



SEPTEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER



Principal: Kim Spencer
Secretary: Heidi Modesti

St. Mary's Catholic School

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Principal's Message

Dear Families,

Welcome back to St. Mary's for another great school year! I am so happy and excited to be back as your Principal this year. I am thankful to you for choosing St. Mary's School, for choosing Catholic Education, and for entrusting your children to our care.

There are many things that will continue to look different this year. Many of these items have been highlighted for you in this newsletter. Know that we are doing these things at the direction of our district and public health partners to keep kids and staff healthy and I welcome your questions about the process. If there is anything I can further clarify, don't hesitate to reach out. We all appreciate your patience and support as we navigate this September together.

As we introduced last year, we will be using the St. Mary's BIG 5 to help our students guide their actions and interactions while at school.

1. Be Kind! - use kind words and actions
2. Keep Hands to Yourself! - away from others and their belongings
3. Show Respect! - to yourself, to others, and to property
4. Lots of Talking! Talking is encouraged except when an adult is teaching, speaking to someone or giving directions.
5. The principal will be aware of all of the classroom rules and support good behavior and help students to learn from their actions according to the rules of the classroom/school.

A positive partnership between school and home is essential in helping our students to reach their full potential. We appreciate your assistance at home in helping us instill these values and for supporting us in the consequences that may ensue when these values are not demonstrated. It is important to keep the lines of communication open at all times. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns at any point in the school year.

Newsletters and calendars will be sent to families via email and placed on our school website. This will be the last paper newsletter sent home. If you wish to request a paper copy, please contact our school office and we will make arrangements to send you one. Please sign-up to receive informational updates on our school website- www.stmaryhagersville.ca and follow us on Twitter @stmhagersville where we will celebrate all the wonderful things that are certain to happen this year at St. Mary's!

Wishing you all a wonderful year!

Mrs. Kimberley Spencer

Principal

What's New This Year?

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES



Our students will be arriving to school and transitioning directly into the school upon arrival. This will allow students to naturally stagger time of entry as well as remain with their cohort as they will be entering into their classroom. One adult will be supervising students arriving and 2 others inside as they transition into the school. At the direction of our district and our reopening plan, parents are not to walk children onto the school grounds. Students in Grade 1-8 will enter the school through the front school doors. Our kindergarten students will be met by staff and taken into the school via the kindergarten doors closest to the bus drop off area by an adult. Supervision is available from 8:35-8:50. Please do not drop your child before 8:35 as there will be no educator supervision available and students will not be permitted entry into the building until this time. As always, student safety is our priority at St. Mary's School. **IF YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE AT SCHOOL PLEASE NOTIFY THE OFFICE!**



PARKING LOT SAFETY

Parents, please be aware that parking is always a concern here at St. Mary's. Please extend co-operation and courtesy when you need to use the parking lot. As our parking lot is used by our school buses, there is no parking in the respective traffic/bus lanes or student drop off zone. It is also vitally important that speed limits are maintained for safety in the parking lot. Our bus loading/unloading area is for buses to wait in only. Parents must let children out of their vehicles and leave immediately from the student pick zone. This is not an area to wait and watch your child walk onto school grounds. If you wish to do this, you must go park your vehicle in the parking area and watch from there. We appreciate your support with this. Parents/families are asked to wear a mask when on school property due to the crowded nature of the pick-up area

Safety of our students is of the utmost priority.

STAFFING CHANGES

We are blessed at St. Mary's School to have an amazing staff team. We would like to welcome our new members to the team.

