

General School Information for Parents and Guardians for the 2023-24 School Year

We are very much looking forward to welcoming students and families to Queen Mary Community Elementary for the 2023-2024 school year. I hope you received the email that I sent out on Wednesday that outlines what the plans are for Tuesday and Wednesday next week. If you did not see that message I have attached the PDF here – and it is posted on our school website (click the links found in the announcements at the top of the main page).

PDF

The following contains information about our school that we ask all parents/guardians to please review prior to school starting next week. Please share relevant information with your child/children before the school year begins. We hope this document, and the content of the associated links and attachments, will provide your family with information needed for a successful transition into the school year.

General QM Information:

We welcome parents and guardians into the school! For safety reasons we require anyone entering the school during the instructional hours (i.e., after 8:47 and before dismissal time) to proceed directly to the office upon entering the school to check in with the office staff before proceeding anywhere else in the building. All adults spending time in the school must sign in and out at the office.

We kindly ask that parents/guardians follow this procedure of checking in at the office even if just quickly dropping off something for a child. Please do not go to the classroom door during the instructional hours as this disrupts teaching and learning. Please always proceed directly to the office and the office staff will assist with any communication or items needing to be delivered to a student.

We encourage “active” travel to school (walking, scooting, biking). We have bike racks at the front of the school and on the basketball courts, and students can carry their scooters or skateboards into the school to store in their classes. Please also ensure that your child has a bicycle lock so that it can be secured outdoors.

PLEASE note that bikes, scooters, and skateboards are NOT allowed to be ridden on school grounds between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., for safety reasons.

If having to drive your child/children to and from school PLEASE note the following:

Parking is available on the streets immediately surrounding the school. These streets can be busy at drop-off and pick-up times, so the best option is to park a block or two away and walk to/from the school with your child - a good form of exercise to start and end the day!

Please use the “drop-off and pick-up” zone in front of the school appropriately – it extends the length of the sidewalk. This area is for stopping **for very short times to drop off or pick up a child**. As per the bylaw, **parking is NOT allowed in this area** – drivers must stay with their vehicle when stopped in this drop-off zone.

Please **DO NOT use the school parking lot** for drop off, pick up OR to turn around. The school parking lot is for staff use only.

Dress your children for the weather of the day! Students will be expected to go outside for recess breaks and outdoor learning engagements, in rain, snow, or sunshine. Please make sure your child is dressed for the weather of the day. Raincoats are recommended over umbrellas, for safety reasons. It would be very helpful if you could write your child's name in coats and jackets so we can easily return them to the owner when we find them on the school grounds!

Please send your child to school each day with a healthy snack, lunch, and a filled water bottle. Water bottle refill stations are located on each floor in the school. Most students stay at school for lunch, however having your child go home for lunch is certainly an option! Children leaving the school at any time during the school day must be signed in and out at the office by a parent.

As per Vancouver Coastal Health guidelines, schools are "nut aware". We do recommend parents refrain from sending food containing nuts to school until medical "alerts" (especially anaphylaxis) are confirmed. Students eat in their classrooms so your child's classroom teacher will be able to let you know if their class is "nut-aware" or not.

Attendance and Absence Reporting:

Ensuring students arrive safely at school each day is a top priority for all schools in North Vancouver. All elementary schools in the North Vancouver School District use a student absence reporting system called *SafeArrival*, which is part of the [SchoolMessenger](#) platform.

INSERT PDF

[SafeArrival Absence Reporting](#)

Parents are requested to use this system to report an absence BEFORE 8:45 a.m. if their child is going to be late or absent from school, or if they need to leave during the school day for an appointment. If a child is going to be absent in the afternoon only, we request notification no later than 1:00 p.m. on the day of the absence.

If the school does not receive notification of a child's absence, a staff member will contact the parent/guardian, and if unable to reach, the emergency contact person, to confirm that the student is not at school.

*Please read to the attached **Important Information - Frequently Asked Questions** document for additional, important "general" school information.*

Home-School Communication

At Queen Mary, we strive to have ongoing communication with our parent community. We know that this strengthens community relationships, which in-turn supports the learning of our students. Communication with/from teachers, and the "Weekly Updates" that the Vice Principal and I email to families every Friday are the main means of staying informed of what is happening at school. Our school website is also an important source of information.

