



Weekly Newsletter Email

November 25 – 29, 2019



Hello Meadowbrook Families,

Fifth Disease

I am writing to inform you that one of our students was recently diagnosed with a minor illness called Fifth Disease.

Fifth Disease is a mild viral infection seen most often in children between the ages of 5 and 14 years. Many children infected with this virus do not become ill. Some will have a mild fever and a distinctive rash which may come and go over a period of 1 to 3 weeks.

The virus spreads from person to person in much the same way as a common cold. People who have the virus are infectious for several days before the start of the rash. Fifth Disease is mostly communicable before the onset of the rash, and probably not communicable once the rash appears. Once the rash appears, the person is no longer likely to spread the infection.

While there is no specific treatment for Fifth Disease, frequent hand washing is believed to help to curb the spread of the virus. As long as the child feels well, he/she may continue with usual activities.

The majority of adults who had Fifth Disease in childhood will not get it again if exposed to a child with the infection, however, people with weakened immunity and pregnant women who are concerned that they may have been in contact with Fifth Disease should consult their family physician.

Under board protocol, we have posted signs on all entry doors to the school to notify persons that we do have Fifth Disease in the school, these signs will remain up until 21 days after the last reported case. Our signs will remain up until **Dec. 13, 2019**.

If you have any questions or concerns about Fifth Disease, you are invited to contact the York Region Health Service Department Health Connection Hotline at 1-800-361-5653.

Let it Snow

With the winter season upon us, people of all ages are looking forward to the joys of snow. Most children rank snowballing high on the list of fun winter activities. We have instructed all of our students that for **SAFETY REASONS SNOWBALLING IS FORBIDDEN**.

There may be times where a teacher may supervise a snow activity such as snow/ice sculpture building if conditions are appropriate; however, with the exception of these activities, and the making of snowmen or snow forts, **SNOW MUST STAY OUT OF HANDS AND ON THE GROUND** at all times.

Students are aware of the following consequences:

- **1st incident:** a warning with letter home and loss of recess privileges (1 day);
- **2nd incident:** a call home and/or letter with loss of recess privileges (up to 1 week);
- **3rd or repeated incident:** may result in suspension; and
- Injury to a student or flagrant disrespect to supervisors could result in a suspension even for the first incident.





Top 5 Things to Know about Pick Ups and Drop Offs



- 1) Entry through South Driveway only. No exceptions. Please obey posted signs;
- 2) Exit through North Driveway only. No exceptions. Please obey posted signs;
- 3) Drive slowly for the safety of all of the children;
- 4) A.M. drop-off is a Kiss 'n Ride only. There is no parking in the bus loop. Park only in designated spots; and
- 5) Follow the direction of the staff on duty. They are there to keep all of the children safe and congestion to a minimum.

2019-2020 School Year Calendar

That the school year for those locations operating on a regular schedule shall consist of 194 days with students commencing school on Tuesday, September 3, 2019 and include the following:

- the designation of 187 Instructional Days commencing Tuesday, September 3, 2019 in the School Year Calendar 2019-2020;
- the last school day for secondary students be Wednesday, June 24, 2020 and Thursday, June 25, 2020 for elementary students; and
- the designation of seven Professional Activity Days in the School Year Calendar 2019-2020.

That the school holiday's left will be as follows:

Winter Break	Monday, December 23, 2019 to Friday, January 3, 2019
Family Day	Monday, February 17, 2020
Mid-Winter Break	Monday, March 16, 2020 to Friday, March 20, 2020
Good Friday	Friday, April 10, 2020
Easter Monday	Monday, April 13, 2020
Victoria Day	Monday, May 18, 2020

That the Professional Activity Days (P.A. Days) for the balance of 2019-2020 school year be as follows:

1. Friday, January 17, 2020
2. Friday, January 31, 2020
3. Monday, June 1, 2020
4. Friday, June 26, 2020

Religious Holiday's

December is a very busy month when it comes to different celebrations, as noted in our board Holiday and Observances Calendar, this is the list and description of this month's events.

