

Birchwood Elementary

Parent/Student Handbook



Birchwood Elementary School

1325 rue Jolicoeur
St. Lazare, QC, J7T 1Z4

School Telephone #: 514 798 8757

Daycare Telephone #: 514 798 8767

www.birchwood.lbpsb.qc.ca

STUDENT and PARENT Handbook

Dear Students and Parents:

On behalf of the Birchwood Elementary School Staff, welcome to an exciting and novel school year! We hope that you will enjoy your time at Birchwood and take part in many activities. As a staff we look forward to sharing many learning opportunities, special events and exciting activities with you as we grow and develop in our school community.

This handbook is intended to provide you with information that is specific to our school and that will apply throughout the school year.

Effective communication between home and school is valued by teachers and parents alike. "Rights and Responsibilities" are located on the last page of this document. Please read this page together with your child. To indicate your commitment and support of Birchwood's values and ideals, both the students and the parents are to sign at the bottom of the page. This will be the beginning of an entrusted partnership in carrying out the duties and activities of Birchwood Elementary peacefully and with mutual respect.

As a school team, we are committed to helping all students develop to their highest potential, to have them participate responsibly and to make attending school a rewarding and enjoyable experience for all. Never hesitate in contacting the school with any concerns regarding your child. Have a wonderfully successful year!

Birchwood Elementary Staff

THIS HANDBOOK BELONGS TO:

Name: _____



SCHOOL PROFILE

About our School

Approximately 400 children attend Birchwood Elementary School. The staff is comprised of full-time and part-time teaching personnel, as well as support staff. The school has a library, art room, cafeteria and a full sized gymnasium. We offer day-care service which includes a lunch program.

Our School has been designated a **Français + Program** school; which includes some English instruction of approximately 15% beginning in Kindergarten through to Grade 4, followed by 50%-50% in Grade 5 & 6. The curriculum is prescribed by the Ministry of Education in the Quebec Education Program.

Schedule

At the beginning of the year students will be given a schedule indicating their regular classes as well as P.E., library, drama, art, etc. It is important to help your child keep track of the schedule during the first few weeks of school in order that they come to school prepared for all classes.

Absence or Late Arrival

It is important that children be on time for class throughout the school year. Lateness has harmful effects on the child and disturbs the other children in the classroom. When a child is late for class, they must report to the office. An admittance slip will be issued to the student explaining their lateness to the receiving teacher.

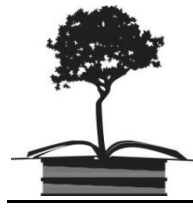
Parents are asked to call the school **514 798 8757** if their child will be absent. Notifying the school before school hours is appreciated as it helps free up the lines during business hours.

Dress Code

We do not have a school uniform but expect students to be dressed in a polished manner. Children should come to school clean and appropriately dressed. The wearing of hats, hoods or caps in school is not permitted. Flip flops are unsafe footwear at school, choose closed shoes or sport sandals which hold the foot securely. Bare midriff, short shorts and skirts that do not reach the tips of a child's fingers with their arm extended, and tops with spaghetti straps are not acceptable at school. Children go outside at recess and lunch time. Please ensure that they have the necessary outerwear for the weather.

Physical Education

Children in the Cycles 1-3 receive 120 minutes of physical education each week, 90 minutes for students in K. On P.E. days, children should wear comfortable clothing which allows for movement. *For this reason we have Birchwood T-shirts in our school colours available for purchase.* For safety reasons, the running shoes worn in P.E. class should never be worn outdoors. Shoes worn outside accumulate dirt, become worn and do not provide necessary traction. All children are expected to participate in physical education classes. If a child is unable to participate because of an injury, please send a note stating the reason. If a child must be exempt for several consecutive classes, a note from your physician is required.



Lost and Found

Please clearly identify all articles of clothing, lunch boxes, school bags, etc that your child(ren) bring to school. Unclaimed objects will be placed in the lost and found. Periodically throughout the year unclaimed items will be bagged and sent to a charitable organization, although helpful for them it is a loss to your family.

