



Holy Family School

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Newsletter # 1

www.dpcdsb.org/HOFAM

September 2011

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A Blessing for a New School Year

**Dear God, as a new school year begins,
fill the hearts of our children with an eagerness
to learn
about the world you have created,
about themselves, and, most of all, about You.**

**Bless our teachers with the gifts
of wisdom and patience,
that they may help their students find the truth.**

**Give our parents generous hearts, to support,
encourage and love their children.**

**Help us all to work together
to form a community of learning,
that teaches not only skills for material success
but all that we need to live our faith fully in this
world.**

Welcome to Holy Family

On behalf of the entire school staff, I would like to welcome all students and their parents back to Holy Family. A special welcome to the many new families and staff members who have joined the Holy Family community this year. We welcome in particular Ms. Venditti and Mr. Stern to our teaching staff. I am sure you will find our school to be a caring and supportive community.

I hope that you and your family had a restful and enjoyable summer holiday. I am sure that all students are energized and excited about the start of a brand new school year.

School staff have been working hard to prepare for our school opening. Thank you to the teaching and secretarial staff who have been preparing their areas for opening day. We thank our custodial staff who have worked hard throughout the summer to make our school a clean and safe environment. A very special thank you to Mrs. Mihevc and Mrs. Santarossa for helping to maintain and beautify our gardens over the summer holidays.

We kindly ask that you take a few moments to read through this important newsletter.

We look forward to a positive and productive year.

C. Howard

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Professional Activity Day – September 16, 2011

There will be no school for students on Friday, September 17th, 2011. Teachers will be involved in faith and school organizational activities on that day.

School Hours



9:00 a.m. – Yard Supervision begins
9:15 a.m. – Morning Classes begin
11:20 – 11:35 a.m. – Recess Break
12:15 p.m. – Lunch Break begins
1:15 p.m. – Afternoon Classes begin
2:25 – 2:40 p.m. – Recess Break
3:45 p.m. – Dismissal

A B Cs Of Student Success

A is for ATTENDANCE.

Attendance is a critical factor in any child's school success. Children should attend school every day, except in cases of illness or emergency. It is impossible to replace the learning that happens on any school day with make-up work. Regular attendance and promptness are good habits that are expected and appreciated at all levels of schooling *and* in the workplace. This year, make school a priority in your household. Commit to excellence in attendance. Your child's future depends on it!

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Attendance Verification

In the interest of your child's safety, it is very important to inform us if your child will be late or absent from school. To record your child's absence, please call the school at (905) 857-1300. Messages can be left on the school attendance line at any time.

Please leave the following information:

- 1) Your child's name
- 2) Your child's teacher
- 3) Date and time of absence
- 4) Reason and duration of absence

Lunch Drop Off

Please let your child know before coming to school that you will be bringing their lunch to school. You may drop off your child's lunch at the lunch table in the main office. Please write their name and teacher. We will not be calling classrooms during instructional time to notify students about lunches at the office. Thank you for your cooperation.



Open House – BBQ September 27, 2011

Holy Family School will be hosting a BBQ and Open House on Tuesday, September 27th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. All parents are invited to come visit the school with their child(ren). More information about this special event will be sent home in the coming weeks.

Use of the School Phone



As you can imagine, the school is a very busy place. We would request that parents make arrangements with your children prior to coming to school about home time arrangements. We will also be discouraging the use of the phone to call home for forgotten items.

Students Leaving Early/ Students Being Picked Up Early from School

If a student is to be released from school early for an appointment, a note must be sent to the child's teacher with a parent/guardian signature. The note should clearly state who will be picking up the child, if it is someone other than the parent/guardian. Upon arrival to the school, parents/guardians are required to report to the office. Office staff will call for your child to come to the office. Parents/guardians are asked to stay in the office until their child(ren) arrive(s) from the classroom(s). Please avoid phone calls during the school day to release your child. If you are picking up your child at regular dismissal time, please wait outside at the appropriate exit area, to avoid disruption of classroom routines.

Visitors to the School



Parents, guardians and visitors are required to use the main entrance of the school, and to report to the office and sign in prior to visiting anywhere on school grounds or in the building. Visitors and parents will be given a visitor sticker to wear.