CHRISTIANITY

December 1 ♦ First Sunday of Advent begins the period of preparation for Christmas. In homes and Churches, Christians set out special candle holders or Advent wreaths (Western).

December 25 ♦ Christmas (Western calendar) celebrates the birth of Jesus about 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. Christians believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the son of God, and accept him as their Saviour and Lord. In many families, Christmas Eve is celebrated with big dinners, visiting and carol-singing, often followed by midnight church services

ISLAM

December 13 ♦ Birthday of Aga Khan (Ismaili)

December 13 ♦ Marks the birthday of His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan, the 49th hereditary Imamof-the-Time descended from the progeny of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). It is referred to as Salgirah Khushiali and is a celebratory occasion for Ismaili Muslims to express love, loyalty and devotion to their Imam.

JAINISM

December 8 ♦ Maun Agiyaras is a day of fasting, silence and meditation.

JUDAISM

Dec. 23 – 30 ♦ Chanukah (Festival of Lights) celebrates religious freedom by commemorating the victory of the Jews over Antiochus who tried to outlaw the practice of Judaism. Starting on the evening of December 12, candles are lit in increasing numbers for eight nights in a “Chanukiah” which is a special candelabrum containing nine candles.

KWANZAA

Dec. 26 - Jan. 1 ♦ Kwanzaa named after the Swahili word for “first fruits” is a seven day cultural celebration initiated by African Americans starting on December 26th. Each day a candle is lit and placed in a seven cup candelabrum called a kinara that sits on a straw mat adorned with fruit and vegetables. The participants discuss the principles or Nguzo Saba of Kwanzaa: unity, self-determination, collective responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith. On the final night of the celebration, friends and relatives gather for a feast known as Karamu.

WICCA

December 22 ♦ Yule In most traditions, Yule is the Sabbat that begins the Wiccan Year. This is the Winter Solstice—the shortest day and longest night we will experience in the Northern Hemisphere

ZOROASTRIANISM

December 26 ♦ Death of Prophet Zarathushtra who was the founder of the Zoroastrian faith. His dates are uncertain but Westerners believe he lived in the first or the second millennium B.C.E.

Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week

The week of Nov. 18 to 22 was Bullying Awareness and Prevention week. We'll shared tips every day that week through our morning announcements to help students learn more about cyberbullying. One very important tip: **THINK** before you post. Ask yourself:

is it **TRUE**?

Is it **HELPFUL**?

Is it **INSPIRING**?

Is it **NECESSARY**?

Is it **KIND. T.H.I.N.K.**

You can support efforts to change the culture of cyber bullying by using the hashtag #yeswewill on Twitter.

Cancellation of Bus Service Because of Weather

Please take a moment to review these “emergency” and “bussing” procedures. If the conditions of the roads force cancellation of bus service, local radio stations will be informed as early as possible and will broadcast this

information to the community. When the buses are cancelled in the morning, and the schools are still open, parents who choose to send their children to school should be aware that:

- field trips will also be cancelled
- any special day (Pajama Day) will be cancelled
- any planned lunches (pizza day) will be cancelled
- it is the responsibility of parents to ensure the safe arrival and pick up of their children
- no a.m. bussing means no p.m. bussing
- depending on availability of staff, several classes may be combined and students will be offered a highly modified program
- students may not be with their own teachers or grade level



If your child is not coming to school due to bad weather, please call the school for safe arrival, all students have to be accounted for each day. It should also be noted that on heavy snow days, the buses are likely to be 10-15 minutes later than usual. If your child is waiting longer than 20 minutes in the morning, please call directly to your child's bus company or check our school website and select the bussing icon to schoolbuscity.com.

Inside Shoes



Please consider footwear that can be reserved for indoor wear only (shoes or slippers). This will help keep feet dry and warm and the classrooms clean as we approach the winter season.