Welcome to Mrs. Whyte, a new member of our educational assistant team

Welcome back to Mrs. Machulla who will be our new Kindergarten teacher

Welcome to Mr. Stephen who will be our planning time teacher in Kindergarten

Welcome to Ms. McCarthy who will be our new teacher in Grade 1

Welcome to Ms. VanVeen who will be our new Grade 3/4 teacher

Welcome to Ms. Arva who will be our new Grade 7/8 teacher

SCHOOL STAFF 2021-2022

Kindergarten.....	Mrs. Machulla	lmachulla@bhncdsb.ca
ECE	Mrs. Boadwin	kboadwin@bhncdsb.ca
Kindergarten	Miss Kras	akras@bhncdsb.ca
Grade 1.....	Ms. McCarthy	pmccarthy@bhncdsb.ca
Grade 2	Mrs. McNiven	kmcniven@bhncdsb.ca
Grade 3/4	Ms. VanVeen	avanveen@bhncdsb.ca
Grade 4/5.....	Mrs. Bowie	dbowie@bhncdsb.ca
Grade 6/7	Ms. Dunnigan	adunnigan@bhncdsb.ca
Grade 7/8	Ms. Arva	earva@bhncdsb.ca
French.....	Mme. MacKenzie	dmackenzie@bhncdsb.ca
Special Education	Mrs. Skrzypek-Lakie	dskrzypek@bhncdsb.ca
S.T.E.M.	Mr. Senia	asenia@bhncdsb.ca
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Whyte	jwhyte@bhncdsb.ca
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Stone	astone@bhncdsb.ca
Educational Assistant	Mrs. McKenzie	kmckenzie@bhncdsb.ca
Custodian.....	Mr. Mike	mburt@bhncdsb.ca
Secretary.....	Mrs. Modesti	hmodesti@bhncdsb.ca
Principal	Mrs. Spencer	kspencer@bhncdsb.ca

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Communication between home and school is essential for student achievement! We support safe communication tools for parents and staff. Aligning with our district policies, we will be using approved electronic communication tools in our classrooms (Brightspace).

MEET THE TEACHER

Unfortunately, like last year, we cannot hold a Meet the Teacher event. In lieu of this, this year each teacher will be contacting their families by telephone to introduce themselves. During the week of Sept. 20, your child's teacher will post a short video to their Brightspace which will allow you a glimpse into your child's day.

LEAVING FOR APPOINTMENTS? DROPPING OFF OUTSIDE OF BELL TIME?

A parent/guardian who requires a student to leave the school before dismissal time must ring the doorbell to sign the student out. They will wait outside the door and the student will be brought to them. All students must be picked up at the front door. If dropping off, buzz the office for student entry. Parents are not permitted to enter with the child.

KNIGHTS in ACTION:



We are on the lookout for students making great choices that reflect our Gospel values. Students caught will be awarded a "Knights in Action" that identifies what they did and who they are and will be posted on the main bulletin board. Mrs. Spencer will then make monthly draws from Kindergarten/ Primary, and Junior/ Intermediate award winners. At the end of each month, all student Knights in Action awards will be entered into a draw for gift card.

PARENTS/VISITORS MUST MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

All visitors must have a prescheduled appointment to visit the school. All visitors must complete a COVID 19 self assessment, sign in and wear appropriate face covering and identification as well as proof of vaccination etc. We take this direction from the reopening plan set out by BHNCDsb.

ALL VISITORS MUST SIGN IN AT OFFICE

MEDICATION



The staff at St. Mary's School must follow BHNCDsb procedures for the administration of medication during school hours. If your child requires such medication you are asked to contact the Principal and the necessary arrangements will be made.

Authorization to provide such service must be made in writing by the parent and signed by physician on the appropriate form (obtained at the school). Only prescription drugs will be administered. Nonprescription drugs such as aspirins will NOT be administered to the students.

ANAPHYLAXIS ALLERGY ALERT!

St. Mary's is a **NUT SAFE** facility.

There are students in our school with life threatening allergies to **peanuts and tree nuts**. Even a trace amount from peanut/nut products or food that has come in contact with a peanut/nut source (cross contamination) can result in a life threatening anaphylactic reaction. The most serious reaction being respiratory difficulties, blockage of the airways, which if not medicated immediately, can lead to death.

To provide the minimized allergen environment, we need the support and cooperation of the parents/guardians and the school community. Students are asked to bring lunches and snacks free of peanuts and tree nuts as well as products that have the "may contain **peanuts/tree nuts**" warning on them. Please read labels before sending food to school. Keep in mind not all packaging is clearly labelled with the warning. Truly, this is a life saving measure. If you have caregivers who provide your child with lunches or snacks we encourage you to share this information with them.

