

# **Public School**

**SOARing to New Heights!** 

# STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024

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**Silverheights Public School** 

390 Scott Road, Cambridge, Ontario. N3C 3Z7

# At Silverheights, we SOAR when we:

Share a safe and supportive school
Own our choices of attitude and behaviour
Achieve academic and personal goals
Respect ourselves and others.

Attendance Check: (519) 658-9023

Press 1 for Attendance

SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE
Before School Supervision 8:30-8:45
ENTRY BELL 8:45
Period 1 8:45-9:15
Period 2 9:15-9:45
Period 3 9:45-10:15
Period 4 10:15-10:45
NUTRITION BREAK 10:45-11:25
Period 5 11:25-11:55
Period 6 11:55-12:25
Period 7 12:25-12:55
Period 8 12:55-1:25
NUTRITION BREAK 1:25-2:05
Period 9 2:05-2:35
Period 10 2:35-3:05
DISMISSAL BELL 3:05
After School Supervision 3:05-3:15

# Welcome back to Silverheights Public School and the 2022-2023 school year!

Communication between home and school is essential. We know that the paper notes we send home about Picture day or a field trip don't always make it out of the backpack and in your hands. Electronic communication has become the most common way to share ideas and information in work and social settings. We want to update school communication in two ways. We are reducing the large amount of paper we use as a school budget. We are using School Day as our main source of communication. **Sign up for School Day, at**www.school-day.com and click 'Register'. You will need the student's OEN# that is found on report cards.

Once registered you must use your smartphone/computer to order and pay for pizza lunches, fill out permission forms, and get class newsletters. You never need to worry about a lost note again. For more information or help with signing up for School Day call the office 519 658-9023. Mrs. Herteis will be happy to assist you.

Silverheights is now on **Twitter**. Please follow us **@silwrdsb** as we post school event information, updates, as well as pictures of events.

#### **SCHOOL HOURS**

Our teacher supervision in the morning begins at 8:30 a.m. and we would ask that **students not arrive** at school prior to this time (unless they are coming for a pre-arranged meeting or practice.) The morning bell rings at 8:45 a.m. If students are not at their entry door at **8:45 a.m.** they are **late** and will need to report to the office. The first nutrition break is from **10:45-11:25**. The second nutrition break is from **1:25-2:05**. Dismissal is at 3:05 pm and students are expected to leave the property immediately.

Most school staff members have a voice mailbox. The number is 519-658-9023 (press 2 for teaching staff) This allows you to leave non-urgent messages for your child's teacher. For attendance, important or urgent issues please call the **regular school office number at (519) 658-9023.** 

#### **ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is key to student achievement. Good teaching these days is all about the activities that happen in the classroom. However, we know that on occasion a student has to miss school due to illness or appointment etc.; **parents are asked to telephone the school at 519 658-9023** (**press 1 for attendance**) **or email sil-attendance@wrdsb.ca** to leave a message. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The message should contain the student's full name, grade, classroom teacher and reason for being late or absent and the estimated period of time that the student will be away. We want to make sure that all of our students are safe, therefore, as part of our safe arrival

program, as directed by the Ministry of Education, the school will attempt to call all parents who have **not** informed the school of their child's absence. Secretaries do work as diligently as they can to ensure late arrivals are sent to class on time as a first priority. Then work down the call list of students who are absent with no record of a call or email from a parent/guardian.

Morning attendance is taken as soon as the students enter the classroom. Students who do not arrive at their entry door at 8:45 a.m. are considered late and must report to the office to sign in and pick up an admit slip. Whenever a student arrives after school has started, they need to report to the office before going to their classroom. Ongoing issues of lateness or absence will be referred to the office, the WRDSB attendance counselor or Family and Children's Services. When students are going to be absent for five consecutive days or more on a planned absence, parents/guardians are required to notify the office to complete the appropriate form.

Students who are being picked up or dropped off by parents/guardians during the school day must be signed in or out at the office. Please come to the front door of the school to identify the reason for your visit.

#### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

If you think school or bussing might be cancelled due to poor weather conditions please consult the WRDSB via **Twitter @wrdsb** or **www.wrdsb.ca** or listen to a local radio station. The school will be open unless there is a board wide inclement weather day. Please avoid calling the school as this ties up phone lines for other business. If you decide to have your child attend school even though busses are cancelled, remember that you need to pick up your child as busses are cancelled for the entire day.

#### **MEDICATION**

Please be sure to advise the office if your child has a special health issue. It is the policy of the WRDSB that school staff may not administer medication unless a consent form has been completed by parents. Medication must be prescribed by a physician and in its original prescription container. All medications are secured in the office and administered by office staff.

