

Nov. 2, 2020.

November Newsletter 2020

Ms. Griffin, Mrs. Obili and Mrs. Osorio

Hello November!

What a beautiful Fall we are having, all the colours of God's paint brush all around us! We have been having a wonderful time exploring pumpkins, nature, and the changing environment around us during Autumn. We are welcoming three new friends to our classroom this month, and are excited to get to learn, play, and grow together.

Please continue to be proactive in assisting your children with the importance of wearing a mask, as well as instilling the importance of social distancing rules. The children have been fantastic learning and following our school health protocols. Thank you for your continued efforts and being diligent when monitoring your own child's personal health and following the Brant County Health Units guidelines. We will get through this together!

***Note: with the current opportunity for families to transfer between online learning and in person learning, many newsletter items will be repeated continuously to keep all families updated and informed. Thank you for your patience.**

The following is for your information:

***Rules and Routines-** we will continue to concentrate on our very important rules and routines. The guidelines from the Ministry of Health, and the Brant County Health Unit, will be our top priority. Practicing physical distancing, proper hand washing and hand sanitizing, as well as wearing our masks and independent bathroom hygiene.

***COVID-19 Ontario Self- Assessment Tool-** please make sure that you and your family are regularly accessing the Ontario Self-Assessment Tool website. If you or any member of your family is feeling unwell, please follow the directions provided by the website and the Brant County Health Unit. Working together, we can help slow the spread of COVID-19.

***Visitors-** parents/ guardians and visitors are not permitted within the school without an appointment. Please call the office for details.

***Family Information Sheets-** Please return your **Family Information Sheet as soon as possible**. Please check carefully that all information is correct and updated for our school files. **This is very important information, and accuracy is key.** Remember to sign the bottom of the form before returning it. Please return them to the school as soon as possible.

***Allergies/ Medical Information-** please make your child's teacher/ school **aware immediately** of any allergies or medical information that is essential to your child's wellbeing.

***Allergy Safe School-** we are a "nut safe" school. We have **several children** within our school with **life threatening allergies**. **No items containing tree nuts or peanuts are allowed within the school**. Please read all labels and packaging before sending any food products to school. **No peanut butter or Wow butter is allowed**. Within our school, and our classroom, we have many children with **Life threatening allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, mustard, shellfish, and egg**. Please avoid sending these items to school for all the children's safety. Unsafe snacks will be returned home. No homemade baking items may be sent into the school. Thank you for your cooperation!

*****Please log into your child's Brightspace account daily! *****

***Brightspace/ School Website-** please subscribe to both Brightspace and the St. Leo School website. There will be no paper copies of letters, forms, newsletters being sent home from the school. All communication will be done through Brightspace and or the School website. All communication with your child's teacher will be done through Brightspace or their teacher's school email address. **Please notify the school if you have any difficulties accessing Brightspace.**

Our school website is: stleobrantford.ca

***School Cash Online-** is the only method of payment for items needed throughout the school year, i.e. school trips, Spirit Wear. If you have any questions, please call the school office.

*****IMPORTANT***- please go to Schoolcashonline to fill out mandatory consent forms for the 2020-2021 school year. Thank you!**

***Police Check-** police checks are mandatory for all parents/ caregivers, who wish to volunteer within the school or for field trips. Please make sure you have an updated police check on file within the school office. Please call the school office for more details.

***Pick Up/ Drop Off-** currently the procedures for pick up and drop off are as follows.

The Kindergartens will be dropped off and picked up from either the far side of the school building and or the back- field gate. Our class has been designated the Kindergarten Pen area. Please notify your child's teacher immediately of your drop-off/pick up plans.

Drop off- please do not drop your child to school until 8:30 a.m., when a teacher will be on yard duty.

Pick Up- our dismissal bell rings at 3:05 p.m., please pick your child up promptly.

If there are any changes to your drop off/pick up plans, the teachers must be notified.

