

This agenda belongs to:

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School Handbook

Highpoint Community School

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School Profile

Highpoint Community School is a Grade 4 to 8 school located in the village of Dundalk, Ontario. The school is a converted high school built in 1953. Major renovations were undertaken during the 1989 school year. Through the mid 1990s portable classrooms were added to address the needs resulting from increased enrolment. In 2001 a new six-room addition was added to the school to address the ever growing needs of the community.

The school currently serves approximately 250 students. Special education programs have a strong emphasis on inclusion. Fifteen percent of our families come from homes where the first language is not English.

School priorities focus on school community well-being, quality instruction, parent engagement and the responsible stewardship of resources. The staff and school community value and support a variety of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities including performing arts, and competitive sports teams.

School Community Council

The schools in Dundalk share an active School Community Council. The role and purpose of the council is always changing to fit the needs of our community. We urge you to join this group as a way to get involved with the school and your child's education. Information regarding SCC meetings will appear in school newsletters.



Balanced Day Schedule

The entry bell rings at 9:00. Pupils who **arrive after 9:00 must report to the office.**

9:00Entry
9:00-11:10Instructional Block
11:10-11:50 Nutrition/Activity Break
11:50- 1:20Instructional Block
1:20-2:00 Nutrition/Activity Break
2:00-3:20Instructional Block
3:20Dismissal

Safe Arrival/Dismissal Program

The Safe Arrival/Dismissal Program is a partnership between home and school to ensure your child's safety. Could you please help us by:

1. **Reporting your child's absence/lateness** by contacting the school at 519-923-2336.
2. **Ensuring that the school has current phone numbers for home, work, cell phones and a local emergency contact.**
3. Ensuring that your emergency contact knows that you have given the school their number.
4. In the event of inclement weather, contact the school if your child walks and will not be attending school.
5. Let the school know before 3:00 pm if your child will not be taking the bus home. We will make every attempt to contact a parent/guardian should a child be absent without explanation.

Nutrition Breaks

In order to ensure student safety, we ask parents to clearly communicate changes to your child's routine. Students are expected to stay at school for nutrition breaks. If you live close to the school and would like your child to go home for lunch please provide a note indicating your child's schedule (i.e., Johnny will eat at home first nutrition break every day). **Blanket notes that indicate a student can leave whenever he/she would like are no longer accepted**, as this practice does not allow us to adequately track our students' whereabouts. **Students must sign in and out at the office.**

Students in grades 6 to 8 may periodically choose to go downtown for lunch during first nutrition break. Students require written permission for each occurrence. **Students must sign in and out at the office.** Again the practice of blanket notes is being discontinued. Please be aware that you are responsible for knowing where your children are when they are away from school at the break time.

Home Time & Buses

Dismissal is 3:20 for both walkers and bus students.

Children who will not be going home the usual way need a note from their parent/guardian outlining the changes. Students are not permitted to ride buses other than the one to which they have been assigned.



Volunteers

We always welcome volunteers in the school. Some prefer to be in their own child's classroom; others wish to avoid that room. Some come several times a week; others once a month. Some bring special skills; others are much appreciated extra hands for the teacher. Please consider your personal timetable and think about the possibility of becoming a volunteer.

Please note that as stated in School Board policy, a police check is required when volunteers are working on their own with children. Examples of this would be when a volunteer withdraws a student from the classroom to work with them or when a volunteer is responsible for a group of students on a field trip, which is not being directly supervised by a staff member.

Parental Involvement

As a school community we are committed to developing a strong home and school

relationship. Homeroom teachers will be sending you a class newsletter regularly so that you are aware of the components of your child's educational program. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to talk with the teacher, either by phone or by making an appointment for a visit.

Peanut Allergy – URGENT MESSAGE

We have several students who have a **severe** allergy to peanuts, other nuts and products made from nuts. Students who have severe allergies to such foods are exposed to health risks that could be life-threatening if peanut products are consumed in their environment. We are attempting to take every precaution to ensure that the safety and health of these students are not jeopardized. We need your help and support. We are asking our students and staff to do without peanut butter and nut products during their time at school. Highpoint Community School must be a **Nut Free Zone**. *Thank you for your co-operation.*



Medication

No child should bring medication to school unless the office has been notified and the appropriate forms have been completed. All medication is stored in a secure location and a staff member supervises its administration. Exceptions to this practise are made, when for safety reasons the student needs to have their medication with them at all time (ie. puffers, epipens). Errors in administering medication can have serious consequences therefore medication must come in its original packaging and parents will be asked to complete the Board form, which outlines the following information:

- **the name/type of medication**
- **the dosage/amount to be given**
- **the time to administer the medication.**

If information is missing or incomplete, the medication cannot be administered at school.

