

# Priory Park Public School Newsletter

275 Scottsdale Drive, Guelph, On N1G 3A1

Phone (519) 836-7710

Principal: Kim Kowch

Office Coordinator: Dianne Bott



## DECEMBER 2017

### Principal's Message

It was wonderful to see so many parents in the school last week to discuss the Progress Reports, and the strengths and next steps for students and their learning. Congratulations to all of our hard-working students for a successful half of Term 1!

Last week during Bullying Awareness & Prevention Week, we had kick-off presentation of "Cinderella's Frog Prince" by the Big Kid Entertainment which focused on accepting and celebrating differences. Our "Fill A Bucket" Day, Pink Day, and "Random Acts of Kindness" Day were great reminders for all of us of the importance of being a kind and caring community. All students and staff have signed a "Kindness Pledge" that will be posted in each class for the year as a reminder of how we need to treat each other each and every day.

As we embark on our last month of school before the holidays, we look forward to some more activities to bring our sharing and caring community together. The entire staff of Priory Park wishes you and your family a safe and fun-filled holiday -- we look forward to seeing you back at school on **Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 8:45 am.**

K. Kowch  
Principal

### Holiday Giving

In order to include all our students in acts of kindness and the spirit of giving within our community, we are asking you to consider supporting any of the following initiatives if you are able:

- Bring in a new, unwrapped toy(s) to put under the Giving Tree in the front foyer between **Mon., Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> and Fri., Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>**. Toys will be distributed to families in our neighbourhood who have expressed a need (please call into the office if this is the case), and the remainder will be donated to **Emma's Toy Drive**. This charity was started 15 years ago by a student from Jean Little P.S. and has grown to support many, many families through the Women in Crisis Shelters in Guelph and Wellington County. <http://emmastoydrive.com/>
- Donate a new pair of socks and/or blanket(s) by **Wed., Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>** to the Giving Tree - all items collected at the school will go to the Welcome In Drop-in Centre in Guelph.
- Christmas tree ornaments will be made in classes to share with neighbouring seniors' residences.
- Panda Food Drive - bring in non-perishable items from **Mon., Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> to Tues., Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>** and all items will be donated to the Guelph Food Bank.

Thanks so much for your support of the gift of giving this holiday season!

## **Parking**

With colder days upon us, it is tempting to park as close to the school as possible; however, please do not use the school parking lot or Sifton's parking lot during pick up and drop off times. Sifton's parking lot is private property and we need to be respectful neighbours. We certainly encourage students who are within walking distance to get some fresh air and exercise by walking to and from school. If you find that you must drive your children, please drop them off on Wilsonview and have them cross at the crosswalk. Always have your children walk along the sidewalk to the back of the school. Please never park in the area used for bus and taxi drop offs.

## **Student Information**

It is extremely important that parents inform the school office if there are any changes to student information. We need to keep our records up-to-date in case we have to reach you in an emergency or if your child becomes ill during the day.

## **Lost & Found Items**

Please be sure to check our Lost and Found box for missing shoes, mittens and other articles. On Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> all lost and found items will be packed and sent to a local charity.

## **Safety Reminders**

For their own safety, please do not send your children to school before 8:35 a.m. Playground supervision starts at 8:30 and until 3:30 p.m. after school. Students are encouraged to go straight home after school and not to play at the school or at the park before they check in at home with an adult. The play structures are now closed until April 2018.

Please remember to bring indoor shoes to school. With the muddy and snowy weather, it is important that outdoor shoes are not worn in the class to keep our classroom environment as clean and safe as possible.

## **Inclement Weather Procedures**

The most accurate way to check inclement weather information is to go to the Upper Grand District School Board's website ( [www.ugdsb.on.ca](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca) ) and then click on the yellow box with the school bus. Here you will find information regarding school closure and transportation cancellation. The information is posted at 6:30 a.m. each day. You can also listen to the local radio stations -- 1460 AM CJOY or 106.1 Magic FM.

If your child takes a bus/taxi and transportation is cancelled, please DO NOT call the school to report a bus or taxi student absent. These students are marked as 'G' which is a Grant Day.

## **Feedback welcome on draft board policies**

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

**Policy 317 - Fees for Learning Materials and Activities**

This policy is important to students, staff, school councils and parents because every student is entitled to participate in the regular day school program, and to successfully complete core courses leading to graduation, without the payment of fees for learning materials, supplies, activities, and textbooks.

You are invited to review the draft documents and submit online feedback at [www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy](http://www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy). **The deadline for public input is December 28, 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.

## Food And Friends

With the holidays quickly approaching, why not give a gift with special meaning? This year, instead of purchasing a gift, honour your teacher with a donation to the Children's Foundation's Food & Friends program. The Children's Foundation would be pleased to provide the individual(s) with a card to notify them that you have made the donation in honour of them for this holiday season. Go to [Children's Foundation Donation Link](#) to make your donation today. Thank you for bringing healthy food to hungry minds!

*Cheers!*

Anita Macfarlane

Community Program Director, Food & Friends

Children's Foundation of Guelph and Wellington

87 Waterloo Ave, Guelph, ON. N1H 3H6

519-826-9551 Ext. 22

[www.childrensfoundation.org](http://www.childrensfoundation.org)

Join us in making spirits bright this holiday season by signing up to **Adopt-A-Family**. [Click Here](#) to see how you can make a difference!