### **INJURY OR ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**

In the unlikely event that a student is seriously ill or injured at school we will call 911 and then call you. If your child becomes ill or has a minor accident at school we will contact you or your emergency contact(s) and ask you to take them home. It is very important that you keep us updated on any changes in telephone numbers, babysitter's names or changes in address. You never know when your child might need you.

#### **ALLERGIES**

Several students within our school community have severe, life threatening nut allergies. As a board policy we are nut free. We want every child in the school to have a safe environment in which to eat. When sending lunches to school for your child, we ask that you take this into consideration and do not send any foods containing nuts of any kind- this includes **all** peanut butter alternatives i.e. Wow butter. Please notify the office of any serious allergies or food sensitivities.

#### **HEAD LICE**

Head lice are a common problem for school-aged children. If head lice are found, please notify the school immediately so we can alert other parents to check their children's hair at home and seek treatment if found. Head lice are highly contagious and so children having head lice must be treated and their head checked before returning to classes.

#### DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP

The best choice for dropping off and picking up students is to develop a meeting spot just beyond the school area on Poplar Drive, Dawn Crescent or Memory Lane. There are a number of different entrances or "catwalks" onto the school yard that are accessible from the side streets.

We are concerned about the safe arrival and departure of everyone in our community. Scott Road is a very busy street, especially just before or after school. We often see students jaywalking, crossing unsafely and walking across busy parking lots. Please help us keep our students safe. **Parents are not permitted to enter the school parking lot or daycare parking lot to drop off or to pick up their children at arrival and/or dismissal time.** Our parking lots are WRDSB parking lots and are for staff use only. Please ensure if you are parking on the street you are following the no stopping and no parking signs.

We all need to work together to keep students and other members of the school community safe at busy times.

By-law officers patrol the school area and will ticket illegally or unsafely parked cars.

#### **VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS**

Volunteers are always welcome at Silverheights School and we value our many volunteers. As with any visitors to the school we ask that all volunteers sign in at the office. We are pleased to have volunteer help in classrooms, on field trips and school programs such as

**Strong Start and School Council**. If you know someone who would have time to give to our school, please call the office.

#### SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council meets several times over the year on one **Wednesday of the month, in the school library at 6:30p.m.** Specific dates are available on our school website. All parents are welcome to attend the meetings. The School Council is a great way to give back to the school community. For more information about the meetings and events, see the School Council bulletin board, the School Council corner, just inside the main entrance to the left of the big TV screen. **It is a good time to join!** 

#### **NUTRITION BREAK PROCEDURES**

There are two nutrition breaks built into our school day. Students eat for twenty minutes and play for twenty minutes at each break. Students are encouraged to bring a healthy meal or snack for each break.

We have reorganized our staggered breaks to make the best use of our playground area. Grades 3 to 6 students play the first 20 minutes and eat the second 20 minutes. The Grade 1, 2 and Grade 7 and 8 students will eat first and play second.

In order for all students to get a chance to play on the creative playground equipment and use the soccer field area as often as possible we have a schedule that allows grades 1 to 6 to have a turn. Respectful, safe and responsible behaviour is expected at all times during our Nutrition Breaks.

During the eating part of nutrition breaks students are expected to sit in their assigned seats and to clean up after themselves. There are no microwaves for student use. Any necessary utensils should be sent to school in student's lunches and should be made of plastic when possible. We appreciate your efforts to provide nutritious snacks with a minimum of litter.

#### **LOST AND FOUND**

Students are encouraged to frequently check the Lost and Found for lost items. The only lost and found box is outside of the office. All personal items should be clearly marked with the student's name or family name so they can quickly be returned to their owner. A helpful tip: use a black sharpie on most items, or silver sharpie on dark coloured items. Unclaimed lost

and found items are donated to a charity at the end of each term. Lost valuables such as keys and eyeglasses or earrings are kept at the main office.

#### **VALUABLES AND BREAKABLES**

We strongly discourage students from bringing fragile or expensive items such as smartphones, electronic games, mp3 players, cameras, family heirlooms, jewelry or collectable cards and so on, to school. These items can become the target of theft and could easily be damaged or lost in play on the schoolyard. Parents can contact their children (and vice versa) through the office in an emergency and thus phones are not necessary at school. Should a parent provide a cell phone to their child for safety purposes on the journey to and from school, it is the policy of the WRDSB and our school that they be powered off and stored out of sight for the duration of the school day, including nutrition/activity break times.

The school is not responsible for the loss or damage of any valuable items brought to school.

