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**HAROLD BISHOP ELEMENTARY**  
**15670 - 104TH AVENUE, SURREY, BC, V4N 2J3**

Principal: Ms. A. Keeper  
Vice Principal: Mr. D. Barry

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September 14, 2020

Dear Harold Bishop Parents & Guardians,

Thank you for your patience and support as we have gone through the process to confirm our enrolment and to organize our classes. Your child will be letting you know their teacher's name today, and students will need to line up at that teacher's door in the morning. As you may be aware, we are subject to the strict rules regarding class size and composition limits. This has made an already complex process infinitely more difficult as we absolutely **MUST** comply with the limits set for us – there is **NO** wiggle room. It is these limits that determine where combined (split) classes will be formed.

The challenge of finding the right fit for our students has been compounded this year by the Health & Safety protocols in place in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Usually, we spend the first week rotating students through grade group teachers, trying out different groupings of students to see how the dynamics and balance might be affected. This is an excellent opportunity to see how students interact with other students in order to achieve harmony and balance in our classrooms for the benefit of a positive learning environment for all students. We were not able to have rotations happen this year.

Most of our classes were set by the children's **PREVIOUS** year's teachers, through collaboration and careful consideration of academic and social strengths and stretches, as well as some information you may have provided to us. In the case of our new students, we also contacted previous schools for recommendations where we could. Given all of the factors and complexity that go into this process, **WE DO NOT CONSIDER PARENT REQUESTS FOR SPECIFIC TEACHERS OR CLASSES**. We simply cannot possibly accommodate everyone's request, so we rely solely on academic and social information.

We must also look at each classroom environment as a **WHOLE** – number of boys to girls, unique learning needs of students, friendship situations, groups of students who do and do not work well together. Therefore, moving one student is never simple, as it usually involves moving up to 6 students in order to accommodate one request. To make matters even a little more complex, we have 325 students registered in 15 divisions and about 100 students in 5 Blended Learning divisions, with very little room for new students at this point. The Blended Learning program is full, with a wait list pending.

In the end, we have made the best decisions we can for each student in our school. While some students may be unhappy that they did not get their "favourite" teacher or their very best friend in their class this year, please rest assured that the decisions were well thought out, and we ensured that every student had a least one friend in their class. It is not necessary for children's learning to have **ALL** of their friends in the same class, and in fact, this may actually be a distraction to learning. We can encourage students to play with their cross-cohort friends outside at recess and lunch.

I emphasize this information in order to reassure you that our decisions regarding your child's placement are not made lightly. It takes hours of sorting and organizing, discussing and collaborating. Also, now that the children have been placed into their Learning Groups or Cohorts for the year, we are not able to make any changes, as per Ministry and District Health and Safety guidelines.

Should you have any questions or concerns, we invite you to address them with your child's teacher. The Blended Learning teachers will be reaching out to their students and families this week.

We thank you for your understanding and we all look forward to an exciting year filled with new learning, new friends and new experiences!

Kind regards,

Ms. A. Keeper  
Principal

### Other Important Information for Parents and Guardians

#### **Combined Classes, New Curriculum:**

While combined classes are an organizational necessity, research indicates that multi-age groupings provide very positive learning environments for children. Studies show that children in multi-age classes generally learn to become more independent, responsible learners and develop a greater degree of social responsibility, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY ARE IN THE LOWER OR HIGHER GRADE. Achievement levels of these students are as good as, and sometimes better than, the achievement levels of students placed in single grade classrooms. It is almost a certainty that your child will experience a combined grade during their elementary school years. Also, in light of the new Supreme Court ruling, combined classes will be smaller than straight classes.

We want parents and guardians to understand that regardless of your child being enrolled in a straight or combined class, your child will be instructed according to the curriculum for their grade. Many parents fear that students will not receive as much attention or instruction in a combined class, but I can assure you that this is simply not the case. The way our combined classes are taught has changed a lot since many of us were in school, and our newly designed curriculum has made teaching and learning in a combined grade even more straightforward. If you would like to know more about this, please make an appointment with your child's teacher, and ask about "blended learning". Despite your child's grade level, teachers work to encourage all students to participate in learning at their level while providing appropriate challenge to ensure success.

With that being said, the curriculum is different than when many of us went to school, sometimes leaving parents questioning what the students are actually learning. The curriculum now focuses on big ideas, deeper understanding of concepts, development of deeper understanding of the self as a learner, inquiry and learning passions as opposed to fact memorization, social skill development and problem-solving skills. **These foci can be found at ALL grade levels; all that differs is the topics or content and materials that are used in each grade while developing those skills.** Therefore, it is possible for a teacher of a combined grade to teach the whole class about a skill and have them practice the same skill with content at different levels to meet individual students' needs.

