

GROH PUBLIC SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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ABOUT GROH PUBLIC SCHOOL

Groh Public School is a world class school with a community of autonomous learners engaged in meaningful inquiry and project based learning opportunities on a globally-oriented campus.

To create this vision, there will be a combination of three essential elements to prepare you for secondary school in advance of preparing you for the workplace:

- a freedom-based, open and inclusive learning environment
- enhanced project-based learning opportunities through inquiry
- interaction with the larger world – to collaborate with students around the world

You will be prepared to thrive in our rapidly changing world that puts a premium on a growth mindset in all areas of the curriculum. You will develop a growth mindset – enabling you to see opportunities for improvement, take initiative and collaborate with others to turn your ideas into action.

The academic and extracurricular programs are designed to meet your needs as well as to give you the opportunity to make many new friends. We will expect you to work hard, complete homework assignments and to be a co-operative student in class.

All of the Groh Staff members are willing to answer your questions or to give you extra help with your studies. With the cooperation of parents, students and teachers, the years at Groh Public School should be memorable and enriching. We look forward to a fantastic year and hope all of you get involved in our great school.

GLOBAL COMPETENCIES AND INNOVATION

Students will develop global competencies and innovation (formerly known as 21st century skills), which now better known as “deep learning”:

- Critical Thinking
- Creativity/Innovation
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Character
- Citizenship



PROJECT BASED LEARNING

Our students will be involved in employing Project Based Learning (PBL) as a focus of accessing the curriculum. PBL helps foster the 21st century habits of mind that students will need as adults. Groh Public School will embrace this model as its primary delivery of curriculum expectations.

Project-based learning empowers learners to collaborate in teams, mentored by their teachers, as they research real-world questions, pose solutions to real-world problems, and design real-world products in a rigorous way.

Depending on the instructional context, a project can be initiated by a teacher, proposed by students, or sponsored by an outside organization. A project topic is nearly always aligned with the curriculum, often interdisciplinary, and guided by a driving question – a carefully crafted, open-ended question that directly captures the focus of the project. For example, what are the factors that help a genre of music gain popularity with teenagers?

To answer their driving question, students collaborate on a project team. They co-plan their learning with the support of the teacher, research the literature, and, as appropriate, meet with adult experts, build prototypes, and conduct surveys and experiments, among other learning activities, leading to the creation of a final product that answers their driving question. The final product is presented to a public audience. The formative assessment of learning is ongoing. Students monitor and regularly report on their individual and project team's progress, which allows teachers to track student achievement on an ongoing basis.

From a project management perspective, one of PBL's strengths is the high degree to which key instructional design principles are enshrined in the professional development literature devoted to PBL. Foremost among these principles is the importance of ensuring that projects have sufficient subject depth to go beyond a surface-level study of a topic. Another key principle is the importance of connecting projects to the real world in order to ensure that student learning is authentic.

PBL provides teachers with the means for instilling in students a wide array of 21st century skills connected to deep and meaningful learning. By effectively employing the same techniques that professional project managers use, teachers will use the principle design concepts of PBL and help young people acquire the 21st century habits of mind that will be indispensable to them in their lives.

Groh Public School Daily Schedule

8:55 - 9:10	Supervision & Entry To School
9:10 - 9:55	Period 1
9:55 - 10:40	Period 2
10:40 - 11:10	Period 3
11:10 - 11:30	Nutrition Break - Outdoor
11:30 - 11:50	Nutrition Break - Indoor
11:50 - 12:20	Period 4
12:20 - 1:05	Period 5
1:05 - 1:50	Period 6
1:50 - 2:10	Nutrition Break - Outdoor
2:10 - 2:30	Nutrition Break - Indoor
2:30 - 3:00	Period 7
3:00 - 3:30	Period 8
3:30	Dismissal

Outdoor supervision begins at 8:55am. Students should not arrive prior to this time.

SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM - LATES AND ABSENCES

Participation in our SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM is essential. Your parents must call the school prior to morning announcements if you will be absent from school or late arriving. The number for our attendance line is **519-570-8074 Ext. ????.** When your parents call please identify:

- your name
- your class (i.e. 71, 83, etc.)
- details of absence

Regular and punctual attendance has a direct correlation with academic achievement and school commitment. If your parents know that you are going to be home for several days because of illness, arrangements should be made for a brother, sister or friend to take work home. Groh students must stay on school property at all times - a note must be sent if a student wishes to leave for lunch. If you are to be withdrawn for 5 school days or longer, your parents must complete a temporary withdrawal form with our secretary as soon as your dates are firm.