#### **BUS EXPECTATIONS**

The rules and regulations for student transportation were developed by the Student Transportation Services of the Waterloo Region. The school bus is to be considered an extension of the classroom or school. Safe and appropriate behaviour is expected. Inappropriate or unsafe behaviour may result in a student losing the privilege to ride the school bus. JK and SK students must be met at the bus stop by an adult when they are dropped off. If an adult is not present it is our policy that young students are returned to the school and parents must come to the school to pick up the student.

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education builds healthy bodies and encourages a lifelong love of fitness. Students will have daily physical activity, either DPA in the classroom or P.E. in the gym. Our gym floor is made of special material that is shock absorbent and good for sports, but it is sensitive to damage by dirt and water, so running shoes are the only footwear permitted.

Students must wear appropriate clothing in the gym. In Kindergarten through Grade 2, appropriate clothing consists of running shoes that do not mark the gym floor and that are not worn outside. In the later grades, students are to wear a gym uniform of a loose-fitting t-shirt, shorts, socks and running shoes that are for indoor use and do not mark the floor. For hygiene, it is expected that older students will not wear the same clothes to gym as to class. Students unable to participate in Physical Education due to illness or injury must bring a note from parents and/or a doctor.

For safety and security, we have a no jewelry policy in place for P.E. class. Earrings, necklaces and bracelets or watches may get caught during games. (Medic Alert bracelets & religious items are allowed)

Therefore, students are to leave all jewelry, as well as, any valuable items or money in student lockers or at home on days in which they have P.E. class. The school cannot assume responsibility for valuables left in the gym or change rooms.

#### **CONCUSSION**

Silverheights will follow the concussion protocol outlined by WRDSB. Caregivers must inform the school if there is a suspected/confirmed concussion experienced by their child.

#### TRAVELLING ON WHEELS

Travelling to school on a bicycle, skateboard or scooter is a great form of exercise. In order to prevent accidental collisions with other people, students are not permitted to ride bicycles, skateboards, scooters or rollerblades onto school property. We say "walk your wheels on school property". Bicycles must be stored and locked in the bike racks while other wheeled items should be stored as directed by classroom teachers.

#### **HOMEWORK**

The amount and type of homework that students have will vary with the grade, subject and individual work habits of the student. At Silverheights we do not assign a set amount of homework by grade or class. Teachers make this decision based upon the idea that homework should support the learning in the classroom. Parents should check the planner and School Day every night for messages or information. If you have concerns about a homework assignment contact your child's teacher. For more tips go to, <a href="http://edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/tips/homework.html">http://edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/tips/homework.html</a>

#### LIBRARY BOOKS

It is the student's responsibility to return all library books in good condition. A student must replace a lost or damaged library book at cost. It is imperative that families pay the replacement cost as we do not have a replacement budget. We have 760 students in our school. If all students lost one book and did not pay to replace it, we would have no books left in our library. Should students not replace a library book or pay the replacement cost they will not be permitted to sign out a library book the following September until this has been taken care of.

#### REPORT CARDS

Teachers assess student achievement on a daily basis. Assessment may include observation, conversations, projects, and daily assignments. There are three reporting periods in the school year in grades 1-8. The first report is a Progress Report and the other two reports are formal Provincial Achievement Report Cards. Kindergarten students have only two report cards a year in February and June. All parents are invited to attend parent/ student/ teacher conferences and interviews throughout the year. Parents with questions or concerns about their child's progress should contact the classroom teacher.

#### STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

#### We are Silverhawks who soar to new heights when we:

Share a safe and supportive school
Own our choices of attitude and behaviour
Achieve academic and personal goals
Respect ourselves and others.

## All students, staff, parents and visitors have a right to be safe in their community school.

From time to time any child may make a poor choice. We work with our students to talk things out and learn how to solve problems in an effective manner. When necessary, we work through a progressive discipline model where the severity of the consequence changes based on the number of incidences and/or the severity of the situation. The purpose of progressive discipline is to help students to regulate their behavior and make positive decisions which keep themselves and others safe.

#### In an effort to keep everyone safe:

- Any game or activity that involves tackling or excessive rough play is not permitted on school grounds.
- We have a "hands off' policy.
- Any inappropriate or offensive language will be dealt with immediately and if it continues will result in progressive discipline.
- Students are expected to comply with reasonable requests from any staff member and a failure to do so will result in progressive discipline.

#### **How to Solve a Problem**

The following diagram is used with students as a reminder of strategies to use when having a problem in class or on the playground.

- 1. Use your friendly words- be respectful
- 2. Walkaway
- 3. Tell a teacher or a caring adult

#### **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

We deem bullying and harassment to be serious offenses. Physical and verbal bullying or intimidation has no place at our school. Harassment in the form of sexual, ethno cultural or racial abuse etc. will not be tolerated. Immediate consequences will apply and may include suspension from school for a period of time.