Student Verification Forms

Each child has received a Student Information Verification Sheet. Please review the information on the sheet and return it to school by Monday, September 12th, 2011, even if corrections or additions are not required. This information is vital when trying to contact parents in the event of an emergency, or as part of our attendance verification procedure.

Student Signing In/Out

Students must sign in and out at the office if:

- They are late arriving to school in the morning or afternoon
- They are being picked up by parents/guardians for appointments, etc.

IF A STUDENT HAS A NOTE SIGNED AND DATED BY THEIR PARENT/GUARDIAN INDICATING THE REASON FOR THEIR LATENESS OR EARLY DISMISSAL, THEY SHOULD GIVE IT TO THEIR TEACHER TO KEEP ON FILE.

No student is to be dismissed directly from their classroom by teachers or picked up at the classroom by parents/guardians, etc. ALL MUST COME TO THE OFFICE AND SIGN IN OR OUT.

Leaving School for Lunch

These requests received once in awhile are fine, but on an ongoing and almost daily basis makes them difficult to manage.

If your children are bussed to school they should remain at the school for the duration of the school day and should not leave school property. Students that remain at school are supervised by their teachers. Those who go elsewhere are not, and are on their own.

For safety reasons, my strong preference is that students stay on site during the entire school day.

Having said all of the above, could you please complete the attached form filling out either SECTION A or SECTION B, and have your son/daughter return it to his/her teacher by **Monday, September 13, 2010**. These forms will be kept on file for the duration of the school year. (***This form only applies to students in Grades 1 - 8***)

Students that for some reason or other, once in awhile have to leave the school building during school hours, must have a note dated and signed by their parents/guardians. **VERBAL PERMISSION IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE.**

Toonie for Terry

On Thursday, September 23rd, 2011, students and staff will have an opportunity to remember Terry Fox and his courageous fight against cancer.

Students will be asked to contribute a Toonie for Terry's great cause. Students from grades 1 - 8 will participate in a walk, run or roller blade. These challenges go a long way to not only raising more money for the cause, but also for building school spirit. More information will follow.



Nut Allergies

ANAPHYLAXIS - A CONCERN FOR ALL - WE ARE AN ALLERGEN AWARE SCHOOL



We have students in our school who can suffer threatening allergies to even the smallest quantities of certain foods, especially peanut and nut products. Allergens can be transported from one location to another in the school. We therefore ask that no lunches or snacks be bought to school that contain peanuts or nut products which could potentially harm a pupil, since keeping this food out of the entire school is the best method of preventing a serious reaction. Please ensure that all children's caregivers are aware that Anaphylaxis is a severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to many stimuli. The most common allergen triggers are food, insect stings, some medications, exercise and latex. The most common foods that cause anaphylaxis are peanuts, other nuts, seafood, eggs, milk and wheat. The Government of Ontario has enacted legislation, Sabrina's Law, an Act to protect anaphylactic pupils as of January 1st, 2006 with the purpose of protecting students at risk of anaphylaxis. Sabrina's Law outlines specific requirements to assist Ontario school boards with setting minimum standards for managing anaphylaxis.

Please note: As of this year we are asking parents to not send any food for birthdays or special occasions and choose alternatives such as stickers and pencils. We also ask that students not share their lunches, snacks or treats with other students as a further prevention measure. We look forward to your co-operation in helping to make our school a safe environment for all.

Staying In During Recess

Under ordinary circumstances, if a child is not well enough to go outside for recess he/she is not well enough to be in school and should be kept at home. We have no facilities for sick children.

Volunteers

We encourage parents to volunteer their time if possible at Holy Family School. We value your talents, experience, knowledge and skills. School Council members will be present at our Open House on September 27th to discuss volunteering with you and encourage you to put forth your name on our volunteer list. As in all schools, we require Criminal Reference Checks on all volunteers.



Student Accident Insurance

As required by the Education Act and the Ministry of Education, the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board annually provides parents with information about cost-effective student accident insurance coverage via student courier. Although enrolment is voluntary, the board encourages parents to take advantage of the inexpensive insurance coverage, especially if their child/children participate in sports, excursions/field trips, or, if parents do not have dental insurance coverage.

