



ABERDEEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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Sally Zryd
Principal
Mark McVittie
Vice Principal
<http://aberdeen.sd73.bc.ca>



September 2017

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year!

The Aberdeen staff welcomes back to school all of the students and parents in our community as well as those families who have recently joined us. We hope everyone had a great summer holiday and is now ready to get back into the routines for the fall.

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, Sally Zryd, as your principal. As such, I would like to extend my sincere thanks in advance to the Aberdeen community for welcoming our new and returning staff and students. Aberdeen is a very special place for learning. I am excited to be a member of the Aberdeen team and I look forward to the prospects of a very productive and rewarding year. I would like to welcome our new Vice-Principal, Mark McVittie. He is joining us from Haldane Elementary School. Our helpful secretary, Stacey Flynn, who spends many hours assisting our students, staff, parents and community members is on medical leave this September but will return to us soon. Please have patience with our temporary staff and welcome her to our school. We also welcome "new-to-us" teachers, Ms. Poelzer, Mrs. Stafford, Mr. Hine, and two more to be announced. I know they will enjoy Aberdeen School as much as I do. We wish a fond farewell to Mrs. Steenson who has announced her retirement. We will miss her as she has been an integral, caring member of our team for many years.

We are expecting approximately 400 students and 35 staff members at the school this year and we hope to have all students placed in their classrooms as soon as possible. All student placements are temporary at this time and changes may have to be made. For the first day, students will return to their previous year's teacher or classroom. On the second day students will be in multi age groups learning about our behaviour expectations around the school. When we are ready, students will be told who their classroom teacher for this year will be. We appreciate your patience and understanding with this process.

We want you to know we appreciate your concerns and requests regarding your child's classroom placement and have listened. Unfortunately, it is impossible to accommodate all requests. The staff at Aberdeen have met and reviewed all requests. We have weighed the academic and social needs of individual students, as well as class composition carefully before assigning children to their classes. There will be no changes to these classes for the first couple of weeks so that teachers and students have time to adjust to their new groups. If after this time, you feel it is necessary to review your child's placement, please make an appointment with his/her teacher and us.

Thanks you for being a member of our Aberdeen family. We value your support and participation in our school.

Clan Group Start up - The Purpose of the Program

Thank you to Mrs. Steenson, Mrs. Elliott, Mr. McVittie and our grade 7 leaders for all their work to get us organized last June. We do this to:

- ◆ Introduce all of our students to our Code of Conduct (R & R) in the first week, as well as to provide leadership opportunities for our older students.
- ◆ Help our students all feel welcome to the school. With several new students coming to our school, Clan Groups are a way to get a feel for our school climate while developing connections with staff and students.
- ◆ Help students develop friendships across our school. Older students tend to look out for their younger Clan Group buddies, and younger students tend to feel more secure in knowing that their older Clan Group buddies aren't the "scary big kids".
- ◆ Introduce our students to all of our staff and parent supervisors in the first week. This allows students of all ages to become familiar with the supervising adults who they can turn to when assistance is needed. It also allows the adults to make a connection with students around the school that they may not typically see on a day-to-day basis.
- ◆ Build a strong community spirit into our school.
- ◆ Align with the BC curriculum goals. With the new BC Education Plan making its way to the forefront, there is an increasing focus on students' social emotional learning, specifically through Personal Responsibility and Social Responsibility.

Class Placement Process

All students are placed in classrooms, temporarily, for the first week. The staff works hard in developing placements for students. Factors such as male/female ratio, academic groupings, independence level, class size regulations, siblings and parent requests are given consideration. Those parents who contacted the school in the spring have had their request considered, but in the final analysis, **placement of children is the school's responsibility.**

Requests are often made based on rumour and not first hand knowledge. Each year the staff wrestles with placement decisions and, it is usually the case that 99% of placements are fine. Worries that might seem enormous during the first few days of school usually disappear once classroom programs and relationships have been established. As parents, you can do a lot to dispel your child's insecurities about this by your encouragement and support. Every year is an opportunity to make new friends and experience different learning environments. So the tears and fears that may take place in the first few days are only temporary, soon to be replaced by excitement and enthusiasm!

