



Garden Avenue Public School Parent Handbook

225 Garden Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6R 1H9
Office Telephone: 416 393-9165

Parent Handbook

Table of Contents

The School Day1	Parents and Teachers6
Kindergarten.....1	Reports.....6
Snack.....1	Kindergarten.....6
Grades 1-6.....1	Grades 1-6.....6
Arrival.....1	
Bad Weather Days.....1	Learning at Garden7
Recess.....1	Reading Programs.....7
Dismissal.....2	Borrow a Book.....7
Buses.....2	Reading Buddies.....7
Lateness or Absence.....2	Physical Education.....7
	Clothing.....7
Importance of your contact numbers2	Homework.....7
	Special Activities.....8
Lunch Program3	Excursions/Field Trips.....8
Peanut Allergies.....3	Parents in the Classroom.....9
What to bring, What to wear4	Supports to Learning9
Dress Code.....4	Reading Recovery.....9
Indoor Shoes.....4	Learning Centre.....9
Lost and Found.....4	Local School Team/School Support Team.....9
Can I bring it to school?.....5	Special Education.....9
	Second Steps.....10
Sunnyside Garden Daycare5	School Advisory Council (formerly PTA).....10
When School is Closed5	Health Concerns11
Religious Holidays.....5	Prescribed Medicines.....11
Professional Activity Days.....5	Anaphylaxis.....12
Severe Weather Warning.....5	Immunization.....12
	Dental Clinics.....12
Vandalism6	Lice and Other Catching Things.....12

The Parent Handbook was produced in May 2004. Its information will not reflect any changes to staff, programs, or procedures that were made after that date.

The School Day

Kindergarten

Monday to Friday

Morning classes.....9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Afternoon classes.....1:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Students enter the school 5 minutes before instruction begins.

Kindergarten students are always dismissed at the same time daily. Please note that we never dismiss students into the care of someone other than the caregiver without written notification from the parent or caregiver prior to pick-up.

Snack

A Snack is provided to each Kindergarten class daily during the school year. You are asked to make contributions when the teacher sends home a request via classroom newsletter. We try to provide a piece of fruit and a cereal item (such as crackers, rice or wheat, bagel, etc) daily, with cheese or some other spread (but never peanut butter or other nut products). Our snack is planned to be vegetarian, and thus can be consumed by any faith group in our school. Children choose to eat or not eat the snack as they wish.

Grades 1 – 6

Monday to Friday

Entry bell.....8:50 a.m.

Class time.....8:55 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.

Lunch.....11:50 a.m. to 12:50 p.m.

Entry bell.....12:50 p.m.

Class time.....12:55 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Dismissal.....3:30 p.m.

Remediation Dismissal.....3:45 p.m.

Classroom closed.....4:00 p.m.

Grades 1, 2, 3 are the Primary grades; Grades 4, 5, 6 are the Junior grades.

Arrival

Teachers are on yard duty at 8:40 a.m. and 12:40 p.m. Prior to these times, supervision is not provided.

Unless arrangements have been made previously with the teacher, students are to remain in the schoolyard until regular bell and entrance times.

Students who leave for lunch are not expected back until teacher supervision is in place at 12:40.

Our bell rings at 8:50 a.m. and 12:50 p.m. Students have 5 minutes to assemble and prepare for class, at which time attendance is taken.

Bad weather days

On rainy or unusually cold days, please send students to school so that they arrive as close as possible to 8:50 a.m. and 12:50 p.m. Students will be permitted to wait in the stairwells (supervised by on-duty staff) before proceeding to their classrooms. In order to curb congestion in our narrow corridors and stairwells, you are asked to let children enter on their own.

On rainy, cold, or snowy days, please ensure that students wear appropriate clothing for comfort both inside and outside the school.

Recess

Fifteen-minute recess breaks for students in Grades 1-6 are scheduled mid-morning and mid-afternoon daily. On particularly rainy or cold days, students will be kept indoors for recess, at the discretion of the Principal.

