

# Helen Gorman Elementary

*Where Kindness Grows*

Central Okanagan Public Schools

## HGE Family Handbook



Principal | Jessica Anjos  
Administrative Assistant | Lia Monroe  
3230 Salmon Road, West Kelowna, BC, V4T 1A7  
**Telephone** | (250) 870 - 5116  
Web Site | <https://hge.sd23.bc.ca>  
Email | [hge@sd23.bc.ca](mailto:hge@sd23.bc.ca)

*We regard it an honour to live, learn, and connect on the unceded, ancestral, and traditional territory of the Syilx Okanagan People.*

# The Central Okanagan Public Schools Goal Statement:

Our learners will develop foundational skills and core curricular competencies so that they can be empowered to follow their passions and strengths and thrive holistically as resilient and engaged global citizens. The following outlines the attributes of a learner in Central Okanagan Public Schools.

<b>The Attributes</b>	<b>What it means at HGE</b>
<p>A <b>Learner</b> is a person who is engaged, resilient and seeks to understand through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Literacy, Numeracy, and Subject competencies</i></li> <li>• <i>Information, Media and Technology Literacy</i></li> <li>• <i>Self-Direction, Work Ethic and Accountability</i></li> <li>• <i>Healthy Lifestyle</i></li> <li>• <i>Financial Literacy</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>A Learner...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is enthusiastic about learning and accomplished across the curriculum</li> <li>• Can transfer and apply learning to real-life situations</li> <li>• Shows higher-level thinking skills</li> <li>• Is self-motivated, independent, organized and persistent</li> </ul>
<p>A <b>Thinker</b> is a person who analyzes, makes connections, inferences, asks questions, and transfers knowledge through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Critical Thinking and Problem Solving</i></li> <li>• <i>Open Mindedness and Reflection</i></li> <li>• <i>Flexibility and Adaptability</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>A Thinker...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asks questions</li> <li>• Can solve problems with a variety of different strategies</li> <li>• Considers multiple points of view</li> <li>• Is self-reflective and seeks feedback for improvement</li> </ul>
<p>An <b>Innovator</b> is a person who sees possibilities and generates original ideas with value through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Curiosity and Imagination</i></li> <li>• <i>Creativity, Design, and Performance</i></li> <li>• <i>Initiative and Entrepreneurship</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>An Innovator...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is imaginative, creative and curious</li> <li>• Willing to take thoughtful risks with their learning</li> <li>• Explores new and unique solutions to problems</li> <li>• Is resourceful and inquiry focussed</li> </ul>
<p>A <b>Collaborator</b> is a person who excels at working with others to create new understanding through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Appreciating Diversity</i></li> <li>• <i>Effective Communication</i></li> <li>• <i>Interdependence</i></li> <li>• <i>Relationship Building</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>A Collaborator...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is inclusive and accepting of others and their ideas</li> <li>• Communicates clearly and respectfully</li> <li>• Works well as a part of a team and supports all members in a group</li> </ul>
<p>A <b>Contributor</b> is a person who participates in the local and global community through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Finding, Following, and Sharing Passions</i></li> <li>• <i>Respect, Empathy, and Kindness</i></li> <li>• <i>Integrity and Ethical Behaviour</i></li> <li>• <i>Civic and Environmental Responsibility</i></li> <li>• <i>Embracing Diverse Cultures and Lifestyles</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>A Contributor...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is kind, respectful, empathetic and compassionate</li> <li>• Sets a positive example for others</li> <li>• Willingly volunteers to make the school community a better place; shows responsible citizenship</li> <li>• Shows initiative and actively participates in classroom and school activities</li> </ul>



# Helen Gorman Elementary

## Student Code of Conduct

At Helen Gorman Elementary School, we recognize that each child and situation is unique and we will always strive to ensure that our school is a *safe and caring environment* in which to learn and work. Helen Gorman Elementary School promotes the values expressed in the BC Human Rights Code, respecting the rights of all individuals in accordance with the law – prohibiting discrimination based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, gender or sexual orientation. Behaviour or communication that discriminates based on any of the prohibited grounds listed will be treated seriously by our school. The code of conduct at Helen Gorman Elementary School is based on the following balance of rights and responsibilities.

