

# SEXSMITH STARS NEWS



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<b>NEWSLETTER #11</b>		<b>September 2018</b>

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

### WELCOME BACK!

I hope your summer was restful and fun and that you are ready for another school year of learning and growth. September is a very busy month. We will be taking a final look at class placements once we determine if there are any changes in students returning to Sexsmith. As soon as possible, students will be moving into their new classes and getting settled with their new teachers. Currently our student population is 407 students in 17 divisions. Requests for fees and permission slips will be going home shortly and we ask that you return them to the school as soon as you are able to. **We want to emphasize that if your contact information changes during the school year it is very important to inform the office immediately.** We are also continuing with our safe arrival protocol. You are now able to call the school number directly and press option 1 to leave a message that your child will be absent. It is essential that you get into the habit of doing this consistently so that we are not spending our time calling families to verify where your child is.

I am very happy to be continuing at Sexsmith and I look forward to another wonderful year with your amazing children.

### 2018/19 School Staffing Updates

We have several new staff members that I am happy to inform you about. Ms. Laura Mould will be teaching grade 3/4. Ms. Kavanjeet Sekhon will be teaching grade 1/2. Ms. Ashley Rule will be filling in for Ms. Chu, our resource teacher, during her maternity leave. Finally, Ms. Keo will be returning from her parental leave to teach grade 4. Welcome (back) to everyone!

### Communication

Communication is so important to a successful relationship between home and school. Please feel free to speak with your child's teacher about any concerns you may have. Check your child's agenda or communication book on a daily basis. This monthly newsletter is meant to keep you informed of all school activities. The school website, will be updated regularly with relevant school information, so please check that often. **If we don't have your email or current contact information, please ensure that you hand that in as soon as possible.** We will be trying to save paper by emailing all future newsletters and important information and would appreciate your cooperation with this goal.

### Multi-Age/Combined Classes

We will have several combined classes this year. Many parents unnecessarily worry about the impact that combined classes will have on their child's ability to have a successful year. The most important point to remember is that every child learns at

their own pace. Even in a class where everyone is the same age and grade, the range of abilities can vary considerably. The teachers work with all the students in the class to meet their specific needs. The same is true in a combined class. One of the benefits of putting different ages together is that they learn from each other. The student in the lower grade has a role model who has mastered some of the material and the student in the upper grade has an opportunity to correct mistakes made in the previous year, be a leader in the class, and gain confidence in their abilities. The development of skills (reading, writing, numeracy, etc.) happens throughout the elementary years and are not hindered by being in a class with younger or older students. The specific contents taught at each grade (Social Studies, Science, etc.) can be presented in many formats and students will not be required to redo subjects from the previous year. Similarly, students in the younger grade would never be expected to learn material that is not at their educational level. For more information about combined classes please see this [information sheet](#). **Please note: Parental requests to move children out of combined classes cannot be accommodated.**

## Safe Arrival Procedures Reminder

### Reporting Student Absences:

Student safety is of paramount importance at the Vancouver School District. Ensuring student safety is a shared responsibility. In order to assist schools, we ask parents to notify schools of student absences. **If your child will be absent from school, please phone the school to report this absence as early as possible. Parents should leave a message on the answering service by calling 604-713-4901 choose option #1.** Messages can be received before the office is open. School offices are busy places: consistently notifying the school in advance of your child's absence will significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Safe Arrival Morning Routine.

To Report Your Child's Absence – Please call **604-713-4901 choose option #1** prior to 9 am on the first day of the absence

### Student Sign out Procedure:

**When you pick up your child during the school day, please ensure that you sign them out at the school office.** If you do not sign out your child, they will be unaccounted for, and the school will identify your child as a 'missing' student and will commence a search of school grounds. **If the school staff do not locate the child, and are unable to reach a parent promptly, the school will call the Vancouver Police Department.** Therefore, clear communication is essential for ensuring the safety of your child and to prevent unnecessary searches.

Thank you for helping us keep your children safe!

## New Report Card and Process Start This Year

As mentioned previously, Sexsmith will be joining the majority of other schools in our district and moving to a different report card format this year. The new "Communicating Student Learning" structure is more in line with the new curriculum and focuses on providing ongoing feedback throughout the year. Conferences will still be held in October and December. The rationale for the timing of these conferences is to be able to provide opportunities for parents to understand how their child is progressing, well in advance of the first written report. The mid-term written report will go home at the end of January and the final report will go home in June. At other times of the year, teachers will be utilizing different ways to communicate student progress, which may take the form of using an online app, celebration of learning, or reaching out to individual parents through email, in person, or phone conversations. For more detailed information please see this [link](#).

## PAC News

On behalf of the Parent Advisory Committee, we want to welcome all the returning and new students and parents. The first PAC meeting will be on Thursday September 13 at 6:30pm in the library. All parents are welcome to attend. If you would like to contact PAC or volunteer to help out with a program please email [sexsmithvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:sexsmithvolunteers@gmail.com).

## Code of Conduct

The school code of conduct is an essential component in having students develop and maintain positive relationships. It guides everyone in our positive interactions and helps students deal with conflicts and difficult situations. The beginning of the school year is a great opportunity to take a moment to review the Sexsmith Code of Conduct with your child and ensure they understand the different aspects of the document. A link to the Sexsmith Code of Conduct is [here](#) or a paper version is available in the office.

## VSB Non-Discriminatory Policy

In June it came to our attention that individuals had been distributing/posting information on our school grounds that was discriminatory in nature. The VSB operates on an inclusive non-discriminatory basis and as such we have a zero tolerance for any acts of discrimination against others. If you notice any materials within our school community that appear to be in breach of our school policy on this, please turn them in to the office immediately and/or report the incident to the school principal.

## Pick Up and Drop Off Concerns

Please remember to **not double park, not block access to the parking lot and not park in staff parking spaces at any time during the school day**. It is extremely important to **go slow** and use the utmost caution when driving anywhere near the school. Your cooperation with these requests is greatly appreciated.

## Important Dates in September

Tues. Sept. 4	First day of school grades 1-7 attend from 9:00-10:00am only
Wed. Sept 5	First Full day of classes for grades 1-7 (9:00am-3:00pm)
Wed. Sept 12	First Full day of classes for kindergarten students
Wed. Sept 12	Vancouver Chess program starts in library
Thurs. Sept. 13	PAC meeting @ 6:30pm in library
Mon. Sept 24	Professional Development Day – no school for students
Fri. Sept. 28	Sexsmith Terry Fox Run

## Upcoming Important Dates in October

Wed. Oct. 3	Goal Setting conferences - dismissal at 2:00pm conferences 2:15 – 6:00pm
Thurs. Oct. 4	Goal Setting conferences - dismissal at 2:00pm conferences 2:15 – 6:00pm
Mon. Oct. 8	Thanksgiving – no school
Thurs. Oct. 11	PAC meeting @ 6:30pm in library
Fri. Oct. 12	Individual Picture Day
Fri. Oct. 19	Provincial Professional Development Day – no school for students
Wed. Oct. 31	Halloween

Please check our website [sexsmith.vsb.bc.ca](http://sexsmith.vsb.bc.ca) for the regularly updated school calendar