



At Mitchell Woods we are:
BEING respectful, resilient and positive members of our school community.
BELONGING - everyone is accepted and welcome.
CONTRIBUTING our best to make our school community awesome!

The results are in!

Thank you to all the families who took the time to complete the school feedback survey last month. I received a total of **217** returned forms! The themes were very consistent from previous years.

This year the top four things the families indicated they love about Mitchell Woods are:

- 1) **The Staff!** Over and over again families told me that the staff at Mitchell Woods are friendly, encouraging, and professional.
- 2) The **School Climate** of Mitchell Woods – families indicated that they love the diversity of our school and the fact that the school culture is very warm and welcoming.
- 3) **Safety** - families indicated over and over how much they appreciate how safe their child is at Mitchell Woods Public School.
- 4) Finally, parents and guardians indicated they appreciate how effective the **communication** is between home and school.

The two most popular areas for improvement are:

- 1) **Parking**- several families indicated that they would like us, as a community, to keep working on the congested parking situation at drop off and pick up. As you might be aware, we have an on-going Traffic Management Committee, comprised of three parents, the principal (me!) and The School Traffic Management Coordinator from the school Board, who have begun working more closely with Guelph City representatives to address the parking issues with our school. Please see further into this newsletter for more information from our latest meeting.
- 2) **Even more School Events**– families indicated they would like even more opportunities to attend school events and communicate with teachers. In addition to school sponsored events last year we increased our number of family events with Staff and School Council initiatives such as Mitchell Woods 101/ Free Pancake Breakfast (which took place again this year on Saturday, October 19th), our annual Open House/ Greet and Eat, Holiday Concerts, and family movie nights. Keep your eyes on our website and flyers going home advertising these events.

Thank you to all families who filled out the survey. Your feedback is very much appreciated.

New Student Survey

Although we survey our students on other issues throughout the year, this year was our first annual Student Survey that mirrored the Family Survey. 154 students from grades four to eight completed the online survey with the following results:

What do students love most about Mitchell Woods Public School?

- 1) That the school is **friendly and welcoming**. (42%)
- 2) **Everything!** Including: friendly school, supportive staff, awesome extra-curricular activities and great learning. (30%)
- 3) The **supportive staff**. (13%)
- 4) **Other** (15%) including: books, friendly people, fun, good teachers, and everything!

What would students like to see happen next?

- 1) Some kind of **art club** - staff are looking into setting this up for our older students.
- 2) More **outdoor play equipment**. In response to this request, School Council has arranged for a donation of soccer balls for outdoor play, and started a campaign called "Wish List" at our Open House. Additionally, our school has purchased over \$500 of new playground equipment and we are arranging for improvements to our basketball nets.

November 2019 School Council Update

Thank you to all families who attended the Mitchell Woods 101 pancake breakfast on Saturday morning, October 19th. The 124+ members of our MWPS community who attended were treated to a pancake breakfast to start. Thanks to Shady Grove Maple farm for the donation of maple syrup, to McDonald's on Woodlawn Rd. for the coffee donation and to Gay Lea for the donation of chocolate milk. Any left over pancakes and coffee were donated to the downtown walk-in shelter.

Afterwards, while the children were entertained in the library with a craft, games and maker-space activities, parents heard from Michelle Nogueira from The Homewood about Screen-time management. If you missed the morning but would like to hear what she shared with everyone you can visit the following link to hear the entire presentation. The other handouts Michelle shared are also available on the school website.

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VznOqYZNz5M&t>

School Website link to materials: <https://www.ugdsb.ca/mwoods/2019/10/25/power-off-and-play/>

Families were also able to visit the information booths around the gym illustrating details about the various activities our students can be involved in as well as various community groups that support families. Thank you to all the teachers, students, staff and parents for volunteering their time to make this morning such a great success!

Our first fundraiser for this year – the annual Gift Card Fundraiser, is launching the first week of November. We have changed companies this year, so look for different vendors and more options in denominations. Order forms will be coming home this week so make sure to check your child's backpack. Additional order forms can be downloaded from the school website. Order forms are **due back November 20th** and cards will be available on **December 2nd**.

School Council is a great way for families to get involved in your student's school. Meetings are held monthly and this year are scheduled to start at 6:15pm in the library on the following Mondays: December 2, January 13, February 3, April 6, May 4 and June 1

For more information please contact Amanda Dawson at scritchellwoods@gmail.com or call the school to leave a message for Amanda, who will follow-up with you.