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have the right to learn.</p>	<p>Students have the responsibility to actively participate and be responsible learners.</p> <p>Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>always trying their best</i></li> <li>• <i>being on time and ready to work</i></li> <li>• <i>staying focussed and not distracting others</i></li> <li>• <i>completing assignments and using a planner</i></li> </ul>
<p>Students have the right to be respected.</p>	<p>Students have the responsibility to respect others (not to bully, tease, pick on, or harass others).</p> <p>Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>being polite and waiting your turn</i></li> <li>• <i>using kind words</i></li> <li>• <i>using good listening skills</i></li> <li>• <i>being honest and telling the truth</i></li> </ul>
<p>Students have the right to be safe.</p>	<p>Students have the responsibility to behave in a safe manner and to protect the safety of others.</p> <p>Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>walking calmly; no running in the hallways</i></li> <li>• <i>staying in the designated areas</i></li> <li>• <i>playing games safely</i></li> <li>• <i>reporting dangerous situations to staff</i></li> </ul>
<p>Students have the right to privacy and security of personal space.</p>	<p>Students have the responsibility to respect the property and privacy of others (students, staff and community).</p> <p>Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>not touching other people's property without permission</i></li> <li>• <i>respecting personal boundaries</i></li> <li>• <i>asking before photographing/recording someone</i></li> </ul>
<p>Students have the right to use student equipment and property.</p>	<p>Students have the responsibility to use the equipment and property according to all applicable rules and with care and respect.</p> <p>Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>cleaning up after yourself</i></li> <li>• <i>asking before borrowing</i></li> <li>• <i>returning materials promptly and neatly</i></li> </ul>

# Student Code of Conduct Continued

## Inappropriate Behaviours:

Inappropriate behaviour can consist of, but is not limited to:

- rudeness, swearing
- fighting (or play fighting)
- lack of respect for others including teasing
- throwing objects (rocks, sticks, pine cones, snowballs etc.)
- littering
- defiant behaviour, insolence
- running in the halls
- public displays of affection in a romantic or sexual nature
- unauthorized leaving of the school grounds

Forms of unacceptable conduct cited above are only some examples and not an all-inclusive list.

## Consequences:

Consequences will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, respecting individual rights, responsibilities, age, and maturity; and will be restorative rather than punitive in nature.

Inappropriate behaviour typically has the following consequences:

- review of the expectations and a pause from learning in class
- review of the expectations, written assignment and loss of privileges
- restorative acts to give back to the school community
- parents are notified and possible meeting with parents
- short-term (in school or at home) suspension up to 5 days
- long-term suspension (over 5 days) or referral to district program
- consultation with police and/or fire department
- expulsion

Students are expected to abide by the school code of conduct when travelling to and from the school. Accordingly, students may be disciplined for violations which occur off school property and outside of instructional hours if such violations adversely affect students or the operation of any school.

## Major Infractions:

Students involved in major infractions (i.e. smoking, fighting, drugs, alcohol, vandalism, overt or repeated defiance) will be dealt with by the administration. Parents will be contacted and informed of the disciplinary procedures. A suspension may occur as a result of a major violation. The RCMP will be contacted if the incident is against the law and an indefinite suspension may result. Such incidents will be dealt with in accordance with School Board Policy and Regulations on Discipline. In a report of something illegal or dangerous, the school reserves the right to search a student, locker, vehicle and belongings.

## Safe and Caring School Environments:

Are free from acts of:

- bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment and marginalization
- threat and intimidation
- violence in any form
- abuse in any form
- discrimination in any form including race, colour, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, ancestry or national origin
- retribution against a person who has reported incidents

Do not tolerate the presence of:

- theft and vandalism
- intoxicating or banned substances
- weapons or replica (toy) weapons and explosives
- intruders or trespassers - All visitors to the school must first report to the office



## Notification:

As circumstances warrant, administrators have a responsibility to advise other parties following a behaviour incident:

- parent of a student exhibiting major behaviours
- parent of a student on the receiving end of concerning behaviours
- District staff including Directors, Assistant Superintendents, Safe Schools Team Members and Superintendent of Schools
- Ministerial agencies and/or School Liaison Officers (Police)

Helen Gorman Elementary School's Code of Conduct has been structured to align with and adhere to the standards outlined in:

- The School Act 85(1.1) 168 (2) (s.1) Provincial Standards Ministerial Order 276/07, effective October 17, 2007
- BC Human Rights Code, (SD 23 Policy 450 and Regulation No. 450 - Discrimination Toward and by Students)
- SD 23 Policy 455 and Regulation 455 - Discipline
- SD 23 Policy 486 - Student Use of Electronic and Social Media Communication
- BC Ministry of Education: Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools A Guide (Nov. 2008) and Developing and Reviewing Codes of Conduct: A Companion (Aug. 2007), both found at <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/>

# School Procedures, Policies and General Information

## **Accident Insurance**

Central Okanagan Public Schools does not insure expenses for student injuries that happen on school grounds or during school activities. It is possible for parents and guardians to voluntarily purchase private accident insurance at a reasonable cost. Optional student accident insurance is underwritten by an independent insurance company. The Kids Plus Accident Insurance Program that was previously offered to our students was discontinued in 2019. The IA Financial Group now offers the Family Accident Reimbursement Plan (FARP) which is a voluntary plan that provides coverage for students and their families against accidental injury, unexpected medical expenses and critical illness. To apply for the FARP visit: <https://specialmarkets.ia.ca/aonbc/home>

## **Adventure Playground**

All students may use the Adventure Playground at anytime. Please note that proper footwear is encouraged on the adventure. Flip flops, Crocs and shoes that are not secured to your feet are not permitted as they are not as safe as a closed toed secured shoe. The following are reminders about the adventure playground; no walking on top of the monkey bars; one person at a time on swings and no side to side swinging; no running games on the adventure playground; slides are feet first only and wood chips are to stay on the ground.

## **After School Bell**

At 2:45pm each day the bell will ring again to indicate to students that supervision is concluding. If your child is walking/biking home from school, they will be asked to leave at that time if they haven't done so already. If you are picking up your child, we kindly ask that you arrive before 2:45pm. If a child hasn't connected with an adult by 2:45pm, they will be instructed to find a supervisor who will ensure the child is cared for and if necessary bring the child to the office to wait for or contact a parent or caregiver.

## **Allergy Awareness Zone**

We have several students and staff at Helen Gorman who are at **extreme risk of anaphylaxis** due to nuts and nut products. These students do not have to ingest nuts; they can have a reaction to airborne particles or residue left on surfaces. For the safety of all our students and staff, Helen Gorman is declared an **NUT AWARE SCHOOL**. Please do not send any products containing nuts to school. This includes but is not limited to peanut butter, granola bars with nuts, trail mixes, for example. Please read labels.

## **Animals on Property**

All animals, even on a leash, are prohibited from school property by District of Kelowna bylaw. Owners that violate the bylaw may be fined \$100 by the Regional District of Kelowna. If you are walking to meet your child and you have dog with you, please plan to meet your child off school property.

## **Bus Conduct**

In order to maintain a safe environment on our buses, students must abide by the following expectations. Students will:

- Remain in the area designated as a bus loading zone
- Board or disembark a bus in an orderly manner
- Remain seated in a seat assigned or assumed from the time they board the bus until the time they arrive at the destination
- Use “inside voices” on the bus—no hollering or loud talking
- Refrain from putting their heads or arms out of windows
- Refrain from talking to the bus driver while the bus is in motion
- Do everything possible to keep the bus clean, tidy and neat
- Do not eat or drink on a school bus without the driver’s permission
- Abide by instructions given by the bus driver

## **Call Home/Safe Arrival Program**

If a child is going to be late or absent, please remember to enter the absence through the School Messenger Safe Arrival system using the app, the website ([www.sd23.bc.ca/SchoolMessenger](http://www.sd23.bc.ca/SchoolMessenger)). You can load the app on your personal digital device. You can also call the school at 250-870-5116 and follow the prompts.

## **Code of Conduct**

The code of conduct at HGE is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of all students. All students are expected to abide by the expectations of the school code of conduct to ensure we have a safe and caring school environment. See page 3 and 4 for details.