Dismissal

Dismissal is daily at 3:30 p.m. Students whose work needs to be finished, revised, or corrected can remain with their teachers until 3:45 p.m. Extra help from the teacher may be given to individual students between 3:30 and 4:00 p.m., by arrangement between parent and teacher.

Help the Office Help You: Keep Your Contact Information Up to Date

If you change your home, work, mobile, fax, childcare, or emergency contact telephone numbers, please let us know immediately. We **must** have, on file, the name and telephone number of a person who can be contacted if you are unavailable. This person should be available to pick up your child in the case of an emergency or illness. Please make sure that you have informed this person of the responsibility this requires.

It is **very important** that you keep this information up-to-date. If we cannot reach you – in case of an emergency, a serious illness, or an extremely late after-school pickup – and there is no emergency contact, the Principal will have to ask for the assistance of the most appropriate child welfare agency. To avoid this course of action, please keep us informed of your pertinent information, and any difficulties, as they arise.

Please inform your child's teacher if your child must be dismissed directly at 3:30 p.m. Students remaining behind until 4:00 p.m. will be asked to telephone and inform parents of this situation.

If your child has to leave the school during the regular school day, please: send a note to the teacher. Then, at the time you need to pick up your child, please come to the school office and inform us. We will notify the classroom teacher, and your child will meet you at the office.

Children leaving early must be picked up by an authorized adult. If someone other than the parent or guardian will be picking up your child, contact the school to let us know in advance.

For safety reasons, children cannot leave the school except at dismissal times, unless the above procedures are followed.

Buses

Students at Garden for whom the Board provides transportation are expected, upon disembarking, to walk immediately to the schoolyard. They enter the school at the normal assembly times. Students are expected to abide by Garden's Code of Conduct from the time they are picked up until they are dropped off at home again.

Students registered at another school's program (e.g., French Immersion) meet their school buses in front of the main entrance at Garden. They are dropped off at this site as well. Parents are expected to provide supervision for these students while they wait for the bus, as they are not registered at Garden and are not the direct responsibility of Garden Ave. P.S. staff.

Lateness or Absence

For student safety, the Toronto District School Board has mandated a **Safe Arrival Program** for all its schools.

Please telephone the school at (416) 393-9165 before 8:30 in the morning (or 1:00 in the afternoon) every day your child is away (for whatever reason) or when you know your child will be arriving late. For your convenience, we have a voice-mail system to receive calls during non-school hours, or when we are unable to answer the telephone.

All students arriving late – morning and afternoon – are expected to report directly to the office before continuing on to their classroom.

Teachers submit attendance reports at 8:55 a.m. and 12:55 p.m. In the event of an unexplained absence, the office will contact all parents who have not telephoned the school after attendance is taken.

Lunch Program

Students are expected to eat lunch at home or at a suitable alternative location arranged by the parent or guardian. A minimally supervised lunchroom is available for students whose parents are unable to make other lunch-hour arrangements.

At lunchtime our school gym becomes a supervised lunchroom. Students may eat lunch at school provided that the parent/guardian submits a request form to the office. Students must follow the rules of the lunchroom or parents will be asked to make other arrangements.

Students who remain at school for lunch are required to remain on school property for the entire lunch period. Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds to purchase a lunch and then return to school to eat it. The school cannot be responsible for students who leave the school grounds without permission.

Attendance is taken in the lunchroom. If a student is absent from the lunchroom and the school has not already been notified (e.g., by a letter from the parent or guardian, or by notification that the student is home from school for the day), then the parent or guardian will be contacted. This is done for safety reasons.

Milk is currently available for purchase at cost. There is no provision for heating food. Hot food can be brought from home in Thermos containers.

Please avoid sending items to school in breakable glass containers. Be sure to label lunch bags and containers with the student's name, so that these items can be returned.

We ask that you provide healthy choices for your children and avoid "junk food" treats. Students are asked to take home the uneaten portions of their lunches and snacks, so that parents can be aware of likes, dislikes, and the lunchtime eating practices of their children. In a time of hunger for some students and their families in Toronto, we try to make sure that our garbage cans are not overflowing with perfectly good food.

