandals and or “beach wear” are not appropriate attire. Hats are not to be worn in the building.

When a student’s appearance is felt to be detrimental, an adult will have a private conversation with him/her. The parent/ guardian may be contacted and asked to bring appropriate clothing for the student. If the problem persists, a parent and administrator conference may be requested.

Medicine at School and Medic Alert

We recognize that children may require prescription or non-prescription drugs while at school. Drugs can be dangerous. Please do not allow students to carry or leave drugs at school. Any drugs should be given by the parent. Arrangements can be made for staff to administer drugs to students. This involves a parent completing an appropriate **Medical Consent Form**.

If a child requires special medical consideration of any kind, for any condition including allergies, please advise the school on the student information form in September. Another medical form should be filled out and signed by the parent or guardian informing staff and allowing staff to follow appropriate procedures should an emergency arise.

Student Support Services

We have a wide range of special education learning services to support the diverse learning needs of our students.

At McGirr we use a process called **Response to Intervention (RTI)**. Using formative and summative assessment data we prioritize student learning needs. The principal and school-based team then organizes our material and human resources effectively for the purpose of improving student learning outcomes. Emphasis is given to early intervention of primary students since research shows that this has the greatest impact.

Up to 85% of students’ learning needs are met in the regular classroom with the teacher providing universal instructional strategies and methods. This is referred to as *Tier One* in RTI processes.

Tier Two students require more support to meet the goals of the regular program and may work in small groups for two to three times per week for 30 to 45 minutes, primarily in the Language Arts area. *Tier Three* students often require significant modifications or adaptations in their education. They may receive intensive frequent support for 60 to 75 minutes. Specific learning goals are developed in an IEP (Individual Education Plan) or Student Support Plan by the Student Support Service teacher in conjunction with the classroom teacher, counsellor, and other specialists who may be working with the student. Throughout the service period, parents are regularly consulted, and goals are monitored and fluid.

Student Support teachers test and diagnose students referred by the classroom teacher. They may suggest to the teacher materials and programs for the child or

provide appropriate instruction that would assist the student in overcoming specific learning difficulties. To support the classroom teacher, regular weekly School Based Team meetings are held. The Team meetings operate in a problem-solving manner to assist classroom teachers in planning for the instruction of learners who are having difficulties. In addition to our administrators, the counsellor, the student support service teachers, classroom teacher, specialists from Student Support Services and sometimes parents are invited to provide suggestions for supporting the student.

We have the services of a counsellor two days each week. The counsellor works with individuals or small groups regarding personal, academic, social, or behavioural problems. The counsellor works with our Child Youth and Family Support Worker to assist parents who are seeking advice related to parenting skills and techniques. Through the Student Support Services Office, we have access to a wide range of services for students including:
 Educational Assessment and Planning Services
 Psychological Services
 English Language Learners and First Nations Programs
 Itinerant Teacher of Visually Impaired, Speech and Language, Itinerant Teacher School Health Programs:
 Vision and Hearing (referral) Dental Screening (K)
 Hepatitis B Vaccinations (grade 6)

McGirr Field Trips/Enhancements

Student Expectations



Students who participate in field trip experiences do so with the same expectations for behaviour and conduct as if they were in a

classroom. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to all persons they encounter while on a field trip. Any departure from these expectations will be dealt with in the same manner as if the child was working at school.

- A. The following policy regarding Field Trips has been adopted by the staff:
 1. That teachers should work to establish equal opportunity at each grade level for field trips.
 2. That major fundraising activities should be targeted to specific grade levels.
 3. Teachers at each grade level will, at the beginning of each year, meet to determine which field trips are appropriate. Following

- 4. that, we will determine which fundraising ventures will be assigned for each grade. Parent information meetings will be held prior to finalizing all out of district field trips.
- B. The following District-wide procedures (3335P) have been adopted by the Nanaimo

School Board to provide for the safety and supervision of students on field trips:

