



February 2022

PRINCIPAL: Mr. Robbie Dhillon
VICE PRINCIPAL: Ms. Jennifer Robinson
SECRETARIES: Ms. Sandra Fox and Ms. Michelle Reynolds

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

FROM THE OFFICE

Dear Caregivers,

It amazes me, even with everything happening around us, how the students and staff continue to do excellent work at the school. I would like to thank families for having their student "school ready." This really makes this possible.

It seemed like just yesterday we came back from winter holidays and here we are at over 50% done this school year. There has been a lot going on at McGirr the past little while. I would like to thank our teachers, educational assistants, and other support staff for their excellent work this school year.

Progress Reports

You will receive your child's progress report on Friday February 11th (we are hoping by 4:30 PM). This progress report presents a brief summary of your child's learning progress since the start of the school year. It does not replace the ongoing discussions you have with teachers either in person or through your child's planner. It does not replace the time you spend working with your child at home, taking time to read together, to organize notebooks, to edit writing and to discuss and celebrate learning. If you wish to discuss any portion of your child's report, please contact your child's teacher.

Planning Ahead for the rest of the year

Here are a few suggestions to reflect on this past term and to plan for the next term:

"What were some important things you have learned so far this year?" or "What have been your favourite moments up to now?" Write these positive memories in the planner or in a journal.

What would you like to be able to do better? How can we work together to help you meet your goals? Review planners and notebooks for ideas.

I do want to bring to your attention a change in our calendar that has been necessitated due to recent absences (both student and staff) as well as what we hope is lessening of the current wave of Covid. **We are shifting our 2nd Communication of Learning events to March 30. Similar to October this involves early dismissal on March 30 and 31 (1 PM), with sessions with families (one parent, one child) that will run from 1:15-3:15 and 5:30-7.** There will be a sign up process for these sessions.

Even though things don't look the same this year, thank you to members of our PAC for your continued contributions to the school. These members work tirelessly to aid in your child's day to day school life. Your help and assistance is appreciated by the staff, students and the McGirr Community.

Yours truly,
Mr. Robbie Dhillon, Principal

2022 CALENDAR

Progress Reports Issued.....	Fri Feb 11
BC Family Day (school closed).....	Mon Feb 21
PAC (6:30 PM).....	Mon Feb 28
Last Day before Spring Break/Easter	Fri. Mar 11
First Day back.....	Mon Mar 28
Early dismissal (1:00 PM).....	Wed Mar 30
Communication of Learning Conferences (1:15-3:15). Wed	Mar 30
Communication of Learning Conferences (5:30-7:00). Wed	Mar 30
Early Dismissal (1:00 PM)	Thurs Mar 31
PAC (6:30 PM).....	Mon Apr 11
Class Photos.....	Tues Apr 12
Good Friday	Fri Apr 15
Easter Monday.....	Mon Apr 18
Curriculum Implementation (students do not attend)....	Thurs May 5
Pro-D (students do not attend)	Fri May 6
PAC (6:30 PM).....	Mon May 16
Victoria Day (school closed)	Mon May 23
Welcome to Kindergarten (AM).....	Fri Jun 10
PAC (6:30 PM).....	Mon Jun 13
Formative Report Issued.....	Wed Jun 29
Last Day of School (school dismissed at 2:10).....	Wed Jun 29
Administration Day	Thurs Jun 30

***NOTE COVID could change some of the dates/events above**

ANTI BULLYING DAY (PINK SHIRT) WED FEB 23

On Wednesday, February 23rd we would like to encourage students and parents to wear pink to school for anti-bullying day.



The Ministry of Education has a guide developed to assist parents regarding bullying behaviour and other safety

issues with the E.R.A.S.E. program. The guide can be found at www.erasebullying.ca/

What is Bullying Versus Conflict?

Building respectful and safe schools proactively address bullying and all forms of unacceptable behaviour including harassment, discrimination or violence. The definitions below are adapted from various Canadian safe schools' networks including: The National Crime Preventions Strategy.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status, or other reasons.

Bullying may occur because of perceived differences, such as, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size and physical appearance, age or economic status. Bullying may be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding, or lack of knowledge. It can continue over time, is often hidden from adults, and will probably continue if no action is taken.

Types of Bullying

There are four broad types of bullying:

- **Direct physical bullying:** includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, and pushing or damaging property.
- **Direct verbal bullying:** includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
- **Indirect bullying:** is often harder to recognize and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes: lying, and spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude someone, or damaging someone's reputation or social acceptance.
- **Cyber bullying:** is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. Some examples include: harassment via cell phone/texting, setting up a web-bashing site or deliberately excluding someone and/or attacking them via social media sites like Facebook.