### **Bullying has been defined by the Ministry of Education as:**

"...a form of repeated, persistent, aggressive behaviour that is directed at an individual(s) that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear, distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance."

The following chart helps provide an assessment tool to help define the issues that might arise within a school setting.

Rough Play	Conflict	Bullying
Usually friends or friendly towards each other. Often repeated. Same players.	Acquaintances or friends. Occasional. Usually issue-centred, until resolved; could centre around misunderstanding, misinformation or no common ground.	Typically not friends, however may have had a relationship previously. Intentional target. Repeated and persistent.
Balance of power. Equal, consensual reaction.	Power is relatively equal. Equal or near equal emotional reaction.	Unequal power. Bully's reaction meets own intrinsic need for power and control (consciously). Strong emotional, mental and physical reaction for the target.
Not seeking power or attention.	Not seeking power or attention.	Attempt to gain power and control, possessions or popularity.

No intention to harm.	Intention to sort out who is right.	Intentionally harm-doing.
Intention is fun. If something goes wrong, then remorse.	Remorse - takes responsibility.	Bully may or may not show remorse. May or may not know what they are doing is wrong. May blame the target or believe the target deserves it.

If a child is bullied or bullies another, it is important that school staff and parents work together to help stop the behaviour and develop strategies to prevent the behaviour from happening again. We will not tolerate bullying at Silverheights or any other behaviour which is in violation of our code of conduct. Internet bullying is an increasing phenomenon in the community and inappropriate online behaviour may lead to police involvement.

It is also important to celebrate great student behaviour that we see at school. We celebrate great student behavior on a daily basis.

#### APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

We ask that you help your child make good decisions about what to wear to school. Clothing should be clean, neat, appropriate and safe. Our dress code is a set of guidelines about what is acceptable to wear to school.

#### This means:

- T-shirts should not have inappropriate sayings, logos or images
- Gang identification may not be worn in school

If a student is dressed inappropriately they will be required to change their clothes which may result in the student having to go home to change. We want to foster a sense of school pride and responsibility as well as encouraging a positive learning environment. Thank you for your support in this.

#### ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AND HANDHELD DEVICES

All families should consult the WRDSB website and review Procedure 4070 (Responsible Use Procedure for Information, Communication and Collaboration Technologies) with their child(ren).

**Handheld devices** (smartphones, tablets and laptops) are becoming more popular every year. From time to time teachers may allow students to bring them for use in learning activities. They can be distracting to teaching and learning in classrooms and require responsible use.

# The following rules for use of devices need to be followed:

- Devices must remain in lockers or backpacks for the entire school day unless requested by a teacher for learning purposes
- Students may not use devices for picture capturing, audio recording or video recording unless directed by their teacher
- Students may not post any images or recordings to websites or attach them to messages
- Students will demonstrate respect for and adhere to the school rules and digital citizenship guidelines of the WRDSB when using devices

#### Failure to follow the rules will result in:

- 1st Warning: Student asked to put device away in locker. Admin notified. Phone call home.
- **2nd Warning:** Student brings device to office. Pick up device at the end of the day. Phone call home.
- **3rd Warning:** Student brings device to the office. Device is picked up from the school by a parent/guardian. Students are no longer able to bring device to school. Meeting set up with the admin to make a plan for the student to bring the device back to school.

We also want students to have healthy online interactions and so the WRDSB reminds students to **THINK before they post** an email or social media message. The letters stand for five simple questions for them to ask themselves before they press 'send'.

Is the message true, helpful, inspiring, necessary and kind?

#### **CHRONIC LATES AND ABSENCES**

# All students are expected to be in regular attendance once registered at school and to be punctual and adhere to school hours.

Consistent attendance is important to your child's overall progress and continued absence undermines the benefits that a school experience can provide. If your child has medical reasons to justify frequent absences, please let the office know as soon as possible. Your child's teacher will make you aware when absences have reached beyond **10** school days. If absences go beyond **15** days in a school year, administration would like to meet with students and families to discuss solutions to resolve the issue. Absences of **20** days or more will be directed to our school's social worker and/or Family and Children Services. Our goal is to work with families to minimize the days away other than those needed due to illness.

Lates significantly reduce the quality and quantity of learning time the student receives. As well, arrival on time is an important life skill that all students need to learn and will use throughout their lifetime. It is the expectation that all students arrive promptly at 8:45 a.m. at their entry door and they enter with their class unless they are attending an appointment with a parent.

