

October 1st, 2022

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Hitting Our Stride

What an exciting first month of school we have had. This period of time is always a flurry of activity, when the relaxed summer routine is broken off, and we all have to change gears in a short span of time. I think this stellar weather we've been enjoying has also made it a little harder to break out of 'summer mode'. Regardless, our transition back to school has gone remarkably well.

I'd like to take this moment to thank our staff for everything they have done to create a safe and welcoming environment for our students. It takes a special mix of energy, enthusiasm, patience and skill to work with students. All of those qualities have been put to the test these past couple years. While things are certainly much easier now as we return to 'normal', COVID-19 is still on our minds. With World Teachers' Day on October 5th, please take a moment to let the adults that support your child or children know you appreciate them.



Daily Health Check

I'd like to thank everyone for keeping their children home when they are feeling ill. I realize at times the kids are only mildly 'under the weather', but this cautious approach is a wise course of action, given what we know about COVID-19. So far, most

of the illness we have experienced seems to be due to colds. This is not unusual for this time of year, as the weather turns, and children adjust to new routines. Taking a day or two to get their rest is never a bad thing, and it helps curb the spread of germs to others.

Bell Schedule

8:00 Supervision Begins
8:10 Warning Bell
8:15 Classes in session
10:05-10:20 Recess
11:55 – 12:10 Lunch Eating Period
12:10-12:55 Lunch Play Time
2:15 Dismissal
2:15 – 2:30 Supervision after school

If you look over the Daily Health Check form, you'll see that if your child has one or more of the **key symptoms**, i.e. fever, chills, cough, difficulty breathing, and/or loss of sense of smell or taste, you should keep your child home until they are well and consult your doctor or call 811. In most cases, because these **key symptoms** are more significant potential indicators of COVID, the advice provided is to go get tested, but this is something to talk over with a health care professional.

On the Daily Health Check form, there is a short list of **other symptoms**- loss of appetite, headache, body aches, extreme fatigue or tiredness, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. There are a much wider variety of potential causes for these symptoms, but each one merits taking at least a day of rest at home. If your child only has one of these **other symptoms**, the advice is to stay home until they're feeling better. If you have 2 or more of these symptoms, you are to stay home as well. However, if these symptoms persist or worsen after 24 hours,

you should consult your doctor or call 811 for further advice.

Allergy Alert

Every year, as students come and go from Cheam, we review all the allergy alerts we are informed about and adjust our safety plans accordingly. Some of these issues are managed quite easily, and only staff really need to be aware. Others are potentially more serious, and we need further support. Currently, our school is a 'peanut aware' school, which means we all must refrain from having products which may contain peanuts at school. We do this because it is necessary for the safety of a few of our students, whose allergies are very sensitive and potentially life-threatening. In addition to peanut allergies, we have many students with a range of other allergies we need to concern ourselves with to some degree. In some cases, you may receive specific guidance from your child's teacher, as the extra precautions required may only be necessary within that classroom. If you receive such a letter, please read it through carefully. If you ever have any questions or concerns about food safety, or need advice on alternatives, please do not hesitate to ask.

Code of Conduct

To view our complete Code of Conduct, follow this link: <https://cheam.sd33.bc.ca/code-conduct>. We review this document annually. Feedback is invited.

Unstructured Play Time

Every year, we see a range of toys and other items that rise in popularity, and the kids really want to bring them to school. Every year, we also have to help manage a range of challenges presented by these items. The current trend is fidget toys and cards. Trading these cards and toys is a very common thing for our students, in spite of our insistence they not do this. There's nothing inherently wrong with trading, however, not all of

our students understand the value of these items, nor do they appreciate that a trade is permanent.

Truly, the purpose of unstructured playtime (recess and lunch) is for the kids to run around, explore, use their imagination, and have fun challenging themselves, all in the company of their friends and classmates. They do not need fidget toys or cards to keep them entertained.

Another point on the fidget toys- these devices were intended as tools in the classroom. Some students use them to maintain their focus on the task at hand, helping them be more successful. Unfortunately, they are most often a source of distraction, and curb students' ability to attend to their schoolwork. If your child's teacher sees them benefitting from this tool, they will be permitted to continue. However, if your child's teacher observes the opposite, the student will be asked to put it away. Your support in reinforcing this with your kids is greatly appreciated.

