



John Darling News

200 Rolling Meadows Drive
Kitchener, ON N2N 3G9

Telephone: 519-749-0834
Attendance/Fax: 519-749-0225

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

September/October 2013

Welcome back, everyone! We hope that you all enjoyed a happy and relaxing summer. September and October are such exciting times as our school opens our doors to a new school year, full of exciting opportunities and a beautiful burst of colour marks the changing of the seasons. The school is sparkling due to the hard work of Mr. Lantz, Mr. Synyard. The teachers spent a lot of time preparing their classrooms to make them welcoming learning environments. We are looking forward to another great year working with wonderful children, involved families and dedicated, hard-working John Darling staff. We are also very excited about the implementation of Full Day Kindergarten at our school! The Youth Development program has also begun. This is a before and after school child care program available to students in grades three through six. It is operated by our 3rd party provider; Conestoga Day Care. Registration is online through the WRDSB website and is ongoing throughout the school year.

Throughout the school year, there are many ways that parents can become engaged in our school community. There will be opportunities to join your child on a class trip or during an in-class presentation. Participation on our school council or volunteering your time in the school or for an event are all valued contributions to the school community. Another way to stay connected is if you have a question or a concern, call the school and speak to your child's teacher. Please remember that we are all here to act in the best interests of children, individually and collectively. If a classroom question or concern arises, it is always best to seek clarification and information from the teacher, first. I am also available to talk to you about an issue. It does help to set up a time to meet in advance so that I can give you my full attention. We encourage your support and participation.

During the first few weeks of school, we plan to hold some community building assemblies: Welcome Assembly, Terry Fox Assembly & Run (Thursday, September 26), Playground Routines & Procedures, School Council Treasures Book Kick-off, JD Community Walk to School event (25 Years Anniversary kick-off where classes will perform a cheer or song to celebrate the new school year.) We will continue to discuss our "Drake" the Dragon motto and also have regular celebration assemblies which will discuss and promote respect, responsibility, bullying, problem solving, and also link to the board Character Attributes (empathy, initiative, cooperation, integrity, respect, kindness, hope, social responsibility).

Our first School Council meeting will be on Monday, September 16th; the focus will be on electing our new council members and executive. All interested parents are welcome to attend any council meeting.

Our boys and girls have returned to school anticipating renewing friendships, as well as making new ones. They expect to participate in a variety of engaging and challenging learning opportunities and experiences. With your partnership and support, we look forward to making this school year a memorable and successful experience for your son/daughter!

Gillian McKenzie, Principal
John Darling P.S.

Home of 'Drake the Dragon'.

SAVE THIS DATE:

Meet the Teacher Night
Thursday, September 12, 2013
6:00pm- 7:30pm



**JOHN DARLING STAFF
2013/2014**

Principal	G. McKenzie
Secretary	M. Simmonds
Dev. Ed	S. Moores
K1	D. Forbes
K2	D. Bidinosti
Gr. 1	D. Vines
Gr. 1/ 2	S. Knechtel
Gr. 2	B. Wigmore
Gr. 3	W. Courtney
Gr. 3/ 4A	T. Siegfried
Gr. 3/ 4B	J. Heer
Gr. 4/ 5	J. Pollock
Gr. 5	H. Burrell
Gr. 6	T. Wallace
DECE	H. Dubrick
DECE	H. Guistini
FDK	C. Lee
Pr. French	L. Friesen
Special Ed.	D. Heer
French/Music	J. Harrison
Library Clerk	S. Wells
EA	G. Schott
EA	C. Neilson
EA	C. Sproul
EA	B. Spurling
EA	L. Heer
EA	A. Ozolins
EA	M. Dix
Custodian	W. Lantz
Custodian	M. Snyyard

MILK



Beginning on **September 25th**, our Developmental Education class will start selling both white and chocolate milk. Milk is sold at a cost of \$1.00 per carton. Please refer to the information note that was sent home in your information package entitled “Milk Program” for further details. We thank Mrs. Nielson, Mrs. Schott, Ms. Moores and their students in A8 for offering this program.

PIZZA TUESDAYS

This year student pizza lunch is being ordered from Panago Pizza starting **Tuesday, September 17th**. Students must order their pizza first thing in the morning from their homeroom teacher when attendance is taken. Late orders cannot be accepted after 10:00 a.m. (Kindergarten students order separately - information will be sent home from those teachers).

FROM THE OFFICE...

Office hours: 8:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.
Monday-Friday

To allow Mrs. Simmonds to get her work done as efficiently as possible, we ask that children have **all** messages before they leave for school. We simply don't have the time (except in emergencies) to relay messages from home throughout the day. Thank you, in advance, for your understanding.

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 (Oldies 1090, Kool FM- 105.3, Dave FM- 107.5, CHYM FM- 96.7) for such news. 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.