NUT ALLERGY HELP (Understanding what to look for.)

When identifying whether or not food is safe to send to school, there are few things to look for:

1. READ THE LABELS!

That means there should be **NO** tree nuts & peanuts in the ingredients.

The item should also be made in a **TREE NUT & PEANUT FREE FACILITY**.

The label can **NOT** say "May Contain Nuts" or made on equipment that also processes nuts, or anything similar.

2. DON'T BE FOOLED BY SYMBOLS!



*The symbol on the left
Indicates "peanut free", but not
necessarily "tree nut" free.*

*Each companies standard
of school safe is different!*



Please read the ingredients to be sure!

Anaphylaxis Canada recommends reading all labels instead of just reading the symbols

3. Remember that peanuts and tree nuts are NOT the same thing

- **Peanuts:** a member of the legume family and not botanically related to tree nuts
- **Tree Nuts:** Almonds, Brazil Nuts, Cashews, Chestnuts, Hazelnuts, Hickory Nuts, Macadamia Nuts, Pecans, Pine Nuts, Pistachios, Shea Nuts and Walnuts

We realize this request may require added planning and effort on your part when packaging your child's lunch and snacks, however, we wish to express our sincere appreciation for your support and cooperation. We cannot guarantee a nut free environment for students nor an "allergen free" area at our school, but with your help we can make our school as safe as is reasonably possible in this regard.

We have a number of students in the school who have serious allergies. In order to best ensure the students do not have an anaphylactic reaction we are insisting that no food items other than your child's lunch and snacks be brought to the school. We will update you with a list of items that are not permitted in the school for this reason.

Fruit trays, vegetable trays, freezies, popsicles etc. that are occasionally brought to classes will be eliminated.

Children's birthdays or special occasions, will have to occur at the home. No items can be brought from home at this time. I'm confident that you understand the importance of this and will support this initiative. The health and safety of all our children is most important.

STUDENT INFORMATION FORMS

Student Verification Forms have been sent to all parents,. It is the standard form from our student management system. We realize that family information and circumstances may have changed over the summer. Please review the Student Verification Form and make additions and changes as required. Updated parent contact information/email addresses are vital to office and public health communication. Please sign the form and return it to the school at the earliest opportunity. Updated prevalent medical condition forms are needed at the office as soon as possible. If you have received a form, please send it with your child as soon as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

BHNCDSB SPIRITUAL THEME

This year, our Board will celebrate learning for all with the spiritual theme of "Catholic Education: Rebuild, Restore, Renew Together". This timely message which rests on the Gospel messages of love and taking care of our brothers and sisters. As we enter this year and based on our spiritual theme, we will focus on what that means to us as a school community. Pope Francis encourages us to look outside of ourselves to the needs of others to find ways in which we can open our hearts to those who need us most. He asks us to take these experiences as a sign of God's Grace and embrace how the Holy Spirit works within these moments to transform our hearts and help us to draw closer to God.

As a staff team, we will help our students understand this message and find ways to engage them in experiences that help this message come alive for them. This year, we will continue to emphasize the importance of building an interior prayer life, using Scripture to deepen our understanding of encounter as found in the Gospel narratives, providing a preferential option for the poor and supporting the faith formation of staff and students. Resources and training dedicated to improving our ability to be Catechists and strengthening home school, parish relationships to encounter students and families with great respect, patience and love will be a focus this year, while inviting all to deepen their un-



STUDENT INSURANCE

A Student Accident Insurance form is available online for your consideration. Should your child need an ambulance, damage their teeth or break a bone, this insurance will cover many costs not covered by OHIP or employee group plans. This insurance will provide coverage for school activities as well as activities outside of the school day. Should your child be injured on the basketball court, the baseball diamond, the soccer field or hockey rink, you will be able to claim many of the expenses associated with their injury if you purchase Student Accident Insurance. All rates are one-time, annual fee and family rates are offered. **Please consider purchasing this affordable insurance** by completing the Application Form and returning it to Reliable Life Insurance Company. Please see www.insuremykids.com

HOT LUNCHES: PLAN FOR 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

To ensure that we are keeping kids safe and that we are abiding by our reopening plan as approved by our local public health unit, we will begin hot lunches in November 2021. Items will be available on School Cash in October. Each meal will be individually wrapped and follow all public health protocols.

