



VANCOUVER COLLEGE

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Friday, August 21, 2020

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the Vancouver College Elementary School Team, I am happy to welcome you to the 2020-2021 school year! I hope that you had a restful summer and are ready for the busy year that lies ahead. As an elementary staff, we are excited to begin our first year in our brand new home. We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure our boys can achieve their highest potential in these challenging circumstances in which we find ourselves.

In order for the year to flow as smoothly as possible, there are certain policies and procedures that you should review. While some of the details are listed below, I also encourage you to read the [Elementary School Student Handbook](#) so that you are fully informed on the policies and procedures of the Elementary School.

School Theme

The theme for this year is the first Essential Element of an Edmund Rice Christian Brother Catholic Education: PROCLAIM AND WITNESS TO OUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY. For students in the Elementary School, we interpret this as "Demonstrate the desire and willingness to follow in Jesus' footsteps through his words and his actions." We will discuss this theme in religion classes and incorporate it throughout the year.

"Preach the Gospel at all times, and only when necessary, use words." St. Francis of Assisi

School Start

School will begin on Thursday, September 10, 2020 for all Grades 1-6 students, following the schedule found in this letter.

Kindergarten Parents and Students will meet their teachers virtually on September 9th or 10th (further information to follow via email). Shortened days (8:05 am - 1:30 pm) for Kindergarten students will commence on Monday, September 14, 2020, with full days beginning on Monday, September 28, 2020.

Uniforms

The Vancouver College uniform is clearly described in the Dress Code section of [the handbook](#). Please help your son adhere to the Dress Code expectations. The one exception for dress code during the COVID pandemic for elementary is that the boys are asked to wear their runners to school. Dress shoes will not be worn at school at this time. We ask you to hold off sending boots and any extra items at this time, and we will inform you when we are able to accept such items in the near future, as we are managing the new space and the COVID restrictions.

Parent Orientation

The Elementary Parent Orientation will take place on Tuesday, September 15, 2020. This meeting will be held virtually, with the link sent to parents closer to this date. We ask that you stay tuned to the Vancouver College Newsletter, sent via email weekly on Mondays, for more information.

Birthdays

In previous years, students were able to celebrate their birthdays by sending in a small treat to share with their classmates. At this time, we ask that no birthday treats be sent to school for the class, and thank you for respecting this shift in policy.

Toys, Trading Cards, and Electronics

Toys, collectibles, or trading cards are not to be brought to school. Anything of any value should not be at school as there is a chance that it could be misplaced, stolen, or damaged. In addition, boys are not to trade any items as this often leads to upset children and upset parents. If we see these items, they will be taken away from the student. At this point, personal electronics are not to be taken to school unless directed by the teacher.

Peanut Allergies

Please remember that nuts or items containing nuts (including Nutella, chocolates containing nuts, or any nut products) are not to be brought to school. We have students at the school who have life threatening allergies to nuts, and we would like to minimize the risk as much as possible for these students.

School Supplies

Our usual Edupac school supplies have arrived at the school, based on the order we placed for each student. Parents will be charged \$50 from their activity fee for the supplies, so there is no need to purchase supplies for the fall.

Special COVID Considerations

As September quickly approaches, you will undoubtedly have questions about what will happen with the return to school due to the impact of COVID. Please note the following:

1. Learning Groups:

Grades will be partnered into learning groups (also called cohorts by the Ministry of Education). Each learning group will be out at recess together. A learning group is still asked to physically distance as much as possible and to not touch each other.

- K-1, K-2, and Grade One
- Grade Two and Grade Three
- Grade Four and Grade Five
- Grade Six

2. Arrival & Departure:

There will be staggered arrival and dismissal times for all students in Elementary, Middle and Senior Schools to improve overall flow. We will continue with our usual late start on Wednesdays to accommodate staff meetings.

Mon, Tues, Thurs, & Fri			Wednesday		
8:00 8:05 8:10	Staggered Arrival	Gr. 2/3 Gr. K/1 Gr. 4/5/6	9:00 9:05 9:10	Staggered Arrival	Gr. 2/3 Gr. K/1 Gr. 4/5/6
8:30 - 11:00	Class	165 min	9:30 - 11:00	Class	105 min
11:00 -11:50	Lunch	40 min	11:00 -11:50	Lunch	40 min
11:50 - 1:15	Class	95 min	11:50 - 1:15	Class	95 min
1:15 - 1:30	Break -1	15 min	1:15 - 1:30	Break -1	15 min
1:30 - 1:45	Break -2	15 min	1:30 - 1:45	Break -2	15 min
*1:30 - 2:30	Class	60 min	*1:30 - 2:20	Class	50 min
2:30 2:35 2:40	Staggered Dismissal	Gr. 2/3 Gr. K/1 Gr. 4/5/6	2:30 2:35 2:40	Staggered Dismissal	Gr. 2/3 Gr. K/1 Gr. 4/5/6

Arrival:

All Elementary School Students will enter the new building through the Main Doors, located at the center of the historic Lannon Hall facade. Please adhere to the school's traffic and parking guidelines.