Please notify the school/ teacher ahead of time if your child is being picked up by a different person! Identification will be asked for! This is to ensure your child's safety, please be patient with the process. Thank you!

**** Please be aware, that due to the nature of the pandemic, these plans are fluid and may change. If a change is made, your teacher will notify the families. ****

***YMCA Before/ After Care Program-** please notify the school/ teacher if your child is participating in the before/ after -care program. Please contact the YMCA for more information.

***Bus-** please notify the school/ teacher if your child will be arriving/ departing school by bus. Also, if there are any changes to their mode of transportation.

***Walkers-** please notify the school/teacher if your child will be arriving/ departing school by foot. Please make the school/ teacher aware of approved adults/persons with whom they may arrive and depart with. Please notify the school/ teacher in advance if there are any changes to who the child will be picked up by. Identification will be asked for to maintain your child's safety. Thank you for your understanding!

***Go Green-** to further our commitment to the environment, and to help eliminate germ spread, the school is encouraging all parents and caregivers to "Go Green". Please try to send a litter-less snack and lunch, re-usable cutlery, re-usable containers, re-fillable water bottles, and re-usable straws. Thank you for your support!

***Twitter-** our school is on Twitter if you would like to follow us. St. Leo @stleocatholic

***Attendance-** regular attendance is key to a successful school year. Please try to be punctual when dropping/ retrieving your child at school. Our morning bell is at 8:45 a.m. Please do not leave your child unattended on the playground. Morning supervision does not start until 8:30 a.m. If your child is going to be absent, or is leaving the school early, please call/ notify the office as soon as possible. Our end of day bell is at 3:05 p.m. Please pick up your child promptly.

***Bell Times:**

8:45- morning bell- school begins

10:25-11:05- first nutrition break (20 min. outside, 20 min. eating inside)

12:45- 1:25- second nutrition break (20 min. outside, 20 min. eating inside)

3:05- last bell- school ends

***Speech/ Behavioural Concerns-** if you have any speech/ behavioural concerns regarding your child, please speak to the teacher as soon as possible.

***Brant County Health Unit-**offers free services/ referrals/ supports for families who have concerns over their child's hearing, eyesight, dental health, mental health.

***Letter Identification/ Letter Sound Identification-**Please continue to work with your children to correctly identify each letter of the alphabet and the letter sound it makes. I have posted the Jolly Phonics song that we use within class within our Brightspace page. Correctly identifying letters and letter sounds is a critical step in preparing our children to become great readers. Thank you for your assistance. If your child has mastered their letter sounds, continue to work on their sight word list!

***Home Reading Program-** The Home Reading program will be starting this month. The Home Reading books will be sent home every Friday and must also be returned every Friday. Please keep the books for the whole week, to read, and reread with your child. Once books are returned, they will be placed in isolation for 72 hours, before being redistributed to other families. The number of books will be smaller than previous years, as well there will be no "reading log" binder attached. **If, you are not comfortable with the traditional home reading program, please notify the teacher as soon as possible.**

***Raz-Kids-** I have signed our class up for a Raz-kids subscription for the year. This is an online reading program, with levelled readers, and reward incentives. The teacher can also monitor individual child development and adjust levels for continued success. Please login and enjoy the reading adventure.

***Teach Your Monster to Read-** I have signed up our class for the **Teach Your Monster to Read** program. This program is free on your PC computer. It is a fun and excellent way to learn and develop our letters and letter sound skills. Please check out this fantastic resource.

***S.T.E.M. Program-** we are very excited to be participating in the S.T.E.M. (Science Technology Engineering Math) Program this year. Our lead teacher will be Miss Alana Kras, who will be visiting our classroom with many amazing and innovative activities.

***Scholastic Book Orders-** all book orders will be online this year. More information to follow.

***Independent Toileting Skills-**Some friends are still having difficulty with the awareness of their body cues for using the toilet. This year, more than previous years, it is extremely important that all children within the Full Time Kindergarten Program **must** be able to independently toilet themselves. This includes wiping themselves after a bowel movement. It is very important that you help your child develop and master this skill. Of course, accidents do happen, so please make sure you send a complete change of clothes (top, pant, underwear, socks) to be kept at the school. Thank you!

