



Birchland Elementary

Mr. D. Shannon, Principal

Telephone: 604-941-3428

Website: [Home - Birchland Elementary School](#)

"We belong. We care. We matter."

Fun in the rain! 😊

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

October	13	Thanksgiving Day
	20	Hot Lunch Day - Boston Pizza
	24	Professional Development Day

Principal's Message

And just like that, September has come and gone. It never ceases to amaze me how quickly the time passes. Hang on folks, it'll be the New Year before you know it!

I wanted to talk about making mistakes. In elementary school, we expect our students to make mistakes. I regularly tell students that any mistake is an opportunity to learn and better ourselves so that we do not repeat the same mistake(s) in the future (where the consequences can become greater).

If your child reports something to you that has happened at school and you wish to address it, please reach out to your child's teacher. Remember that you are only hearing one side of the story. Often, your child's teacher can add more information to provide a more complete picture, or they can talk to other students and / or staff members to get a more complete picture. This is a time when problems that are smaller can be handled before they become larger problems later.

I would also advise against talking to other parents about any incident(s) that happen at school, regardless of whether or not their child was involved. I have seen instances in which parents have asked other parents about what their child might have seen about something that has happened. This can put that child in a difficult position, and even if they are able to report on what they saw, again, remember that there may be more to the story than they are aware of and that they are only reporting a piece of it.

When a challenge happens at school between two students, we ask parents to please let the school handle the challenge. We can get the complete story from all parties that were involved or who witnessed what happened. When you hear from your child, you are hearing one side of

what happened. Check with your child to see if they have reported anything to an adult at school because sometimes, we hear about situations from parents that have been ongoing that we had no idea about. If your child is uncomfortable telling an adult, assure them that the adults are at the school to help them. If they are still uncomfortable, let them know that you will talk to their teacher so that the problem can be resolved. I know that as parents we want to get to the bottom of whatever the problem is and to try and resolve it as best we can. I have seen instances where parental friends have had their friendship strained because they tried to handle something from school themselves. I know that even with the best intentions, parents can get upset when their child has been accused of something and the full story has not been reported. When this makes its way into the community, often the problem becomes bigger.

At school, we are involved in handling situations every day and they range on a continuum from low to high. We make sure to talk to everyone involved so that we have the complete picture, and we move forward based on the information we obtain. We want to be sure that everyone has a chance to tell their perspective and that everyone is heard. When we move forward, while the students may not like the consequences that stem from what happened, they know that they were able to tell their side of the story. Even when this takes a lot of time to get through, the student(s) will often understand the problem and the role they played in it. The hope, as mentioned above, is that this will become a learning opportunity (for everyone). I often say that elementary schools are the "speed bumps" of life. These experiences offer us the opportunity to become better 😊

Dennis

Orange Shirt Day



Students at our Orange Shirt Assembly



Our talking stick

On Monday, we had our Orange Shirt Day and assembly. Our school has an Indigenous Youth Council and members from this council worked together to help create the agenda for the assembly. We are excited to have an Indigenous youth council and will look to include them in plans throughout the school year.

I met with the members who played a part in helping to organize the Orange Shirt Day Assembly and showed them a talking stick that I was gifted with and how I wanted to let them know that they could use this talking stick in their meetings. This talking stick is very important to me as it was a gift and the only people to touch it was the artist, my friend who gifted it to me, and myself.

StrongStart Program

Birchland's StrongStart program is up and running in the afternoons. This is a parent participation program for children 0-5 years of age. This means that parents must remain with their children for the time that they are in the program (it is a drop-in program, not a drop-off program 😊). Anyone needing to take part must register for this program and this can be taken care of when you arrive. Mrs. Jang, our Strong Start Facilitator, will take excellent care of you!

Absences/Early Pick Up

Thank you to everyone who is using our absence report to record their child's absences, lates, or early pick up. Absence report (found here): [AbsenceReportForm - New Form](#) If you are unable to access this form, please send us an email at the following address: birchland@sd43.bc.ca. This email will be received by our secretary and myself. If you wish to include your child's teacher, you may, but it is really important to include the office staff so that we can be certain when your child is away.

If your child needs to be picked up early, you can use the same absence report (above) and then let us know the early dismissal time (in the comment section). Thank you for your attention to this.

Breakfast Program

A reminder of our "set" menu:

MONDAY - Cereal, oatmeal, fruit, milk.

TUESDAY - Egg-Based (e.g. breakfast sandwiches, French toast), fruit, milk.

WEDNESDAY - Pancakes with yogurt and berry sauces, milk

THURSDAY - Cheese-Based (e.g. grilled cheese sandwiches, quesadillas, mini pizzas), fruit, milk

FRIDAY - Smoothies and toast.

Our intention is to try and make this consistent each week, BUT PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MENU CAN CHANGE ON ANY GIVEN DAY DUE TO LACK OF TIME OR PRODUCT.

West Coast Recess and Lunch

At Birchland, we will be going outside at recess and lunch unless the weather is extremely bad or there are potential safety risks. This means that we will be outside virtually every day. Please make sure that your child is prepared each day to go outside.

District / Community News

COBS Has Done It Again! This time, their community support is three times as tasty. With **two campaigns** running from now until **November 12th**, you'll have plenty of chances to shop local *and* give back. Stop by **COBS at Oxford Market** to see how your purchase helps support your community and the PoCo Foundation.

Not to mention, these freshly baked, delicious, and healthy loaves make the perfect school lunch - your kids and community will thank you for it! No crumbs left behind guaranteed!

From SEPT. 18 until OCT. 8, \$1 from every **Large Loaf of High Fiber bread** at Oxford Market COBS will benefit the PoCo Foundation

From OCT. 16 until NOV. 12, \$1 from every **Large Loaf Country Grain bread** at Oxford Market COBS will benefit the PoCo Foundation