## **Dress Code**

Discussions regarding student dress require the careful balance of the individual’s right to self expression with the school’s responsibility to ensure an appropriate learning environment. We encourage students to dress in a manner that promotes a positive image of self and the school. Consideration should be given to the health, safety and welfare of the school community. Although choices regarding student attire rest primarily with the parent and student, the school dress code identifies some standards that should assist these decisions and identify consistent expectations for the school as a learning community. To that end, administration along with the Parent Advisory Council, offer the following guidelines so that students learn to make good, independent decisions regarding their choice of clothing. All members of the school community are expected to dress in ways that are appropriate for their particular roles and show respect for themselves, for others and for the school. Footwear must be worn at all times. It is not appropriate to wear clothing that:

- Uses inappropriate language
- Depicts or promotes violence, racism or other discrimination
- Is intimidating to others, has brand names that relate to profanity
- Promotes drugs and alcohol

## **Emergency Preparedness**

Although we hope that our school will never be subjected to an emergency, we take Emergency Preparedness very seriously. The following are Drills and Practice measures we take as a school:

1. Six (6) Fire Drills per School Year. Three in the Fall & Three in the Spring.
2. Earth Quake Drill as part of Shake Out B.C.
3. Lockdown and Hold & Secure Drill
4. School Bus Evacuation Drills

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### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Throughout the year, teachers volunteer their time to run extra-curricular activities for the students of HGE. We appreciate these efforts and the support shown by parents. Notification of these activities will be announced in school and included in our newsletters and websites. Students who sign-up for extra-curricular activities are expected to attend practices regularly to build a sense of teamwork, follow-through with commitment and to best represent Helen Gorman at school district events.

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### **Head Lice and Childhood Diseases**

Parents of students with head lice are contacted by the school office. We encourage families to treat their children for the condition and try to be 'nit-free' before returning to school. Otherwise, the condition spreads or worsens. When a case of head lice occurs, a letter is sent home to all families in the class to let parents know to check their child for head lice. This letter does NOT contain the name of the student with head lice. Please contact the school, if you discover your child has head lice. The following [link](#) a guide to Common Childhood Diseases. Each infectious disease in this guide is described according to:

- What is it?
- How is it spread?
- Incubation Period
- When is the person contagious?
- How to prevent spread of the illness / infestation to other children

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### **Home/School Communication**

We want to do our best to keep you informed of activities and events that occur in and around the school. We will also try to keep you posted on district and community information. We rely heavily on our students to ensure the school notices are delivered home and that response slips or parent notes are returned to the school. The follow methods of communication are used at Helen Gorman:

- Newsletters: a published weekly HGE Cougar PAW will contain notes on special events and accomplishments in our school. These are available on our website and are emailed directly to parents. Thanks for taking the time to read them.
- Website (<https://hge.sd23.bc.ca>) Please check the site often for current information, newsletters and upcoming events.
- Email: we have the ability to send school-wide emails to our parent population to share latest updates and information. In addition, parents can email teachers and administration using the linked staff directory on the school website.
- SynerVoice: automated callout service from the school to all parents/guardians.
- Formal Written Learning Updates: will be issued in December, March and June.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences: these are scheduled opportunities to discuss your son's/daughter's progress. We encourage parents to call and arrange conferences as needed throughout the year.

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### **Hot Lunch Program**

The Helen Gorman Parent Advisory Council sponsors a Hot Lunch Program at our school. Parents prepay for meals which are generally delivered on a weekly basis. We thank the coordinators and the other volunteers for their hard work in ensuring the success of this program. You can learn more about the Hot Lunch Program by visiting: [www.munchalunch.com/schools/helengorman](http://www.munchalunch.com/schools/helengorman)

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### **Illness at School**

If students feel ill at school, they should ask their classroom teacher for permission to go to the office. Someone will contact a parent. Students who feel ill, should stay home until they feel better.

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### **Library Learning Commons**

Our Library Learning Commons (LLC) includes both the physical space of the library as well as a digital space available to our students. Our LLC has a collection of materials that is intended to support curriculum needs and to provide enjoyment for pupils. The collection also includes a limited selection of materials of particular interest to parents. Students are encouraged to exchange books frequently.