***Zipper/Buttons-**please assist your child in developing the independent skill of zipping up their own jacket/ coat zippers. We have a "Zipper Club" within the classroom for those who can successfully do up their own coats. Thank you for your assistance.

***Extra Change of Clothes-**with the cooler weather upon us, it is essential that we have an extra, full change of clothes here at the school. **Please send in a warm set of clothing** (pants, underwear, sweatshirt, hoodie, socks) We will return the set we currently have here, to be switched out for the warmer set. **Our Kindergarten Pen area is very low laying and does get very wet and muddy.**

***Attire-** here in Kindergarten, we **will get dirty/messy**. We will be busy exploring, creating, and learning, working with paint, glue, food colouring, soil, bingo dauber, shaving cream and much more. Many of which can stain clothing. We do attempt to take every precaution available, to help ensure no staining, however we are not always successful. Please do not send your child to school in clothes that cannot get dirty. Getting messy is half the fun! Thank you!

***Outside Exploration-** our Kindergarten class will participate in 100 minutes of outside exploration every day, all year long. Please make sure your child is dressed for the weather! Layering clothing is best, to ensure your child is not too hot or too cold. Rain boots are a must for rainy days and wet seasons.

***Physical Education/ Health-** this year our class will have gym/ health every Day 2 and Day 4, with Mr. Jerez. Please make sure they have a pair of proper running shoes that can be left at the school. **These shoes can also be their necessary “indoor shoes”.**

***Innovative Space-** this year our class will be having innovative space/ computers within our classroom twice a week on Day 2 and Day 4. The tablets will be coming to us. There will be no library book exchange this year due to COVID-19.

***Fire/ Lockdown Drills-** it is mandatory that the entire school participate in fire/ lockdown drills occasionally. These drills are handled in the most comforting and reassuring way possible for all students. A tremendous amount of preparation work is done prior to any drill, to help alleviate any possible anxieties a student may have. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the office.

***Backpacks-** if possible, it is best if your child has a **full-size (large) backpack**. There are many creations that will be coming home, as well as lunch pails and water bottles. During the winter months, there is also scarves, hats, and mittens.

Please note:

Due to COVID-19, it is highly recommended that nothing but essential school items (lunch pail, water bottle) be within the backpack. No toys, stuffed animals, key chains, or blankets are allowed. This is to help stop the spread of germs and virus’ traveling between home and school. Thank you for your cooperation!

***Donations-** this year the school is not asking for “classroom” donations due to COVID-19. However, if you would like to send in an individual Kleenex box, with your child’s name on it, it will be placed on your child’s desk. Thank you!

***Expectations of Behaviour-** it is important to realize, especially this year, that rules and routines are necessary to help keep all the students within our classroom and school safe, happy, and healthy. Please help us by reviewing and reminding your child of proper behaviour expectations. Please review the following:

- * keep your distance from others
- * follow the posted signage
- * wear your mask, avoid touching your face
- * proper hand washing, especially after using the washroom
- * keep hands off others, and other people's belongings
- * no rough play (wrestling, ninja, body tag)
- * listen while others are speaking
- * no interrupting, raise hand when you wish to speak
- * wait your turn, patiently
- * use only your personal items
- * bring used supplies/ toys/ items/ to the sanitation station
- * no sharing food
- * use a soft inside voice
- * use walking feet within the school/ classroom
- * use a tissue for your nose
- * be respectful of teachers, friends, others, themselves

Thank you!

I am confident we will continue to have a wonderful year full of laughs, learning and love. Please feel free to contact me at the school anytime, or via email (mgriffin@bhncdsb.ca)

Thank you!

Ms. M. Griffin, Mrs. V. Obili, and Mrs. S. Osorio