

Dear Queen Elizabeth Elementary School Community,

Now into the third week of our return to school, I wanted to take an opportunity to thank our entire school community for your efforts to follow our new protocols and support the school's efforts to ensure safety for all of us. We appreciate that the changes to our process this school year are significant, and we thank you for your patience and understanding as we all adjust to the new routines and expectations.

Important Changes:

Health Check – Perhaps the most important change is the requirement to complete a daily health check with your family before attending school. Any person that is accessing the school grounds – caregiver or student - needs to ensure that they are not exhibiting any symptoms of illness before doing so. While this isn't necessarily a change in our practice, we can all appreciate that it is of the utmost importance now and we need your diligence to ensure it is done daily. If a child presents symptoms at school, we will contact parents immediately. While we will work through situations with you where your child may be symptomatic for reasons related to allergies or another condition, we will expect that the child be picked up and go home until they are symptom free or we can determine the symptoms are not a cause for concern.

The Health Check Document has had some revisions by the Provincial Health Office and the new form is attached here for your reference. Your child has brought home a paper copy this week as well.

Drop off and Pick up – We have new lineup locations and are expecting caregivers to distance outside of the school grounds when dropping off and picking up children. We encourage parents to wear masks when they are not able to distance as we feel it sets a good example for our children to follow and makes us all feel more comfortable. We feel drop off and pick up has gone very smoothly and appreciate your continued support here. There is always room for improvement, and we ask that you please make the daily effort to ensure you are distanced from other family groupings at these busy times.

Late Arrivals/Late Pick Ups: Please make every effort to arrive each morning for the 8:50 AM warning bell at your child's lineup area. Classes will make their way in at or just before the 8:55 AM bell to begin instruction. Late arrivals that miss their class lineup will need to come to the front of the school and remain in distanced groups until office staff are able to assist you. This is time consuming and while we understand that lateness does occur we ask that you make every effort to arrive to school on time daily. It is important for your child's learning and helps them start the day right. If you are late to pick up your child at dismissal bell 3:00 PM, they will be brought to the gymnasium where they will be supervised until caregivers arrive. Again this is a task we need to manage and while we understand that lateness will occur your effort to pick up your child on time consistently is very much appreciated.

Lunches and Water bottles – Thank you for ensuring your child has a filled water bottle and a packed lunch with them each day when they arrive and not dropping off food or other items at other times throughout the day. Understandably a lunch may be forgotten from time to time and we are able to support that with a variety of food items available in the office. Supervisors will note if a child does not have a lunch or the child may communicate it to teachers/supervisors as well and we will follow up.

Recess and Lunch – Our split recess and lunch breaks have gone very well. Our student population is divided in half and students remain in their own specific play areas. Students are adjusting to the expectations that although strict distancing is not required for children outside, they need to avoid contact and make different play choices at times, such as not playing tag in the traditional way.

We have all had to make many changes in our lives this year, and while it has certainly been challenging to adjust to a very different school year, I am very proud of our community for stepping up and doing what is necessary to keep families safe.

Important Reminders:

Traffic - I want to thank families again for your efforts to make the streets surrounding our school safer. It has definitely improved, although a new school year has brought back some of our old, bad habits. Please be reminded that there is a clearly posted NO STOPPING zone at the junction of Carter and Salter Street. This is our most challenging area, as the road narrows here and any vehicles parked in the no stopping zone impedes two-way traffic. This results in delays and unsafe conditions for drivers and pedestrians alike. Drop off parking is limited in front of the school, and this is purposeful. We don't want more cars in front of the school, and we ask that you leave early, park further away on Salter or other side Streets and walk the short distance to your class lineups each day.

South Side Salter Street Drop Offs – this is a serious concern to drop off your child and have them cross Salter independently. Salter is busy at these times and this practice is very dangerous. Please do not drop your child off this way.

U-turns - Please do not perform U –turns on Salter. It causes delays and is not necessary. Take the extra time to drive down a side street and turn properly.

School Roundabout and Staff Parking Lot – Parents are welcome to use the roundabout and drop off students on the curb side, but we ask that you do not park in the staff lot at drop off and pick up times unless using the handicapped zone. At times there may be available spots, but they are needed for our staff and the act of backing out of spots at these busy times interrupts the flow of traffic through the roundabout.

Staff Professional Day – A reminder that on Monday, September 28th we have a Professional Development Day and school will not be in session.

Picture Day – Individual Class Photo Day, Friday, September 25th. In the past we have had families bring children that are ill to picture day as they are concerned they will miss the photos – please keep your children home if ill, you will have a second opportunity on picture retake day November 3rd.

Thank you again for the successful start to another school year. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

I can be reached directly at pmanville@sd40.bc.ca

Thank you

P. Manville
Principal