Why are there split grades or multi-aged classrooms? Are straight classes superior to split classes?

Staff is assigned to our school, based on projected enrollment, and is not enough for each grade to be taught as a straight grade. The number of students does not equal the size of classes as determined by the teachers' collective agreement, for class size, so we therefore will have split classes where necessary. There is no qualitative difference between split and straight classes. They are more work for the staff. The B.C. curriculum is taught as directed by the Ministry of Education. In most split class situations a combined curriculum is presented. The younger students in the class will not hinder older students nor will the younger students gain any more advantage by being with the older students. The upper grades of split classes are NOT for lower ability students and vice versa. Please note as well that our Montessori classrooms are structured according to a multi-aged grouping philosophy.

Our population changes between June and September. We try to have the fewest possible disruptions for students. Once numbers have been confirmed and staffing is finalized, we will move the students to their class. This is **usually** completed before the end of the first week.

Ways that Parents Can Support Teachers

I have included this article before, but I think it is worthwhile reprinting it, especially as how it pertains to building relationships in our school community. Teachers at Aberdeen are committed to helping each and every student be the best they can be. We want to work together with parents to make it a real team effort. Below are a few suggestions that you, as parents, can use to help us and your child have a successful school year:

Get both sides of the story – About 90% of all problems between parents and teachers can be solved by giving each other a chance to tell their side of the story. Children will often give an account of what happened in a way that avoids placing any negative light on themselves, (I can certainly remember that!) and this can lead to big misunderstandings. As a parent, it is hard not to believe every word your child says and to take his or her word for fact, but just remember that before becoming upset or displeased with a teacher you should give that individual the opportunity to tell the story from their perspective. Never jump to conclusions or make assumptions!

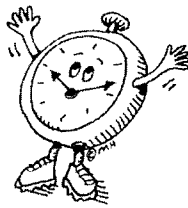
Be patient – Beginning a new school year with a new teacher and harder standards is difficult for children. Often they will complain that the work is too hard, that they are given too much homework, or that the teacher isn't fair. Sometimes when they say they don't like a new teacher, it really translates to the fact that they don't like having to do harder work than they did the year before. Please bear with the teacher over the first few weeks and take any complaints from your child with a grain of salt. After all, the most profound learning takes place when we are challenged and placed out of our comfort zone.

Avoid negativity in the home – There are times when you may be upset with your child's teacher. When this happens, I would ask that parents deal directly with the teacher and avoid speaking about the matter in a negative way in front of their children. If a parent shows disrespect for the teacher at home, the child will feel that she or he has the right to show the same disrespect for the teacher in the classroom. I will say as well that if you do have an issue with your child's teacher and call me to discuss it, in most cases I will refer you right back to the teacher, where most issues can be resolved in a respectful manner (and almost always better when it's done face to face!). If you have made an attempt to handle the matter with the teacher and no progress is made, then you are welcome to set up a meeting with the principal.

Contact teachers during appropriate times – Please do not show up at your child's classroom unexpected to have a discussion. Teachers love to have parents visit the school, sit in during lessons, and talk with them about their child's performance. All of those things, however, should be scheduled. Teachers have enough on their plates, and when they are in the middle of a lesson they have worked extremely hard to prepare and all of the students are paying attention, it is distracting to have to go into the hall to talk with someone who has shown up out of the blue. If you do have an emergency where you need to pick up or speak with your child, please come to the office first.

DAILY SCHEDULE

- 8:20 am Students can enter the school.
There is no supervision before 8:20.
- 8:30 am Morning classes commence.
- 10:20 am Recess, students go outside.
- 10:35 am Recess ends & students return to class.
- 12:15 pm Lunch - students may eat their lunch in their classroom or go home for lunch.
- 12:30 pm Students may finish eating; go outside or to other noon hour activities.
- 1:15 pm Afternoon classes commence.
- 2:30 pm Dismissal for the day.