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### **Lost and Found**

Every year many articles are lost at school. It is recommended that nothing be brought to school that is of value or you cannot risk losing. Smaller items such as keys, jewelry and watches are kept at the office. Larger items and clothing are put in our "Lost and Found" bin in the hallway outside the library. Lost and found items are put out on display a number of times over the school year. Unclaimed items are donated to local charity.

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### **Lunch Time Procedures**

At the lunch bell (11:10am) students go outside to play, weather permitting. At 11:40am, the students come inside to eat their lunch. Students are to remain on school property for the entire school day. Students are also expected to demonstrate proper manners while eating and to clean up their eating area before the end of lunch hour. Student supervisors are on the grounds while students play outside and circulate between classrooms while students eat their lunch.

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### **Morning Entrance & Start-up Routines**

It is important for students to abide by the following procedures as school begins each day to ensure students are safely supervised while on school grounds. The first warning bell will ring at 8:27am. At this point, students should promptly line-up outside of the building at a designated spot and wait for their teacher/supervisor to let them into the building. Please consider appropriate clothing to deal with changing weather throughout the year. Students are to remain outside during non-instructional time unless part of a planned program. Students are to leave their backpacks in their outside line-ups in the mornings.

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### **Parent Advisory Council**

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is the officially recognized voice of the parents at the school level. Every parent or guardian of a child at Helen Gorman Elementary is a member of our PAC. Please contact our executive if you wish to make us aware of something requiring parental input or attention. The HGE PAC meets monthly to consider school issues of concern to parents, to organize parent education and to plan ways of supporting school programs. Our vision is to build community ties and enrich the educational experiences of our children. Meetings are conducted according to the constitution and by-laws of PAC, and the executive is elected by parents annually. The school principal or their representative attends the PAC meetings to facilitate consultation between the school and PAC. Refreshments and child minding are always provided. Please email [hgeparents@gmail.com](mailto:hgeparents@gmail.com) for any wonders you may have.

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### **Personal Digital Devices School Technology, and District Network Services**

Student use of personal digital devices (any device used to communicate and/or access the internet), school technology, and district networks at school is for educational purposes. Students must abide by the school's Code of Conduct and procedures, as well as Central Okanagan Public Schools Policy 486: Student Use of Network Services and Digital Technologies.

Students will:

- Secure, power off and store personal digital devices during instructional (i.e. class time) and non-instructional time (i.e. breaks/lunch) at Elementary schools unless instructed by the Principal or school staff;
- Use personal digital devices during instructional time for instructional purposes and digital literacy skills as instructed by the Principal or school staff;
- Ensure personal digital devices are not used in areas where privacy is expected, such as restrooms and change rooms;
- Be permitted to use personal digital devices to support accessibility, accommodations, medical and health needs;
- Always take precautions to ensure online safety, privacy, and security;
- Treat others with respect and kindness when using digital devices and district network services;
- Always use digital devices and district network services responsibly and with academic integrity.

Schools will ensure that all students have equitable and developmentally appropriate access to technology to meet curricular requirements. Students are not required to have their own personal digital device or cellphone at school. The use of personal digital devices, school technology, and district networks is a privilege. Staff may revoke a student's access to devices because of inappropriate student conduct. Violations of the school code of conduct could result in appropriate restorative processes or disciplinary actions including suspension and police intervention.

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### **School Based Team**

A School Based Team (SBT) is a group of school based personnel who work collaboratively with parents to best support their children in developing their academic and social/emotional skill set and by suggesting, providing, and implementing variety supports and strategies. At the SBT meeting, we will discuss what is working well for your child, highlight areas of continued growth, review any background history and brainstorm ideas of possible supports to be put into action. Please connect with Mrs. Kirkey (LAT and SBT Chair), [shannon.kirkey@sd23.bc.ca](mailto:shannon.kirkey@sd23.bc.ca), if you have any questions.

