

# SEXSMITH STARS NEWS



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<b>NEWSLETTER #1</b>		<b>September 2021</b>

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

### Welcome Back!

We hope that everyone had an enjoyable and restful summer. It is wonderful to see all the students and families return to Sexsmith school. We are enthusiastic and eager to begin our exploration of learning this year. We especially welcome new families to our school community. I am excited to be here as the interim principal until the Winter Break. I heard so many lovely things about the students and staff, the supportive parents and community and they are all true. I finally had a chance to go into all of the classrooms to meet the students today. They are settled into their new learning environments and ready to go for an exciting new year ahead.

We had hoped for a different start to the school year however, things are not completely as we had expected. While there are no longer cohorts and we are able to offer some extra-curricular activities such as field trips, sports and clubs, we continue to follow Health and Safety Protocols around Covid-19.

Our priority is always the health and safety of all staff and students. Students enter and exit through specific doors depending on where their classroom is located. They are expected to line up outside and their teachers will pick them up at the door. All staff and students are to sanitize their hands upon entry into the building by washing their hands in the sink or using the hand sanitizers that are available. Students are directed to wash their hands frequently, physically distance when possible, and wear masks when appropriate. Masks are mandatory for all adults in the building and students in grades 4-7. Masks are recommended for students K-3.

**Most importantly** parents are required to do a **Daily Health Check** on their children and keep them home if they are showing any symptom of illness. Any student who is not feeling well at school will be isolated and you will be asked to come pick them up from the office. A reminder that only staff and students are allowed into the building. The far east parking lot door has a doorbell and is monitored by the office. If you are coming to pick up a student, please ring the bell or call the school phone and we will bring the student to you. If you wish to meet with any other staff, please make an appointment with the office.

We are continuing to refine our recess and lunch routines so that we are able to maintain safety protocols and still allow the students to enjoy their time outside in free play. All eating of snacks and lunches will be done in the classroom with supervision. **Students needs to arrive each day with their snack, lunch and waterbottle.** Please **do not** come to the school during the day with the intent to drop off lunch. We are trying to limit the number of adults our students encounter during the school day. If your child is going home for lunch, please send a note to the classroom teacher indicating if it is every day or on certain days of the week. Older students who are not picked up by a caregiver for lunch must sign out in the office when they leave and sign in upon return.

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.**

All of us at Sexsmith are looking forward to working together with parents and the community to continue to provide great learning opportunities that enable our children to thrive emotionally, socially, intellectually and to build strong relationships. We want the learning to nurture our students' natural curiosity, creativity and critical thinking.

## **2021/22 School Staffing Updates**

We want to welcome Ms. Haley Cheng back to Sexsmith. She will be here until December covering for Ms. Keo. Ms. Kaylin Pearce will be our new Fine Arts Prep Teacher covering for Mr. Andrew Coehlo, who is currently at Hastings Elementary as the acting vice-principal. Ms. Silvia Musholt and Ms. Tia Ho join our resource team this year, Mr. Simon Thorn is back to cover our new grade 5 class while the job is being posted and finally Ms. Tassy Beretanos who is back as our office administrative assistant until November.

## **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 daily. 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 do not have your email or current contact information, please ensure that you hand that in as soon as possible.** The majority of correspondence going home to families will be via email.

## **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 they are signed out in 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!

## Online School Fee Payment System (including school fees)

Please register for online payments— a simple process that takes only a few minutes – by visiting <https://vsb.schoolcashionline.com> or visiting our website at <http://www.vsb.bc.ca/online-payment> and following directions to the School Cash Online page. You will need your child’s usual first name, last name, and birth date to register. A “Pay Fees” button is now installed on our school website for easy access to the system. Cash and cheques will continue to be accepted for school fees, but we encourage everyone to use the new system as it is more secure and efficient. Please note that field trip permission notices will continue to be sent home for a signature and to indicate that you have paid online.

## 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. The school code of conduct is in the front of the student agendas and on the school website.

## Vehicle Pick Up and Drop Off Concerns

We encourage all of our students to walk, bike, scooter to school.



Check out this link for an explanation of the rules for no parking in school zones.

<https://vancouver.ca/streets-transportation/school-zones.aspx>

Please note that as of 2020, parking fines have doubled in school zones.

**1. There is NO parking on 59<sup>th</sup> avenue in front of the school between 8:00am – 5:00pm on school days.**

Parents who violate this rule are forcing other parents to stop in the middle of 59<sup>th</sup> avenue to pick up or drop off students creating a dangerous situation where children need to exit vehicles into oncoming traffic and run between cars. Parents are allowed to drop off and pick up their children but they are not allowed to park and leave their vehicle unattended.

- 2. NO STOPPING** – means you cannot stop in this area to drop off your children.
- 3. NO PARKING** in the roundabout or blocking access to the parking lot. Drop off and pick up only. This must be kept cleared for emergency vehicles and for deliveries.
- 4. BE AWARE** of students crossing the parking lot entrance to go to school in the morning. Many classes are lining up on the west side of the school next to the roundabout to go into the building. **KEEP OUR STUDENTS SAFE** by proceeding slowly and cautiously.

**PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THE ROUNDABOUT AND PARKING LOT ARE VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD PROPERTY. THE ROUNDABOUT IS AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES AS A CONVENIENCE FOR DROP OFF AND PICK UP ONLY. THE PARKING LOT IS FOR STAFF ONLY. IF THIS BECOMES A SAFETY CONCERN, THIS AREA WILL BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.**

## Important Upcoming Dates

Mon. Sept. 20	Federal Election Polling Station in the Gym. Outside access only for the public.
Fri. Sept. 24	Professional Development Day – no school for students
Thu. Sept. 30	Truth and Reconciliation Day – Statutory Holiday – schools are closed.
Fri. Oct. 1	Terry Fox Run – separate notice when home for donations

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