

# Priory Park Public School Newsletter

275 Scottsdale Drive, Guelph, On N1G 3A1

Phone (519) 836-7710

Principal: Kim Kowch

Office Coordinator: Dianne Bott



## MARCH 2017

### Principal's Message

With the variety of weather we've had outside this past month, it's been good practice for us all in learning how to be resilient and grateful for all that we do have - even if Mother Nature isn't cooperating! A very successful Sweater Day and Winter Walk to support our Eco School initiatives, the Grade 5/6 community leadership outreach in conjunction with Brant Ave. P.S. to support the Guelph Humane Society, Guelph Food Bank and Chalmers Community Services, and our very own Hollywood Movie Dance-o-rama, which made over \$550 to support the "Live-Free" campaign of the Children's Foundation for nutrition programs in Guelph-Wellington. We have SO much to be proud of with such a giving community - thank you for all your support of these projects!

We have also had some staff changes in our building this month. A very warm send-off and best wishes to Ms. Darroch, who has become a vice-principal at William C. Winegard P.S. The new Grade 5/6 teacher for the remainder of the school year is Ms. Billings, who is moving from her current half-time Grade 1/2 position. Ms. Dyjach is filling in for her until a replacement is hired. Mme. Tavares is off on a medical leave and Mme. Baker will be here until a replacement is hired for her, and Ms. Pilon joins the Educational Assistant team while Mrs. Forbes is off on medical leave.

Just a reminder to check out our full newsletter online: [www.ugdsb.on.ca/priorypark](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/priorypark)

Enjoy a wonderful March Break (Mar. 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>)!

K. Kowch

Principal

### Junior Kindergarten Registration

If you have a child or know of anyone in the Priory Park area who has a child born in 2013, they are eligible for Junior Kindergarten. Please register as soon as possible. If your child is currently at Priory Park in JK you do not need to register for SK. Parents must provide the following documentation in order to register your child:

- Birth Certificate/Birth Registration
- Immunization card
- Any legal and/or custody papers, where applicable and if you are new to Canada then we need documentation of your status and date of entry to Canada
- Documentation with a current address (i.e. utility bill or driver's license)

## **Lost and Found**

Please be sure and check the lost and found for those missing mitts, hats and scarves before the March Break. Any unclaimed items will be bagged and sent off to a local charity.

## **Before and After School Supervision**

Our yard is supervised for 15 minutes before and after school each day. Children should not be arriving before 8:30 a.m. in the morning. For the continued safety of your children, please remind them to go home directly after school. As daylight increases, children may be tempted to linger in the park and school yard after dismissal when they should go home. We remind and encourage children to go straight home and to walk with a buddy or two. The safety of your children is important to everyone and safety rules should be reinforced with them so they understand the procedures to follow.

## **Home/School Communication**

It is very important to let the school know if your child is going to be late or away in order for the safe arrival program to work. Messages regarding your child's absence or late arrival should be left on extension 100. If you need to speak to the office or have an emergency please dial 0. If Ms. Bott cannot get to the phone, you can leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible. Priory Park has voicemail for all staff. By pressing the # key, you can access our staff directory for voicemail. Remember you can call the school any time of day to leave a message on voicemail.

## **New To Canada?**

Guelph-Wellington Immigrant Services has many services to help new Canadians. There are settlement workers who speak several languages. They can help new Canadians find English language and citizenship classes, including classes that can be taken on-line. Free tutoring is available for children new to the English language. They can also help connect new Canadians to community services such as translation needs, housing, job opportunities, support groups and many more. Please feel free to contact Immigrant Services, 926 Paisley Rd, Units 4-5, Guelph, On N1K 1X5, or phone 519-836-2222.

## **Indoor and Outdoor Footwear**

With the wet and mild weather already here, it is important that all students have not only appropriate outdoor footwear, but also indoor shoes. This is a significant safety issue as proper footwear reduces the risk of slips and falls and stepping on items which may cause injury. It is vital, too, that students wear indoor shoes, not slippers, so that they are protected in the event of a fire drill or event resulting in a school evacuation.

## **Boomerang Lunches**

As our ECO School tries to go for gold status, we continue to encourage boomerang lunches. Children should bring home any uneaten food and items that are not recyclable. This is part of our Waste Management initiatives as required by the Ministry of the Environment. It also allows you to monitor what your child is eating and what we can and cannot recycle at school. Please try to use reusable containers whenever possible and remember to clearly mark with family names so any lost items can make their way back to their owners!

## **Head Lice**

Thank you for continuing to regularly check your child's hair for lice. We appreciate a call to the school so that we can let the parents of children in that class know to do a head check as well.

## **Use of Electronics at School**

We ask that you please remind your children that electronic items need to be left at home unless a note from a teacher has indicated otherwise. Expensive items at school are easily misplaced, dropped or can be a distraction in the classroom. Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

## **A Message from Guelph Police Services**

A safety concern for parents is how to protect "latch-key" kids who are home alone after school. Don't let a stranger inside the house. It's a good rule, but can be misleading. Stranger is a confusing word for many children. Many kids expect strangers to be scary, poorly dressed people who drive dark old cars and offer candy.

Parents should leave children home on their own when they are certain the child is both able and ready for the responsibility. Age, maturity, location and time are just some of the variables that must be considered in doing so. The buddy system is the most ideal one and parents should seek out other parents with children compatible and suitable to take turns staying with each other. Any form of organized activity, or the immediate availability of a trusted adult, can provide the necessary guidance to help ensure your child's safety and also give you peace of mind.