#### **Who is on the team?**

The SBT includes the following members:

- Principal
- Learning Assistance Teacher (SBT chair)
- Classroom Teacher

Often the SBT can also include:

- School Counsellor
- Speech Language Pathologist

On a case by case basis the SBT can include:

- Inclusion Teacher
- Indigenous Advocate
- Outside community support (pediatrician/therapist etc.)
- District Student Support Services staff

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**School Community Learning Plan**

In collaboration with staff, school administration, and the community, our school continually strives to improve. Our improvement model is based on an inquiry process, and involves fluid transition through an interconnected framework which incorporates these elements:

1. Scanning – asking what's going on for our learners?
2. Focusing – asking what can we do that will have the greatest impact on their learning?
3. Learning – determining what the school needs to learn to be able to impact student learning
4. Taking Action – applying the new learning in our classrooms / school
5. Checking – determining if what we have done has had the desired outcome

Our Learning Story shows our journey to date. Please find the plan on our school website. We will update it throughout the year. Parents are invited to comment, provide feedback, and input into the direction of our school improvement process.

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**School Search & Seizure Policy**

Student searches may be made based on reasonable suspicions of a violation of school rules and/or law. The search shall be made pursuant to the reasonableness, under all the circumstances, of the search. The search of the student shall be justified at its inception, based on reasonable suspicion and reasonable scope in light of the age and sex of the student. Contraband and other property unauthorized to be on school property or school sponsored activities will be seized for evidentiary purposes in a school hearing and/or legal hearing. Return of the property may be made to the parents/guardians of the student. Illegal contraband or other property will be turned over to the proper law enforcement.

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**School Fees**

Parents have the option of purchasing school supplies directly from the school. All students are expected to pay a cultural fee which covers the cost of various performances throughout the year. School fees are \$40 for supplies plus \$10 Cultural fee for a total of \$50.00. *School District Policy 425 – Student Fees* the Board of Education indicates “that a student will not be excluded from any educational program due to financial hardship”. This clause in the policy provides for the private and confidential consideration of financial circumstances of individual students and families, while preserving the dignity of families who may be unable to pay. Please contact the school Principal if you are facing a financial hardship that may restrict the ability of your child to access a school program.

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**Shoes and Additional Clothing**

Students are asked to bring a separate pair of runners for use within the school. Wearing winter boots throughout the school is not permitted. Indoor shoes will be used in the gym and throughout the school on days when the weather requires students to wear boots. Please ensure that these indoor shoes have non-scuff soles so that they don't mark the floors. During wet weather, it is advisable that all students have an extra T-shirt, pants, and a pair of socks at school in case a change of clothing is required.

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**Student Absences due to Family Vacation**

At times, we are approached by parents who need to take their child out of school for extended periods of time. Usually, this is for reasons associated with family plans or family business. We are respectful of the fact that many of our families have family members far away and spending time with them is important. Difficulties arise, however, when parents wish to be reassured that their child will not be “behind” in their work when they return. Please understand that, while your children will have other cultural and travel experiences that contribute to their overall development, the many varied daily classroom activities they will miss cannot be duplicated through worksheets or workbooks. We are not in the position to provide assignments for students prior to extended absences due to family plans. Upon the student's return, teachers will do their best to help students get “caught up” by providing missed assignments.

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**Student Health and Medication**

If your child suffers from a medical condition that may require emergency action, please ensure the office is aware and all the medical alert planning forms are on record at the school and updated each year. These forms are available at the office. Please do not send medication to school with children unless absolutely necessary. If this situation cannot be avoided, all medication is to be kept in the school office during school hours. Please see the school administrative assistant for proper authorization forms and other information. Please reference the school district's policies regarding medical treatment of students with policies no. 435; 435A; and 435R – see policy page [HERE](#). If your child becomes ill at school, he/she should alert a staff member who will then attempt to contact you, or your emergency contact.

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**Student Phone Use**

Students are permitted to use the school telephone only if circumstances are deemed important and they have permission from their classroom teacher or the office.

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**Student Pick-up and Drop-off Zones**

The HGE parking lot is an extremely busy place at the beginning and end of each school day. We want every student and their families to travel safely to and from school. Year round we endeavor to maintain a safe environment for all. Our parking lot is for staff only and for designated vehicles that have an accessible parking pass. The lane way is closed to all traffic except fire, bus, staff, and vehicles equipped with an accessible parking pass provided by our administration. The regional district urges motorists to not let their engines idle in school zones. If you see any illegal and/or unsafe traffic incidents, please fill out a "School Traffic Incident Report." We thank parents in advance for their compliance with these safety issues.