Food Items

From time to time there may be food items offered for sale at school. The sale of these items provides an opportunity for children to have a treat or an alternative to their regular lunch. The proceeds from the sales support school activities. The purchase of these items is entirely voluntary. Sales are offered throughout the year so that families may make purchases whenever it suits their personal schedules.

Please remind your children of their allergies. We assume our students to be fully aware of what they are able and unable to eat.

Notes to Remain Indoors

Usually, students who are not well enough to go outside are not well enough to be at school and it is often best that they remain at home until they have fully recovered. However, we understand that there are circumstances for which going outside for recess might pose a health or safety risk (i.e. broken leg, extreme asthma.) In such cases we ask that you provide a written request for your child to stay inside. Your child will be expected to sit quietly at the office during recess. We may require a note from their physician explaining the situation, if it is not self-evident.

School Insurance

At the start of the school year each pupil is given an insurance envelope for your consideration. Insurance of this type provides good coverage for active youth. This is an inexpensive but sometimes valuable item to purchase. Envelopes are to be mailed directly to the company. Please do **NOT** return them to the school. All students participating in extra-curricular sports are especially encouraged to purchase this insurance.

Homework

The Ontario Curriculum has expectations for all grades and all subject areas. Some form of homework may be necessary for all students. It is beneficial to a student when his/her parents show interest in the homework activity. All curriculum documents discuss the importance of parental involvement with the process. Studies show that students are more successful when their parents are aware of the components of their academic program. Usually, in elementary school,

homework is not extensive. The exception is when activities have not been completed during the day at school. Communication with your child's teacher will assist you if you have any questions.

Dress Code

We ask all students to continue to wear clothing that is appropriate for an elementary school setting. It is important that we maintain a safe and respectful learning and teaching environment. Clothing which is suitable for the beach may not be suitable in a school setting. We appreciate your support as we work together to assist students to develop good judgement when choosing attire that is appropriate for their settings. School should be considered a public workplace and as such students should dress in a manner that is conducive to both their learning and the learning of others. Bare midriffs, bare backs, short shorts, low cut shirts, clothing that reveals underwear, offensive T-shirt slogans or those advertising smoking, drugs or alcohol are not appropriate for a school setting. Any questionable items will be addressed by school administration.

In an effort to develop appropriate workplace etiquette students are asked to remove hats and visors as they enter the building and leave them in their lockers. Coats are not to be worn in classrooms.

To ensure safety, students must have proper gym clothing (running shoes, T-shirts, shorts/jogging pants) in order to participate fully in the Phys. Ed. program.

Developing good hygiene is an important part of growing up for students of this age. Please see that your child has access to stick-deodorant at school, and to other personal health care products as required.

Protective Eye Wear

Due to mandated safety regulations all students must wear safety goggles in order to play badminton at school. The school provides these for student use. Families may purchase their own safety glasses if they wish. The protective eye gear must meet ASTM F803 standards. Students may also use protective eye wear when playing floor hockey.



Bicycles

Bike racks are provided for our students to use. Students must walk their bike through the school yard to the bike racks. Students are not permitted to play in the area of the racks. A bike should not be left without a lock or at the school overnight. The school cannot be held accountable for lost or stolen bicycles.

For safety reasons, roller blades, scooters and skateboards need to be stored in the office during the day, if they are brought to school.

If your child plans to ride his/her bike to school, please make sure that he/she wears a helmet and can safely manage the bike in traffic while obeying all the rules of the road.

Child Abuse

The Child Welfare Act clearly makes it the duty of each school principal to inform all parents and staff members of the policy statement regarding suspected child abuse. Any staff member who has reasonable grounds to suspect abuse **must** inform the Children's Aid Society of their concerns.

Lost and Found

The lost and found is located at the "T" in the front foyer. Please encourage your child to check the lost and found frequently as all items in the Lost and Found will be donated to a charity at the beginning of each holiday break. Parents are welcome to stop in and look through the Lost and Found.