If your child must be home alone, they need to know the following rules:

Keep Doors Shut: Instead of telling kids not to let a stranger in, the real rule needs to be: Keep the door shut and locked at all times. Don't fill your child's head with "don'ts"; simply tell them to keep all doors closed. If someone comes to the door, your child can communicate with this person through the door or ignore them completely.

Set Check-In Time: Another thing parents should ask their child to do is call and let Mom or Dad know that he/she is home safe. Have your child call at the same time each day. Give ten minutes plus or minus to allow for a slow bus, etc ... then call or have someone check if he/she doesn't meet this deadline. Also, find a close neighbour who is usually home around this time. If there is a problem and you can't be reached, the child knows to call this person. Parents need to remember that kids who are home alone are much more likely to encounter dangers such as cooking fires or accidental injuries while playing than being abducted by a stranger.

## **Live Free**



Thank you to all who contributed to the Help Kids Live Free from Hunger campaign. Our school raised over \$550 to help purchase food and supplies for our Food & Friends student nutrition program.

## Digital Saturday returns this March!

All parents in the UGDSB are invited to attend Digital Saturday, which will be hosted at JD Hogarth PS in Fergus.

See a variety of technology used in the UGDSB. Meet with Special Education staff to learn more about how they support all students. Discover the rich online digital resources available to your children from home and at school.

Presentations include: devices in our schools, Homework Help, Cospaces and Ozobot, Google Apps for Education, UG2GO, Coding in the Classroom, MIT App Inventor, Grandpals, Virtual Reality, SEA, and My Blueprint.

Digital Saturday is on March 25 from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

### **Heather Loney**

Communications and Community Engagement Officer  
Upper Grand District School Board  
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[heather.loney@ugdsb.on.ca](mailto:heather.loney@ugdsb.on.ca)

## Your Child's Hearing is Important!



Seventy-five percent of a child's day is spent listening; listening to complex language, directions and instructions which need to be comprehended. Being able to hear peers is important for developing social skills and friendships. That is why it is important that any hearing difficulty be discovered as soon as possible because even mild hearing loss can put a child at risk for academic and communication difficulties. **Audiologists** are experts who assess hearing sensitivity and functioning that provides a window into the language/listening parts of the brain. Since listening is a critical learning skill, test results can be helpful in planning a program of intervention. Students who wear hearing aids, cochlear implants, or use personal FM systems should routinely visit an Audiologist to have their equipment checked. If you suspect your child has difficulty with hearing or attention it is recommended that you have your child tested by an **Audiologist**. To find an Audiologist in your community, visit the website of the College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario ([www.CASLPO.com](http://www.CASLPO.com)) and click on "Find an Audiologist" and search for Private Practice.

At UGDSB you can call 519-941-6191 ext. 231 for information.

## Vision Health

If you suspect that your child is struggling with vision issues, there are several things that you can do. First, book an eye exam with an optometrist. Basic OHIP coverage for eye exams, is available free of charge, for children from birth to age 19. Speak with your child's teacher regarding your concerns and encourage your child to clearly express to the teacher the difficulties they are having (Are they having trouble seeing things on the board? Are they having trouble copying information? Are they having trouble seeing the information in novels/textbooks/notebooks etc.? ) There are a number of accommodations that can be made to quickly address potential problems, including seating closer to the board or larger print on computers or photocopies. You can also discuss with the classroom teacher or SERT the possibility of making a referral to one of the Vision Itinerant Teachers who provide support to your school.

## **Feedback Welcome on Draft Policies**

The Upper Grand District School Board is welcoming public input on draft policies. Currently under review is the **Website and Social Media Management Policy 312**. You are invited to review the draft documents and submit online feedback at [www.ugdsb.on.ca/policy](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/policy). The deadline for public input is March 16, 2017 at 4 p.m. EST. Persons without internet access may call 519-822-4420 (or toll-free 1-800-321-4025) ext. 723 to request a printed copy of the draft documents.

### **MONTHLY ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES TO HELP CELEBRATE OUR PLANET**

**March 25<sup>th</sup> is Earth Hour!**

*It is vital to teach our children to respect and take care of the environment.*

**Join the global Movement! Celebrate Earth Hour on March 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:30pm.**

Earth Hour's mission is uniting people to protect the planet by raising awareness of about climate change and encouraging positive action.

*"Earth Hour was famously started as a lights-off event in Sydney, Australia in 2007. Since then it has grown to engage more than 172 countries and territories worldwide."*

*"Earth Hour is more than an event. It is a movement that has achieved massive environmental impact, including legislation changes by harnessing the power of the crowd."*

**Click [here](#) to see a short video clip of Earth Hour's story around the world  
and click [here](#) for highlights of 2015**

### **Ideas for your family to do for Earth Hour!**

Earth Hour belongs to you. Celebrate your commitment to the planet with your friends, family, community or at work - in your own way.

A simple event can be just turning off all non-essential lights on March 25<sup>th</sup> from 8:30-9:30 pm. For one hour, focus on your commitment to our planet. To celebrate, you can:

- prepare a candle lit dinner,
- talk to your neighbours, or invite people over
- stargaze, or go camping in your backyard
- play board games, or charades
- host a concert, or a sing-a-long
- create or join your own community event
- have an Earth Hour every month

The possibilities are endless!

*Quotes and information taken from: <https://www.earthhour.org/>*