



John Darling News

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE: Jan./Feb. 2013

Welcome back and Happy New Year to all of our families in the John Darling School community! After the hustle and bustle of the Christmas holiday season, we look forward to comfortable routines and engaging challenges at school.

We have many enriching activities planned over the coming months. The Blue Spruce & Silver Birch Reading Program, school Spirit Days, a motivating performance promoting Character Development, Skating, "Scientists in the School", and Hip Hop Dance Lessons to name a few! John Darling is a busy place!

As we settle into the winter months and 'raise the academic achievement bar' for our learners, we would appreciate your support at home by reminding our children that maintaining good learning habits and routines is important. Behaviours such as independently using the agenda and having it signed, completing assigned homework, keeping up on home reading, returning permission slips as well as prompt and consistent attendance are essential. They make a huge difference for our kids!

The staff of John Darling Public School sincerely thank each family for the continued support you demonstrate towards John Darling P.S. and towards your child's learning.

We extend best wishes to our students and their families for a happy and healthy 2013!

Gillian McKenzie

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION Full Day, Everyday 2013-2014!!

Children born in 2009 and 2008 are eligible to attend Junior and Senior Kindergarten in September 2013.

Kindergarten Registration will be held at John Darling School on:

**Tuesday, February 5th (morning)
Wednesday, February 6th (afternoon)**

If you have a child who will be starting school in September, please call the school at 519-749-0834 and arrange an appointment to register with Mrs. Simmonds, our office manager. If you know of neighbours or friends who have children who are eligible to start Kindergarten, please ask them to call as well. It is very important for our planning that we register as many of our next year's kindergarten students as soon as possible.



EQAO DATES

Grade 3/6 EQAO assessment dates have been established for the spring of 2012. We ask that parents of Grade 3 and Grade 6 students at John Darling make every effort to avoid scheduling appointments, trips, or other activities during this time. Our students will write the EQAO assessments during the following dates: **Between May 27th – June 7th.**



KINDERGARTEN REPORTING

The provincial report card is designed to give parents clear, detailed information about the expectations for the end of Kindergarten. It reflects achievement in the skills and strategies that the child is developing as they progress through the 2 year program.

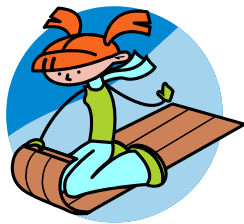
The report reflects evaluation of achievement in all six areas of learning:

- Personal and Social Development
- Language
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Health and Physical Education
- The Arts

The Kindergarten report card includes parent friendly comments on the child's achievement in relation to overall expectations, the next steps for the teacher, as well as the next steps for the parents to assist them in supporting their child's learning.

BACK HILL

We will have the opportunity to open the back hill for students to slide down at times during the winter months. Staff on duty closely monitor this activity. Students must wear slush pants or snow pants in order to participate. The hill and the rink are **NOT** supervised before or after school.



DARLINGFEST – Coming in June, 2013

It's hard to believe, but it's time to start planning Darlingfest 2013! We have 8 members on the committee, and there is room for more. The first meeting will be held on Monday, January 21st, 2013 @ 6:00pm. Please consider being part of the committee this year and join us at our meeting!

Also, if you can make a donation of a prize, give a gift, or gift certificate, or know of someone who can, please contact Helen Byers or the school (gifts or donations can be sent directly to the school marked "Attention Darlingfest" - include your email to get a donations request letter if needed). Please also consider volunteering yourself or a family member for this huge event as many hands are needed (200 volunteers)! Only 30 minutes of your time, can help make this event a HUGE success!

Severe Weather Procedures

This is a reminder that in the event of a severe storm it is possible that school would be cancelled. Please listen to local radio stations for updates:



**Oldies 1090, Kool FM- 105.3,
Dave FM- 107.5, CHYM- FM 96.7**

Since we do not have bussing at John Darling, our school would only be closed if the whole school system were to be cancelled. This decision is made prior to 6:30 a.m.

SKATING AND THE J.D. RINK

Hopefully, our rink will be up and running this winter! Our rink committee members are very optimistic as they prepare for and maintaining our



community rink. Thanks to Amanda and Bill Pope, for coordinating our rink committee and to the following volunteer members of their committee for maintaining the rink: **Steve Coleman, Dwayne King, Austin Stamp, Rob Gutri, Paul Schmidt, Justin Hawkshaw, Jim Irwin, Tim Mitchell, Colin Mitchell, Kevin Hollands, Bill Pope and Ian Vanderpool.** Thanks in advance for all of your hard work!

Parents, please watch for our school skating letter that will be sent home shortly. Please sign and return the skating permission form to indicate that your child has permission to use the rink during physical education classes. Grades three to six students have access to the rink during first and second nutrition break, if they are able to tie their own skates. Please make sure they also have proper gear and a helmet.

Think sub-zero temperatures!

Strong Start Volunteers Needed!!!

Each year at John Darling we offer a valuable session of the strong start Letters, Sounds and Words program. If you can volunteer at least once a week for half an hour to help a child, by playing fun games to assist their learning, then please call Mrs. Deanne Bidinosti at the school or leave her a voicemail message at 519-570-8092 ext. 8813.



SAFETY, SAFETY, SAFETY

Parents are reminded that *access to the parking lot is for staff and current day's volunteers only.* The drop off loop is for the Daycare and the Developmental Education's class's transportation only. Your cooperation is necessary in order to ensure safety for all our students, especially during the winter days when snowbanks are high and visibility is reduced. Thanks

Crossing Guard Appreciation Day is in February. Our Crossing Guard is located at Highview Dr./Willow Green Crt. Crossing Guards work in all kinds of weather to ensure a safe walk to school for our children. Please say "Thank You" when you see our Crossing Guard!