School Fees

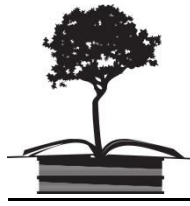
Families are obliged to pay a fee each year for each child that attends the school. This fee helps to defray the cost of consumable materials used throughout the year. The fee is levied in all Lester B. Pearson Schools and each year our fee is ratified by the Governing Board.

School Supplies

We are offering a class supply purchasing service through Hamster to all students. Class supply lists and information will be available on our Birchwood website beginning at the end of June.

Textbooks- Library Books

Textbooks and library books are provided free of charge to the students. However, they remain the property of the school. Students must be responsible and take good care of these resources. Parents will be asked to pay for any lost or damaged books either from the library or the classroom. Our library technician oversees the volunteers who help to support the library schedule.



TRANSPORTATION

Bussing

Bus passes are available through the Mozaik portal. Please inform us through Mozaik if your child does not require bus service as this frees seats for courtesy bussing. For those students who are not eligible, parents may be able to apply for “courtesy bussing” for the year by completing a form at the school office and paying a fee (this is done in June for the following year). Granting of courtesy bussing depends on available space on the bus and the suitability of existing stops. Please inquire at the School Office for more details. Parents of children in Kindergarten and grade one must make sure that they are accompanied to and from their bus stop.

Parents are asked to speak to their children about the safety and the necessity of good behaviour on the bus. This means behaving in a respectful manner. Students are to sit in the designated seat, refrain from eating or drinking on the bus, talk in a quiet manner, be polite to the driver and be on time at the bus stop. Failure to abide by the safety rules will result in a bus report and may result in suspension of bus privileges.

Drop-off and Pick-Up Zone

The bus lane area should never be used to drop off students.

This “Kiss ‘n’ Go” area at the front of the school has been designed for children to be dropped off safely at school and for the convenience of parents. It is used between 9:00 a.m. and 9:10 a.m. in the morning, at lunch time and between 15:40 and 16:00. in the afternoon. During these times cars should never be parked or left unattended, it is solely to drop off or pick up your child. The parking lot should never be used to drop off your child.

Students are to exit from the passenger’s side of the car only.

The drop off zone may be used by daycare parents who are dropping off their children or picking them up as long as it is before 8:45 in the morning and after 16:00 in the afternoon, otherwise use the areas in the staff parking lot. Please do not leave any child unattended in your vehicle, even for the few minutes you think it will take to run in and out of the daycare.

For the safety of all our students, parents who pick up and drop off their children in the “Kiss ‘n’ Go” area are expected to follow the above mentioned procedures and school zone speed limits of 30km/h.



COMMUNICATIONS

School Records

Please advise the school of any change of address, email address or telephone **number at home or at work**. We also request that you provide the school with phone numbers of relatives or neighbours in case of an emergency. Make sure to update this information as needed. **It is essential that you leave specific directions if you are away on a trip. We must always be able to reach someone who is responsible for your child.**

Channels of Communication

Any difficulties or concerns involving students, curriculum, or other school programmes must first be discussed with the teacher or teachers concerned. Teachers know your children best and will be in the position to help resolve difficulties. Should you require further assistance, the input of the School Administration is appropriate. The goal is to solve problems together and to develop open lines of communication.

Inquiries and Appointments

To see or speak to a teacher, please make an appointment by sending an email or by phoning the School Office. You will be contacted as soon as possible. Teachers can never be expected to leave their classroom during class time to speak with a parent either in person or on the phone. If you have any questions or concerns to be addressed to the Administration, please call the Office to make an appointment.

Reporting

Parents who are having concerns should not wait for formal reporting periods to contact the teacher. Communication early on helps resolve difficulties as they arise.

The schedule for reporting can be found on the annual calendar. You will be invited to attend formal parent-teacher meetings at which time your child's progress will be discussed.