If you are late for school because of an appointment, you must bring a note explaining the reason and sign in at the office. You are expected to be in class prior to the bell at **9:10 am, 11:50 am, and 2:30 pm.** You are also expected to be on time when moving from class to class during the day. Groh's late policy states that a student who is repeatedly late will have consequences. Lates due to **appointments, confirmed with parent or guardian,** will not count against students. Planning to be on time ensures that students practise a good life skill and do not miss the very important first minutes of a new lesson or interrupt the learning of others upon late entry to class.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURE

Student Transportation Website: <http://stswr.ca>

As Canadians, we must think about winter weather and the effect it has on transportation, in particular, school buses. If the school is closed unexpectedly for any reason, please proceed as follows:

1. **Listen to your radio station**
(CKKW - 1090 AM)
(CHYM - 96.7 FM)
(CKGL - 570 AM)
2. **Do NOT call the school,** as our lines must be open to the system, service, media and emergency communications.
3. **Make CERTAIN you have alternate arrangements** with neighbours, babysitters, etc. when the home is not accessible (i.e., students are sent home early due to inclement weather).

BUS TRANSPORTATION

The purpose of the school bus is to transport eligible children between school and their designated home pick-up or drop-off point. The buses are not to be used as a taxi service. Non-bus students are **not** to ride home to a friend's house. Bus transportation is a privilege and all bus rules must be followed for the safety of all passengers. Failure to do so will result in the removal from the bus for an extended amount of time. For those bus students who would occasionally like to walk home, written permission from a parent/guardian is required.

SAFE WELCOME PROGRAM

The Safe Welcome initiative involves the locking of all doors in elementary schools. All visitors (parents, vendors, central Board staff) will access the main doors to the school using an intercom system.

STUDENT DROP OFF AND PARENT PARKING

Vehicle traffic flow and student drop off have become increasingly dangerous and congested in many schools. Students and parents are reminded of the following:

- It is recommended for all students to walk to and from school if distance and ability are not a factor.
- Parents, our first wish is to drop your student off on one of the side streets to the school. If for health reasons or the student is carrying lots of equipment then we ask parents to drive to the front of the school and drop the student off in the bus designated area before 8:45 a.m. **The school parking lot is closed from 8:45 - 9:20 am and 3:15 – 3:45 pm.**
- **DO NOT** enter, park or turn around in the staff parking lot. Vehicles get blocked, the designated wheelchair spot is blocked and delivery vehicles get stuck.

Your cooperation and understanding in this area is greatly appreciated

BICYCLE SAFETY

Some of our students ride bicycles to school during the nice weather. Appropriate safety measures should be taken by all students that are riding their bicycles to school. It must be pointed out that the school is **NOT RESPONSIBLE** for losses or damages to personal property. Therefore the use of locks is encouraged. Students are expected to avoid playing by the bicycle racks and are encouraged to respect the personal property of others.

N.B. All bicycle riders under the age of 18 are required, by law, to wear a safety helmet. If students do not have a helmet, they will not be permitted to leave school property with their bike.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

As a student at Groh, you may expect to be treated fairly, firmly and consistently. You are also expected to treat others in the same manner. Each individual must accept responsibility for, and the consequences of, his/her own decisions. By making good choices, you become part of a solution, rather than part of a problem. As you proceed through our school, you will be expected to demonstrate greater maturity in your decision-making and general conduct. The following guidelines are designed to assist in the attainment of our common aim as it relates to student conduct.

Behaviour Expectations and Consequences for Students

We expect students at Groh Public School

- To attend and be on time
- To be prepared for class
- To complete assignments on time
- To respect oneself, others, and other people's property
- To act in a safe manner at all times

Your teachers will establish expectations for behaviour in the classroom and the school. When students do not meet the expectations, staff will discuss the inappropriate behaviour with you and determine the consequences. Consequences such as the following may be used:

- Student-teacher conference
- Withdrawal of a privilege
- Detention
- Assignment of meaningful work
- Time-out from class and make up time before or after class time
- Parental contact
- Referral to the office
- Referral to other support services

Student's Rights and Responsibilities

Every student has the right to an education without disruption and corresponding responsibility not to deny this right to any other student. It is our learning outcome for students to develop a respect for the dignity, feelings and values of others.