Update from Traffic Committee

The safe arrival and return home of our students continues to be a concern for our community. In an effort to make positive changes to how students arrive and are picked up, a meeting between Principal Gault, a School Council subcommittee of three parents, three Guelph city employees and the School Board Traffic Coordinator took place in late October. Included in the discussion was:

- current issues of traffic flow and safety concerns for pedestrians
- past efforts and changes made to the infrastructure to make walking safer
- past communications with families informing them of safe driving practices and encouraging active modes of transportation (walking, biking, scooting)
- brainstorming new ideas of how to make walking safer and how to guide traffic in a safe, organized manner

The meeting was a very positive experience where all in attendance were committed to making changes to help keep our school community safe. Further meetings are being planned to keep initiatives moving forward.

November Student Council Update

November Events:

Food and Clothing Drive : Monday November 11-Thursday November 28th

Holiday Food Drive

We are collecting a variety of non perishable food items to donate to families in need in our local community and a variety of hats, mitts, coats and winter clothing. Please bring your items to your classroom and council will collect and tally your amounts for a classroom contest. The winning class will receive a party of their choice, (Pizza, icecream, movie and treats. etc)

Examples of food items most needed are:

Canned Meats – Tuna/Salmon/Ham/Chicken, Peanut Butter, Cheese Spread, Canned Fruit, Canned Vegetables, Stew & Soups, Meal Helper, Canned Tomatoes, Pasta Sauce, Cereal, Dry Pasta, Rice, Juices, Coffee, Tea, Baby Formula, Baby Foods. A letter with further details will go home the first week in November.

School Drills

In the interest of student safety, the Upper Grand District School Board has directed all schools to conduct at least six fire drills, two lockdown drills and one tornado drill each school year.

A lockdown is used when it is suspected that an intruder has entered the school and poses a threat to the safety of our students and staff. Detailed procedures have been developed in conjunction with our local police services and provided to all schools as part of our emergency procedures manual.

In a lockdown, students and staff are directed to secure areas where doors can be locked and the children are kept out of sight (such as classrooms and portables). No one may leave their secure area until they receive an "all clear" from the authorities.

Students and staff will be instructed on what they are to do when a drill is held. Lockdown drills are becoming familiar to students just like fire and tornado drills which we are also required to do every year.

If you have any questions or concerns about Lockdown drills, we would be happy to discuss them with you.

Lost and Found



Did you label, with a permanent marker, items your child brings to school that could go missing? Our lost and found bins are filling up fast and it is more likely an item can be returned if you have labelled sweatshirts, coats, lunch bags, backpacks, shoes, etc. All items not claimed in a timely manner will be donated to a charitable organization.



Cold Days - Wet Weather- Recess

It is getting chilly out and the snow may fly soon. Please remember to assist your child in wearing the proper clothing to school. This includes a warm jacket, hat, mittens, and waterproof footwear. Thanks for sending extra socks in your child's backpack just in case. All students are expected to participate in outdoor recess, as this important active break aids concentration and success in the classroom. Indoor shoes are essential to help keep our classrooms clean and dry.



Inclement Weather

It is the parent's responsibility to determine whether or not it is safe for his or her child to leave for school in inclement or severe weather. A parent must be aware of the following:

- When a bus does not travel a route in the morning due to fog, ice, snow conditions, it will NOT travel that route in the afternoon.
- While we have an excellent transportation system, buses may be delayed in the morning due to traffic, poor road conditions, mechanical breakdowns etc. To ensure your child is not stranded at his/her pick up point, please make sure they know what to do and where to go if their bus is more than 15 minutes late.

- Remember to listen to CJOY 1460 AM or Magic 106.1 FM in the event of inclement weather. They will broadcast bus cancellations or school closures.

Procedures are also in place to ensure the safety of students during their outdoor breaks at nutritional breaks during periods of extreme cold.

In the event of inclement weather, the Director of Education will make the decision to close schools. Announcements are made by local radio stations and this information is also posted on the Wellington-Dufferin Student Transportation System website.

Website: www.stwdsts.ca

Sign In and Sign out Procedures

We take the safety of your child(ren) very seriously!

Adults entering the building are asked to come to the office to sign in. If you are staying to volunteer or as a visitor for an event, please pick up and wear the appropriate badge from the office. Adults in our building who are not wearing a visitor's badge will be asked to return to the office and sign in. Please remember that the safety of our students is extremely important.

If you are dropping your child(ren) at the office, please allow them to proceed to class on their own.

