



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL
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September 2, 2009

Issue 1



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome back!! We hope everyone had a fabulous summer holiday. It is with great excitement that we begin the 2009-10 school year. The upcoming year promises to be a very exciting one with much to look forward to. We welcome all our new families and staff members who have joined our school community.

The staff looks forward to supporting and guiding students in their educational journey throughout this year. Our present student enrolment is 347 students.

The theme that we have chosen as our guiding principle for this school year is **WE ARE GIFTS TO EACH OTHER!** This theme reminds us that through our words and actions we should instill the gospel message that we are all created equal in God's eyes, we are all created perfect the way we are, we are to discover the gifts that God gave each of us and treat each other with dignity, respect and appreciation at all times.

We look forward to Father John Jasica and Father Maciek, our Parish Priests, spiritually guiding us through our upcoming school year.

Our first outreach project for the year will be the school Terry Fox Run which will be held on September 18th. **Students are asked to bring a donation on this day for the Canadian Cancer Society.** This year marks the 29th Anniversary of the Terry Fox Run. Parents and community members are invited to come out and join us for this important event.

School Improvement is something we continually strive towards. In the coming weeks teachers and students will be identifying the academic goals they will be working towards for this school year. Your support as we work towards our goals is greatly appreciated.

I wish everyone a happy and successful school year and look forward to working with each and every one of you. Please feel free to contact me any time with your thoughts, concerns or ideas.

Jackie Simpson-Principal

OPENING SCHOOL MASS

Our beginning of the year school Mass will be celebrated by Father John on **Thursday, September 10th at 9:15 in our school gym.** We thank our parents and community members who join us for special events.

SCHOOL HOURS

Please Note: Playground supervision does not begin until 8:30 p.m. Any students arriving before that time are not on a supervised yard.

8:55	School begins
10:10 – 10:25	Morning recess
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch break
2:00 – 2:15	Afternoon recess
3:25	Dismissal

Our staff for the 2009/10 school year is listed below. We welcome new staff members to our school community with enthusiasm and support.

Teaching Staff

JK	Barb Desjardins
SK-A	Angela Graham
SK-B	Lisa Pitre
Grade 1	Yleon Voskamp
Grade 2/3	Keri Wilkie
Grade 3/4	Mary Bedour
Grade 5/6	Laurie Glazier
Grade 6	Peggy Sloan
Grade 7	Jim O'Hara
Grade 7/8	Kris Holland

Staff List cont'd.

Grade 1 FI	Claudine Menard
Grade 2 FI	Melissa Rivera
Grade 3 FI	Louise Lefebvre
Grade 4/5 FI	Elisabeth Spaleta
Grade 5/6 FI	Marcel St-Arneault
Grade 7/8 FI	Ward Baxter
Resource	Todd Psutka
Core French	AnneMarie Lambert
Music	Marianne Hogan
FI Science	Sarah Becker
Literacy Resource	Laurie Donnelly
Principal	Jackie Simpson

Support Staff

Parish Priests	Fr. John Jasica/Fr. Maciek
Educational Assistant	Linda Alexander Theresa Kloepfer Rosemary Corriveau Marg Gould Karen Partridge
Librarian	Rosemary Corriveau
Secretary	Adele Drennan
Custodians	Pat Flanagan Peter Dykstra
Noon Hour Monitors	Shelley Morley Angela Abbott Mona Gobrail

IMPORTANT UPDATES

Health & Safety

The number one priority of any school is to ensure the safety of all students and staff. In order to ensure that this occurs every school has a Code of Conduct and a Student and Staff Dress Code. Please find these attached. Also please take time to familiarize yourself with the following basic school routines and review them with your children. By working together we can all strive towards optimum safety and protection for our children.

Lunch Routines

All students will eat their lunch in their classroom from 12:00-12:20 daily unless you have indicated that they are to walk home daily for lunch. **Only students in Grade 7 and 8** will be allowed to leave school property during the lunch hour and this is only if they have a signed note in their planner on that day giving parental permission.



Playground / School Routines

Students are only to enter and exit the school through their designated recess doors. The only time students are to enter or exit through the front foyer doors is when they are accompanied by their parent who is checking in at the office or meeting with a teacher. **Parents please remember that all adults entering the school building must sign in at the main office.**

Upon arrival at St. Mary's in the morning parents are to walk their students to the playground NOT into the school unless they are meeting with a classroom teacher. Students are to go directly to their appropriate playground area. They may wish to put their backpack near the area where they will be lining up to enter the school at the morning bell. For the first week, pylons will be set up outside to designate where classes should line up.