### **Digital Portfolios and Communicating Student Learning:**

As many returning families know, in Surrey, **our teachers have the choice** to use our Communicating Student Learning (CSL) document or the FreshGrade Digital Portfolio to communicate student learning with parents and guardians. Your child's teacher will communicate their reporting method with you shortly.

All information in your child's FreshGrade portfolio is stored on a very secure District server and it is not available to the public through search engines, etc. The only people who can access your child's account is your child's teacher, your child, you and anyone YOU tell us to give access to. The portfolios will follow your child to any school in Surrey and will be stored until they graduate. At the end of the school year, teachers using FreshGrade will provide you with a paper copy of a summary of your child's learning for the year.

Teachers using the CSL document will be providing a paper copy of a summary of your child's learning at the end of each term.

Parents and Guardians are encouraged to talk with teachers about their child's learning often throughout the year. Please don't wait until Parent/Teacher Interviews if you have questions sooner! Ongoing communication is one of the keys to student success!

### **School Supplies & Planners:**

If you ordered your child's school supplies in June, they will be handed out in classrooms this week. Many parents have ordered on-line just in the last few weeks, and it may still take some time before they arrive. If you are unsure if you ordered, you can check your credit card statement to see if you have been charged by "School Specialty". If you have questions about when your child's supplies will be delivered, please contact the company directly at [schoolspecialty.ca](http://schoolspecialty.ca). You may also print off a school supply list from our website and shop for your child.

Due to the uncertainty regarding what school might look like when we were at the planning stage in June, we have not ordered planners for students to purchase this year. You are welcome to purchase a student planner on your own or talk with your child's teacher regarding ways he/she will be communicating with families this year.

. **NEW! When Students are "Ill" at School:** New Covid-19 Health & Safety protocols dictate that we can no longer "house" students who are ill at school. If a student complains of feeling ill (or if staff notice the child displaying symptoms of being ill), the following occurs:

- the office is notified.
- an administrator or designate will escort the child to an isolation room for assessment - a Health check will be done.
- the office will contact the family for immediate pick up - **the child MUST stay home while symptoms persist.**
- if the health check indicates so, **the child may need to be assessed by a medical professional - this could mean talking to a nurse at the 8-1-1 line or taking the child to a doctor** - BEFORE RETURNING BACK TO SCHOOL. (Families will be asked.)
- Stomach Flu and gastrointestinal germs do not usually disappear overnight. Fraser Health

guidelines say that **students should remain home for 24-48 hours AFTER vomiting to ensure the germ is no longer contagious**; therefore, if your child has reported they vomited, we will advise you that your child should not return for at least a day after the last time they did so. This is regardless of a negative Covid-19 test result, and this has always been our practice.

- IF 8-1-1 or a doctor recommends a Covid-19 test, this needs to be done and the family needs to let our office know. This will be confidential. If the test is positive, Fraser Health will contact us to direct us further. If it is negative **AND the child no longer displays symptoms**, they may return to school.

- **In the case of a positive Covid-19 result:** FRASER HEALTH WILL HANDLE ALL CONTACT TRACING AND NOTIFYING OF CONTACTS. Our staff will not share the names of any students undergoing testing or isolating due to Covid-19. Our first priority is everyone's health & well-being, and our second priority is student/family confidentiality.

Fraser Health will also make the recommendation for next steps. This may include a single student isolating, monitoring of the class/pod/school, a class being asked to isolate, a school being asked to isolate and so on. The response will depend on the severity of the outbreak.

\*Note: one or two students does not equal an "outbreak" in the community.

For everyone's safety, all parents must complete a Health Check with their children EVERY DAY before bringing them to school. You can find the health check HERE [Daily Health Check form](#)

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses including the flu and common cold. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever (see below)
- Chills
- Cough or worsening of chronic cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and vomiting
- Muscle aches

While less common, symptoms can also include:

- Stuffy nose
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Dizziness, confusion
- Abdominal pain
- Skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes.

**Fever:** Average normal body temperature taken orally is about 37°C. For more on normal body temperature and fevers, see HealthLinkBC's information for [children age 11 and younger](#) and for [people age 12 and older](#). Infants less than three months of age who have a fever should be assessed by a health care provider.

Children have similar symptoms to adults, but are less likely to have fever, shortness of breath or cough. COVID-19 causes mild illness in the majority of cases in children.

Please consult with the 8-1-1 Hotline if you are unsure if you should send your child to school. This keeps everyone safer.

