

Welcome Grade One Families:



Welcome back to our experienced Grade 1 parents/guardians and families new to our class. I hope that you and your family had a safe and restful summer and I am very excited about the opportunity to work with your child back in our beautiful new school!

The children have shown great flexibility in adapting to our new learning reality, and deserve “two thumbs up” for physically spacing as much as possible, keeping hands clean, bringing water bottles and being patient as I learn different ways to create new Grade 1 routines. For example, as we need to distance from students, I am now using our class iPad to project storybooks we read in Language Arts up on the front whiteboards. The children are helping me figure out what I need to do with equipment to make the story appear as they are terrific with technology and great teachers!

The following information touches on a number of our class routines.

Morning routines:

School bus doors will open gradually to allow students to exit and distance after the first bell at 8:32. Students who are driven to school and bus students may enter the school at that time. The children are getting trying their best to distance and then to wash/sanitize their hands upon each entry and exit. (Grade 1 children now enter/exit the building from the doors at the east end of the school, closest to Highway 22.)

We are continuing to finalize timetables and staffing for the year. At this point in time, the Grade 1 Phys. Ed periods are scheduled for Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. With Covid protocols in place, we are not asking the Grade 1's to change into Phys. Ed. clothing, so you may wish to have your little ones wear clothing suitable for lots of movement in the Gym or outside on these days. The class is very lucky to have Ms. Bonaventura, a P.E. expert, teaching these classes! Mrs. Ashley, our librarian, has been working diligently to unpack and organize the library and I will keep you posted as we determine how book borrowing may eventually work.

Throughout September, we have also been very fortunate to have Mrs. Johnson, from last year's kindergarten program, and Mrs. Ashley helping in the class at various times during the week. Schedules for all Westbrook staff are still undergoing final tweaking and their help for these weeks has been most appreciated.

Clothing/Footwear:

Children need both an outdoor and indoor pair of shoes suitable for Phys. Ed. activities. Students need to be able to tie their own laces, or have runners with Velcro fasteners, if they are still mastering their shoe-tying skills.

Food/Snacks:

Depending on the day's schedule, students normally have a healthy snack immediately after morning recess. Students need to have a water bottle at school. Please ensure that it

has a lid which can be resealed in order to avoid spills and it would be incredibly helpful if all food containers, water bottles and personal items have your child's name written on them.

-Please let me know immediately if your child has any updated allergies/food sensitivities, or uses medication such as an asthma puffer.

Communication Home:

Your child has been provided with an agenda. This is a very valuable tool for keeping in touch on a daily basis. Your child will write important messages in it, and weekly spelling lists, major school newsletters and announcements may be enclosed.

Please check it each evening and return the book and bookmark every day. Changes in home-time routines and bussing need to be written for your student's safety, as it avoids home time stress for younger students unsure of how they are traveling home. (This is the place we will refer to if your child is confused about travelling home on a particular day.) As school staff are busy working with your child and not checking computers, I could easily miss an e-mail update sent during the day. The agenda is my guide to get your little one home happily and safely.

-School/classroom newsletters are usually sent home each month. Watch for news about our learning adventures.

What We're Working On:

Language Arts: We are reviewing alphabet letter names, the phonetically regular sounds of consonants and short vowels, determining the beginning, middle and ending sounds in short words and practicing the Pre-Primer Dolch sight words each morning. When I have introduced the first 45 words, I will be sending home paper flashcards for each child. In order to become a confident beginning reader, students will need to practice these words as frequently as possible during the school week at home with you. More information will come shortly.

We will also start our classroom spelling program. Each week, the children will get a list of words (either similar sounding word patterns, or thematic words). We will practice them 3 – 5 times each week in class, but your student will benefit immensely if you can also practice them at home. There will be a weekly quiz on these words. In class, we will break the words into their beginning, middle and ending sounds.

If you find your child is struggling, please feel free to contact me so that I can help provide strategies to assist you.

Math: We are practicing the numerals for each date on the calendar (up to 30), sequencing the days of the week and working on recognizing, extending and creating various kinds of patterns.

Science: We explore primary and secondary colours in the world around us, as well as investigate the signs of the changing seasons.

Social Studies: Grade 1's start the year by thinking about how they are unique individuals and then look at different groups they can belong to – their families, school, teams, clubs etc. A special project request will be coming home soon!

Music: As Covid safety protocols significantly limit opportunities for regular singing, we will be using a brand new, Alberta based program the school has purchased, called Musicplay Online. We will be exploring the concepts of beat, rhythm and movement activities, as well as continuing to watch as the Alberta government clarifies what is and is not possible to do with school music programs in the coming months.

Fine Arts: Students will be exploring different kinds of lines and patterns as they tackle a number of directed drawing projects and painting and pastel activities relating to Fall.

I am delighted to be working with you and your student in the coming year. Please feel free to call and leave a message or write notes in the agenda at any time if you have any questions or concerns. The school's switchboard number is (403) 932-5443. My school e-mail is sjaeger@rockyview.ab.ca, and I am generally able to check it before school and after the children are dismissed at the end of the day.

Looking forward to a continued positive start-up with your children,

Mrs. Sandy Jaeger/ Grade 1 Teacher