We will let you know if any adjustments are made to this schedule. At the beginning of the school year, a ton of work goes into creating a timetable for teachers and classes that incorporates all of the different programs that are happening within the school. This will be a work in progress for the first couple of weeks.

I would like to remind everyone of our **Litter-less Lunch policy**. Students should be taking home all recyclable containers and materials and are strongly encouraged to bring reusable containers for lunch items, to reduce the amount of litter. Thanks for your support with that!

Bike, Scooters, and other Fun Things



Many of our students make their way to and from school using wheeled forms transportation. A reminder that students are expected to use and store their bikes and/or scooters appropriately. Students are reminded that these items are not to be used on the school grounds between 8:00 – 3:30 for safety reasons.



PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

One very important group at each school is the PAC. We need you to continue to support this organization. The PAC is an advisory council, a fund-raiser, and a supporter of the school.

All parents are automatically members of PAC and are invited to the PAC meetings. Meetings are usually held the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the library.

School Photo Day

Please mark **September 28th** on your calendar as this year's School Photo Day. Class photos will be taken in the spring along with the School Panorama

Terry Fox Run/Walk

Aberdeen's annual Terry Fox Run will take place on Friday, September 29th. We will start the event with warm-up activities at 11 am followed by the run/walk. Everyone is welcome to join in. We will be sending home information sheets with your child as we strive to do our part for Cancer Research. See you there!!

COMMUNICATION

We work to update our **website, synvoice messages and facebook page** when news needs to be shared.

In order to continue to economize and be environmentally friendly, with the exception of this first newsletter, we will continue to send out all news electronically this year.

*If you do not receive this email today, please let Ms Robinson know at the office (sflynnsd73.bc.ca). It will be posted on our school website <http://aberdeen.sd73.bc.ca/>.

After School Plans

Please ensure that your child knows his/her after school schedule before leaving for school in the morning. We are happy to occasionally deliver messages to the students; however, there are approximately 400 students attending Aberdeen. We do not permit students to use the office phones to make after school plans with classmates.

Students may use **cell phones** to communicate with parents before or after school, but no cell phone usage of any kind is permitted during the school day unless specific permission is granted by your child's teacher. These devices must be stored away securely, and at the student's own risk. Please review with your child the appropriate times to use his or her cell phone. Be mindful that you are not texting your child during school hours as he or she is not permitted to check for texts during school hours. If you have a message that cannot wait until after school, please call the school office and a message will be delivered to your child.



PARKING PICK UP AND DROP OFF

In order to keep your child safe at school, please be mindful of the following:

- ◆ Please do not park in "NO PARKING" zones.
- ◆ Please drop off and pick up your children in the appropriate areas:
- ◆ Use the lower parking lot whenever possible.
- ◆ Use the designated "Pick Up / Drop Off" zone for *briefly* loading and unloading children. You cannot park in this area. It is greatly appreciated when you do this as quickly as possible, as there are many vehicles waiting to do the same thing.
- ◆ Please make arrangements with your child so that they will be ready and waiting in the pick-up zone when you arrive. My advice is that you arrive around 2:40 so that there will be little to no wait time involved. Thanks for your cooperation!

WANTED: NOON HOUR SUPERVISORS!



We are in need of parents for this **important** position. You will receive an honorarium of \$10/hr. Even if you can only help out one or two days a week, please contact me or Ms. Flynn at the office. We would like to put together a team as soon as possible. This is a rewarding job; an opportunity to spend time with wonderful children and contribute to a positive, safe, and dynamic school environment. I know some of you helped out in this capacity last year, which was greatly appreciated. Special thanks to Holly Arnold, who organizes a schedule for each noon hour. The need for your help is just as profound every year. This does not have to be a five-day commitment, either. If you only have one or two noon hours a week that you have available and want to help, we will be thrilled to

VOLUNTEER DRIVER FORMS

If you are planning on assisting in driving students we will require a Volunteer Driver form to be completed. Please pick it up at the office and bring in your vehicle insurance to verify with the completed form.