Supervision

Supervision begins at 8:25 a.m. for bus students.

Our walkers / bikers are urged to arrive at no earlier than 8:45am.

Staff members are on duty during nutrition breaks. At the end of the school day, there is no supervision after the students leave the property to go home or board the bus. Walkers are to go directly home when dismissed.

Traffic at School



Safety is a prime concern of ours, and we are very concerned when cars and buses are trying to share our parking lots. We ask that, if you

are dropping a student off or picking one up after school, you be sure not to block the way of buses. Our buses are on an interlocking schedule with other schools and even a small delay can be significant for them. We ask that you do **not** drive vehicles onto the paved playground area; we wish to avoid accidents at all times.

Freedom of Information

We like to recognize your child in as many ways as possible. Therefore, from time to time, we may post their best work in the hallways and classrooms, print their best efforts in the newspaper, publish a photograph of children engaging in some activity at school, enter work in a competition, or simply announce their birthday. **If you do not wish your child to be acknowledged in any of these ways, please contact us in writing with the specifics.**

Respect for Property

Students in our school are expected to respect the property of others, whether it is something that belongs to a classmate or the school. If students borrow library books, textbooks or other materials and they are lost or damaged, we expect the item(s) to be replaced. Should a student be responsible for damage or vandalism of an intentional manner either at school or on the buses, financial sanctions will be imposed.

Head Lice (Pediculosis)

If nits/lice are detected, parents of the child affected as well as parents of the other children in the class, will be notified. Each infested child shall be screened before returning to class.

We encourage parents to routinely check their child's head for nits/lice and be sure treatment is made before returning to school to prevent the spread.

Visitors to the School

The school policy is to encourage members of the community to come and see our school in session. This is the best way to gain an understanding of the programs and learning experiences offered to our students.

For the safety of our students, we insist that all visitors check in at the office before visiting the school or playground. If you wish to visit a classroom, please contact us in advance. Please do not feel that you need an open house or a special event to bring you to the school. You are welcome anytime.

Personal Technology Expectations

Parents should be very cautious when allowing their child to bring personal technology (i.e., phones, ipads) to school. **The school will not take responsibility for the safe keeping of such items. We cannot ensure that items will not be broken or stolen.**

Personal technology may only be used for instructional use under the supervision and with the permission of a teacher. Limiting the unsupervised use of phones lessens the opportunity for cyber bullying while at school, and it mitigates privacy issues for other students.



There are telephones in every classroom at our school and our office staff is able to receive calls and ensure that a call-back or that a message gets relayed to a student.

Failure to follow these expectations:

If a cell phone, camera or similar device is being used without permission it will be taken by staff and kept at the office until the end of the day. If taken a second time, parents will be asked to come and retrieve them.

Any device brought to school is the responsibility of the student.

Telephone Use

School offices are very busy places. Student use of the telephone will be limited to “must call” situations only.



Students will require a teacher’s permission to

use the telephone. We encourage students to take responsibility for their possessions thus eliminating the need to call home for forgotten items. If a student is ill a call will be placed by a school staff member.

Please do not call to speak to your child, leave a message with the office manager.

As in all situations we realize that unforeseen circumstances may arise and we will deal with these on an individual basis. Students will not be allowed to use the telephones for arranging social activities.

Cash Online

We encourage you to sign up for CASH ONLINE. This will allow you to pay for all school events without your child bringing money to school. For students who do carry money to school, please teach your child to bring only what is necessary, and to take good care of it.

Items from Home

Pupils are asked to leave valuable possessions such as gaming systems, iphones/ipods, and expensive toys at home. If it is necessary to bring valuables, the pupil is asked to leave the items at the office for safekeeping.

Students should not leave valuable items in their lockers or in a school bag or desk. They should not bring anything they cannot afford to lose. The school cannot be responsible for items from home.

Any sports equipment brought from home such as ball gloves, skipping ropes, and soccer balls should be well marked with the pupil’s name. For safety reasons, pupils are not allowed to bring baseballs and bats, small hard rubber balls, lacrosse sticks, or hockey sticks to school.

Dangerous objects such as knives, slingshots and guns of any kind are not to be brought to school for any reason. Serious consequences will result if any items such as these are brought to school.

