



## **Ignite the Light and Wake Up the World!!!**

Welcome to a new school year! Thank you for entrusting your children to us. We know that the year ahead will be an exciting one, full of growth for all of us.

Our Catholic District School Board theme once again is, "Ignite the Light and Wake Up the World!" Together in Christ, we are asked to be aware of the light within us. Let us seek out the light within each other. Let us guide our children with the full light that we can only achieve when we work together in Jesus' name.

Below is a series of more "housekeeping" notes. Please take some time to read them carefully (you may want to make yourself a cup of tea ☺) and don't hesitate to write or call if you have any questions or concerns. Some of the information may have been covered in our August letter however it never hurts to review items!

**ZIPLOC NOTE-TOTE/COMMUNICATION BAG:** The large Ziploc bag will be used as a means to carry all communication between the teacher and the parents. Establish a routine for this bag so that it is well cared for as it will hold all communication items (ie. Communication Book, permission slips, milk/lunch orders and eventually Home-Reading books). When you need to share information, please write it on the back of the weekly "Peek at Our Week" sheet and we will respond back to you. Please use the enclosed clip to keep the Communication Book open to the weekly section for written notes. This will ensure that all notes are read. Thank you!



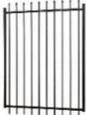
**SNACKS & LUNCHES:** Students have a morning snack time, lunch and an afternoon snack time. JK families are reminded to please pack their child's morning snacks in a separate, re-usable bag - labeled with your child's name and "Morning Snack". Continue to have your little one practise opening and closing lunch bags and containers. Part of the Kindergarten curriculum covers the importance of taking care of our Earth and one way we can all do that is by reducing garbage. Please do your best to ensure lunches are litter free. We have three bins in our classroom: compost, recycling and garbage. The children will become accustomed to placing items in the proper bin. Information about the Milk Program and Hot Lunch Fridays will be sent home soon.



**REAL FOOD:** We know that some of the requests we make regarding healthy food and beverage choices may take some adjustment and we would like to work together in the best interests of the children. If you have any questions about the Health Curriculum guidelines in Kindergarten, please do not hesitate to contact us.



**An important reminder to read all labels carefully as several of our students at St. James School have severe allergies.** Speaking of allergies, we ask that families do not send in baked goods for the class to eat (for example, a birthday cake).



#### **Dismissal Pick-Up Reminder**

If your child will be picked up at dismissal time, we ask that you to come right to the gate once your child is next in line to be dismissed by the 'gate teacher'. Then please leave the school promptly to reduce congestion. (If a care-giver picks your child up, kindly pass this message along to them).



**DISMISSAL ROUTINES:** Thank you for maintaining a consistent dismissal schedule for your child. It gives your child confidence and helps us to ensure everyone's safety. We do understand that your child's dismissal routine may need to change from time to time (ie. doctor's appointments...). As mentioned in the August mailing, I ask that you write me a note in the Communication Book as well as telephone the school by 2:00 p.m. in order for us to prepare for the change. ***Please note that because the last hour of our day is extremely busy with our little children, we will not be able to accommodate any changes to dismissal routines after 2:00 p.m. unless it is an emergency.***



**FIRE DRILLS:** We will have several school-wide fire-drills throughout the year. We review the safety procedures with children for such a drill. Could you please talk to your child about them? When we hear the fire alarm, we...

- ~ **stop** what we are doing and line up at the back door of our classroom
- ~ we leave all toys in the classroom
- ~ we **are quiet** (this way we can hear any instructions given to us by grown-ups)
- ~ we **walk** quickly and quietly to the fence at the big yard
- ~ we **make a line** at the fence and remain quiet
- ~ when our Principal Mrs. Forbes knows that all children are accounted for, she gives us the "okay" signal then we walk back to our classroom

If we hear the fire alarm while we are in another part of the school (ie. hallway, library, gym), we exit the building at the closest door. A grown-up will then bring us to our classroom line-up at the fence so our teachers know we are safe.



#### **ILLNESS GUIDELINES ETC.**

If your child will be absent from school, please notify the office. Kindly note that if your little one is ill, the healthy guideline is that they be 24 hours symptom free before returning to school (no fever, vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours). Thank you for respecting this guideline and for helping us keep everyone healthy.