CURRICULUM CORNER - For parents in the know!

Mathematics and the "Learning Cycle"

You may hear your child's teacher refer to a "learning cycle" this year and wonder what is that? John Darling teachers work both individually and collaboratively to plan "learning cycles" (units) that are based on Ontario Curriculum expectations in the various subject areas. As in all effective curriculum planning, we begin by exploring and evaluating just where each child is; specific to a very focused set of expectations. This is called *diagnostic assessment*, and it allows the teacher to tailor his/her delivery and resources to better suit the learning demands of each child. As we focus on refining our instructional strategies in mathematics, each grade group is participating in collaborative professional learning teams where they create a specific *learning goal* and identify *success criteria* for an engaging and relevant problem-solving task. In this process, the teacher uses student work as evidence to guide his/her planning. S/he identifies exactly what s/he wants the children to demonstrate (know and do) at the end of the math task(s) and at the end of the learning cycle. While working on the lesson, students explore familiar and new math strategies through solving problems. During the sharing/debrief portion of the lesson, students are supported as they build skills to effectively communicate their thinking and explain their solutions. Throughout the learning cycle, students have many opportunities to practise, practise, practise. As students are learning, teachers assess them formatively and regularly so that the feedback helps the learner access the concepts in a timely manner.

Through our WRDSB professional development experiences, we also benefit from the collective expertise in our schools. A group of our teachers continue to meet with other teacher teams from within our school board. With the support of our WRDSB consultants, Sandhills, Southridge and Grandview (New Hamburg), Sir Adam Beck and John Darling P.S. teachers are holding 4 inter-school learning sessions throughout the year.

Dates to Remember

Jan. 10- 31	On-line Registration for French Immersion
Jan. 18	P.A. Day- no school for students
Jan. 21	School council meeting @ 7pm
Jan. 31	Spirit Day: Twin Day
Feb. 5	Kindergarten Registration AM
Feb. 6	Kindergarten Registration PM
Feb. 11	Reports home- K-6
Feb. 12	Reports home- Kgn (Blue)
Feb. 14	Valentine's Day/ Spirit Day: Red & White Day
Feb. 18	Family Day Holiday
Feb. 25	School Council meeting @ 7 p.m.
Feb. 25 & 26	John Darling Book Fair
March 11-15	March Break

Diversity Corner

Here are a few of the multi-cultural celebrations and activities occurring during January and February:



Orthodox Christmas (Jan. 7)

Some Eastern churches celebrate the birth of Jesus according to the Julian calendar.

Chinese New Year (Feb. 10)

This is the year of the Dragon. It is a three day holiday in China and Hong Kong. The Chinese clean and decorate their homes with the 5 lucky signs of happiness: new clothes are worn.

Black History Month (February)

This is a time to celebrate the many achievements and contributions of Black Canadians, past and present.

Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)

One version states that a priest named Valentine was martyred on Feb. 14, 269 A.D. in Rome for secretly marrying couples against the orders of the Roman Emperor.

Christmas Penny Drive

Giving to our community is a wonderful way for our children to show we CARE. Even little children can make a BIG difference! We surpassed our goal of 16 bags of pennies by collecting enough to fill 26 bags. Our students raised \$650! This will help to fund the creation of water wells for other children around the world.



Thank you for supporting our Penny Drive!



Thank You!



To Our School Council members, the staff of John Darling and the Knights of Columbus for your generosity and kindness to our families at Christmas time.

To Tim Mitchell and Sherwood Music for donating the sound equipment used in our Seasonal Concerts in December.

To our many parent volunteers and friends of John Darling, We couldn't do it without YOU!

Strong Start

Strong Start: Letters, Sounds and Words.

The program is designed for children in SK and Gr.1 who need extra instruction to improve their chances for success in learning the names of the letters, the corresponding sounds each one makes and some basic sight words to begin reading development.

This program is implemented by volunteers and has been very effective in closing the gap for many of our early years learners. We are pleased to have the opportunity to provide this valuable and engaging program to our students at John Darling school.

In January, a new session of Strong Start will begin. The number of students we can support depends completely upon the number of volunteers. If you enjoy working with little children and would be able to give us one half-day per week, for 10 weeks, please contact Mrs. Bidonosti. All training is provided. Your time and enthusiasm are all we need!



In Memory of Wyatt Helmuth (7 years)



Wyatt was in grade 2. He shared his classroom with his teachers Sandye Moores, Ginny Schott and Carol Anne Nielson. Wyatt had many friends at John Darling. He enjoyed playing in the sand with them. He also enjoyed playing "Go Fish" and making puzzles. Wyatt was an active little boy who is remembered by many for his smile and his warm hugs. He loved to swim, and played soccer in the Wilmot District Soccer Club. Wyatt enjoyed animals, especially horses. The staff and students send our love to the Helmuth family.

The flags at John Darling P.S. and the WRDSB were lowered in honor of Wyatt. Currently, a display celebrating Wyatt is available to view at the school. The cards that students have made will be given to the family when they are ready. Also, a tree donated by the school board Trustees and the Director of Education will be planted in Wyatt's memory at John Darling in the spring. At the time of planting, our students will have an opportunity to say farewell to a treasured friend. We will miss Wyatt!