Regularly connecting with your child's classroom teacher(s) is recommended and encouraged! If you have information to share or a question that would only take a minute or two of the teacher's time, you can usually catch the teacher for a moment at drop off or pick up times. For anything that involves a longer conversation we ask that you request a meeting with the teacher to provide adequate uninterrupted time for discussion. The best way to reach a teacher is via email (staff emails can be found on the Staff Info tab of the school website) or by calling the main office and requesting a call back (604-903-3720)

[https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/StaffInfo/Pages/default.aspx#/="](https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/StaffInfo/Pages/default.aspx#/=)

Queen Mary School Website:

www.queenmarycommunityelementary.ca

or [LINK HERE](#)

We acknowledge there is a LOT of information on our school website, and it is not the easiest site to navigate, so in this email we are providing you with a list of links to help you find the information that is most important for you to review at the beginning of the school year.

Click on the **BOLD titles** in the list below to link to that specific section of our website.

HOME - Main Page [https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/Pages/default.aspx#/="](https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/Pages/default.aspx#/=)

Note the following:

- Announcements, at the top
- Quick links, on the right side
- News and Announcements and our current or "live" school events calendar, at the bottom of the page

Contact Information for School office, Admin, NVSD etc..

[https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/ContactInfo/Pages/default.aspx#/="](https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/ContactInfo/Pages/default.aspx#/=)

General QM office email: queenmary@sd44.ca

Jen Wilson, Principal: jwilson@sd44.ca

Erin Vandekerkhove, Vice Principal: evandekerkhove@sd44.ca

Staff Info

- Staff list and email addresses

[https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/StaffInfo/Pages/default.aspx#/="](https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/StaffInfo/Pages/default.aspx#/=)

Calendar and Hours of Instruction

[https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/Schedule/Pages/default.aspx#/="](https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/Schedule/Pages/default.aspx#/=)

- General school year dates (holidays reporting periods) and daily hours and "bell" schedule
- Instructions on how to report a child's absence also included in this section. *Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the school BEFORE 8:45 a.m. if their child is going to be late or absent from school.*

School fees and school supplies

[https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/Principal/Pages/default.aspx#/="](https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/Principal/Pages/default.aspx#/=)

Principal's messages (an archive of weekly emails) – scroll to the bottom of the page

[https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/Principal/Pages/default.aspx#/="](https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/Principal/Pages/default.aspx#/=)

This message will be posted under the **Principal's Messages** section for future reference!
<https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/Principal/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

QM Code of Conduct

<https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/Documents/QueenMaryCodeOfConduct.pdf>

QM Parent Advisory Council (QMPAC)

<https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/About/PAC/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

Alternatively, search **QME Parent Group on Facebook**. <https://www.facebook.com/QueenMaryPAC>

The QM PAC will be hosting their monthly meetings remotely, on ZOOM. All QM parent/guardians are invited to join in on these meetings. Email queenmarypac@gmail.com to id you have any questions. Providing connections and social time for QM parents/guardians is important to QM and the PAC. Our PAC will be hosting "coffee mornings" throughout the year - all parents are invited to attend! The first coffee social is set for Tuesday, September 6th.

Parents section

<https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/Parents/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

AND the sections listed on the left sidebar, especially the **Parent Handbook**

<https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/Parents/ParentHandbook/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

Other information of note:

School Plan

<https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/ProgramsServices/Library/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

- School Goals and Action Plans

International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program

https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/ProgramsServices/IB_PYP/Pages/default.aspx#/=

QM Library and Learning Resources Page

<https://www.sd44.ca/school/queenmary/ProgramsServices/Library/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

NVSD website <https://www.sd44.ca/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

NVSD Parents Tab

<https://www.sd44.ca/parents/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

Hope this helps, as a "walk through" of important information. Please contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,
Jen Wilson, Principal
jwilson@sd44.ca
Erin Vandekerkhove, Vice Principal
evandekerkhove@sd44.ca