"LITERACY CORNER" How can parents help !

We continue focus our energies on improving the literacy skills of all our students. In particular, we want to motivate our boys to read and write. One of the resources available to help us with this area is the Ministry of Education and Training document, "Me read? No Way! A Practical Guide To Improving Boys' Literacy Skills. Here are some practical suggestions to improve literacy for boys and girls that you can do at home...

- encourage daily reading
- let your child choose interesting books
- set your child up for success by choosing a book that is a good fit for your child
- re-read books and give reassurance
- take turns reading
- let your child see you read
- visit the public library weekly
- do crosswords and play word games
- talk about books, their characters, problem and solutions
- retell, relate and reflect about the books you are reading
- create family book clubs
- have a family reading time
- use magazines, graphic novels and comics
- non-fiction texts are a great way to encourage personal interests



A Parent's Guide to Regular School Attendance

School can be a wonderful time in the life of a child. It is a time for learning and for developing friendships. Children begin to develop lifelong habits and skills. Getting to class on time, and avoiding absences are critical, if your child is to get the most out of school. What can you, as a parent, do to help ensure your child's regular attendance?

Why does attendance matter?

Getting to school – every day and on time – is very important. Learning occurs daily, right from the start of class. By

establishing patterns early on (i.e. by being punctual and responsible) children acquire positive habits about school attendance.

Some other things to consider:

- If children are late arriving to school, they miss important social time with their peers before school begins.
- Students who are late often feel embarrassed or self-conscious.
- Late arrivals disrupt the routine of the classroom.
- A last-minute rush can be stressful for the child, and get him/her to school in the wrong frame of mind.
- Missing even five or ten minutes of the day can make it harder for a student to understand the material being taught.
- Frequent absenteeism leads to gaps in a child's skills and knowledge base and can cause the child to fall behind peers and decrease self-esteem.
- Too many missed school days can increase isolation as the child stands out from his/her classmates and misses opportunities to develop socially.
- Absenteeism makes it tougher for the child to develop a good rapport with the teachers.

TIPS FOR BEING ON TIME:

The morning can be a very hectic time. Here are some effective tips for getting your child up and out the door on time.

- Get your child to bed at a reasonable hour.
- Set realistic and consistent schedules and rules at home. Getting ready for school should be part of the child's overall routine; something that's expected of him/her every day.
- Do whatever is necessary the night before to save time in the morning, such as setting out clothes, packing lunches, and setting backpacks at the door.
- Create a set morning routine that your child can easily follow (i.e. washing hands and face, going to the bathroom, dressing, making the bed, brushing teeth, and eating a healthy breakfast).
- Avoid any distractions that can slow your child down, like TV or games.
- Set your alarm to get up earlier if you're running late regularly.

HOW SICK IS SICK?

Children do get sick. They are still developing natural resistance to certain infections, their hygiene behaviours are not fully developed yet and germs spread. Some missed school is unavoidable for your child's own well-being and the protection of classmates. There are ways to cut down on sick days:

- Teach your child about proper hand washing after going to the bathroom, playing outside or wiping his/her nose.
- Follow other healthy habits, from eating nutritious food to getting enough sleep.
- Some symptoms make school attendance uncomfortable, like a fever, vomiting or diarrhea. If you're unsure whether your child is sick enough to miss school, talk to your doctor.
- Some children pretend to be sick to avoid school. Ask yourself if the child's symptoms are vague, (i.e. a headache, upset stomach, fatigue) or if your child tends to instantly recover just after school starts or ends, or if the illness is happening during stressful times at school or at home. Allowing your child to remain home when there's no real illness may start a bad habit.
- If you decide to keep your child home, inform the school and keep the child in bed or doing quiet, low-key activities. A day off from school shouldn't be a holiday; it should be a time to recuperate from illness, so the child can return as soon as possible.