Enrolment is required in writing -- there are two options for enrolment:

- 1) Complete the traditional form and mail it in
- 2) Photocopy the form and fax it to Reliable Life at 1-905-522-7211 or 1-800-463-KIDS (5437).

Parents alone have the right to insure their children.

If you wish to purchase insurance coverage for your child, complete the application, place it, and the required premium in the return envelope, and mail it directly to the Insurance Company. Please do not return envelopes to the school.

YMCA Before and After School Program

The YMCA Before and After School Program is available at Holy Family School. The program runs from 7:30 - 9:15 a.m. and 3:45 - 6:00 p.m. For further information, please contact Natalie Iapaolo at 905-857-3531 ext. 300.

Parish News

We are very blessed to have both Father Larry and Father Sherwin as the pastoral team at Holy Family Church. We look forward to working with them as we know that they are strongly committed to the faith and spiritual development of our students. We are fortunate to be so close to our parish church where we can simply walk over to pray, visit the church, celebrate liturgies and masses and reflect on our faith.

Personal Electronic Devices



A personal electronic device (PED) can be defined as a wireless and/or personal electronic handheld device such as a cell phone, walkie-talkie or MP3/iPOD player. Our School Board has acknowledged that the dignity of the human person, as promoted by the Catholic Church, may be compromised by the potential invasion of privacy made possible by the inappropriate use of PEDs on

school premises. The Board also recognizes that the use of PEDs by students at school can potentially interfere with learning in the classroom. In this regard, we are asking students to keep all PEDs out of sight, turned off and not used within school premises or during field trips. To prevent the loss or damage of PEDs, we encourage students to leave their PEDs at home or in their backpacks. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the confiscation of the PED. Confiscated PEDs will be kept in the main office and will be returned upon request of the student at the end of the school day.

Virtues Education



A Catholic Faith Community is rooted in a set of common beliefs which are inspired by the life, mission and teaching of Jesus Christ. As a Catholic Community we are called to learn, to grow and to become more like Jesus in the way we see and treat others. Our Catholic faith plays an important role in helping us shape schools that are safe, caring and inclusive.

Here at Holy Family School, we will continue to focus on our Virtues program. This program is designed to help us nurture virtue and character development. Each month we will focus as an entire school, on one of the virtues. We will begin with a school wide liturgy.

A Litany of Virtues

For the gift of **Faith** – that God calls us to strive for holiness as we grow together as a family rooted in Christ.

For the gift of **Empathy** – to care about everyone's feelings.

For the gift of **Conscience** – that means by which God helps us to choose to be good people.

For the gift of **Hope** - to keep working for a more peaceful world even when we feel discouraged.

For the gift of **Self Control** – to have the courage to do what we know and feel is right.

For the gift of **Respect** – to treat all people with the honour and dignity they deserve.

For the gift of **Kindness** – to be moved to give generously to those around us.

For the gift of **Love** – to see the goodness in everyone we meet and to serve one another's needs.

For the gift of **Acceptance** – to make room for everyone no matter how different they may look or act.

For the gift of **Fairness** - to treat each person as we would love to be treated.

God Bless us in our endeavours to be more like Jesus and to value the dignity of each and every person who is part of our Holy Family School Community.

To begin the new school year, we will focus our attention on the first of our virtues – FAITH

Faith is the great virtue of believing in God and trusting that God is with us. A faithful person believes that we are created, guided by and destined to be reunited with God. A faithful person believes that God's plan for us includes the right to be safe, especially at school.

Student Use Of School Materials

The school will provide your child with the regular school materials such as pens, pencils, workbooks and textbooks. Therefore, it is not necessary that you purchase any such materials unless you wish to do so. However, it is important that children learn to make proper use of these materials and with this in mind, your child's teacher will explain our expectations about this matter to the children.

One of our expectations is that students will be responsible for the replacement of lost books or damaged materials including texts or library books, both of which are quite expensive.