Habitual lates will be looked at on a case by case basis, so that as a team we can create health attendance.

# **LEARNING SKILLS AND WORK HABITS**

In Grade 1-8 Learning skills and Work Habits are assessed and reported on in each report period over the year. The learning skills are graded using letters that represent; N for needs improvement, S for satisfactory, G for good and E for excellent. There are six areas of learning skills that are assessed based on a teacher's observations of the students' overall work habits. These learning skills play a crucial role in your child's success.

# Responsibility

The student:

- fulfills responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment;
- completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines
- takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour.

## **Organization**

The student:

- devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks;
- establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals;
- identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks.

# **Independent Work**

The student:

- independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals;
- uses class time appropriately to complete tasks;
- follows instructions with minimal supervision.

#### Collaboration

The student:

- accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group;
- responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others;
- builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions;
- works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals;
- shares information, resources, and expertise and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.

#### **Initiative**

The student:

- looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning;
- demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks;
- demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning;
- approaches new tasks with a positive attitude;
- recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.

# **Self-regulation**

The student:

- sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them;
- seeks clarification or assistance when needed;
- assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests;
- identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals;
- perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.

# **CHILD AND YOUTH WORKER (CYW)**

The CYW provides services for students whose school success is at risk due to social, emotional or behavioural problems. If a teacher is concerned about a student the teacher will communicate this with parents first. The teacher will then bring the student forward to School Based Team where the concerns will be discussed. Following this meeting the CYW may see the student for a short term on his/her caseload. Our CYW does not do long term counselling, however, the CYW can provide contacts in the community for parents to access.

#### **LOCKERS**

Students in Grades 7 & 8 are assigned lockers in which to keep their personal property and school materials. Students will be required to give their combination to their homeroom teacher. A record of all locker numbers and locks is kept at the office. **Students must have a combination lock on his/her locker at all times and the locker is to be kept locked at all times.** 

All contents of the locker are the responsibility of the individual student. In the interest of security, it is essential that students do not share their lockers and lock combination with any other students. Locks and lockers may not be exchanged or traded. All lockers remain the property of the Waterloo Region District School Board and the administration has the right to search lockers at any time.

#### **Guidelines for the Use of Lockers**

- The locker is to be used to store a student's books, other school material and personal clothing and belongings
- It is the responsibility of students to maintain their locker in a neat, clean condition. The homeroom teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal, will periodically inspect lockers.
- No student should enter another student's locker unless they are sharing one.
- No breakables or items which may spill are to be kept in the locker.
- Students who tamper with locks and lockers belonging to other students may lose the privilege of having a locker at school, and will face disciplinary action.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Ministry of Education Website has a wide variety of resources and ideas for parents to support their children's learning. When you go to the Ministry of Education home page, you will see a tab called parents at the top, when you click on it you will see a number of links.

- Parent Information
  - http://edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/multiLanguages.html
  - Important information for parents, in many languages.
- Safe and Accepting Schools
  - http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/safeschools.html
  - o A safe learning environment is essential if students are to succeed in school.
- Parent Engagement
  - http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/
  - As parents you play a vital role in the development and education of your children and in their success at school. Learn more about how to get involved.

The WRDSB website at <a href="https://www.wrdsb.ca">https://www.wrdsb.ca</a> also has many things of interest to parents. For example, at <a href="https://www.wrdsb.ca/learning/board-improvement-">https://www.wrdsb.ca/learning/board-improvement-</a>

and-equity-plan/, you can find the Board Improvement and Equity Plan that outlines all of the goals we are working on as a school board and as a school.

#### **GROWTH MINDSET**

Mindset is a simple idea discovered by	
world-renowned Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck, in decades of	I
research on achievement and success, a simple idea makes all the difference.	ľ
In a fixed mindset, people believe their	Ι
basic qualities, like their intelligence or	Ti

In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success without effort. They're wrong.

In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard

Developing a Growth MINDSET		
INSTEAD OF THINKING	TRY THINKING	
I'm not good at this	What am I missing?	
I give up	I'll use a different strategy	
It's good enough	Is this really my best work	
I can't make this any better	I can always improve	
This is too hard	This may take some time	
I made a mistake	Mistakes help me to learn	
I just can't do this	I am going to train my brain	

work-brains and talent are just the	I'll never be that smart	I will learn how to do this
starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is	Plan A didn't work	There's always Plan B
essential for great accomplishment.	My friend can do it	I will learn from them

#### **CODE OF DIGITAL CONDUCT**

Students using computers are expected to follow the Waterloo Region District School Board's Conduct quidelines:

