Friday, September 3, 2021

Dear Lions Bay Parents and Guardians,

We hope that you have had a wonderful summer.  While the extent of your travels may have been limited, we trust you were able to find time to relax, recharge, while enjoying the beauty of our province/nation or simply within the vicinity of the Sea to Sky area.  Regardless, we are looking forward to welcoming students and families back to Lions Bay school for the 2021/2022 school year.

The following message provides a broad overview of the expected September timelines and expectations to assist in your family’s planning in the coming weeks.  We appreciate your flexibility and understanding as we continue to prepare and work with various partners and stakeholders to provide a safe school environment for our entire community.

Your child’s safety is a paramount concern as we begin the new school year. Despite relatively high rates of vaccinations in the VCH region and on the North Shore, a number of the precautions in place are very similar to those that were in place in June 2021, when our last school year ended.

A more in-depth overview of our health and safety guidelines are available in the [West Vancouver Schools Communicable Disease Prevention Plan](https://westvancouverschools.ca/return-to-school) and in the links provided at the end of this message.  Lions Bay School is fortunate in that due to the small school population and limited number of adults in the building, the risk of infection and exposure is very low. However, in order to continue to exercise caution as we begin the school year, Lions Bay School will continue to exercise a number of policies and protocols to ensure continued student safety:

* Mask requirements for all adults in the building
* **Students in K-3, while not required, are encouraged to wear face masks when inside the school building**
* Assigned entry points and exit points for all individual classes
* Continued focus on hand washing and sanitizing for both students and staff before and after each transition
* Frequently touched surfaces cleaned and disinfected 1x/day
* Extended custodial shifts continue to be in place with rigid sanitizing regimens
* Ventilation and air exchange in classrooms and learning spaces will be highlighted
* Daily health check for all staff and students
* Visitors to the school by appointment only; health check and visitor logbook sign in required

These and other school wide precautions being exercised district wide can be found in the [West Vancouver Schools Communicable Disease Prevention Plan](https://westvancouverschools.ca/return-to-school). Other resources are listed in the links below:

* [K-12 Education Recovery Plan](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-education-recovery-plan.pdf)
* [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf)
* [Public Health communicable disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf)
* [COVID-19 Protocols for School & District Administrators and Staff](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/covid-19-protocols-for-administrators.pdf)
* [West Vancouver Schools Communicable Disease Prevention Plan](https://westvancouverschools.ca/return-to-school)

**OPENING DAY: 21-22 School Year**

Tuesday September 7th will be our first day in session for students in Grades 1-3. Our first day on Tuesday will extend from 8:45 am until 9:40 am for Grades 1-3.

At drop off and pick up, we ask that parents wait on the ramp and keep the courtyard a *student only zone* for children. If your child is in grade 2/3 and familiar with the school, you may consider meeting at the top of the stairs to avoid congestion on the ramp.

Like in June, we will be asking students that were in K/1 and the Gr 2/3 class to enter the building through their assigned entrance at 8:40 a.m.  We will invite children to find their name outside and wait to be invited into the building.

**Kindergarten Gradual Entry** will commence on Wednesday Sept 8th as well. Kindergarten schedules were sent out to all incoming KG families in a prior email message in mid-July.  We also sent home a paper copy in the mail.  We look forward to welcoming our youngest LB students as they begin their exciting journey into elementary school. Once again, all incoming KG students will enter and exit at the exterior KG classroom door for their Gradual Entry sessions and for the remainder of the term until further notice. We would ask our KG parents to consider wearing a face mask and to ensure they are respectful of the space of others, when waiting to drop off and pick up their child at the KG exterior door.



**Please note:**  \*\***Friday, September 24th** is a Professional Development Day for teaching staff and no classes are in session. In addition, it was recently announced that \*\***Thursday Sept 30th** will be recognized as a [federal statutory holiday in recognition of the Legacy of Residential Schools and the journey towards Truth and Reconciliation](https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021FIN0048-001531) for all Canadians. Stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.

**Parents and Guardians on School Premises:** While Ministry guidelines continue to require all visitors to make an appointment prior to visiting the inside of the school building, we want to express how valuable positive parent interaction is with both staff and parents in maintaining a vibrant and connected school community. Therefore, parents and guardians continue to be welcome on school grounds and playgrounds **before** and **after** school hours. Similar to last school year, we appreciate the respect and responsibility exercised by our parent group during in person pick up and drop off at Lions Bay.  E.g., encouraging the wearing of face masks when distance is in question, being cognizant of the personal space of others, avoiding unnecessary crowding, etc. We thrive on the connection with our community and hope that we can look forward to further engagement in the coming months.

Thank you once again for your patience and flexibility during this time as we prepare thoughtfully and carefully to welcome your child back to school. We look forward to reconnecting.

                Sincerely,

Aron Campbell

Principal

Gleneagles Ch’axay Elementary

Natalie Mendes

Vice Principal

Lions Bay Primary School

Sincerely,

Ms. Natalie Mendes

Vice Principal/Primary Teacher

Lions Bay School

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*I acknowledge and am thankful to live, learn, and work on the territory of the Coast Salish people, specifically the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) Nation, whose territory West Vancouver Schools resides.*