Hot lunch orders will **ONLY** be taken via **School Cash Online**. No cash orders will be accepted.

AGENDAS

To minimize the items sent back and forth between home and school, this year we will not be using agendas or mailbags. We will be using Brightspace to communicate with families. These pages (found online) will be updated regularly by the classroom teacher. Please use email to communicate messages to the teacher whenever possible if you need to update them. Keep in mind that teachers are not readily available to respond to your email during the day without undo interruptions to our learning time. If it is essential information that must be conveyed (ex. emergency change of end of day transportation), please contact the office.

SCHOOL CASH ONLINE

Rather than accepting cash or cheques, St. Mary's School uses School Cash Online. No cash or cheques will be accepted for payment of any items (ex. field trips etc).

Registration is simple and easy. Once you are registered, you can pay for field trips, hot lunches etc., for all your children at one time. We will be sending home information on how to sign up for School Cash Online. Credit Cards can now be used on School Cash Online.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

We will hold our first Catholic School Advisory Council meeting via Microsoft Teams on September 29, 2021 at 6:30 pm. School Council elections will be held at this time if required. Nominations are due at the office by Tuesday Sept. 28^h. Nomination forms are available at the office.

PICTURE DAY

October 21, 2021



PLEASE ASSESS YOUR CHILD DAILY for SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19. We are expecting families to complete a self assessment *DAILY* before sending your child(ren) to school.

SELF-ASSESSMENT can be located online at:

<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment>

Common symptoms include: fever, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat or difficulty swallowing, altered smell or taste, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea/ abdominal pain, nasal congestion (unrelated to allergies). If your child has new or worsening or unexplained symptoms related to COVID-19:

- Do not enter the school (any household member)
- Seek assessment and testing ASAP
- Self-Isolate while waiting results
- If results are negative- self-isolate for 24 hours after symptoms resolve.
- If results are positive, or test is not completed, self-isolate for 14 days from 48 hours before symptom onset and contact health unit & school

If your child has an underlying condition- please share this info with Mrs. Spencer.

NEW! CHECK EMAIL DAILY BY 6PM- any info about a cohort needing to isolate will be emailed to you.

ORANGE SHIRT DAY

On September 30, we will be acknowledging Orange Shirt Day at St. Mary's School. In this annual event, we will come together in the spirit of hope and reconciliation to honour former residential school students, showing our belief that every child matters.

STUDENT INFORMATION CONSENT FORMS

These forms are now on schoolcashonline.com Please make sure you have registered if you are not registered already on school cash.

Technology Use Agreement: Please complete this form for the grade/division your child is in which is indicated at the top of the page.

Consent Form: Please complete the Consent Form for each child in your family. Please read it so you understand what you are signing

Concussion protocol forms were sent home in paper format and will need to be returned with your family information sheets for all students in Grade 4-8.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

The safety of our students is our primary concern. All students are expected to behave in a quiet, respectful manner when travelling on the bus. Every time that the bus stops, the bus driver's attention is averted from the road to speak to students who are not behaving properly and there is a potential situation for an accident. It is a privilege NOT a right to ride the school bus. Students are responsible to the Principal for his/her behaviour on the bus.

Inappropriate behaviour will NOT be tolerated and students will be responsible for their actions and will be dealt with accordingly. If you have any questions regarding the pick-up and drop-off times please call the transportation department. Unfortunately, please note that students will not be allowed to get off, or on the bus at another stop or ride a bus other than the bus assigned to him/her due to the transportation policy and insurance purposes.

SPIRIT DAY

SEPTEMBER 24

The last Friday of every month will be a St. Mary's Spirit Day!

The theme for this month will be St. Mary's Pride! Wear school colours; blue and silver and/or spirit wear

Stay tuned to learn how you can purchase spirit wear for this year!

ST. MARY'S
KNIGHTS