Bullying Prevention Corner

We will be continuing to focus on our multi-year Bullying Prevention Initiative. Please read over the Anti-Bullying School Policy that is located in the front pages of the Student Agenda. Our Anti-Bullying Mission Statement is as follows:

Holy Family is a Catholic community that respects and promotes the uniqueness of all its members. By following the teachings of Jesus, we pledge to provide everyone with a safe, caring and peaceful environment, which ensures the respect and acceptance of all. Because of these beliefs, **bullying will not be tolerated.**

September--Everyone Has the Right to be Safe at School

The key message for September is *"everyone has the right to be safe at school"*. Each class will create a set of behavioural guidelines in the form of a classroom contract. This activity provides students with an opportunity to identify and discuss their expectations of how to appropriately interact with others. When students feel ownership they tend to assume more responsibility to follow the established guidelines and manage their own behaviours. Students learn about expressing opinions, consensus building and accountability. A sense of safety is established in knowing that all students have agreed to follow the contract. By posting the contract in the classroom and referring to it throughout the year, peer accountability for behaviour management is encouraged.

Tips for parents:

- Talk with your children about the contract
- Ask them which statements they like the most and which ones they think will be most difficult for them

Holy Family Catholic School Council



Our first School Council meeting of the year will be on September 12th at 6:30 p.m. As a new school year begins, we encourage all parents to participate in their child's education and join our School Council. If you are interested in becoming a member, please pick up a nomination form, which will be available from our school office or at our Open House. Return the nomination form to C. Howard. Nominations will be accepted from 9:00 a.m. September 19th to 9:00 a.m. September 30th, 2011. Further nominations will not be accepted after this time. Proxy votes are not permitted. If an election is required it will be held on Monday, October 3rd, at 6:30 p.m. just prior to the School Council meeting.

Interested candidates should be aware of the following criteria before completing a nomination form.

- Must be Roman Catholic or married to a separate school supporter.
- Must be a parent of a student currently enrolled at Holy Family School.
- Regular attendance at Executive and General Meetings. Absence of two or more meetings without notice will be grounds for immediate dismissal.
- Attend in-service workshops when required and/or religious retreat.
- Be prepared to head a sub-committee.
- Receive no honorarium or personal expenses.
- Remain in office for one year or until the first General Meeting in September 2012.
- The council will consist of:
 - Parents of students enrolled in the school.
 - A community representative who is a member of a parish in the region served by the school.
 - 1 teaching staff member
 - 1 non-teaching staff member
 - Principal
 - A student enrolled at the school who is a child of a separate school elector (mandatory in secondary schools; at the discretion of the principal in consultation with members of the school council in elementary schools)
 - One person appointed by the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE)

Extra! Extra!

Read All About It!

Newsletters will be sent home with the youngest or only child in the family once a month throughout the school year, except for the month of March. Due to March Break, we will send out a combined February/March Newsletter. Newsletters are meant to serve as a means of keeping strong communication links between home and school. They will inform you about various school activities, programs, routines, reminders and so forth. The newsletters will be supplemented by letters re: special events, trips, religious celebrations, etc.

Newsletters will be sent home on the **FIRST FRIDAY** of each month. If you do not receive one, please ask your child(ren) where they have put it.

Please note that in our effort to be a more Green school, we encourage our parents to access our monthly newsletters by visiting our school website: <http://w3.dpcdsb.org/HOFAM> and view all our newsletters there. All information can be retrieved from previous months in case an event or date has been forgotten. Also, we encourage you to sign up for the Holy Family School monthly newsletter to be automatically delivered to your mailbox. Please provide us your email address on your child's student verification sheet and we will put you on our mailing list.

Bus Transportation



STOPR (Student Transportation of Peel Region) is the organization which administers transportation for both school boards in the Region of Peel. Their new website, <http://businfo.stopr.ca> provides information to parents about their child's bus route, times, stop location. Please note when entering the website, click student login, and enter your child's OEN number as it appears on their report card. This website also has an option where one may view if a student is eligible for transportation based on your home address.

The school continues to comply with distance requirements for all students for bus transportation. The student's age and the distance he or she lives from the school determines whether bussing is provided. A board wide computer program generates lists of eligible students, based on student age and addresses.