Labeling Clothing

Please label all your children's clothing (jackets, shoes, gym strip, etc.). It is amazing what can get lost at school! To eliminate lost clothing, please put your child's name on the label of their personal items.

Parking Lot

The general flow in our parking lot in the morning is smooth most days, but it can also be quickly thrown into disarray when traffic is heavier, or individuals don't adhere to the expectations. Here is a link to a [video](#) we created a couple years ago, guiding you through the basics. Two additional points I need to highlight relate to the bus lane and safe walking areas.

As pedestrians, the safest place to be walking is along the sidewalk. The sidewalks will guide you safely to one of two crosswalks- one by the main

entrance, and the other just before the exit. Additionally, we have narrow walking lanes along two sides of the lot, marked by striped, yellow paint. Pedestrian traffic must remain within these areas.

Second, the bus lane is for bus use only, **at all times of day**. The *only* exception to this would be when directed by staff. In the morning, at times we can get a backlog of traffic along Banford Road, and the only way for folks to proceed is if cars are directed through the bus lane. As soon as the pressure has been relieved, we'll stop allowing cars through the bus lane. Why? Please refer to my points about safe walking areas.

This is a snapshot of events on the horizon. Please keep your eyes on the website for details and updates.

Important Dates in October

Oct 5: World Teachers Day
Oct 7: Pro-D Day
Oct 10: Thanksgiving (no school)
Oct 14: Hot Lunch
Oct 20: ShakeOutBC Earthquake drill
Oct 21: Professional Development Day
Oct 28: Trunk or Treat family event

Important Dates in Nov./Dec.

Nov 1: Photo Retakes
Nov 4: Early Dismissal
Nov 8: Indigenous Veterans Day
Nov 10: Remembrance Assembly/Hot Lunch
Nov 11: Remembrance Stat Holiday
Nov 12: Professional Development Day
Nov 13-19: Rock Your Mocs Week
Nov 25 and 28: Professional Development Days
Nov 30: Mo'vember

Dec 2: Hot Lunch
Dec 9: School Spirit Day (Red/Green)
Dec 16: Last Day of 2022/ Term One Reports


Communication

If you want to know what's going on at school, our website is an excellent place to begin. Visit <http://cheam.sd33.bc.ca/>. Key areas to focus on are the *Home* page, the *Calendar* and *News and Events*. The site will be updated regularly. We will also send out periodic reminders via our email system: sysadmin@myeducation.gov.bc.ca.

Our monthly newsletters will only be published online. If you require a paper copy, please inform Merilee at the office.

There is a Cheam Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cheamelementary/>, which has proven to be an excellent vehicle for sharing information and keeping families connected. I encourage you to visit the site and request to be added to the group. Please understand this is a parent forum, with parent administrators. If you ever need to get a hold of me or other staff, best to contact us directly.

Your child's teacher will also be in regular contact with you, of course, perhaps by newsletter, communication book, planner, class website, email or phone.

 <h2 style="text-align: center;">DAILY HEALTH CHECK</h2>	
KEY SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS	WHAT TO DO
Fever (above 38°C) Chills Cough Difficulty breathing Loss of sense of smell or taste	If yes to 1 or more of these symptoms: Stay home. Contact a health care provider or call 8-1-1 about your symptoms and next steps.
OTHER SYMPTOMS	WHAT TO DO
Sore throat Loss of appetite Headache Body aches Extreme fatigue or tiredness Nausea or vomiting Diarrhea	If yes to 1 symptom: Stay home until you feel better. If yes to 2 or more of these symptoms: Stay home for 24 hours. If symptoms don't get better or get worse, contact a health care provider or call 8-1-1 about your symptoms and next steps.
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL:	WHAT TO DO
Have you returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?	If yes: Fully vaccinated students, staff and other adults who have travelled outside of Canada may qualify for the fully vaccinated traveller exemption . Students, staff and other adults who are not fully vaccinated and have travelled outside of Canada CANNOT attend school for 14 days after arrival , as part of federal requirements .
CLOSE CONTACT	WHAT TO DO
Have you been notified by public health that you are a close contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?	If yes: Follow the instructions provided by Public Health.

You can also check your symptoms with the [K-12 Health Check](#) or the [BC Self-Assessment Tool](#).

Call 8-1-1 with any questions about symptoms of illness. If you have severe symptoms, like difficulty breathing (struggling to breathe or you can only speak single words) or chest pain, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

Visit the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](#) for more information on COVID-19.