Student's Rights Are:

- to receive a meaningful education, with an appropriate and challenging curriculum
- to be free from physical and verbal harassment
- to obtain help in making decisions regarding program and career goals
- to enjoy a pleasant school atmosphere
- to have an opportunity to participate in all programs offered at the school
- to receive a brief but clear statement of expected standards, in the school and in each class
- to be treated justly
- to receive assistance from teachers
- to communicate their concerns to classroom teachers and to the teachers and administration in confidence without fear of punishment

Student's Responsibilities Are:

- to be punctual and to attend regularly
- to be responsible for displaying self discipline
- to accept the standards and discipline in each classroom
- necessary for an effective learning environment
- to meet all the requirements of their courses to the best of their ability
- to respect the rights of other students and all school personnel
- to respect school property
- to return any permission forms and report card envelopes promptly
- to be prepared to learn

Class Transition

The student shall:

- move quietly through the halls, keeping to the right-hand side and respecting others' space.
- move directly to their next class, **without stopping at their hooks or lockers**, the washroom or the water fountain.
- line up quietly outside his/her next class and await the teacher's instructions.
- use appropriate language and tone of voice at all times, being considerate of others and especially classes still in session (yelling, shouting or swearing will not be tolerated).
- carry only the books, materials and equipment necessary for the next periods between nutrition break/dismissal. For safety reasons, backpacks or large sports bags are not permitted in the halls or on the stairs. This can result in student falls and injuries.

Student Entry

The student shall:

- enter the building at the appropriate times and the designated door
- move quietly through the halls, keeping to the right-hand side and respecting others' space.
- use appropriate language and tone of voice at all times (yelling, shouting or swearing will not be tolerated).
- move directly to the hooks or lockers, depositing knapsacks and all other electronic devices, coats and headgear and collecting books and materials for the half day.
- discard all gum in a waste receptacle, before moving to class.
- enter the classroom quietly, at the teacher's invitation.
- return greetings from staff and others in a polite manner

Student Success in the classroom

The student shall:

- listen to and follow instructions.
- respect stated classroom procedures.
- focus on assigned tasks.
- remain seated at all times, unless given permission to do otherwise.
- not interrupt the teacher other than in an emergency.
- raise hand to be recognized (i.e. ask or respond to a question, give information, etc).
- use appropriate language and tone of voice at all times (yelling, shouting or swearing will not be tolerated).
- respect the property of others.
- not interfere in any way with other students' right to a quiet, safe learning environment.

HOMWORK EXPECTATIONS

Time spent on homework should be balanced with the importance of personal and family wellness and the wide array of family obligations experienced in our society today. It is our belief at Groh Public School that children need to spend more quality time with family and fun activities and very little time on homework.

There is no established “right” amount of homework for students. There are many research studies that indicate that there is no correlation between homework and increased student achievement.

Homework will not be assigned to Kindergarten students. For Kindergarten students, there is a strong connection between parental involvement and student achievement. As a result, families are encouraged to engage in early learning activities such as playing, talking and reading together in English or in the family’s first language. Teachers may provide resources to support home-based early learning activities.

For our primary and junior students, there is a strong connection between reading to or with elementary children every day in English or in one’s first language and student achievement. As a result, homework assigned in the early grades shall more often take the form of reading, playing a variety of games, having discussions and interactive activities such as building and cooking with the family. In the Junior and Intermediate grades, effective homework may begin to take the form of independent work. In both cases, homework assigned for completion, practice, preparation or extension will be clearly articulated and differentiated to reflect the unique needs of the child.

It is important to remember some other factors:

- Students work at different speeds, so the amount of time spent on homework will vary.
- Students should be able to complete a limited amount of homework and still have time to participate in other activities, including sports, music lessons, religious activities, language classes, volunteer work and free play.
- If you are concerned that your child is getting too much or too little homework, you should speak to the classroom teacher or speak with the principal.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND STUDENT USE (Cell phones, computers, etc.)

Many of our students are bringing cell phones to school and we understand that this is a means of safety and security for parents who want to have ready access and contact with their children. We ask, that students who bring cell phones to school leave them in their backpacks, classrooms or lockers during the day.

Students may not have their cell phones with them in class unless permission is given by the teacher to use the cell phone for instructional purposes, as this can cause a distraction for the student, their peers and the teacher. Cell phones should be turned off while at school. Cell phones, even when left on, vibrate and can cause the student to be distracted during school hours.

In addition, many cell phones have “camera capacities” and we also have a responsibility to safeguard all students from having unauthorized photos taken. We realize that many students share photos on Facebook and other internet sites, which may or may not be safe.

Cell phones are expensive items and unfortunately, some students have had their cell phones lost, stolen or broken while at school. The school cannot be responsible for the replacement of any lost, stolen or broken personal equipment.

With permission from their teacher, students are welcome to use the classroom phone to contact their parents during the school day. We ask our Groh Public School families to please support our request that “cell phones are not to be used during the school day”, to contact parents or friends and that they be left in their backpack, classroom or locker. Students who disregard the school policy of keeping their cell phone in a secure location, will have their phone confiscated for the day.

- Please refer to the Groh Public School Personal Devices Acceptable Use Policy that is included in the initial Student Registration Package. This document outlines and supersedes all rules and expectations.
- If possible, due to risk of loss or theft we do encourage parents/students to consider leaving electronic devices at home.
- Electronics are prevalent in today’s society. We respect student use of technology and request student respect for our school guidelines.
- All electronic devices are to be turned off and stored securely in backpacks, the classroom or in student lockers from arrival to departure from school.



NUTRITION BREAK PROCEDURES

Students may eat their lunch and snacks only in areas designated by staff.

Students are expected to put all garbage in the containers provided, to keep the table and floors clean and to recycle tin cans and bottles.

Students are not permitted to leave the school property during the nutrition break without **written** consent of a parent/guardian. Please note that the first nutrition break will be designated as the “lunch” break. If your parent wishes you to be excused from school early, or during the nutrition break, they must send a note to the office. Students **must** always sign out at the office before leaving the school and sign back in upon return. A student wishing to leave property at the second nutrition break must bring a note in the morning and hand it in at the office when they sign out. If students leave property and are late returning, they lose the privilege of lunchtime sign out for one month.

NUTRITION BREAK CAUTIONS & ALLERGY ALERTS

Some students at Groh Public School have epipens for various allergies. One such severe reaction will occur if peanuts, peanut oils or products exist in the school. Groh Public School parents and teachers are asking for the removal of these occurrences from our school. Please help to support our school in providing a safe, caring, respectful learning environment.

Another allergy includes latex products. Latex-free gloves are available for emergency needs. Balloons (like the ones restricted in hospitals) are not allowed in the school. Thank you for your consideration for the safety of our students.

Some students have **severe** allergies to **cologne or hair spray**. These products create discomfort, breathing difficulties or loss of work/school due to debilitating headaches. Please be aware and sensitive to the needs of others by refraining in bringing these products in our school. Many students have medication or concerns for bee stings, penicillin or pollen. In addition, child diabetes has our attention.

The office must know if any student carries an epi-pen or inhaler/puffer.

DRESS CODE

Personal cleanliness is an important part of healthy living as it reflects respect for yourself. The wearing of appropriate clothing shows respect for themselves and others. To assist students we have shared the following guidelines:

- tops must cover the stomach and shoulder straps must be two finger widths wide, backs must be covered.
- clothing must be worn in such a fashion that undergarments are not visible, no undershirt tank-tops for boys
- pyjamas are not to be worn to school
- appropriate length shorts and skirts...full length of arm extended to baby finger.
- no bandanas, kerchiefs or head bands representing an affiliation, either on the head area or displayed visibly
- hats may be worn to school but not in the school facility

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Junior and intermediate students are encouraged to purchase and wear the school P.E. uniform as well as supply white socks and running shoes that tie securely. A gym bag is recommended in which to carry gym clothes. Any student who cannot participate, due to injury or illness is required to bring a note explaining the circumstances. A doctor's note will be required if a student is missing an extended period of P.E. classes. You should leave all valuables and electronic items in your classroom, locker or at home.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The type of extracurricular activities offered depends on the skills of the staff and the interests of the students. Some of the extracurricular activities offered may include:

- * Leadership Council
- * Video Announcement Teams
- * Students' Council
- * Makerspace Club
- * ECO Club
- * Learning Commons Helpers
- * Intramurals
- * Tech Club
- * Knitting Club
- * Homework Club
- * Art Club
- * Grad Committee
- * Athletic Council
- * School Teams
- * Guitar Club

LOCKERS

Grade 7 and 8 students will be assigned a locker. We urge students to keep their combinations confidential. There is no reason for anyone to know your combination but you! Students are required to take appropriate care in keeping lockers neat, clean and free of damage. No tape, glue or pictures are to be attached to the locker.