Cancellation of School and/ or Closure

Should school be cancelled for snowstorms or any other reason, parents will be notified by the school board notification system and through media outlets before the start of the school day.

*In the event that the school be required to close during the day, your child should know where he or she should go if no one is home. Please make sure to designate someone else on the **Emergency Information form** in case you cannot be reached.*

Missing Child

If for any reason your child does not report home from school, please call the school. Our busses are equipped with a communication system which allows bus drivers to be reached on the road.



SAFETY

Safe Proofing

At the beginning of the school year, we ask that parents stress the following to their children:

- a) The importance of going directly home following dismissal from school unless at daycare.
- b) Good safety habits on the street.
- c) Never accept rides from strangers.

Playground Supervision

Children who walk or bike to school should **not arrive, before 9:00 and 13:20** as there is no supervision before these times.

Security

- 1- Access to classrooms is restricted to School Board personnel, designated volunteers and emergency personnel (police, fire) only.
- 2- Any parent wishing to volunteer in a classroom or on field trips must have *filled out and returned* the Judicial Record at the beginning of the school year.
- 3- Parents who need to deliver items to their children during school hours must bring the items to the office. The items will be given to your child by school personnel.
- 4- Children who arrive late must report to the office before going to class. The parents of these children are not permitted to enter the classroom areas with the child.
- 5- Parents who pick up their children at the dismissal times must do so outside at the appropriate area.
- 6- Parents who pick-up and drop off their children at the drop- off zone, must respect proper procedure. Never leave your car. Children must not exit the car on the driver's side.
- 7- Parents who must pick up their child during class hours must report to the office. We will call the child down from his/her class. Teachers should be notified in writing by the parent ahead of time.
- 8- Our school is a place of courtesy and respect for students, employees and visitors. Intimidation, offensive language or any threats of violence will not be tolerated and are subject to the protocols outlined in our Anti-Bullying & Anti-Violence Policy (found on our school website).



Fire and Safety Drills

As you may be aware each school must practice safety and fire drills throughout the year. These drills last approximately 15 minutes.

A “Lockdown Drill” requires all students and staff members to remain in their classrooms for a specified period of time. Staff and students are briefed as to how this takes place. This drill helps to ensure the security of all students and staff in the building in the event of an in-school emergency.

A “Fire Drill” comprises of all students and staff exiting the building in a prescribed manner. The quietness, efficiency and the speed of leaving ensures that all arrive at designated attendance points safely.

Our aim, as a first priority is to ensure the safety and security of all our students throughout this process. However it is possible that practice drills may leave some students feeling anxious. Please reassure your child or children of their safety and the necessity of these practices. Please take the time to explain that schools as well as businesses practice all types of emergency procedures so that everyone is well prepared and safe. .

Feel free to contact the school if you have any questions or would like more information regarding this matter.



HEALTH

Allergies

In order to provide the most secure environment for children who experience allergic reactions we consider ourselves to be an allergy-aware school. Please inform the school IN WRITING if your child suffers from allergies. Mention steps to be taken in the event of an allergic reaction.

- In the case of a child with a life-threatening allergy, special waiver forms must be completed and the child must carry an Epipen with him/her at all times.
- For other students with allergies, the Epipen or other medications must be kept at the office.

Staff members are educated and sensitized about life-threatening allergies; all staff members, including lunch monitors and daycare supervisors, receive initial training and refresher courses in the administration of the Epipen.

Please be considerate and ensure that your child's snacks and lunches are nut and peanut free.

First Aid / Injuries / Illness

DO NOT SEND A SICK CHILD TO SCHOOL, as we do not have the facilities or staff to care for them. In consultation with the CLSC, the school purchases the necessary equipment and material to administer basic First Aid. Should an accident or illness occur at school or during a school outing, school personnel will give immediate attention and first aid to the student.

- Parents are contacted depending on the severity of the situation, that is why we require names and telephone numbers of parents and /or designated adults and we need one adult to be readily available.
- The school is required to have on hand a list of all Medicare numbers and their expiry dates.
- If a student should require immediate attention, the school will act in the interest of the child, while at the same time, alerting the parents or guardians.
- All costs incurred, such as the cost of an ambulance to transport a child to the hospital, are the responsibility of the parents.