Parents of students in Kindergarten - Grade 3 ONLY may park on West 37th Avenue and walk their sons to campus at their assigned arrival time. We ask that you drop your child off at the Main Doors, where staff members will be available to assist them in finding their classroom. While on campus we ask that parents do NOT enter the building, and practice physical distancing at all times.

Parents of students in Grades 4-6 are asked to follow Vancouver College Traffic Guidelines, and drop off their sons at their assigned arrival time. Please ensure your sons walk directly to the Elementary School Building and into their classroom.

Dismissal:

All Elementary students will be dismissed into the courtyard.

Parents of students in Kindergarten - Grade 3 ONLY may wait in the courtyard, physically distant, to pick up their child. We ask that those parents park on West 37th Avenue only, and leave immediately upon picking up their son.

Parents of boys in Grades 4 - 6 are asked to follow Vancouver Traffic Guidelines, and wait for their son in designated zones at their son's assigned dismissal time.

3. Lunch:

Lunch is scheduled daily from 11:00-11:50 am. Since students will not have access to the cafeteria, please pack a lunch for your child.

	<i>From 11:00-11:25 am:</i>	<i>From 11:25-11:50 am:</i>
<i>K-1/K-2 & Grade 1</i>	play in the new playground	Eat in their classroom supervised by their teacher
<i>Grades 2 & 3</i>	play in the old playground	Eat in their classroom supervised by their teacher
<i>Grades 4 & 5</i>	Eat in their classroom supervised by their teacher	play in the old playground
<i>Grade 6</i>	Eat in their classroom supervised by their teacher	play in the new playground

All garbage from lunch will go back into the student's lunch bag and returned home. As we currently are minimizing the amount of parents entering the building and engaging in volunteer activities on school grounds, parents are currently not able to volunteer as lunch supervisors.

4. Second Recess:

- From 1:15-1:30: Students in Grade One will go to the new playground, while Grades Two and Three will go to the old playground.
- From 1:30-1:45: Students in Grades Four and Five will go to the old playground, while Grade Six students go to the new playground.

The playground allocations may shift after two months to give others a chance to play on the new playground.

5. Masks:

All students from Grades 4 and up are required to wear masks. Students in K-3 are able to wear a mask if they wish, but will be provided with face shields from the school. Students with respiratory issues will not be required to wear a mask. Parents are asked to let your son's teacher know if he has a respiratory concern.

Teachers will all wear face shields, with a significant plastic shield around the teacher's desk.

6. French:

French will take place in the French room with two cohorts - one class at a time - and the other students will be taught virtually in their classroom. Every two months, the grades that go to the French room will shift.

7. Library:

Library classes will take place in the classrooms. Mrs. Olson will go to the classes with a book cart and do book talks with the students, providing books for them to take home.

9. Physical Education:

P.E. classes will take place as usual with students going outside as often as possible. Students are asked to bring sweatpants to school for cooler days. When students need to be in the gym, they will be doing individual training or activities where distancing is possible.

10. Music:

At this point music classes will continue in the student classroom with a different style of presentation. This will be monitored in an ongoing fashion.

11. Art:

We are keeping the students in one classroom as much as possible. Therefore, our new art room will not be utilized, at least initially.

12. Learning Assistance Program:

Mrs. Phee-Hale and Mrs. Skinner will continue with a pull-out program in order to keep to the appropriate numbers in learning groups. They may also provide in-class support for one class only and rotate that class every two months (while continuing with their pull-out sessions).

13. The Readwell Program:

This primary reading program will shift slightly. Mrs. Roche will be working with Grade One and Grade Three to keep her learning group numbers consistent. Mrs. Farrell and Mrs. Tran will work in Grade Two with the reading program.

14. Extra-curricular Activities:

These will still run this year. Separate communications will go out when a club or sport is about to begin. Sports will still be offered, but we will only play in our school cohorts and not be competing against any local schools. More Information will follow once available.

15. After School Care:

This will continue to run with COVID health regulations in effect.

16. Lockers:

Students will not be using lockers as we begin this School Year. They will keep their items in their desk and their backpack will be hung around their chair. Students are asked not to bring backpacks with wheels. Students may leave some items at school in their desk.

17. Handwashing

Students will be reminded to wash their hands and/or sanitize them as frequently as possible, and at a minimum when arriving and leaving school, before eating, after using the toilet, after sneezing or coughing, whenever hands are physically dirty, and when moving between different learning environments.

Seesaw Platform:

We will be utilizing the Seesaw Platform for Kindergarten to Grade six. Seesaw is a very user-friendly communication between students, parents, and teachers. More information will be coming shortly.

Bedtime:

With the beginning of school comes the earlier bedtime. I would like to stress the importance of bedtime and the routines that go along with it. To help with bedtime routines, there should not be any screen time one hour before bed to assist in calming down the mind and body. If children do not get enough sleep, their behaviour can mimic those with attention deficit syndrome. Children with insufficient sleep also have more difficulty coping with stress and often do not have a sense of well-being. We need to ensure that the basics of enough sleep, good nutrition, and exercise are met, in order to give our children the best start to the school year.

We need to be ready for anything this year. The above schedule can quickly shift. We are all in this together, and as Dr. Bonnie reminds us ... be kind, be calm, and be safe.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ms. Barbara Seppelt
Elementary School Assistant Principal
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