Teachers and monitors on yard duty now have hall passes. **Students are to NEVER enter the school unless they have asked the playground supervisor and have been given a hall pass.** Upon coming back out of the building they return the hall pass to the adult on duty.

No student may ever leave the playground area at any time throughout the day unless under the strict supervision of an adult on duty.

Due to the anaphylactic allergies of some of our students we need to monitor where food is consumed. The classrooms that have an anaphylactic student are designated as nut safe zones. This means students in these rooms must not bring food to school that contains nuts or nut traces. The only restriction for the rest of the school is that all food must be consumed in the classrooms. **No food is to be eaten on the playground or in the hallways.**

End of Day Bus Routines

Our day ends at 3:25 p.m. All bused students are dismissed through the gym doors. Students being picked up or met by a parent are dismissed through the front foyer doors **ONLY**.

Parents are asked to wait outside the front entrance doors to pick up their child. (Unless they are meeting with a classroom teacher)

Please remember that it will be assumed that all students will travel home in the typical fashion unless a note indicating otherwise is given to the classroom teacher.

Safe-Arrival

Safe Arrival – A.M. AND P.M.

Please notify the school by phone (or note) **before 9:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m.** if your child will be late or absent from school in the morning or afternoon. (The answering machine can be used anytime day or night)

Arriving late or leaving early

Please ensure that your child(ren) announce their arrival to school in the office when arriving later than 9 a.m. If they are leaving school earlier than regular dismissal time they must stop at the office to advise the secretary of their early departure.

Early Dismissal/ No bus ride home today!

If your child will be leaving the school before our regular 3:25 dismissal time, we require verbal or written verification by the parent including the name of the person who is picking up the student (Board Policy). **Please try to call well before the buses are due to leave if at all possible.**

Student Phone Use

Students may use the school telephone in the event of an emergency. Calling home to get permission to go to a friend's house, to go out for lunch or to have homework dropped off will not be permitted. Thank you for helping us to help your child be organized.

Contacting Teachers and Visiting the School

Open communication between home and school is a very important component of a successful school. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have a concern. Please don't let an issue escalate beyond repair. It is more effective to problem-solve together at an early stage.

Teachers can be contacted by phone. Please call the school office, and the secretary will take your name and number and the teacher will return your call at one of the following times.

8:30 - 8:50 a.m.
12:20 - 12:55 p.m.
3:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Visitors to the school are welcome, especially parents. If you wish to meet with a teacher we would appreciate you making arrangements with the teacher at least a day in advance to avoid complications.

All visitors: please report their presence to the Main Office so that no unauthorized persons are in our building.

Open House/Meet the Teacher Night

Our open house evening will be held on **Wednesday, September 16th** at 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. This is an informal meet the teacher night and a time to leisurely tour the classrooms. Please plan on coming out for this important evening.



SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

The Scholastic Book Fair will begin on September 14th and run until Sept. 17th. The Scholastic Book Fair is available in the library to all families the night of our Open House as well. The Book Fair is a primary way to replace books for our school. Please support this great fundraiser.

Conflict Resolution Program

As one of our main objectives is to create a school without bullying, teachers will be using the Resource, "Imagine A School Without Bullying" to help create a safe, peaceful school for our students. We will also be continuing with our Peace Mentors program and implementing a Peer Pals program. It is hoped that by all of us working together we can greatly reduce the exposure of children to bullying incidents.

We will continue our weekly virtues program. The virtues are simply characteristics that we should try to develop to help us become like Jesus. On the monthly calendar the virtue that will be concentrated on each week will be noted. Please try to reinforce the development of this virtue at home as well.

REMINDERS



Shoes

It is asked that all students have a second pair of shoes at school to be used as "inside" shoes. Wearing the same shoes both inside and out creates unclean, slippery and unsafe floor conditions. From the months of October to May and on days that warrant it, it will be mandatory for all students to change their footwear upon entering the school. **Please try to purchase white soled or non-marking running shoes.**

Toys

Students are not to bring any electronic hand held games or expensive toys to school. With the number of students at school it is hard to ensure the safety and proper use of such toys. Cell phones and cameras are not permitted to be used at school at anytime.



LOCAL SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWS

Our first meeting will take place on **Monday, September 14th at 7:00 p.m. in the school library**. We deeply thank all those who serve our school community in this important capacity.

We need new parents to serve on our Council. Should you be willing to sit on this extremely important committee, plan on attending our first meeting. Please take this opportunity to be a valuable voice for your school community. I greatly look forward to working with the upcoming Council.