Administration of Medication to Pupils

School personnel are not permitted to administer any non-prescription medication to pupils. In order to administer prescription medication, the Administration must receive written instructions from a doctor, hospital or clinic, **as well as** written permission from the parent or guardian. A NOTE FROM HOME IS NOT SUFFICIENT. A waiver form for the parent to sign with details needed from the doctor indicated must be filled out. Each request for administration of medication must be accompanied by a new form.



USE of ELECTRONIC and other TECHNOLOGIES

Telephone by Students

- Pupils may use the office phone for serious reasons only.
- Permission and arrangements to visit a friend's home must be organized ahead of time, at home, **not from the school and must not include bussing as transportation arrangements.**
- Please advise your child in advance if there is a change in his/her routine (i.e. getting picked up instead of taking the bus). A note must be directed to your child's teacher to prevent confusion in such a situation.
- Any unforeseen changes in routine must be signaled **to the office and daycare** (if applicable) by phoning ahead of time, **before 12:00.**
- **Only in an emergency should you call the office later than the above mentioned time** as it is difficult to get a message to your child at the end of the day.

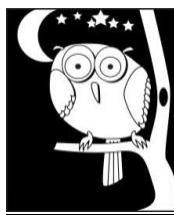
Cellular Phones/Digital Cameras/Electronic Devices

Cellular phones are not to be used by students in school or on the school premises. If a parent deems it necessary for their child to have one, then it is to be left in the "Off" position and in the child's school bag to be used as an emergency tool. Cell phones or Electronic devices from home used on school property will result in a confiscation of the device and parents will be required to pick it up from the Administration.

Digital cameras, phone cameras or any devices that can take photos or record are not to be brought to school. Privacy rights prohibit taking candid pictures or recordings of people. Students need permission to use this equipment on school property. Unauthorized or inappropriate use will result in confiscation as mentioned above.

Please take the time to discuss with your child the appropriate use of the electronic "toys" they have at their disposal.

***** Further Note on Toys: Please note that **no** personal toys, games, trading cards or stuffed animals should be brought to school unless specified by the classroom teacher. This includes toys attached to backpacks and lunch boxes. They as well will need to be picked up by parents.*



LUNCH / DAYCARE PROGRAM

Registration for these programs takes place in June

All children are welcome to participate in the lunch program. Lunch fees for the school year have been set and are described in the Registration package. **Only children who are registered will be allowed to participate in the lunch program and are allowed on school property between 12:30 pm and 1:20 pm.**

Appropriate behaviour is expected of all children in lunch program. Behavioural problems will be reported to parents and if these problems persist, parents will be asked to find alternate lunch accommodations.

If a parent knows in advance that their child will not be staying for lunch, we request that the child bring a note signed by a parent excusing him/her from the lunch program.

To withdraw a child registered for the full-time or part-time program be advised that a written notice must be given to the coordinator 30 days prior to the withdrawal date.

The Daycare office can be reached at **514 798 8767** between 7:00 – 18:00 from Monday to Friday.

Chartwell Food Services: We offer hot lunches. It is the parent's responsibility to follow the requested procedures and as well be aware of field trips or any changes that could affect the hot lunch order.



Governing Board

This is a body formed by parents and staff. This group works with the school administration to discuss and recommend major orientations for the school. It is a representative body whose members are chosen during the Annual General Assembly at the beginning of each school year, usually during the first or second week of September. Please refer to the school web site and/or calendar for the exact date and time of this meeting. The GB meetings are traditionally held once per month and last approximately an hour or an hour and a half. Once again, please check the web page for dates and details.

P.P.O. & Home and School

The Parent Participatory Organization and/or Home & School are the official voice of the parents on the Governing Board. It is made up of a group of dedicated parents who aim to add to school life by, for example:

- providing support during special activities, in and out of the school
- initiating special activities
- fundraising
- school beautification.