What Bullying is Not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

- **Mutual conflict:** involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- **Social rejection or dislike:** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
- **Single episode acts:** of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

It is important that all students recognize that they are each responsible for helping to create a safe, caring, and respectful environment.

15 MINUTES OF FUN: LEARN WITH YOUR FAMILY



ABC Life Literacy Canada is encouraging Canadian families to

have "15 Minutes of Fun" learning together. Learning can happen at any time. Practicing literacy together every day has tremendous benefits for both children and parents. Here are some great ways to get started:

1. Read a "wake up" story in the morning (after reading your bedtime story the night before).
2. Search online for fun places to go in your community. Pick out a spot for your next family day trip.
3. Make up a new recipe together and post it online.
4. Tell knock-knock jokes together while doing the dishes.
5. Create a story with your family: take turns writing one sentence at a time, then read the whole story aloud when you're done.
6. Write a review of a book you read together as a family. Send it to the author through email or snail mail.
7. Organize a book swap at your school or with your friends.
8. Track your trip to school, the park, and the grocery store on a map. Find a different route to take to each place.
9. Learn to play a musical instrument. What about the ukulele?
10. Write a note to include in a grown-up's lunch – ask them to write back!
11. Make a popsicle stick model with your family.
12. Write your names graffiti-style using chalk on your sidewalk – you may need to shovel first!
13. Play a board game together.
14. Look up the words to your favorite song online. Have a sing-off with your friends!
15. Count how many steps it takes to get from your bedroom to your kitchen. Find out who in your family has the most steps to a snack!

INTERNET SAFETY –KEEPING YOUR CHILD SAFE

Internet safety for children is an important subject and something many parents are concerned about. The internet does have many good points, but there are dangers, and parents and children should be particularly cautious.

So, what can you do to protect your children when they are online?

Use A Child Safe Browser

These are browsers that block websites with content that is not appropriate for children to view. Although you can never be completely sure it will block everything, it will at least go some way to protect children from content that is not child friendly.

Observe Children When They Are Using The Internet

It may not always be possible, but where it is, you should observe what your children are looking at, or at least be in the same room as them.

Limit Internet Usage

There are many reasons to limit the time your children spend on the internet. Spending too much time on the computer is not healthy, and the less time they spend online the less chance of them coming across something they shouldn't.

Stay In Touch

Parents should keep abreast of the latest online threats, so they know the dangers their children could face. It is a good idea to read up on the subject occasionally. If you are educated on these matters, you can educate your children, thus protecting them from internet dangers.

The better placed you are to protect your children the better, but children themselves also need to be aware. So, what should parents tell their children to do and not to do when using the internet?

Don't Give Away Personal Information

Parents should tell their children not to give information such as their telephone number, their address or their age to people online. There are times when they cannot be sure who they are talking to and who will see this information.

Don't Meet Up With Online "Friends"

Children should not meet up with someone they have met online. The problem here is that it is easy to hide your identity online, so you never know who you will really be meeting.

Don't Give Information About You Away

Any information children would not be comfortable with everyone knowing should not be shared online. Whether true or not, this could be seen by anyone and may not disappear in a hurry. If there is something they wouldn't share with their entire school it should not be revealed online, because all of their friends (and even people they don't know) may be privy to this information.

Don't Post Pictures Of Yourself Online

Any pictures posted online have the potential to get anywhere. They can even be manipulated. For obvious reasons children posting pictures of themselves online could lead to problems.

Don't Tell People Your Plans

Again, this could be seen by anyone. If people know where children will be and when, then they will easily be able to find them. This means they could be tracked down by anyone, from school bullies to child predators.

Don't Respond To Messages If Not Comfortable Doing So

If a child is sent a message online they should not respond unless they feel comfortable. All they have to do is ignore it or delete it or turn their computer off.

RULES FOR PLAYING IN THE SNOW



As we are still in 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.

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 neighborhood that lead you to decide to keep your children home, even though schools are open.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING FOR WEATHER CONDITIONS



The cool wet weather will arrive 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. At McGirr 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.** Warm gloves are always a good idea as well.

YOU CAN HELP THE OFFICE BE MORE EFFICIENT BY CONTINUING TO:

- Email student absences to info.mg@sd68.bc.ca is the preferred communication for general student absences.



- (please include your child's first and last name, teacher name and reason if needed). During COVID times please indicate if sick/ill
- call the school in advance (preferably before 8 AM) and leaving a message on the answering machine that is on 24 hours a day if you know your child will not be attending school on that day.