Please note that unless students fall within the policy guidelines they will not be eligible for transportation in September. This might mean that a grade JK – 4 child is entitled to transportation, but a grade 5 sibling in the same home will not be eligible for transportation. As in the past, parents/guardians will be able to apply under the Courtesy Transportation policy for those children who are not eligible for transportation. Transportation will be assigned according to Board policy. **STOPR will not be giving permission for students to ride the bus**

using Courtesy Transportation until the first week in October. This is in accordance with Board Policy. Please send written and dated requests for Courtesy Transportation to the Mrs. Howard's attention.

Kiss and Ride



We will continue using the system from last year for dropping children off in the morning if they aren't coming by bus. The driveway at the side of the school has been set up so that parents may "Kiss N' Ride" when you let off your child before school. This can be a safe and effective way of allowing children to enter the school property providing that it is used properly. Please follow the arrows in the driveway up to the unloading area (right beside the Kindergarten yard). When you stop at the unloading area, your children can then exit the car safely. Please do not let your child get out of the car before you arrive at the unloading area – having a child walk across the parking lot full of moving cars would be extremely dangerous.

Directly after your child has left your car, we ask that you continue to follow the arrows along the driveway crossing in front of the school and exiting at the southwest end of the school driveway. In the interest of the safety of all children, please drive slowly and carefully in these lanes at all times. We will continue to use the new plan from last March that we set up for use of the "Kiss N' Ride" at lunch time to ensure that no one parks in front of the school or at the side of the school during this busy time of the school day. As a gentle reminder, there is to be no parking or waiting in the area directly in front of the school building. Parents or other caregivers dropping off lunches are asked to park in one of the three designated parking zones: the *school parking lot*, the *church parking lot* and the *plaza* on the west side of the school. Parents picking students up are to circle the designated Kiss 'N Ride lanes in the school parking lot. You are reminded not to park in front of the kindergarten classes as this is a bus loading zone. As student safety is of paramount importance to parents and staff, we urge all drivers to follow this plan. Parents who need to park to come into the school are asked to use the designated parking spaces at the mall or the church. The parking lot at the side of the school is for staff use only. Parking is very limited and with the daily visits of special services in our school, most spots are filled.

School Picture Day

Individual student and class pictures will be taken on **Wednesday, October 12th, 2011**. Further information will be forthcoming closer to picture day.



Pediculosis (Head Lice)

It is that time of year again. Should any infestations be found in your child's classroom, you will be notified by letter.



Holy Family is an Idle-Free Zone



Parents, this is just a reminder that the school parking lot is an idle-free zone. Engine idling creates dangerous fumes, which impact the development of children's lungs. In order to keep our school zone a safe and healthy place for students and staff, we ask that you please turn off your engine if you drop off or pick up your children at any time this year. Ten seconds of idling burns more fuel and is harder on your engine than turning your key and restarting when you are ready to go. Please turn off your engine if you are waiting for 10 seconds or longer. Thanks for your co-operation.

Medication at School

If a child is required to bring medication to school, procedures relative to the administration of medication shall only be adopted:

- when requested by the parents/guardian
- when authorized by a physician and
- when medication must be provided during school hours

If medication must be administered at school, signed request/authorization forms from the parents and the supervising physician must be obtained whenever a prescription is initiated or changed. Please do not send medication with your child to school without the proper authorization.

These forms are available in the office. The required forms and the medication shall be delivered to the principal or designated person by the parent/guardian. All medication will be housed in a safe location in the school office. Medication must not be kept in the child's possession (i.e., pocket, back pack etc.) or in the classroom with the exception of epi-pens and inhalers

Dates to Remember

- Sept. 6 Welcome Back!
- Sept. 12 Return all forms to school
- Sept. 12 School Council Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- Sept. 16 P.A. Day - no school for students
- Sept. 27 BBQ and Open House – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Oct. 5 Hep B (all Gr. 7s) / HPV (Gr. 8 girls) Clinic
- Oct. 7 Thanksgiving Mass @ 10 a.m.
- all are welcome!
- Oct. 10 Thanksgiving- School is Closed
- Oct. 12 School Picture Day

Attachments

- Student Verification Form
- 2011-2012 School Year Calendar
- Student Accident Insurance Form
- Letter from Holy Family Parish
- Emergency and Early Dismissal Consent Form
- Media Consent/Waiver Letter
- Lunch Permission Form/Walking Permission Form
- Achievement Newsletter