We hope to have a large group of very active parents each year. Get involved! Check the web page for dates and times of meetings.

PPO and/or Home and School representatives are voted in during the AGM each year as well.

Volunteers

Each school traditionally relies on the help and support of parent volunteers. Our library, for example, can only operate as long as there are generous, dedicated members of our community to staff it. As well, classroom teachers use such support to the benefit of the children under their tutelage. At the beginning of each school year, we ask parents to fill out a Judicial Record report, valid for three years, and hand it in to the school. Please note this is a mandatory process to follow if you plan to volunteer for school activities in any form. Your help is greatly appreciated as it enables us to better serve our student population. Thank you!



HOMWORK SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

1. Schedule a regular time to do homework. This shows that it is an important priority and that you value its worth.
2. Provide a quiet corner or room for your child to work. Computer access should be set up in a *common family area* for internet safety.
3. Help set up the homework area so that there is good lighting and materials to work with.
4. Encourage your child to work independently, knowing that you are available for support. If your child is experiencing difficulty with the work please let his/her teacher know.
5. You should be available to check whether assignments have been completed or that your child has made a serious attempt at completing the work.
6. Encourage your child with a positive comment or smile. When parents are encouraging and supportive, their attitude is contagious.

Homework Guidelines:

- 20 to 30 minutes for the primary level
- 40 to 60 minutes for the upper elementary level.

Since children differ, the set homework may be too much for some and too little for others. When a child quickly finishes his/her assigned homework before the suggested amount of time, he/she should be encouraged to read books and play educational games. Should you find that your child's homework seems unmanageable, please contact his/her teacher to discuss this. It is important that you communicate any concerns early on in the year.

No homework will be sent home to children absent for one day only. If your child will be absent for an extended period of time for medical reasons, **homework should be requested with 24 hour notification.** We would appreciate your cooperation in this regard.

Parents should not request homework for children when they are taking them out for an extended holiday. During this time your child can read and keep a journal including pictures.



Our Code of Conduct

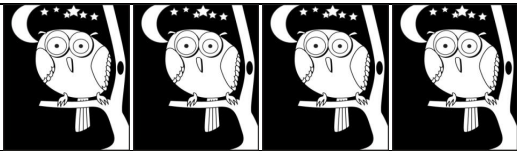
It is our aim to focus on the positive actions and behaviours demonstrated by our Birchwood students and staff. We will use these school values to reflect and to take a stand in unpredictable situations, as we all agree and accept that rules cannot anticipate every situation.

So that we may provide a safe and enjoyable school climate where learning can take place, rules and regulations for conduct have been established. You will find them included on the following pages. These rules are applicable in all of the school contexts and at all levels.

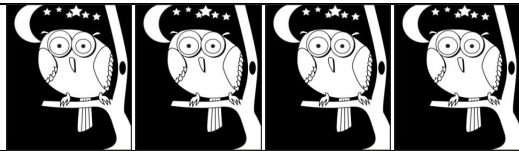
We will teach and demonstrate to our students of Birchwood the underlying values through our “Code of Conduct” and how they relate to our “Rights and Responsibilities”, this will help the students develop a sense of self-discipline and responsibility in the school community.

In order to protect the basic rights of all members of the school community and to ensure that all students receive a solid educational experience; each student has the obligation to respect the rules outlined in the “Code of Conduct”. Failure to comply with these rules will bring about specific disciplinary consequences. These consequences are applied according to the severity of the infraction, its frequency or both.