## Talking About Mental Health December 2017

### - Taking Care of Ourselves and Our Families

As we head through December and towards the holidays, it is important to be aware that this can be a very exciting time of year, but for some it is also a difficult time of year. Here are some tips and resources to make sure that you and your family have a safe and mentally healthy holiday season.

#### Self-care

*What you do to support or take care of yourself? What do your children/youth do?*

It is important to look after yourselves:

- exercise
- sleep well
- eat well
- reach out to and spend time with family & friends
- reading, writing
- music, art
- spend time with pets
- spend time outside

## Stay connected

- Have dinner together as a family, no phones or devices
- Plan a family outing to a friend's or a park or a local event
- Have friends or family over for a game night
- Have a family movie or game night
- Take a few moments each day as a family to say what you are all grateful for
- Volunteer at the foodbank or other community organization as a family

## Signs to look for that someone is struggling

- *Sometimes it's hard to tell that someone is suffering. Here are some signs that someone is struggling.*
- not coming to school or work
- not engaging with friends or family
- not participating in activities that they used to enjoy
- withdrawing
- feeling hopeless
- increase use of drugs or alcohol
- changes in behaviour
- anger/irritability

## Getting help

If you, your child/youth or someone you know is struggling, it is important to know where to reach out for help. Who would you talk to if you were distressed, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to make a list of at least 3 people or resources you would reach out to.

Who would your child/youth talk to if they were upset, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to sit down with your child/youth and ask them who they would talk to. Put the kidshelpphone and HERE247 or DCAFS number in their phones (see below).

All children and youth need caring adults in their lives to talk to about their feelings. Parents/guardians can be some of those caring adults, but it is important for the children/youth to have other caring adults in their lives such as:

Family members, friends of the family

School staff (teachers, guidance counsellors, principals, child and youth counsellors, social workers, librarian, custodial staff)

Coaches, instructors

Spiritual or religious community

Community members (police, family doctors, librarians, etc.)

## Who you can call for mental health support:

- Here 24/7 (for crisis and support with mental health or addiction concerns in Guelph/Wellington)  
<http://here247.ca/> 1.844.437.3247
- Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS) (for crisis and mental health supports for children/youth in Dufferin) <https://dcafs.on.ca/> 519 941 1530
- Kids Help Phone <https://kidshelpphone.ca/> 1 800 668 6868
- Your family physician or family health team

Have a mentally healthy holiday season!

*Dr. Lynn Woodford is the Mental Health Lead for Upper Grand District School Board*

*Follow me on twitter: @drlynnwoodford*



Monthly environmental activities to help celebrate our planet

## December 10th is HUMAN RIGHTS Day!

*“For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects & enhances the freedom of others”*  
- Nelson Mandela

### Celebrate Human Rights Day on December 10th!



Human Rights Day calls on everyone to stand up for someone's rights. It starts with each of us. Step forward and defend the rights of someone whose voice is not being heard. Recognize that human rights include the right for all of us to have access to clean water, unpolluted air and healthy food. <http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/>



### Simple yet meaningful ways for your family to celebrate the rights and responsibilities that we all share as human beings!

- **Learn about how children live in other parts of the world.**
- **Read the book: We Are All Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures** by Amnesty International.
- **Read the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights.** Decide if there is a cause your family wants to support, or an Ecojustice action you want to take on.
- **Talk to someone you know who is from another country.** Where are they from? What was their life like there? What language did they speak? Did they go to school? What do they miss? What do they like about their new country?
- **Start a tradition of doing a family service project on Human Rights Day.** There are many opportunities to volunteer, such as preparing and serving meals at a local homeless shelter or simply gathering enough to put together a bunch of care packages of simple needs and necessities. <https://humanrightswarrior.com>

*“For the bigger picture we can (and should) do what we can to fight injustice. But on a smaller scale, in the day-to-day, practicing kindness can help knit a web of compassion to give humanity a boost of resilience”* by Melissa Breyer

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>December 2017</h1>  						
					1 Please remember to check the school's website for the latest and greatest Priority Park P.S. newsletter at: <a href="http://www.uodsb.on.ca/priorypark">www.uodsb.on.ca/priorypark</a>	2
3	4	5 *9:00-Jr. Volleyball Tournament Willow Road. P.S. (Boys - AM, Girls - PM)	6	7 *Pizza Day	8	9
10 *1:00 Patrol Storm Game	11	12	13 *Walking Wednesday *8:30 – School Council (babysitting provided)	14 *Pizza Day *11:00-Kiwanis Lunch @ Italian Canadian Club Rm.1	15	16
17	18	19	20 *12:50 - Patrol Pizza Lunch	21 *Pizza Day	22 *9:00-Holiday Assembly & Treehouse Groups	23
24	25 CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS *****	26 *****	27 *****	28 *****	29 *****	30 *****
31	**School Begins again on Jan.8/18**					If you require a hard copy of the newsletter, please send your request in writing to Ms. Bott at the office. Thank you for being GREEN!