To keep disruptions in the classroom to a minimum, parents picking up students during the school day are asked to come to the office and wait for their children there. Please remember to sign your child(ren) out at the office. If children are reminded in the morning when to come to the office to meet a parent and the teacher has been aware of the absence, this will go a long way to keep disruptions in the classroom down.

Lunches, clothing, homework etc. must be dropped off at the office. We will make sure that your child(ren) receive the items before breaks.

Finally, parents needing to speak to a teacher are asked to phone ahead or write a note and request an interview time, rather than dropping in when the teacher is busy with other responsibilities. The home/school connection is so important for your child's success. You are more than welcome to call your child's teacher to discuss any issue.

Child Custody

Unless otherwise directed by a court of law, both natural parents have full access to their child and their records. If for some reason these rights are restricted, it is important to notify the Principal with a photocopy of any legal documents that outline a parent's access rights (e.g. Custody Order). Should the situation change, please ensure that the Principal is notified.

Head Lice

Here is our friendly head lice reminder; as you are aware, having head lice is not an indicator of poor hygiene – lice like clean hair best! They can happen to anyone. If there was a report of head lice in your child's class, we will send

home a head lice notice. Please check your son/daughter's hair regularly, and contact the school if you discover your child has lice or nits. If your child has head lice, please treat them with a remedy from the pharmacy that kills the live lice and then using a special comb or other technique; and remove nits from the hair. Since no product can effectively kill all nits, you will then need to check for nits and remove them from the hair every day for 7-10 days at which time treatment is redone with a pharmacy product.

Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten Registration for the 2020/2021 school year will take place in the New Year. More information will follow.

School Safety Patrols

Our safety patrols have been doing an excellent job in safeguarding our students and parents as they walk to and from school. We would like to remind parents of the following:

*Please come to a **full** stop at stop signs.

*Please do not stop to let your children off at the crosswalk or wave for students to cross.

*Please do not obstruct the sidewalk by parking in neighbours driveways.

*Please take care in attending to our patrols and be patient.

*Please do not park/stop in no parking/no stopping areas. This choice of parking spots blocks the line of sight for our patrols.



Bullying Awareness Week **November 17th - 21st**

During the week of November 17-21 the students and staff at Mitchell Woods are going to be discussing and exploring the issue of bullying and its effects. Throughout the week, students will participate in activities and discussions in their classrooms.

What is a bully?

A bully can be defined in many ways but some of the common elements of the definition include:

- an imbalance of power - the bully or bullies may be physically stronger or may be part of a larger group and/or may have a stronger social status within the school
- the action is repeated over time - two friends arguing and calling each other names is not bullying
- there is malicious intent - a bully means to hurt the other person. Bullying is not accidental nor is bullying just teasing
- bullies enjoy the power and strength they feel when hurting others

Anyone can be a bully, although the approach a bully takes usually differs from boys to girls. Boys tend to bully physically; pushing, tripping, bumping, kicking, etc. The bullying pattern of girls tends to be harder to observe as

they tend to exclude, intimidate or verbally bully their target. If you suspect that your child may be a bully you need to take the problem seriously and talk to your child. Let your child know that you will not tolerate bullying behaviour and use non-violent consequences. Establishing family rules, spending more time with your child and increasing supervision of their activities will help your child feel valued and lessen the likelihood of bullying behaviour.

How do I know if my child is being bullied?

Anyone can be a target of bullying although bullies tend to choose victims who are passive and are less likely to be assertive and stand up for themselves or less likely to tell an adult.

Some signs that your child is being bullied *may* include:

- being afraid to go to school
- changes in mood or behaviour (ie. quiet, withdrawn, argumentative)
- coming home with unexplained injuries
- having damaged property
- experiencing restless sleep

What to do if your child is being bullied?

- ask your child directly
- listen
- talk with staff supervising your child
- teach your child assertiveness and social skills
- know your child's strengths and weaknesses
- encourage special interests and activities that focus on strengths
- teach your child positive ways to resolve arguments
- seek help

What is a bystander?

A lot of recent research indicates the role of a third group in the occurrence of bullying. This third group is the bystanders. Bystanders allow bullying to occur by standing and watching or by actively encouraging and cheering the bully on thereby reinforcing the bullying behaviour. Bystanders often say that it's none of their business, the bully is my friend, the victim deserved to be bullied or that there is nothing they can do about it. Bystanders are now being encouraged to empathize with the victim, to report (not tattling) when someone is in danger of being harmed, to accompany the target to get help, and to join together with their peers to protect targets.