Dates to Remember!	
Sept. 12	Meet the Teacher
Sept. 16	School Council meeting
Sept. 18	Photo Day
Sept. 19	Community Walk to School
Sept. 26	Terry Fox Assembly & Run
Sept. 27	School Council Fundraiser Kick-off Assembly
Oct. 4	Lock Down Drill
Oct. 11	P.A. Day (No School)
Oct. 14	Thanksgiving Holiday
Oct. 16	Treasures Book Orders Due
Oct. 18	Jack & the Beanstalk Performance

J. D. TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Please remember to call the **Attendance Check Number 519-570-8092 Ext: 3409** and leave a message on the answering machine if your child is going to be absent or late. The Attendance Check Number is used to report an absence of up to four days. If your child is absent for five or more days, you need to fill out a Temporary Withdrawal form.

Please dial **519-749-0834** for emergency calls or calls to the office during the office hours of 8:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Also, please refer to the teacher voice mail information sheet previously sent. You can leave messages for the classroom teacher by calling the Unified Messaging System at **519-570-8092**, and then inputting the Teachers extension number. Communication is the key to a successful year. Please do not hesitate to contact any of our staff if you have questions/concerns. Last year we began posting the Newsletter on the John Darling website: <http://jdp.wrdsb.on.ca/>. We will continue to do this. We have also had requests from many parents to continue sending a hard copy with our youngest/only children. We will continue to do this also.



SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO ACT

Now that a new school year is underway, I wish to remind you of the enforcement protocol regarding smoking on school property.

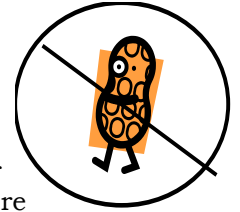
On May 31, 2006, *The Smoke Free Ontario Act* (SFOA) was enacted. This Act prohibits or restricts smoking in all public places and workplaces in Ontario, including schools.

Specifically, this law prohibits:

(2) No person shall smoke or hold lighted tobacco in the following places or areas:

1. A school as defined in the Education Act.
2. A building or the grounds surrounding the building of a private school, where the private school is the only occupant of the premises, or the grounds annexed to a private school, where the private school is not the only occupant of the premises.

FOOD ALLERGIES



At John Darling, we have several children with severe allergies to nuts. These children and their parents have taken steps to ensure that they make responsible decisions about any food or drink ingested. As a school community, all students, teachers and parents can share the responsibility of making our environment safe for all students at John Darling. J.D. Public School is a “nut safe” environment. Please assist us by sending nut free lunches and snacks to school.

DRAKE CAUGHT YOU DOING SOMETHING RIGHT!



The ‘Gotcha’ is a small prize draw for students at John Darling Public School. Students receive tickets, which they then put into the ‘Gotcha Jars’ in the office, when they are caught doing the right thing (DRAKE expectations/Character attributes). Tickets may be awarded either in school or on the playground. The ‘Gotcha Jars’ are quite full at the end of each week. All of the students are recognized as winners, and one student from each grade receives a small prize at the end of each week. We congratulate all of our John Darling students for their wonderful behaviour!

PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF:

A SAFETY CONCERN

Our student’s safety remains our number one concern at John Darling. Please ensure that your son/daughter recognizes and obeys all traffic safety rules when you drop them off in the morning or pick them up after school. Our crossing safety patrols are constantly on the lookout for those who may be putting themselves into danger.

Traffic problems related to student pick-up and drop-off are a concern at most schools in the Waterloo Region District School Board. Please watch and move your child safely from your vehicle to the crossing and school property. Thank you for your help as we continue to make John Darling School a safe place to be.

COMBINED CLASSES

As you may be aware, the Ministry of Education continues with their commitment to lowering class sizes in the primary grades - Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3. They have established legislation requiring that each primary class in our region will have no more than 23 students and that 90% of primary classrooms in our region will have 20 students or fewer. The belief of this legislation is that students in smaller classes receive more attention, do better and are more likely to succeed in future grades. The Waterloo Region District School Board supports this legislation. One of the implications of the legislation is that there will be more combined (split) classes as caps are enforced.

This year at John Darling, we have four combined classes. There is a wide range of abilities and levels in every classroom. Our teachers work hard to differentiate the program to meet the needs and abilities of all students, whether in a combined or same grade class.

If you are interested in knowing more about the instructional strategies that we use to move all students forward, please contact your child's teacher. I would also be happy to talk to you.

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Morning supervision starts at 8:35 a.m. We ask that students do not arrive at school before supervision begins. We appreciate your ongoing support and cooperation in this matter. Please remember that all students walk their bikes as soon as they arrive on school property.

The parent handbook also has important safety information to discuss with your child/children.

PARKING

Please be aware that the Daycare driveway is reserved for Special Education Buses. It is not a student drop off or pick up location. This area is monitored by the By-law officer. We ask that you cooperate with us so that we can avoid any serious accidents. Also, the parking lot is a "no drop off zone" due to student safety.