**SELF-REGULATION:** As teachers of the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario, one of our many goals is to provide students with self-regulation strategies. When we self-regulate, we monitor our behavior, thoughts and emotions in order to adapt them to particular situations. There is a great deal of information available for anyone who is interested, notably Dr. Stuart Shanker's book, "Calm, Alert and Happy". In class, we will be referring to the "Zones of Regulation". For example, when we come in from recess, we may be in the **YELLOW ZONE** - active and excited. We use strategies (ie. 3 deep breaths) to get ourselves into the **GREEN ZONE** where we are calm and ready to listen to instructions. Each morning, your child will have an opportunity to share which zone he/she is in:

**BLUE ZONE** (ie. tired, sad)

**GREEN ZONE** (ie. calm, alert, okay)

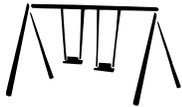
**YELLOW ZONE** (ie. excited, wiggly, worried)

**RED ZONE** (ie. angry, yelling, out of control)

Of course throughout our day, the way we are feeling may change. More information will be sent home about Self-Regulation and the strategies/tools we are learning about.



**THE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROCESS:** We use Restorative Justice practices to assist our students when they need support in dealing with a conflict. We get the children involved to talk about... **WHAT HAPPENED? WHO GOT HURT? HOW CAN WE MAKE THIS BETTER/DOES ANYONE NEED TO MAKE AN AMENDS?** When we make amends, we are saying that we will try our very best not to hurt the other person again (actions speak louder than words). By first giving each child a chance to say 'What Happened', everyone has an opportunity to tell their side of the story. In our experience, when children feel as though someone is listening, the restorative process is often smooth and successful. Restorative Justice is used in our School Board. As an aside, it's a helpful parenting tool as well... ☺



**FIRST BELL ROUTINE IN KINDERGARTEN:** The children in Kindergarten will have the opportunity to remain outside for an extended recess at 9:00 a.m. Please ensure your child is *always* dressed for outdoor play when they arrive to school.



**OUTDOOR FOOTWEAR:** Running shoes are the safest choice and kindly remember that tie-up/lace shoes are not for Kindergarten. Please note that if your child is wearing running shoes, then he/she will be permitted on the play structure.



**FRENCH:** The children receive 30 minutes of French every day. Our French teacher is new to St. James: we give a warm welcome to **Madame Rowe!**



On Mondays and Wednesdays from 2-2:30 p.m., the children will spend time in **Mrs. Wolynice's** awesome classroom. She will do many fun and engaging activities using Math Centres and the Smart Board. Mrs. Wolynice will also bring the girls and boys to the school library every Friday afternoon from 2-2:30 p.m.



**GYM:** Health and physical activity are important parts of the Kindergarten curriculum. Our class will visit the gym/outdoors regularly to develop gross motor skills, play co-operative games and use various types of equipment. We are so blessed as well to have a beautiful Kindergarten yard with lots of grass and a Butterfly Garden as well. Yoga Fridays will begin in the coming weeks so wear your comfies on Fridays, children!!!



**RESOURCE TEACHER:** We are very grateful to have **Mrs. Peledeau** as our Kindergarten Resource teacher again this year. Mrs. Peledeau loves to work with all of our girls and boys and will provide extra help to those who may need some extra assistance.



**BIRTHDAYS:** We celebrate birthdays with the Birthday Monkey (a little stuffed monkey that sings Happy Birthday ☺) . We also sing a special blessing for the birthday girl/boy . *If your child will be having a birthday party, I am happy to place invitations into Note-Totes when they are sent to school. We don't like to see feelings hurt so we ask that you speak with your child about keeping the party a quiet surprise. It helps us if you jot me a note in the Communication Book to ensure we see the invitations. Many thanks.*



**God's Shining Stars:** We are ALL Shining Stars, however, some days we have an opportunity to shine extra brightly by being the Star of the Day! We will begin with our S.K. children and then our J.K. children. Information will be sent home to you several days before your little one's special day comes up. Throughout the year, each student will have an opportunity to be the Shining Star approximately three times.

**TOYS & ITEMS FROM HOME:** With the exception of a Rest-Time stuffy, children are asked to leave **all toys/items from home at home**. We have a wide variety of toys and learning materials in our classroom. At this age, toys from home become a disruption as they get lost and/or broken. Each child will have a chance to bring Show and Tell items when they are the class leader. Thank you in advance for your support with this.

**SPEAKING OF THE REST-TIME STUFFY...** Your child's stuffy and towel/blanket will remain at school for two weeks; all rest-time items will then be sent home to be washed. Could you kindly remind your child that his/her stuffy will stay at school until September 15<sup>th</sup>? Thank you!

PHEW! That is a lot of information!!!! Thank you for taking the time to read this. Our next request is that you show this newsletter to your child's other parent so that we are all on board. 😊

If you have any questions or concerns, please use the Communication Book to let us know. We are also just a phone call away. We look forward to an exciting year in Kindergarten!

Yours in Catholic Education,

Mrs. Ann Seward