Is conflict the same as bullying?

People may sometimes confuse conflict with bullying, but they are different.

Conflict occurs between two or more people who have a disagreement, a difference of opinion or different views. Conflict between students does not always mean it's bullying. Children learn at a young age to understand that others can have a different perspective than their own, but developing the ability to gain perspective takes time and the process continues into early adulthood.

In conflict, each person feels comfortable expressing his or her views, and there is no power imbalance. Each person feels able to state his or her view point. How people deal with conflict can make it positive or negative.

Conflict becomes negative when an individual behaves aggressively by saying or doing hurtful things.

Then the conflict is an aggressive interaction. Conflict only becomes bullying when it is repeated over and over again and there is a power imbalance. Over time, a pattern of behaviour may emerge where the person who behaves aggressively in the conflict may continue or even make it worse. The person who is the recipient of the aggressive conflict may feel less and less able to express his or her point of view and feel more and more powerless. That is when negative conflict may turn into bullying.

A school will respond to bullying and conflict differently. For example, in the case of a conflict, a school staff member may try to have the students come together to tell their side of the story and help them resolve the situation together.

In the case of bullying, a principal will consider progressive discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion. - Ontario Ministry of Education

See our 2019/20 Bullying Prevention Plan (link below)

<https://www.ugdsb.ca/mwoods/our-school/bullying-prevention-plan/>

Feedback welcome on draft board policies

The Upper Grand District School Board is welcoming public input on draft policies. Currently under review is:

213 – Code of Conduct

This policy is important to students, staff, school councils, parents, and community members because everyone plays a role in maintaining a healthy and safe learning and working environment in our schools.

You are invited to review the draft documents and submit online feedback at www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy. **The deadline for public input is November 21, 2019** 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

Special Class Placement in UGDSB

Students who require special education programs and services receive support through the classroom teacher and the special education resource teacher at their home schools. However, in some circumstances, students can be referred to a special education class placement where focused instruction in the area of need is provided. These classes have smaller numbers and can provide targeted instruction to meet student needs. In elementary there are four specialized class placements for the following exceptionalities: Learning Disability, Mild Intellectual Disability/Language-based Learning Disability, Developmental Disability (Intellectual Disability), and Intellectually Gifted. *Students need to have a diagnosis of an exceptionality before they can be eligible for class placement, and parents and the school team should feel like the placement would best meet the student's learning needs.* Contact your school team if you would like to have more information on special class placement options.

ECO Club News

Mitchell woods is collecting MILK BAGS ! These are the coloured bigger bags that hold the three smaller bags. Mrs. Growden has located a neighbourhood business who will accept them. These milk bags will be used to make wonderful, durable sleep mats for families in need.

Information from Public Health:

Free dental care for children and youth (17 and younger)

Oral health is an important part of a child's overall health and wellbeing. If you cannot afford dental care for your child, Public Health has programs that can help.

Public Health offers free preventive dental care at locations across Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph for eligible children and youth. Our dental hygienists will check your child's mouth for oral health concerns, clean their teeth, apply fluoride and sealants and teach them how to brush and floss.

Dr. Baseer Mohammed ("Dr. B") provides free dental care including check-ups, x-rays and treatment to children and youth enrolled in the [Healthy Smiles Ontario](#) program. He is located in Guelph (160 Chancellors Way).

If you have this card and do not have a family dentist, call the Public Health Dental Line at 1-800-265-7293 ext. 2661 to book an appointment. If your child has a dental emergency and you cannot afford their dental care, call Public Health for help.

Get your Flu Shot!

- As a parent, you are at risk of exposure to communicable diseases because of your close contact with children.
- Children under two years of age are the most susceptible for hospitalization related to flu and flu related complications, while 5-9-year-olds are the most likely to spread the infection.
- Flu immunization is available at your local pharmacy, physician's office, or Public Health office and is suggested annually for everyone 6 months of age and over.

NOTE: Pharmacies will not provide immunization for children less than 5 years old. Public Health and your family physician offer flu vaccines to all ages.

*FluMist is not available for this flu season. *

If you have any questions related to the benefit of immunization, please call 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4746

PARENT TIP - Check out this link for tips to help your child cope during immunizations!

<http://www.sickkids.ca/PDFs/Learning/32832-CMAJ%20HELPinKIDS%202010%20Appendix%201%20parent%20to%20ol.pdf>