COLDS AND FLU

Regular and thorough washing of hands is one of the most effective ways of stopping the spread of infections. Our hands can be the vehicle by which many different germs are spread.

Please encourage your children to wash hands frequently and show them how to cough into their sleeve. Hands should be washed for at least 15 seconds.

Please consider keeping your children at home if they display flu-like symptoms.

Students who feel sick at school will be sent to the office and a call will be made home for someone to pick them up.



HOME READING PROGRAM

The John Darling Primary Home Reading Program is being offered to all students in grades one, two and three. This beneficial reading opportunity will help your child develop a habit of reading every day and improve their reading skills and confidence. This is why the books chosen are at a recreational level for the program. Please enjoy the reading time with your child, and work on comprehension and fluency. **If you can volunteer with this program, please let the office know.**



EMERGENCY DRILLS

Every school is required to practice three **fire drills** in the fall term, and three drills in the spring. We must also hold a practice **tornado drill**. The third emergency procedure that must be practiced with students is a "**lockdown**", and is put into place when there is a threat to personal safety inside or outside of the school.

We have been practicing our Safety procedures this year so far and have already had 3 fire drills and a lockdown drill. We explain to the students why we are practicing these procedures, and we also assure them that these events have very little likelihood of occurring. Sometimes, there may be an individual child who is fearful after the procedure. Please take some time to talk to your child if you feel this is the case, and offer information and reassurance to

alleviate any fears. Thanks so much for your cooperation!

TO CHANGE OR NOT TO CHANGE!

All students at John Darling Public School are involved in some form of physical activity each day. All students must wear running shoes in the gym. We also encourage children to wear a t-shirt in the gym. During the winter months, we suggest that students wear a t-shirt under sweaters and jackets in order to change quickly and easily.

Because our gym periods are 30 minutes in length and we want to use our valuable time being active, we do not require that students in Junior Kindergarten to grade three change completely for their gym period. We do ask that grade four to six students change, and that they keep their gym clothes at school. This prepares them for physical education procedures in the intermediate grades.

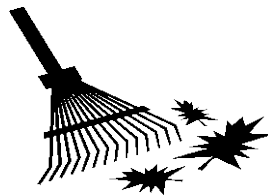
Please talk to your child's teacher if you require further clarification. Thanks!

REMINDER: SIGN IN and SIGN OUT

It is the policy of the WRDSB that all parents, visitors and volunteers sign in and out at the office when coming into a school. Our volunteer sign in/out book is located in the office on the countertop. Please pick up a volunteer tag as you sign in so that our staff and students know you have followed this procedure. Please use the sign in/out book when taking children in and out of the building during school hours.

AUTUMN WEATHER

Autumn brings varied weather conditions. We often remind all students to arrive at school dressed for changing temperatures throughout the day. Effective learning occurs when children take advantage of the outdoor activity. Please assist us by reinforcing with your children that the weather may require a jacket, umbrella or raincoat. Thank you for your support. Please remember that if your child is well enough to attend school, we assume they are well enough to go outside during the first part of the nutrition break and participate in gym. Thank you.



STUDENT INSURANCE

Please read the information concerning student insurance that was sent home in the opening day package. This offers coverage for accidents that

may occur during school or related activities and should be carefully considered.



SCHOOL COUNCIL

Just a quick reminder that we have started our fundraising campaign for the fall. This fall we were selling "Treasures Coupon Book" Thanks for getting your orders in! Orders were due October 16th. School Council will also be selling poinsettias in late November. Profits from these two campaigns will be used to pay for chess club for our grades one to six students, a science program for all grades, and school trips. Council money this year be directed towards supporting school activities such as those listed above, as well as, parent engagement activities such as our Health & Wellness Fair planned for the Spring of 2014. Thanks again for supporting our fundraising efforts.

**Upcoming Meeting Date for School Council:
September 16th, 6:30pm – 8:00pm**

**Elections executive positions for the 2013-2014
will be held.**

Everyone is welcome at any or all meetings.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The staff at John Darling appreciate and value the many volunteers who support and enrich our School programs. We know that many parents work outside of the home full time and are not available to help during school hours. If you would have some time to support School Council in their fundraising activities, which support and strengthen our school programs, but would prefer not to be a member of council, please contact the school at 519-749-0834. If you would like to volunteer in other areas (home reading, office, classroom) please call the office. Thanks

WEBSITE

John Darling will be posting our school newsletters, school council minutes and other school news on our newly updated website. Teachers may also post information and items of interest regarding what is happening in your children's classrooms on their sites which are linked to this page. As we learn to utilize the website effectively, we hope that this resource is helpful to you throughout the school year.

JD website

<http://jdp.wrdsb.on.ca/>