1. Prior to embarking upon a field trip of any kind, students and parents will be appropriately advised of the school’s code of conduct, with reference to expectations regarding behaviour and curfew. The use of alcohol or illegal substances shall be prohibited at all times during a field trip.
2. On a field trip of any kind, the teacher sponsor/adult supervisor will act in a manner consistent with what would be expected of a “judicious parent”.
3. On a field trip of any kind, it is expected that teacher sponsors/adult supervisors will endeavour to ensure proper and safe student conduct by providing a proactive, participatory and visible presence.
4. In cases where both male and female students are participating in overnight field trips, and it is impossible to provide adult supervision of the same gender, parents will be so advised in advance.
5. Where a situation warrants a student’s being sent home from an overnight/out-of-district field trip, parents shall be notified as soon as practicable and appropriate travel and pick up arrangements shall be made for that student.
6. Potential chaperones for over-night and extended school sponsored trips will complete an “Application to be Chaperone” form. This form will be kept on file at the school for at least two years after the trip.
7. Criminal record checks shall be conducted for all chaperones prior to overnight and extended activities.
8. Criminal record checks will be reviewed by the Human Resources Department in consultation with the school principal and will be kept on file by the HR Department.
9. Criminal record checks for chaperones will be valid for one year after date of issue.

District Policies

Our School district has numerous policies that direct and safeguard a school’s operation and the students who attend our schools. Below are a few policies in summary form that the board

has asked you to be informed of on a yearly basis. The complete policy is also available on the school district web site.

3560 - Parent/Student Appeals

In accordance with section 11 of the School Act, a student or the parent of a student entitled to an educational program in the School District may appeal a decision of an employee of the School Board which significantly affects the education, health or safety of the student.

3804 - Multicultural Education

The Board recognizes the role of the school in promoting an awareness of the multicultural nature of our community and believes that such an awareness will encourage respect for human dignity. As such, the Board is committed to providing school and classroom environments, and educational practices leading to respect for the cultural traditions of all students.

3808 - Cross-Cultural, Ethnic and race Relations

The Board recognizes the diverse background of our district students, staff and community members.

In order to assure an education that will broaden and enrich life experiences of all those served by this school district, the Board will work to improve understanding among cultures, promote respect for diversity and combat racism and discrimination. The Board will be sensitive to and ensure the equal right to individuals of different ethnic backgrounds and resist racial bias in any form.

Communication

We believe that good communication between home and school is critical. Daily communication between the home and school is normally through the student planner.



Increasingly, we are using email to communicate with parents, families and the school. Check with your child's teacher to see if this is possible and connect up. You can also email the school to keep the staff and up to date with relevant issues regarding your child at school. If you need to communicate anything of a serious or immediate nature to the school, please call and email the office to notify us. We can always get a message to the teacher.

School happenings are also communicated at assemblies throughout the year. Most assemblies are held monthly, alternating morning and afternoon. Parents are most welcome to attend.

Our school web site is a good place to keep informed. We hope to be consistent with posting the latest information, including a calendar page showing field trips, assemblies, etc.

During the first week of each month and occasionally more often, a school newsletter is emailed or sent home. It is usually sent home with the youngest member of the family – a big responsibility. Please make sure you check your email or your child's backpack or planner for communication items from the school.

Family Vacations

Each year we are approached by an increasing number of parents who wish to take their child out of school for extended periods of time. Usually this is for reasons associated with family plans or family business. We do not have a procedure for granting students a "leave of absence". Rather, it is assumed that parents will make decisions in the best interests of their own child. We are respectful of the fact that many of our families have family members far away, and spending time with them is important. Travelling to new places is also educational and can provide students with a wonderful opportunity to learn. Difficulties arise, however, when parents wish to have some sort of reassurance that their child will not be "behind" in their work when they return. If your child misses school for extended periods of time, he or she will be "behind" in classroom work. Students may

have other cultural and travel experiences that contribute to their overall development, but the many varied daily classroom activities they will miss cannot be duplicated through homework packages.