Our goal this year is to begin installing additional playground structures for our students. After an overwhelming success of our Spring Fair, once again we are on our way to having enough funds to begin looking at some small playground structures. Make sure to continue to look for and support our upcoming playground structures fundraising events. If you would like to help out with this fundraising committee please come to our next meeting which will be held before the LSAC meeting **at 6:30 p.m., Sept. 14th in the library**.

It is also never too early to begin gathering items for our Annual Spring Fair. Please consider helping with this extremely important event. Any items gathered throughout the year can be dropped off at the school.

School Planners

These books are essential in helping students remain organized. It is mandatory that all students have a planner in grades 1-8. We apologize for some incorrect information in the student planners. The order was placed before final changes occurred.



The cost of the planner is \$7.00 per student; please send this amount to school at your earliest convenience.

VOLUNTEERS/VOLUNTEERS/VOLUNTEERS



Parent and community volunteers are an essential resource to any school. They can make the difference between a good school and a great school. Research shows that a child's success at school is positively influenced by their parents' involvement with their school. Volunteers can do any number of important tasks and are essential for an effectively run school. Please see the attached. Please consider offering some time or assistance in whatever way you can to help make a difference in students' lives.

BEST START PROGRAMME

Attention JK/SK Kindergarten Parents:

St. Mary's is very excited to be running a Best Start programme at our school. This child care programme is for JK/SK students in the Goderich area who wish to attend day care on non-school days. This is a wonderful opportunity for the Goderich Municipal Daycare Center and school to work together. Please contact Best Start at the Daycare Center 519-524-7441 for more information on enrolling your child in this great experience.

STUDENT SUPPORT

St. Mary's is once again delighted to offer counseling support for our students. Please take note of the following letter of greeting from our School Based Worker.

From the Desk of Allyson Austin, School Based Social Worker:

Hello St Mary's Families - Welcome back!!!

I'm Allyson Austin, a registered social worker, employed by the Huron Perth Children's Aid Society, and under a unique collaborative agreement with the Huron Perth Catholic District School Board, I have been providing counselling services to children and their families for the past four years at St Anne's, St Joseph's and St Mary's. I have worked as a school based social worker for nine years in total, previously providing similar services within the Public School system.

As a School Based Social Worker, I have expertise in numerous areas including promoting positive peer relationships, social skills, bullying prevention, increasing self esteem and confidence, and assisting parents in strengthening their families.

If you believe that your son, daughter, or family could benefit from my on-site services at school, please feel free to contact your principal, your child's teacher or Huron Perth Children's Aid Society to discuss how I can be of assistance to you.

Working together to keep kids safe and happy.

Allyson Austin, School-Based Social Worker

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Please complete the following and return to school as soon as possible.

Student Data Sheet

Consent for Use and Disclosure Routine

Application for Internet Use

Student Insurance Forms (optional)

** Remember to check our school website. A weekly update is posted on this site.



SPARTAN CHEERS

Cheers to all the teachers and Mrs. Drennan who have been busy preparing for the upcoming year over the last several weeks.

Cheers to Mr. Flanagan and Mr. Dykstra for all their hard work in preparing the school for the new school year.

Cheers to all the parents and guardians who took the time to prepare their children for the upcoming school year.

Community News

MedicAlert's No Child Without Program is at Our School .

The *No Child Without* program offers a free MedicAlert membership to students who attend our school and are between the ages of 4 up to their 14th birthday. If your child has a medical condition, allergy or is required to take medication on a regular basis then you should consider a MedicAlert membership through this program.

Your child's voice in an emergency, MedicAlert membership;

- Gives emergency first responders immediate access to your child's medical information on their MedicAlert bracelet or necklet
- Enables first responders to quickly obtain up to date medical information by means of the child's Electronic Health Record through the **24 Hour Emergency Hotline.**
- Communicates with the parent or emergency contact upon activation of the **Hotline**
- Allows free updates of the child's medical record as needed

MedicAlert identification can alert school staff, friends, coaches and others about your child's medical condition should an emergency occur.

For further information come to the office for a brochure or visit www.nochildwithout.ca. To register your child you will need a *No Child Without* brochure from the office.

If your child is already part of the *No Child Without* program and there have been changes to their medical condition, medications or emergency contact information, call MedicAlert at 1-866-679-3220 Ext 1 to update your child's file.

Employment Opportunity

St. Mary's is currently looking for additional yard duty monitors for temporary or possible full time positions. This is a paid position for 1hour/day. If you are interested please forward your resume to the attention of Jackie Simpson.