Peanut Allergies

We have a number of students who have life-threatening allergies to peanuts. We ask you for that reason to avoid sending students to school with peanut products. Our severely allergic students eat at designated tables with friends who also eat peanut-free lunches and snacks. Our supervisors often check students' lunches for peanut products, and may ask students eating peanut butter cookies, sandwiches, etc., to wash up carefully before they are dismissed.

What to bring, What to wear

At the beginning of the year, students are issued the materials they need in order to complete their work and assignments. Art materials are provided, as are paper and specific notebooks. If materials are lost, students are expected to provide their own.

Except for certain consumable items, all school equipment and supplies are on loan. Parents are asked to sign a letter agreeing to take responsibility for the replacement of lost or vandalized books and equipment.

Dress Code

A Dress Code is mandated by provincial Safe Schools legislation. Currently the Code of Conduct stipulates that students wear appropriate clothing for a school and workplace environment.

Indoor Shoes

During the muddy and snowy months, students need to keep indoor shoes at school. Running shoes make useful indoor shoes, since students need them for gym classes.

Students are asked to wear appropriate footwear at all times. Should a fire drill or emergency evacuation take place in winter, students will be expected to leave the building without having the time to put on shoes or boots.

Please label all items of clothing – boots, shoes, hats, coats, scarves, mittens, sweaters – in fact, anything that the child might remove, put down, and then forget!

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found is located in the front foyer and in the hallway outside the school office. Every year the Lost and Found overflows with beautiful and expensive clothing (including many, many, many hats, mittens,

and scarves!) as well as a great many backpacks and lunch bags. Inexplicably, on occasion we also have such necessary items as jeans, underwear, belts, and shoes!

Valuable items such as keys, glasses, retainers, watches, and electronic gear are kept in the school office.

Please label your children's belongings in permanent ink – clothing on the inside tags, bags and backpacks on the outside. And please check the Lost and Found regularly. Clothing left behind after a season is bagged and donated to a charity.

"Can I Bring it to School?"

All items valuable to a student – including **personal electronic equipment such as Walkmans, Gameboys, CD players, and cellular telephones** – are best kept at home. The school is not responsible for loss of, or damage to, personal items.

Teachers may remove toys (including trading cards) from children who are using them inappropriately.

Students who bring their **bicycles** to school are required to park and lock them at the front of the school. Please make sure that you have a second key at home in case your child locks his or her bicycle and then loses the key! Parents are asked to stress with their children the importance of obeying the safety rules at all times. The school cannot be responsible for bicycles that are lost or stolen at school, at any time, whether they are locked or left unlocked.

Rollerblades, skateboards, scooters, etc. are not permitted in the school, or in the playground, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., when other children are usually present on the site. These items cannot be easily stored during the day, making it hard to protect them against loss or theft. Safety on the street and

appropriate safeguards – such as shin and elbow pads, safety helmets – remain an important issue in the use of this type of equipment. Please make sure that

children are aware of safety rules and are wearing the appropriate safety gear!

On what days is the school closed?

The 2004-2005 draft School Calendar is included with this handbook.

Religious Holidays

The Toronto District School Board recognizes that religious observances are important to many of our families. In an increasingly diverse population, we try to schedule activities so that we avoid holidays of significance to members of our community. Should we fail to notice a holiday important to you, please advise the school and your child's teacher.

Professional Activity Days

Professional Activity (P.A.) Days and Professional Development (P.D.) Days are approved by the Ministry of Education and the TDSB. The days set aside for these purposes (see the School Calendar) are used by teachers and administrators for:

- curriculum and program development and evaluation
- participation in profession in-service and workshops
- evaluation of students in consultation with parents.

There are no classes for children on these days, and parents are requested to make alternative arrangements for their children.

Severe Weather Warning

There is a separate page with this handbook describing how to get information about school closures for reasons of severe cold or snowstorms. Various radio stations broadcast this information so

that it is not necessary to telephone the school.

Schools in Toronto are rarely closed. On days when the weather is especially cold or when a smog alert has been issued, children with certain conditions may remain indoors, if their health warrants this precaution.

Sunnyside-Garden Daycare

Sunnyside-Garden Daycare is a non-profit daycare on site at Garden Avenue P.S. It provides care for students between the ages of 2½ and 12 years in both Pre-school and School-Age programs. The Daycare is run by a volunteer Board of Directors, elected annually from the general membership, and meets all legislated and regulated requirements.

Waiting lists for Daycare are kept and are prioritized according to specific criteria. Because the school has only limited enrollment opportunities for students living outside the school's catchment area, enrollment in the Daycare does not necessarily mean that these students can enroll at Garden Avenue Public School. (The School Principal can provide more information concerning the TDSB's Optional Attendance Policy.)

All inquiries regarding the Daycare should be directed to the Supervisor, Judith Malcolm-Barnes, at 533-2008.

Parents And Teachers

We have an Open House every year in late September or early October, at which parents have the opportunity to visit the classrooms and look around the school's facilities. This is not a time for discussion of your child's progress with the teacher, who will have many people to meet and greet, but it is a chance to introduce yourself, and for your child to show you his or her work.

It is our practice for teachers to contact parents whenever they have questions about a student's social, emotional, or academic progress, in an effort to plan together for the student's benefit.

Parents may contact teachers at any time to arrange an interview. Please speak to the teacher, or call the office at (416) 393-9165 and speak to the administrative assistant, to arrange a time. When you visit the school for an appointment, Toronto District School Board policy requires that you report first to the office.

Please avoid discussing your concerns about individual children when the teacher is supervising students – for example, at arrival or dismissal times or when a teacher is on yard duty.

See also **Parents in the Classroom** under **Learning at Garden;** **School Advisory Council** under **Supports to Learning.**

Reports

Kindergarten

Parents of Junior Kindergarten students are expected to meet individually with the teacher in November/December to discuss their children's progress. A written report is sent home in March.

Parents of Senior Kindergarten students receive a written report in November/December and are

expected to meet with the teacher in March.

All Kindergarten students receive a written report in June.

Grades 1-6

Report cards are sent home each term, in early December, March, and late June.

Parent-teacher conferences concerning all students are held following the December report, and for some students following the March report. Interviews are not generally scheduled following the June report, though they can be arranged at the parent's request.

Vandalism

Under current provincial legislation, the parents of students or of other children found vandalizing the school and /or school property can be made responsible for the recovery of costs. This can be as simple as paying for the replacement of lost or damaged textbooks, library books, or other materials. It also includes paying for the replacement of windows, repainting of washrooms or hallways, repeated cleaning of the site due to graffiti, repair of breakage, and so on.

We hope that everyone will respect the building and site and realize that these kinds of abuses make it more difficult for those of us who wish to grow, learn, and work in an environment of mutual respect, understanding, and tolerance.

Learning At Garden

Reading Programs

Literacy is a basic building block of school success, and at Garden we encourage reading with programs at school and books to borrow for reading at home. Sharing of stories, books, poems, information retrieval from the Internet, going to the Public Library, etc. can be done in any language, and all these activities encourage children to see themselves as readers.

Borrow-a-Book is a program provided by teachers in the early grades. There is significant evidence that students who share reading of stories and books at home with their parents or others develop good literacy skills. Each classroom has a small library of books that students can borrow to read nightly or weekly, as the teacher determines. Often the books borrowed go home in **Book Bags** provided by the school.

All of our students share reading and books with their **Reading Buddies**. This is a program that establishes partnerships between older and younger students, who love this sharing time and often look out for their "buddies" during the school day.

See also **Reading Recovery** under **Supports to Learning**.

Physical Education

Clothing

In order to allow for freedom of movement and safety during a Physical Education lesson, it is essential that the students wear loose, light clothing, and socks with running shoes. Changing before a gym class is not practical, so please plan your child's wardrobe accordingly. The class teacher should let you know when gym classes take place, so that your child can be prepared. Children without running shoes may be

exempted from an activity if the teacher decides that safety is a factor. Otherwise, the child may be able to join in with bare feet.

Every year our teachers coach various sports teams. Sometimes these teams are competitive, inter-school, and designated by age and gender; sometimes they are less competitive, and mixed in gender. School teams are generally open to all Junior students (Grades 4,5,6). Should the number of students interested exceed the number of spots on a team, discussion and explanation will take place with students before the team is established. As well as inter-school teams, we generally are able to organize before-school in-house sports activities for both our Primary (Grades 1, 2, 3) and Junior (Grades 4,5,6) students.

All the teachers and coaches at Garden stress good sports behaviour and co-operative spirit on and off the playing field with all the adults and students participating. As well, students are to meet the contractual obligations of school attendance and academic progress necessary to remain on a team that represents our school. Our goals are to teach the game skills to students, allow participation, and have fun. Winning championships is not our primary goal, but we do work towards that end, and we like it too!

Homework

Our teachers develop homework expectations around the age and stage of development of the child. Primary students (Grades 1, 2, 3) may be asked to complete simple daily assignments at home for homework. Junior students (Grades 4, 5, 6) may be doing research for project work, finishing incomplete work, studying for quizzes, or editing and revising

personal writing. Each teacher will inform you of his or her expectations in terms of homework.

The amount of time a student spends on their homework is individual and depends on that student's learning and work habits. Should you find the amount of work going home a challenge for your child, please discuss this with your child's teacher

Many tasks that require learning by rote (repetition) are assigned for practice at home. In the language arts this might be spelling, or in mathematics memorizing number facts.

We expect that parents share activities like reading daily (parent to child, child to parent). For this purpose, our library and all our classes have a collection of books that can be borrowed. As well, some classes send home Calendar Math – activities to develop math skills that can be done at home by the whole family.

Parents can help with homework by providing encouragement and a quiet work place, but also by supporting the expectation that homework assignments will be completed and handed in as requested. An Agenda will be provided for each Grade 4 to Grade 6 student in the hopes that they will learn to become responsible for keeping track of homework assignments and completing them on time. A sign-off is part of the Agenda. Parents of younger students who are having trouble keeping track of assignments and returning them on time might find that a homework notebook provides a solution, and they should discuss this with the teacher.

There are as many ways of doing homework as there are students. Sometimes we need to negotiate what works best for your student, in light of Ministry expectations and curriculum demands. (Along with this Handbook you will receive an article from *Professionally Speaking*, a magazine of the Ontario Principal's Council, that discusses homework help.)

The TDSB has a homework policy that can be accessed through the Board's website at www.tdsb.on.ca/boardroom/policies/d/d03.htm.

Special Activities

During the course of the year, a number of activities (clubs, sports, etc.) are offered to students. These activities are usually held before school, during lunch hours, and sometimes after school (in the event of inter-school team games). Announcements are made and letters sent home to parents of interested students with the relevant information. Your permission will be required, and each child is expected to meet specific expectations, which are set out in the sign-up and letter of permission.

Excursions/Field Trips

From time to time, students are involved in excursions outside the school that require the use of public transit or a chartered bus.

Field trips are planned by teachers as part of our regular curriculum, and it is expected that students will participate in these excursions. These excursions sometimes extend beyond the regular school hours or over the lunch period. If your child is involved in such an excursion, you will be informed in advance in writing of the details of the trip.

From time to time, teachers will ask parents to volunteer to help supervise students during a field trip, particularly in the primary classes.

Often parents will be asked to make a contribution towards the costs of a field trip. Families experiencing financial distress should not worry about the cost of contributing towards these trips. All our students participate in field trips, and students needing financial support receive this help automatically.

If there is an unusual or particular reason why an individual child cannot participate, this should be discussed in confidence with the teacher or principal before the field trip takes place.

While we try to include all our students in every area of the curriculum, there might be particular reasons

why a teacher will not allow a student to participate in a field trip or special activity. These reasons will be shared with the parents in advance and an alternative placement in the school during the event will be planned for those students.

Parents In The Classroom

Many teachers welcome the assistance of parents in the classroom during the year. If you are interested in volunteering in your child's classroom, contact the teacher and ask how you can help. Often parents have

exciting suggestions for classroom learning, but teachers have a heavy curriculum load for the year and can't always take advantage of unrelated activities.

Teachers often need parent helpers for field trips and other excursions, which can be a very enjoyable way to spend time with your child's class.

The school also welcomes volunteers for special events, helping in our library, or over the lunch period. If you have an idea or suggestion, feel free to share it with your child's teacher, the Principal, or the School Council.

Supports To Learning

Reading Recovery

Garden Avenue is finishing a 4-year special project called the Early Years Literacy Project. As a result, we received extra staff (a half-time Reading Recovery teacher), extra supplies and books, and more teacher training in order to improve literacy throughout the school. Reading Recovery also offers some intensive teaching support to specially selected Grade One students experiencing significant reading difficulty, in an effort to bring them up to grade expectation by year's end.

Learning Centre

Our Learning Centre is a child-friendly room on the second floor beside the Library. It is staffed by a teacher who plans, co-ordinates, and teaches remediations skills to individual students in small groups. Students access this support through the School Support Team (also called the Local School Team).

Local School Team/ School Support Team

Our Local School Team is comprised of the Principal,

Learning Centre teacher (the Chair), teachers, parents, and the school social worker or psychologist (if possible). The Team meets regularly to review student progress and other concerns, which are brought to the Team's attention through a request either from a staff member or from a parent. Concerns can be of a social, emotional, or academic nature. The goal is to make schooling as successful as possible for all our students.

The Team sits down to discuss and brainstorm these concerns, and possible solutions, in the spirit of collaboration and co-operation between parents and professionals. All students receiving help in our Learning Centre, or in other Special Education classes, have their issues discussed privately and confidentially. The Local School Team also looks at academic concerns across classrooms or across the school and advises teachers or parents on how to improve our effectiveness.

Special Education

Access to Special Education support is usually made available after a process that begins at the local school, through meetings of the Local School Team. These meetings always include the parents, whose

concerns, questions, and participation are paramount in planning appropriately for each and every child.

There are many Special Education programs available throughout the TDSB, and Garden offers three: the Learning Centre, for students who need consistent, monitored remediation for a short time (about two years) in order to fill in academic gaps; our Learning Disabilities Program, which is available for students identified through the IPRC (Identification, Placement and Review Committee) process as needing this type of support; and a Home School based Special Education half-time class that meets needs in a variety of areas (e.g., Autism, Mild Intellectual Disability, etc.). All Special Education students receive an individualized Education Plan. Teachers can also create a plan for students in the regular program, if that student has a program that is consistently modified to meet academic challenges.

Second Steps

Second Steps is a Conflict Resolution program that we teach at Garden in all grades. It has been developed to teach empathy, anger management, and conflict resolution strategies in an age-appropriate manner, using, among other teaching devices, language, photographs, and stories. Second Steps is part of our Safe School Program.

Anti-bullying programs are available through the TDB Guidance Services, and staff will be discussing problems and solutions for on-going support, over the next year.

School Advisory Council

(formerly the Parent-Teacher Association)

Garden Avenue Public School is supported by an active and enthusiastic School Council, which

provides a link for parents to the school and to the broader school system. School Councils are mandated by provincial legislation to offer input and advice to school administration.

Elections are held at the beginning of the year for positions on the School Council Executive. In addition, the Council welcomes as many parents as are interested to participate as Members at Large and attend the monthly Executive meetings when they can. Both the Principal and a teacher representative sit on the Council Executive.

Much of the focus of the School Council is on fundraising – annual events generally include, among other things, bake sales, a craft fair, a fundraising concert, and the ever-popular Fun Fair. Volunteers are always needed to help out with these activities.

Funds raised by the Council are put towards educational enhancements – additional classroom supplies, field trips, playground equipment, concerts – for our students. A questionnaire is sent home with parents at the beginning of the school year asking for input as to the use of these funds, and the Council makes every effort to address the priorities of the parents.

The Council sponsors information meetings and school community potlucks for all parents. It also produces a newsletter and provides an e-mail update about upcoming school events to interested parents.

Should parents need to be contacted directly to receive important information – in the past this has concerned heating problems in the school and staff work actions – the Council operates a Phone Tree, with the help of a parent volunteer from each class. Parents will be phoned only if they have given permission to be contacted directly by a parent volunteer from the Council.

The Council acts in an advisory capacity to the school administration. Each year parents from the Council advise the Principal on our School Staffing Committee, our Safety Committee, our Budget Committee, and help work on the School Improvement Plan. In addition, the School Council provides a point of contact between the school and the Toronto District School Board. A parent from the Council is invited to attend regular meetings with our trustee to get information and to provide parent input on matters of Board policy and practice.

The Council also initiates projects of benefit to the school, such as long-range planning for playground renewal or

school enhancements such as the Butterfly Garden. Issues that affect the community might also come to the School Council for discussion and parent input.

Many parents find that joining the School Council gives them a welcome opportunity to contribute, through their time and effort, to making our school the best environment for learning. The work of the Council also gives parents a better understanding of how our school and the broader education system work. And Council involvement sends a message to our children that we care. We look forward to seeing parents at our Council meetings.

Health Concerns

Does your child have medical problems? Be sure to let the school know.

From school start to school stop we always have a few students absent due to colds, fevers, and flu, among other ailments. Younger children, especially, can expect to catch a good many colds before their immune systems develop fully.

The school does not have a school nurse or a place for sick children to be kept when they are feverish, cranky, nauseated/vomiting, or just upset due to illness. If your child is ill, it is necessary to keep them at home. That way they can get the attention and care they need in order to get better, and the rest of us at school can avoid getting sick.

If children complain of earache, stomach ache, feeling hot or nauseated, please take their complaints seriously, and have them checked by a family doctor if necessary.

Children always seem to get ill at unexpected times, and working parents can expect to miss a few days of work each year in order to care for a sick child. If your

child comes to school ill or becomes ill at school we will endeavour to reach you or your emergency contact so that they can go home or to the doctor for the treatment that they may need.

Prescribed Medicines

If your child requires prescribed medication to be administered during the school day, this can be done only under the following conditions:

- provision for administration of this medication at school is essential for your child's attendance at school
- your child cannot administer his/her own medication
- the medication has been prescribed by your child's physician
- the medication cannot be administered outside school hours.

A written note with explicit instructions for the administration of the medication must be received by the Office staff. Only the Administrative Assistant or the Principal can administer prescribed medications. The

EPIPEN for anaphylaxis can be administered by other staff in cases of severe allergic responses in those students who have been identified by their parents, and for whom there is an EPIPEN provided in the school.

All medications are to be kept in the office (with the exception of the EPIPEN, which is carried personally). We ask that you teach your child the safety rules in regards to medications, prescribed or otherwise, including vitamin pills, etc. These should never be brought to school and should never be distributed to others in school.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is the extreme allergic response some people experience to very specific substances, such as peanuts, shellfish, or bee stings. This reaction can be life-threatening. If your child experiences this kind of allergic response, please contact the Principal, who will explain the TDSB policy in regards to anaphylaxis and the immediate injection of adrenaline through the EPIPEN. There may be students in your child's class who are severely allergic to a specific substance. If this is the case, you will be informed and asked to cooperate by not sending this item to school, as a safety precaution. In our case the substance in question is usually peanuts, or any item that might contain peanut products.

Immunization

The Department of Public Health is responsible for monitoring whether students are appropriately immunized according to the policies and regulations stipulated by the Province. Parents are expected to update this information regularly, as their children meet the immunization standards prescribed medically. If your child's records are found to be missing specific immunization requirements, you will be notified. This can lead ultimately to the student's suspension from school by the Chief Medical Officer of Health. In special circumstances, due to medically determined

allergies or belief systems, a waiver is available. Please contact Public Health officials with your specific questions in regards to immunization requirements.

Dental Clinics

An annual dental clinic at the school, in which all students are given a dental examination, is another service of the Department of Public Health. Parents are notified if follow-up dental care is recommended.

Lice and Other Catching Things

Pediculosis infestations are more commonly referred to as lice and nits – the small insects that live on the human head and multiply in great numbers. A louse enjoys nothing better than finding another head and beginning a new infestation, and then doing it again. Fall and summer seem to be times when the spread of these infestations is rampant, although winter hats and scarves also help spread the problem.

In years when the problem is particularly bad, Garden parents will be asked to join a Nit-Picking group three times a year (after each holiday) so that the whole school can be checked within a day or two. Lice, immune to some of the special shampoos available at the pharmacy, are as common now as the head cold – and as catching.

If students are found to have lice or nits, parents are contacted and asked to remove them and treat them immediately. Information is offered concerning the various ways in which the infestation can be treated. Careful and persistent treatment is necessary to halt the infestation. Students whose parents refuse to treat the infestation can be denied re-entry to the school. Children must be checked by the Principal and found to be free of nits and lice before they will be allowed to return to the school.

Check your own child's head weekly for signs of infestation. Should you find an infestation, please contact the office and let us know, so that we can warn other parents to check heads as well.

Homework Tips

Harris Cooper's Homework Tips for Parents

1. Be a stage manager. Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework. Make sure the needed materials (paper, pencils, dictionary, etc.) are available.
2. Be a motivator. Homework provides a great opportunity for you to tell your child how important school is. Be positive about homework. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
3. Be a role model. When your child does homework, don't sit and watch TV. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your chequebook. Help your child see that the skills they are practising are related to things you do as an adult.
4. Be a mentor. When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, do it. If homework is meant to be done alone, stay away. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong learning skills. Over-involvement can be a bad thing.

Harris Cooper's Homework Tips for Kids

1. Pick a good time to do homework. Try to do your homework at the same time every day – right after school, just before dinner, or right after dinner. Try not to leave homework until just before bed.
2. Remember to make time for long-term projects. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with classmates. If you need special stuff for a project, make sure to ask your parents to get it well in advance.
3. Spend more time on hard homework than easy homework. If you know what's easy and hard, do the hard work first. Take a short break if you are having trouble keeping your mind on an assignment.
4. If homework gets too hard, ask for help. If your parents are busy and you have an older brother or sister, ask them for help, or get your parents to ask them. If you haven't got an older brother or sister, and your parents can't help you, ask the teacher to help you find a "homework tutor". Only ask for help if you really need it.
5. Find a place that makes studying easy. Collect up all the books and supplies you'll need – and your snack – before you begin to work. Do your homework in the same place every day.

School Homework Tips for Students

1. At the beginning of the year, ask your teacher for a list of items you should have at your desk. It is a good idea to have pencils, pens, erasers, stapler and staples, pencil sharpener, math tools (if you need them), ruler, paper (all sorts), and art supplies. Also handy is a glue stick, coloured pencils or felt pens, coloured paper, binders or duo-tangs for projects, and so on. If you have a selection of things like this handy, you won't be looking for things or running to the store when you need to complete a project.
2. Make sure you have the necessary books for homework. You should own your own dictionary and thesaurus, and a French-English dictionary if you are old enough to study French. An up-to-date globe or atlas is handy as well as your textbooks, or resources for research (library books, address of websites, etc.).
3. You are never without homework. If the teacher has not assigned work, you can read daily and write a letter to someone (like your grandparents) or in your journal. As well, practising your spelling or number facts to improve upon your basic skills is a good way to improve your work.
4. Help someone else with their homework. You can help a younger brother or sister by listening to them read, and then they can listen to you. Parents usually love to hear you read as well. Share stories with your parents every day. You can write them down for your teacher and classmates at school as well.
5. Visit the Royal Ontario Museum; the Science Centre; the Zoo; the Art Gallery of Ontario; Colborne Lodge in High Park; Enoch Turner Schoolhouse; the first Post Office; Riverdale Farm, or any of the other interesting places to visit in Toronto. Share your visit by story and pictures with your classmates.