SET THE RIGHT EXAMPLE

- Children follow the lead of their parents. If you place importance on regular and prompt school attendance, so will your child.
- Provide a home environment that encourages learning and curiosity.
- Treat school hours with respect. If you have to make an appointment for your child, arrange it before or after school or at the very beginning or end of the day.
- Show interest in your child's education by asking about the school day, celebrating school successes, attending

school events, parent-teacher interviews, volunteering at school, and communicating with your child's teacher. The more you value school, the more your child will.

- If your child resists going to school for no apparent reason, talk to him/her about any possible problems with the school, teacher or other children. Don't give in to coaxing or pleading; that creates a bad precedent.
- Some families plan trips during the school year due to scheduling of vacations from work or to take advantage of low travel costs. When this occurs, children of every age miss valuable learning which can impact on their success. Even brief absences can have a negative impact. Family trips can be a wonderful learning experience, but should be saved for school vacation time, such as March Break.

Is your child ready to use the rules of the road?

According to Safe Kids Canada, each year in Canada more than 4,000 children are hit by motor vehicles while playing outdoors or walking to school, a friend's house, to sports activities, or to a neighbourhood shop.

Teach your child these 5 steps to safely cross the street:

1. Stop
2. Look down the road to make sure you have a clear view in all three directions: left, straight ahead and right
3. Listen for traffic
4. Wait until the street is clear and all traffic has stopped
5. Make eye contact with drivers to make sure they see you



Remember:

1. Wear reflective or colourful clothing to be more visible to drivers
2. Always walk on the sidewalk. In areas without a sidewalk, walk facing traffic
3. Cross only at traffic signals, crosswalks and stop signs
4. Never run out onto the street, especially between parked cars
5. Keep a safe distance from service vehicles such as waste and recycling trucks
6. Cross at railway using the designated crossings
7. Young children should be accompanied by an adult when crossing



School Zone Safety

The rush of cars, buses and children arriving at school can create many dangers. Everyone plays a role in ensuring the safety of children when they are going back and forth to school.

Drivers, to keep kids safe in the school zone:

- Reduce your speed and be ready to stop at all times. Avoid distractions like a cell phone
- Drive cautiously and follow the rules (even when you're late!)
- Be patient and wait for children to complete their crossing before proceeding

Parents, teach your children to:

- Stop, look and listen before stepping out of the car or bus
- Walk only on the sidewalk and crosswalk and follow the crossing guard's instructions
- Be sure that drivers see them before they cross by making eye contact
- Sit on the side of the car where they will exit
- Consider practicing a drop-off during an off-peak time and teach your child what to do. Or start a program at the school where volunteers open car doors and escort children to the building.

Children, vehicles and smoking don't mix!

Second-hand smoke in vehicles can be 60 times more concentrated than a smoke-free home. Even with the windows open and fan on high, second-hand smoke is more toxic in a vehicle than in any other children's environment.

Tips for a smoke-free vehicle:

- Take smoke breaks outside the vehicle (stand where you can see children)
- Ask other smokers to smoke outside the vehicle
- Stick a smoke-free decal on the window of the vehicle
- Plan ahead and make stops on longer trips
- Replace smoking in the vehicle with other things (chewing gum, singing to music)
- Fill in the ashtray with sugar-free candy or gum

If you are thinking about quitting, contact Smokers' Helpline for free, confidential, one to one support at 1-877-513-5333 or www.smokershelpline.ca.

Upcoming Events: Important Dates to mark in your calendar

- December 2 - School Council Meeting 6:30-8pm
- December 4- Dental Screening for JK, SK, and Gr.2
- December 5- Zucca's Hot Lunch
- December 6- Popcorn and Hotdog Sales \$2.00
- December 12- Winter Concert
- December 16-20th- Spirit Week
- December 19- Zucca's Hot Lunch
- December 20- Popcorn Sales \$2.00
- December 23- January 3- Winter Break

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