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## **Student Support Services**

### Learning Assistance:

The Learning Assistance Teacher (L.A.T.) assists classroom teachers in planning and implementing programs for students with specific needs within the regular classroom. The L.A.T. assists teachers with detailed assessment of students and communicates the necessary information to teachers, parents, administrators and to the student, if appropriate.

### Counsellor:

Every elementary school in Central Okanagan Public Schools are presently provided a staff counsellor on a part-time basis. The counsellor supports students who are experiencing emotional, social or behavioural problems at school or at home which affect their learning and personal well-being. The counsellor is available for consultation with staff, administration and parents who wish to discuss concerns about students so that strategies for improvement can be implemented.

The following services are also available to students at Helen Gorman: Speech and Language Assistance; Hospital/Homebound Services; School Psychologist; Indigenous Advocacy; Occupational Therapist; Physical Therapist; and Inclusion Teacher.

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## **Volunteers**

There are many opportunities for parents to become involved in the educational process at Helen Gorman. Any of the following areas would benefit from increased parent involvement:

- One-to-one reading programs
- Field-trip supervisors
- Classroom helpers
- Lunch program
- Coaching & extra-curricular clubs
- Living Library

Central Okanagan Public Schools and the RCMP require all adults in the school community who are wishing to volunteer to complete a criminal record check – valid for five years. Along with changes to the form, the process involved with becoming a volunteer was changed in April 2014. The completed forms will be sent by Helen Gorman to be processed. Once approved, the RCMP will send the confirmation TO THE VOLUNTEER. It is the volunteer's responsibility to return this confirmation to Helen Gorman, or the School Board Office, at which time; they will be added to our Volunteer list. NO ONE can volunteer until they have completed this process, and their name has been recorded on the Board Office list. Please contact the office, at 250-870-5116, if you have any questions or if you'd like to confirm if your Criminal Record check is current. If you are volunteering as a driver, you must complete the driver's volunteer forms (annual) and they must be resubmitted each year when your insurance expires. Drivers require appropriate insurance coverage. Forms and detailed insurance information are available at the school office. **Allow at least 3-4 weeks for the Criminal Record Checks to be completed before the needed volunteering time.**

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## **Weather Guidelines**

It is critical that students arrive at school each day prepared for cold weather during our Winter Months. Parents should check the local forecast for up-to-date weather information. Students must be dressed appropriately so that they remain safe and comfortable during the following times:

- Outside playtime before and after school
- Lunchtime playtime
- Recess
- Fire Drills (at all temperatures)
- Bus breakdowns
- Unscheduled and scheduled outside breaks and learning experiences.

We do not have a school or district policy for cold weather procedures. However, the following guidelines are in place at Helen Gorman Elementary.

### **BELOW FREEZING (-1 Celsius to -15)**

Students are expected to go outside. Parents should ensure that their child brings the following items needed to stay warm and comfortable when outside:

- Warm coat
- Boots
- Gloves/Mittens
- Waterproof snow pants
- Head/Ear Covering

Students will be expected to go outside for the duration of the forty minute play time providing the wind is calm and the students will be able to stay dry. The Environment Canada website (<http://www.weatheroffice.gc.ca>) will be used to check weather conditions. The same clothing items as noted above should be worn. If the wind starts to pick up and students start to show signs of significant discomfort, the bell will ring early to allow students to come inside to their classroom, computer lab, or library for the remainder of the outside play time. As teachers have a duty free lunch, noon hour supervisors will be responsible for formal supervision.

### **TEMPERATURE REACHES -16 Celsius**

If the temperature reaches minus 16 Celsius, and the grounds are dry and the wind is calm, students will go outside for 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, the bell will ring to allow students to come inside to their classroom, computer lab, or library for the remainder of the outside play time.

### **TEMPERATURE REACHES -20 Celsius (with windy conditions)**

If the temperature reaches minus 20 Celsius, and the wind is blowing at more than 20 km/h, students will stay inside during lunch and recess.

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## **Wheels**

Bicycles, scooters, skateboards, rollerblades and other similar equipment may not be used on school property unless a special supervised event is held. Students must walk their bikes and scooters to the racks and lock them securely upon their arrival at school. Students must provide their own locks. Heelies should not be worn at school. Please ensure your child has the necessary safety equipment (i.e. helmet) when riding their wheels.

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