



January 2021

PRINCIPAL: Mr. Robbie Dhillon
VICE PRINCIPAL: Ms. Jennifer Robinson
SECRETARIES: Ms. Sandra Fox and Ms. Karen Corrigan

<https://mg.schools.sd68.bc.ca/>

FROM THE OFFICE

Dear Parents,

We hope you had a wonderful holiday season. Your child(ren) and staff have returned from their break refreshed and ready for the learning opportunities that lie ahead. As January unfolds, it is a perfect opportunity to re-establish routines and regular habits to support your child(ren's) school life. Here are six ways to assist you in this regard:



1. Regular bedtimes with time for brushing teeth, bathing and quiet reading time helps to calm active children and enable them to sleep well each night.
2. Consistent wakeup times, healthy breakfasts and sufficient time to dress and gather school books enables children to begin the school day on time and in a calm way.
3. Regular daily homework time (with parental support as needed) is essential to help children feel competent and confident in class.
4. Ensure there is a balance between active play and television or computer time. Time with friends and family is essential to developing positive social skills and a sense of belonging.
5. Computers should be in a highly visible area of the house. A child's computer time must be monitored and should follow specific safety guidelines regarding site and program access.
6. Share a caring conversation and a smile with your child each day.

We are also at that time of the year when we are accepting registration for new, in catchment, students for September **including new kindergarten students**. If you know of a family with a child who should be entering Kindergarten in September in our neighborhood please encourage the family to register their child immediately. **This process is done on line and the information was sent out prior to the holidays** (www.sd68.bc.ca) link onto registration <https://www.sd68.bc.ca/students-parents/registration-information/>

Yours truly,
Mr. Robbie Dhillon
Principal

VICE-PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year! I hope families had an opportunity to relax over the winter break and take opportunities to enjoy our west coast weather in parks and outdoor areas of Nanaimo. While we are back at school, enjoying time outdoors allows children to demonstrate their curiosity about the natural world, as well as expend their energy in a fun way. Mr. Dhillon has made suggestions about ways to support your child so that they can have a positive and productive day at school. I would also encourage you to

talk about your child's school day with them. Perhaps instead of asking "How was your day?", asking some of the following questions may help you better understand your child's learning and their feelings about school.

- What made you feel proud? happy?
- What are you reading at school? (independent reading/ teacher read-aloud)
- What was your favourite/least favourite part of your day?
- What is an example of kindness you saw or showed today?

Mrs. Jennifer Robinson
Vice-Principal

STRONG START

Please welcome Ms. Michele Moore to McGirr as our new strong start coordinator. Many families will know Teacher Michele as she also runs a daycare in the neighborhood. Teacher Michele comes to McGirr with lots of experience not only in early childhood education, but also as a Kindergarten teacher before she moved to Nanaimo. We don't know how strong start will look this year (starting with online) but it is nice to know we have such a wonderful and skilled person taking over this very important program.

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2021

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|--|--------------|
| PAC (6:30 PM)..... | Mon Jan 18 |
| PAC (6:30 PM)..... | Mon Feb 8 |
| Progress Report Issued | Wed Feb 10 |
| Non-Instructional Day (students do not attend) . | Thurs Feb 11 |
| Non-Instructional Day (students do not attend) | Fri Feb 12 |
| BC Family Day (students do not attend)..... | Mon Feb 15 |
| Last Day before Spring Break/Easter | Fri. Mar 12 |
| First Day back..... | Mon Mar 29 |
| Good Friday (students do not attend)..... | Fri Apr 2 |
| Easter Monday (students do not attend)..... | Mon Apr 5 |
| PAC (6:30 PM)..... | Mon Apr 19 |
| Non Instructional Day (students do not attend)..... | Fri May 7 |
| PAC (6:30 PM)..... | Mon May 17 |
| Victoria Day (students do not attend) | Mon May 24 |
| PAC (6:30 PM)..... | Mon Jun 21 |
| Formative Report Issued | Tues Jun 29 |
| Last Day of School (school dismissed at 2:10).... | Tues Jun 29 |
| Administration Day..... | Wed Jun 30 |

BIKE SAFETY



In the same newsletter we will mention snow, we will discuss bike safety 😊. During the winter months there is less daylight. This increases the dangers on the roads with students cycling to school in very poor lighting conditions. It is very important that students wear brightly coloured

clothing or reflective tape so others can see you better. Ideally the importance of having proper lighting affixed to their bike is the best way to allow for others to see you clearly as a cyclist. Just a reminder, it's against the law to ride a bicycle without a red rear light and a white light on the front. In addition, please walk your bike across marked crosswalks when crossing the road and do not ride your bike on school property. Always wear your helmet --- "It's your last line of defense!"

Constable S. Caram RCMP School Liaison Officer

PARENT QUIZ – ARE YOU A GOOD LISTENER?

We all think we're good listeners, but studies show that most people can do a better job.

Have each member of your family take this quiz. See if you agree with each other!

Give yourself five points for things you think you do very well, zero for something you really need to work on – or any score in between.

- ___1. I do not interrupt family members when they are talking.
- ___2. Each person in my family can count on me for some uninterrupted listening time each day.
- ___3. I do not do other things while "listening" to people.
- ___4. I maintain eye contact with my family when they speak.
- ___5. My family would consider me a good listener.

RULES FOR PLAYING IN THE SNOW

As we approach that time of year when Nanaimo can get snow, we'd like to remind families of the "snow" rules at McGirr. The following rules are enforced for the safety of students:



- There is "no snowball throwing" on the grounds
- Students are not to participate in activities that may injure other students –

face washing with snow, kicking chunks of snow/ice, etc.

- No crazy carpets, sleds, slides brought to school

It is important that our students understand the rules and our concern that snowballs can cause serious injury. Within these rules there are many opportunities for students to enjoy their time outside in the snow at recess.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING FOR WEATHER CONDITIONS



The cool wet weather has arrived and there will be many days students will ask the question "Is it an inside day?" The answer on most days is no. Students will be going outside to play at recess and

lunch unless it is raining heavily. We thank you for ensuring your child comes to school with appropriate rain and cool weather clothing, including warm gloves. At McGirr Elementary we believe in the importance of fresh air and outside play for all students and appreciate your assistance in this regard. **It is also advisable students have a change of clothes in their school bags, including socks.** This extra clothing may be needed, especially if your child like active recess games.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

It is that time of year again, when the school district would like to remind parents about school closure procedures. The most common reasons that schools might be closed are dangerous road conditions due to a heavy snowfall or ice. If you are wondering if schools are open on a particular day, for the most current updates listen to local radio stations (WAVE 102.3 FM and WOLF 106.9 FM) in the mornings.



We also attempt to put an announcement of any school closure on the school district website, www.sd68.bc.ca, and on Twitter and Facebook, but our ability to do so could be affected by such things as power outages and technical issues. If there is no announcement on the website or social media, please be sure to listen to local radio stations.

We would like to remind parents that it is their right to make the final decision as to whether it is safe for their children to travel to school on any given day. While the district strives to make the best decision possible for students across the district, there may be circumstances in your neighbourhood that lead you to decide to keep your children home, even though schools are open.