Volleyball/Tripleball Already?

Yes... even though volleyball is still a few weeks away, we want to secure coaches for our upcoming season. Are you a coach or do you know somebody in the community who coaches? We would love to have you work with our intermediate students! Please call or email Mr. McVittie (mmcvittie@sd73.bc.ca) if you can help.

One to One Reading Program

Volunteer opportunity for grandparents, students and community members!

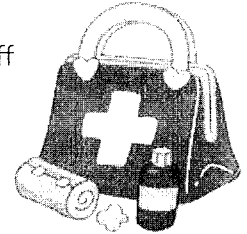
Do you like to read with children? We have a training session at the Henry Grube Centre for anyone interested in volunteering for this valuable program.

Monday, September 25th, 9 am – 12 noon

Please email our new volunteer coordinator: Claudia Dempster Ciriani (climbhigh55@hotmail.com) for more information.

Medical Alerts & Administration of Medication

Parents, please remember that it is your responsibility to let the school know if your child has a serious health condition or requires medication while at school. School district personnel are **not permitted** to administer medication to students unless specifically authorized to do so by a Doctor. Please ensure you obtain a form/s from us that authorize the school to administer a prescription or identify the steps to take in a medical emergency. All medication must be clearly labelled with your child's name, the medications name and given to the teacher as soon as the classes begin for the day. School staff permitted to administer non-prescription drugs (ie: aspirin) at any time.



2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR

September:

- 4 Statutory Holiday
- 22 Non-Instructional Day

October:

- 11 Parent -Teacher interviews
- 9 Statutory Holiday
- 20 Non-Instructional Day

November:

- 13 Statutory Holiday

December:

- 4 Non-Instructional Day
- 25-5 Winter Break

January:

February:

- 12 Statutory Holiday
- 22-23 Non-Instructional Days

March:

- 19-23 Spring Break
- 30 Good Friday

April:

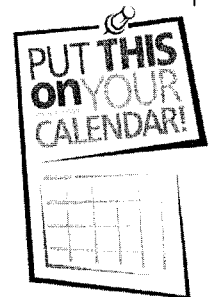
- 2 Easter
- 24 Non-Instructional Day

May:

- 18 Non-Instructional Day
- 21 Statutory Holiday

June:

- 29 Students' Last Day
(12:00 Dismissal)





Aberdeen Elementary School Supply Costs for 2017-2018

School District 73 offers a program that allows families to purchase their child's school supplies directly through their school at a real saving. This is a once a year charge – payable on or before **Friday, September 21st** - which will ensure you child will always be equipped with the proper materials he/she needs in order to participate in their daily lessons. The cost for the school year is:

Grades K- 3	= \$ 35.00	(includes agenda)
Grade 4 – 7	= \$ 50.00	(includes agenda)

In addition, all of our students will be attending several events through the year. The cost for these performances is \$15.00 per student. Several teachers will be buying workbooks (\$5.00) that may be kept by the child.

See your teacher's newsletter.

2017 SCHOOL SUPPLIES PAYMENT

You may submit one payment, however please use one form per child.

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

Teacher Name: _____

Please print information. Refer to fees applicable to your child's grade level listed above. If issuing one cheque for all of your children attending Aberdeen Elementary, ensure **each child's payment invoice** is included along with your payment in a sealed envelope. Cheques are to be made out to Aberdeen Elementary. Thank you!!

School Supplies (circle applicable fee)

K-Gr 3 \$35.00

Gr. 4-7 \$50.00

Please have all student fees Professional **Arts Starts Series** + **\$ 15.00**
paid by Friday, September 21st

Several teachers will be buying workbooks that may be kept by the child.

See your teacher's newsletter.

Additional workbook \$5.00

Thank you!

TOTAL \$ _____.

This portion will be stamped "PAID" and returned as your receipt