We are not in the position to provide assignments for children who have extended absences due to family plans. Rather, we have the following list of suggested activities that are designed to assist parents in planning for their child's educational needs while traveling.

- Set aside a time each day for reading books.
- Have your child keep a reading response journal in which he or she records this reading activity and thoughts about what has been read that day.
- Keep a scrapbook of special places or sightseeing.
- Have your child keep a “math journal” or ledger, dealing with changes in time and currency, distances traveled, cost of fuel and meals, etc.
- You may wish to purchase a math workbook that will help your child keep in daily practice with basic math skills.

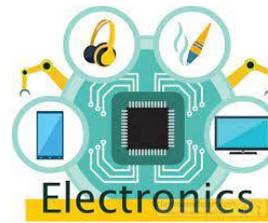
We will be happy to see what your child has accomplished upon his or her return, but the activities will not be marked or evaluated. It is your right to take your child out of school due to family circumstances, but once you have exercised that privilege, you must also accept the responsibility for your child’s education during that absence.

Toy Guns and Weapons

Our School District Policy strictly forbids the use or possession of toy or simulated weapons as well as any use or possession of dangerous weapons. Weapons and toy weapons pose a serious safety threat to people and will be confiscated if brought to school.

Cell Phones, Cameras and Electronics

As a school staff, we do understand the importance of phone communication between parents and students before and after school. Cell phones that are brought to school must **be turned off when entering the property and stored in a backpack.** They shall not be in pockets of clothing or in desks. Cell phones must be stored in backpacks and are not permitted to be brought out at any point during the school day (**unless invited to by their teacher for an educational purpose**). This is solely the responsibility of the student possessing the phone. After school, they may be turned on and used **outside of the school property.** Cell phones are not to be removed from backpacks or used in hallways, rooms of any kind, foyers or anywhere within the school building.



We understand that there may be times when parents need to immediately contact their children. At McGirr it is always possible for parents to communicate with their children in an emergency, via the main office. (Non-emergency: info.mg@sd68.bc.ca along with your child’s first and last name and teacher)

The school is not responsible for any electronic device that ends up at school and will not investigate one that is lost, stolen, or damaged while on school property.

Use of any photographic device, film camera, digital camera, cell phone camera, video camera, etc. is strictly prohibited. Use of any such device can potentially violate the personal privacy of individuals and such items are not to be at the school. If such a device is in use or in an individual’s hand emulating use, a logical consequence will be given.

Any confiscated items will be returned when parents/guardians and the student make an appointment and meet with a school administrator.

Personal Digital Device Restrictions

Research suggests that restricting the use of personal digital devices at school leads to improved student wellness and academic focus. The use of personal digital devices during the school day, inclusive of outdoor recess breaks, is limited to instructional purposes and digital literacy in a way that is appropriate to the students’ age and developmental stage, under the direction of the classroom teacher. Consideration will be given to:

- accessibility and accommodation needs;
- medical and health needs;
- equity to support learning environments.

The school team will work collaboratively with families to ensure students have the support needed to manage their device usage in a healthy and safe manner.

Parent Advisory Council

This is our parent association. It has become more than a fund-raising group and now also serves in a consultative capacity regarding school policy, programs and direction. The executive officers are elected in September.



If parents can afford the time, please get involved. This is

your school community.

Who: - is on the PAC?

1. Elected Members from the parents of students in the school
2. Principal of the school
3. Staff Representatives
4. All parents can attend meetings and have input.

What: - is the Purpose of a PAC?

1. To provide a discussion forum for school activities between staff and parents.
2. To bring ideas to the attention of the principal and staff members that might benefit the children in that school.
3. To consult on new programs, fund-raising, volunteer activities, etc.
4. To channel school activities through one group.

It is NOT a committee to discuss individual students/staff problems.