### **Other Housekeeping Items:**

**1. Student Drop off & Pick up:** Given the parking and traffic flow 'challenges' at Harold Bishop, we again are asking you to consider alternate options for getting your child(ren) to school. Here are some options:

- If your children are older, or have older siblings or friends, consider dropping them off at 8:15 am and picking them up at 2:45 pm. Supervision of students is available during these times;
- Consider having the children walk to school. Arrange a walking club with friends and neighbors so that each parent only has to supervise/accompany one or two times a week;
- Consider parking on 102 B by the park and walk children through the ravine – there is a path
- Consider carpooling – does anyone you know have a van and could drive 5-6 students to school?

If you are unable to change your drop off/pick up routine, please understand that there are several areas in our parking lot that should not be blocked by parked cars under normal circumstances – for example, in front of the access gate by the front playground or in front of cars parked in parking spaces. We know MANY people park in these places as there is no-where else to go. ***When parking illegally (including double parking), the driver should definitely stay with your car in case you need to move it for emergency access or to allow someone else to leave.***

Also, please make sure you **SLOW DOWN** when coming into our parking lot! The speed limit is **5 kpm** due to people walking through the lot and in the crosswalks.

2. Playing Outside During Recess and Lunch: Please note that we will be sending children out to play even if it is raining lightly. It is really important for students to get fresh air and to have the opportunity to run around and burn energy. It helps their brains learn! For this reason, please ensure your child(ren) has/have appropriate clothing for outside play. This includes:

- jacket appropriate to the weather
- boots for rainy days
- umbrella
- hats, scarves, mittens or sweaters if it's cold

Please Note: We have organized students to have **staggered recess and lunch breaks**, in order to limit the number of people outside at once.

3. Playground Supervision: We have staff supervising in different areas outside before and after school. Morning supervision begins at 8:15 am, and afternoon supervision ends at 2:45 pm. **Students should not be arriving earlier than 8:15 am** and students should leave at 2:45 pm unless supervised by a parent. We are sorry, but we cannot supervise students at the office before 8:15 am.

4. Lates & Absences: **When students are late or absent, our school clerk must phone EACH family to find out if the students are safe at home.** As you can imagine, this can be a very big job, and we do it to ensure no one has gone missing on the way to school. **If YOU know your child will be late or absent, PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL THE SCHOOL AND LET US KNOW!** This will save us from calling you unnecessarily! We have a message option so that you can call outside of office hours if necessary. Please clearly state the child's name, division/teacher and the reason for the late/absence (ie. ill, appointment).

**Harold Bishop Phone Number: 604-581-6016**

**Students arriving before 9 am should go directly to their outside classroom door.** The teacher will let them in and mark them late if it's after 8:30 am. **Students arriving after 9 am need to go to the Outside Office Window where our staff will ensure they get to class.**

If you need to pick your child up early, let the office staff or teacher know, and then **you will need to come to the Outside Office Window to sign them out.** Once signed out, you may go to their outside classroom door to pick them up.

Please note that students will not be permitted to cut through the school in the mornings or afternoons - they must use their outside classroom doors, for Health & Safety reasons.

5. Visiting the School: At this time, **we cannot have visitors in the school building.** If you need to meet with a staff member, please phone and make an appointment. This also includes using the washroom. We do not have a washroom for public use at this time. There are very strict health & safety guidelines to follow!

**A friendly reminder that parents are not permitted to "visit" their child during recess and lunch on the playground.**

6. Dropping off Lunches: It is so lovely that many parents are able to bring special lunches to the students! Unfortunately, new Covid-19 Health & Safety guidelines prevent us from being able to have a Lunch Drop Off Table as we have in the past. **Parents should send children's snacks and lunches with them in the mornings** to prevent the need for passing lunches on.

7. Meeting with Teachers and/or Mr. Barry and Ms. Keeper: We and the teachers are very happy to talk with you! However, we may not be available if you just “pop in”. It is best to call ahead to schedule an appointment to avoid disappointment. Also, where possible, we will schedule phone appointments as opposed to face-to-face meetings.

8. Code of Conduct: Please review our School Code of Conduct in the handbook we are sending home with students this week. Keep in mind that there are some expectations around appropriate clothing and footwear for students, and that **“heelies”, skateboards, scooters, roller blades and bicycles are NOT permitted to be ridden on school grounds** at any time between 8:15 am and 2:45 pm.

9. Electronic Devices & Cell Phones: Many of our teachers permit the use of personal devices and phones IN THE CLASSROOM as a learning tool. However, use of these devices is limited to the classroom WHEN THE TEACHER IS PRESENT to supervise. Devices and phones are NOT permitted outside at any time during recess or lunch, nor are they permitted to be used during inside days in the classroom unless the teacher is present and has given the student permission to use it. Devices being used when not permitted will be held for the remainder of the day and may be reclaimed from the office after school. Continual disregard for the expectations may result in the device being banned from the classroom and kept at the office instead. Use of personal technology is a privilege, not a right when students are at school.

Please see your child’s teacher if you have any questions or concerns at any time!