From time to time students have brought DVD and/or video tapes to school to show to their class. Copyright laws have become very strict, and only DVDs/videos with “Public Performance Rights” may be shown in school. We ask you not to send other DVDs/videos to school.

Due to health and safety reasons, pets should not be brought to school. A school visit causes stress to the animal and potential allergic reactions for students. From time to time, a teacher may make arrangements for a short visit after due attention has been made to health concerns. Thank you for your help in this regard.

Bus Cancellations

If the weather is such that it is unsafe for the buses to run, they will be cancelled.

- Announcements of bus cancellations can be heard in the morning on the following stations: CKNX (101.7), HOT (103.5), CFOS/K (106.5).
- **A link has been added to the school website (www.hpe.bwdsb.on.ca) that will allow you to access bussing information on-line.**
- If buses are cancelled the school usually remains open for students who can get there safely.
- If buses are cancelled in the morning they will not run in the afternoon, regardless of the weather.
- Buses will not be sent home early.

The school will only be closed if it is unsafe for walkers to get to school or if there are not enough staff to adequately supervise the students. If a decision to close the school is made in the early morning it will be announced on the radio, if the decision is made later, parents of students who are at the school will be contacted so that they can make arrangements to pick up their child.

Programming is provided on a no bus day, but due to the number absences it will not be a typical school day.

On the very rarest of occasions, it may not be possible to send pupils home from outside of Dundalk. In such a circumstance, you will be asked to let us know where your child should go. If you do not know anyone in Dundalk, you will be asked to give the Principal permission to find suitable accommodation.

School Code of Conduct

As a school community we developed a new code of conduct, during the 2015-2016 school year. The following represents the collective ideas of students and school staff.

We are Better Together

(Our Code of Conduct)

We all have feelings.

We respect everyone. We treat others the way we want to be treated.

We celebrate our differences.

We are inclusive. We listen.

We all want to be safe at school.

We make smart decisions.

We all share the school and resources within.

We treat them with care.

We are the future.

We do our best.

We all work in the same space.

We show respect by dressing to learn.

We learn better as a team.

We are polite.

We are a part of a community.

We stand together.

All school members must also follow the Standards of Behaviour outlined in the Ontario Code of Conduct.

All members of the school community must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas and their opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times and especially when there is a disagreement;
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability;
- respect the rights of others;
- show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others;
- take appropriate measures to help

those in need;

- seek assistance from a member of the school's staff, if necessary to resolve conflict peacefully;
- respect all members of the school community, especially persons in positions of authority;
- respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching;
- not swear at teacher or at another person in a position of authority.

Safety

All members of the school community must not:

- engage in bullying behaviours;
- commit sexual assault;
- traffic weapons or illegal drugs;
- give alcohol to a minor;
- commit robbery;
- be in possession of any weapon, including firearms;
- use any object to threaten or intimidate another person;
- cause injury to any person with an object
- be in possession of, or be under the influence of or provide others with alcohol or illegal drugs;
- inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person;
- engage in hate propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias;
- commit and act of vandalism that causes damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school

Our expectation is that each student will follow the code of conduct, will co-operate with staff and other students, will behave in a way that is safe for everybody and will accept responsibility for all actions.

Yard Behaviour

Safety at school is a concern for everyone. The school staff is constantly looking at ways to make sure that students are safe at all times.

We put an emphasis on playground behaviour and safety.

The following behaviours are considered inappropriate and will result in disciplinary action:

1. aggressive behaviour (including play fighting)
2. defiance or rudeness to staff
3. swearing or inappropriate language

Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

As noted in its strategic plan, the Bluewater District School Board is committed to ensuring the well-being of students and staff in a safe supportive environment for teaching, learning and working

Creating both an emotionally and physically safe environment requires not only high behavioural expectations but also opportunities for students to learn and grow from their mistakes.

Discipline strategies utilized at Highpoint community school focus on prevention, intervention, restoration of relationships and consequences that promote positive student behaviour.

When working with students to correct instances of misbehaviour the underlying cause of the behaviour is considered in order to identify appropriate next steps. If after given the opportunity a student does not demonstrate improved behaviour severity of consequences may increase up to and including suspension. It is of utmost importance to the school staff that a positive school climate is maintained where all children attend school without concern for their physical or emotional well-being.