Examples of Respectful Conduct include, but are not limited to:



Examples of disrespectful and unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to:



Being on time and ready to learn	Not taking responsibility for learning
Walking quietly in hallways	Throwing dangerous items, including snowballs
Appropriate washroom use	Name calling and or swearing
Seated quietly for lunch	Harassment or bullying
Respectful language	Teasing
Non-contact play	Violence of any kind, including rough play, threats or retaliation,
Playing in designated areas only	Being in the school unsupervised
Including, and welcoming others	Defying reasonable requests made by teachers or adult supervisors
Sharing equipment and taking turns	Leaving the school grounds at any time without parent or teacher permission
Removing our hats in our building	Vandalism of any kind
Dressing Appropriately and wearing shoes suitable for daily physical activity	Wearing clothing that advertises substances illegal for elementary students, or uses inappropriate language or content
Leaving gum and junk food at home	
Leaving toys and personal electronics at home	



RULE



REASON



POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

No Aggression:

Physical or verbal aggression and/or intimidation are not acceptable

Violence is not acceptable in society at large. We must all feel comfortable and safe in the school. Respect of others and oneself is necessary for a calm and secure environment.

Depending upon frequency and/or severity: Verbal warning, note in agenda, reflection, loss of recreation privileges, parents contacted, principal involved, police involved, suspension.

No Defying Authority:

of any adult working in the building, or bus driver, volunteer on an outing or peers assigned a role of responsibility

In order that our school run efficiently and calmly it is expected that all students will respect adults and follow what is being required of them.

Depending upon frequency and/or severity: Verbal warning, reflection, loss of recreation privileges, parents contacted, principal involved, suspension.

Property of Others: Vandalism, stealing, or destroying property is not acceptable and is against the law. Appropriate use of school property is expected.

It is against the law. In order to live well with ourselves and our neighbours we must respect each other and their property.

Depending on the situation: loss of recreation privileges, parents contacted, restitution of property, community service, principal involved, police involved

Schoolyard Behaviour: No pushing, shoving or name calling are allowed. Immediate positive response to authority is expected in the school and yard at all times. Report to an adult, any incidents of bullying, harassment or intimidation when you are aware of it.

All students and adults should feel safe in the school yard at all times. By listening and being respectful we have more fun in the yard for longer periods of time.

For any behaviours that are seen as inappropriate, consequences such as being separated from friends and not being able to play, or a reflection and practice period of appropriate behaviour with the supervision of an adult, or loss of recreation privileges for increasing amounts of time, communication to parent, principal involved.

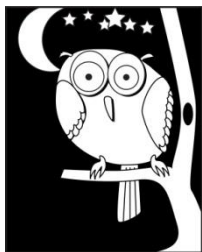
Hallway Behaviour: In hallways, single file on the right hand side of the hallway or stairwell. No running. During class hours no talking while going from one class to another or to the bathroom.

This is common practice in society. Always using the right hand side allows for smooth transitions from one place to another. Quiet in the halls shows respect for those working in classes.

Reflection, practice of appropriate hallway behaviour under adult supervision until understood, communication to parent, principal involved.

The lists are not necessarily chronological.

The administration will impose consequences for behaviour based on the severity and or repetitive nature of the behaviour as well as the circumstances of the situation. The principal reserves the right to suspend a student immediately.



Birchwood Elementary School

Please take the time to read and review these statements with your child

Students Rights and Responsibilities

1. I have a right to learn and grow.

It is my *responsibility* to listen to instructions, work quietly, and raise my hand if I have a question or concern and to complete my assignments. I will cooperate, participate and do the best that I can.

2. I have a right to hear and be heard.

It is my *responsibility* not to talk, shout or make loud noises when others are speaking.

3. I have a right to be respected as an individual.

It is my *responsibility* not to tease or bother other people or to hurt their feelings, but to show respect for others and their ideas.

4. I have a right to be safe.

It is my *responsibility* not to threaten or physically harm anyone, and to adhere to the rules of this school.

5. I have a right to privacy and to my own personal space.

I have a *responsibility* to respect the personal property of others and to accept their right to privacy.

6. I have a right to enjoy school.

I have a *responsibility* to have a good attitude and to participate in a way which helps to make our school a place where others can enjoy school too.

AS A STUDENT OF THIS SCHOOL, I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY OWN LEARNING AND MY OWN ACTIONS.

Student signature: _____

Parent signature: _____