When: advertised through newsletters and listserve, but typically 1 evening a month (8-9 meetings a year)

Use of Tobacco Products/Vaping

The use of tobacco products in school buildings and on school property is against the law. In March 2007, the B.C. Legislature approved legislation making it illegal to smoke or use tobacco at school, effective September 2007.

Students and Adults are reminded that they must not smoke or use tobacco in the school building or on school property. This includes smoking in vehicles while you are on school grounds. Students found violating this law will be subject to school discipline.

School Wide Behaviour Expectations

Staff, students and parents were involved in creating expectations for school wide behaviour at McGirr. They can be found posted outside of the main office and should be referred to for expectations of behaviour in all areas of the school. The table format in the following page is provided to clearly explain these expectations.

McGirr School Behaviour Matrix

<i>Expected Behaviour</i>	Classroom	Hallways	Gym	Gym Change Room	Playgrounds	Library	Emergency Drills	Assemblies	School Wide/Field Trips	Bathrooms
Respect Ourselves	Listen Be on task. Participate. Give your best effort Be prepared. Desk clean, organized Do Homework. Use Planner.	Walk. Stay on right. Watch slippery spots when wet.	Listen Participate. Be in the gym only when supervised.	Change quickly. Bring your strip. Listen.	Play safely. Follow game rules. Dress appropriately wear safe footwear. When bell ring go immediately to you lineup.	Be on task. Use only approved site. Be prepared Be supervised. Return books on time.	Listen. Stay calm. Follow directions. Leave the building quickly. Leave the grounds only with permission	Enter and exit quietly. Sit in one spot. Listen Silent at signal. Use washroom before and after.	Listen Stay with your group. Follow directions willingly. Go to washrooms with a buddy. Be prepared.	Enter and leave quietly. Wash your hands.
Respect Others	Be Kind. Walk Hands/Feet to self. Include others. Use polite words. Accept differences. Keep valuable items at home. Take notices home.	Use quiet voice. Greet people politely. Single file. "on the right to be polite" Hands and feet to self.	Praise effort and good sportsmanship. Take turns. Share. Play safely. Hands and feet to self	Quiet voices. Respect personal space Be Kind Pick up after yourself If you can't say something nice don't say anything.	Use designated play areas. Get help for problems-be a helpful bystander. Accept differences include others be aware of younger children. Use appropriate language. Throw objects for games only-rocks and sticks left on the ground	Quiet voices. Return books. Take turns. Log off when directed. Use only your own passwords. Push in chair when finished.	Keep hands and feet to self. Assist when instructed. Line up without talking. Stay in line. Stay with group.	Eyes on speaker. Hands and feet to self. Clap hands for appreciation. Sit cross-legged. Enter and exit silently, single file. Empty hands for anthem: stand at attention & sing with pride. Respect all cultures.	Show care for place visited. Display good manners. Sit while bus is in motion. Maintain personal space. Act safely. Give McGirr a positive image.	Flush. Report problems. Paper towels in garbage cans. Respect privacy in stalls. Keep feet on ground. Be Kind. Keep water in sink. Keep soap in container or in hands.
Respect Property	Care for school and personal property. Reduce, re-use and re-cycle. Pick up after yourself Keep desks clean. Gum Free	Appreciate others' displays-look, don't touch. Put litter in garbage cans. Wipe feet.	Handle equipment with care. Food and drink free. Clean shoes. Don't hang on hoops.	Wear proper footwear. Keep property vandalism-free. Stay out of other's things.	Put litter in garbage cans. No food. Wipe feet upon entrance to school. Use class doors or designated doors. Respect trees, plants, and nature-stay off trees & garden.	Push in chairs. Treat books carefully. Treat computers gently. Food free	Close doors behind you.	Lift and store chairs and benches with care. Food and drink free. Be careful with electronic equipment.	Look after your things. Treat others' property respectfully. Clean up after yourself.	Hands and pockets empty. Keep floors and walls clean. Turn taps off. Use garbage cans.

WELCOME
BACK
— TO —
SCHOOL