FUNDRAISING

Groh Public School will endeavor to hold one major fundraiser event for the fall. A major focus will be determined by staff in consultation with the School Council. This fundraiser will also support many on and off-campus activities, including great motivational speakers, year-end trips, anti-bullying initiatives and other special events, clubs, graduation and other extracurricular activities for the entire school. Upon completion of this fundraiser, we will determine whether another smaller fundraising event will take place later in the school year.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Guidance time is provided for students in grades 7 and 8. Students who wish to see the Guidance Teacher, are encouraged to make an appointment. Students who need to see our Child and Youth Worker, are encouraged to make an appointment through the office. Students should seek assistance if they need help or advice.

MEDICATION

A form devised by the Waterloo Region District School Board must be completed if prescribed medication are to be administered by school personnel. Only medications with the original prescription label attached are to be administered. No other medications (such as Tylenol or Advil) can be given to students by school staff.

LEARNING COMMONS

Groh Public School has moved away from the traditional library and it now has a learning commons. A learning commons is an inclusive, flexible, learner-centered, physical or virtual space for collaboration, inquiry, imagination and play.

The goal of the learning commons is to enable all students to be engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit. The concept of a learning commons is a shift in thinking from a library as a physical space that is a repository of books, to an inclusive, flexible, learner-centred, physical and/or virtual space for collaboration, inquiry, imagination and play to expand and deepen learning. A learning commons is an agile and responsive learning and teaching environment available to individuals and groups to use for multiple, often simultaneous, purposes. It supports literacy, numeracy, competency development and student learning outcomes through access to and instruction in the effective use of print and digital resources. The learning commons approach functions best when learning experiences in the school community are coordinated to support student learning outcomes through collaborative planning, teaching and assessing.

Benefits of Learning Commons

- Learning commons promote global and cultural understanding as students collaborate with their local and broader community to investigate and create solutions to complex problems
- Learning commons emphasize active and collaborative engagement and encourage the co-creation of knowledge by all learners
- The virtual aspect of a learning commons (a VLC) promotes more efficient use of technology for creation and sharing of knowledge as well as enabling 24/7 access to resources and shared collaborative space for all students
- Research shows improved student achievement and literacy development for students who have access to quality school library services, which include learning commons



CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Character Development is an ongoing process of growth that intentionally models, teaches and inspires all people to want to do the right thing for the greater good of our whole community. They are a set of principles. When we teach them, we are really teaching character. The premise: **EVERYTHING WE DO REVEALS OUR TRUE CHARACTER.** If integrity, respect and kindness are part of your character, others will recognize those qualities in you and you'll be more successful in life.

Character Development is the journey of connecting deep caring to knowing, feeling and doing. Our community's shared principles make a statement about how we collectively choose to live our lives. They will become part of our language that will in turn become part of our behaviour. This learned behaviour helps establish a trusting, supportive environment where each person is valued and respected – an absence of threat is one of the necessary conditions for learning to take place. You and your teachers will be actively developing and learning these 8 character traits throughout your time at Groh Public School.

Empathy:

Understanding how someone feels and responding with sensitivity.

Initiative:

Acting responsibly without being asked.

Cooperation:

Everyone working together for the greater good of all.

Integrity:

Saying and doing what you know is right, even when it is hard.

Respect:

Treating others, ourselves and our environment with care and consideration.

Kindness:

Helping others with your caring words and actions.

Hope:

Acting with the belief that things can be better and that what we say and do matters.

Social Responsibility:

Acting as caring citizens who want to make our world a better place for everyone.

PARENTAL SUPPORT IS KEY TO STUDENT SUCCESS

Parents frequently ask "How can I help my child be successful at school?" Here are some suggestions and guidelines to be considered:

1. Provide a quiet place at home for completing school related work.
2. Keep school personnel informed of conditions and situations that may affect your child's performance at school.
3. Encourage your child to use and share his/her planner or monthly calendar. This planner can be an effective method of informing you of homework assignments, tests and project due dates.
4. Encourage your child to share successes and setbacks that may be encountered at school.
5. Regular review of difficult subject areas, topics being covered, is a good method for reinforcing learning and helping the student to incorporate information into his/her knowledge base. The interest you show encourages the child to do his/her best to learn the material being studied and to see the reason for learning the information.
6. Do a notebook check and a school bag check from time to time. This is a good way to get a sense of whether your child is coping with the organizational demands at Groh Public School.
7. Praise your child for his/her accomplishments, for disciplining himself/herself to stick to a task until it is finished and for having the courage to think independently rather than following the thinking of the crowd.
8. Finally, if you have concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school. Call the homeroom teacher or the specific subject teacher. As well, feel free to contact our guidance counselor, child youth worker, the special education teacher, or the principal. If you have concerns or if you would like a progress update on your child, any of the above people can provide assistance and/or the information you need.