

# September Parent Information for 1P



Dear Parents,

Congratulations! You are the parent of a first-grader here at Elbow Valley. This is an exciting time in the world of learning. You will be amazed at just how much your child will learn! Keep in mind that each child progresses at his or her own rate, acquiring skills when they are developmentally ready. It is important to maintain your child's self-esteem and build a secure foundation for future growth.

This newsletter will inform you of some basic routines and expectations. Communications will either be by e-mail or agenda. Most other communications from myself will be sent by e-mail, I also have many posting on my school personal website (Plone). <http://evalley.rockyview.ab.ca/Members/jpryor>

This month your child will explore the world of learning. During the coming weeks, we will begin to:

- Follow directions
- Read and write the alphabet
- Work and play together
- Question and experiment
- Count and compute



### Picking Up Students and Dropping Off Items

As school policy parents are asked to wait for their child(ren) at the office if collecting for an appointment during the course of the day. Please do not come to the classroom. If you need to drop anything off for your child, please leave the item at the office and the secretary will ensure that your child receives it; this helps to minimize teaching and learning disruption. When collecting your child after school, please pick up from the designated pick up area (Kindergarten doors). If you are going to be late please contact the office and your child will be sent there until your safe arrival. If there is a change to an after-school arrangement please record in the agenda, if this is missed please phone the office (403 242 1117) and your child will receive the message. **Please DO NOT e-mail myself about the change during the day**, my attention is with the children and I cannot ensure that your e-mail will be received before the end of school.

### Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers are an integral part of the Grade One program. Your open communication and involvement in classroom activities are welcomed and strongly encouraged. This information will be sent home by the office, alternatively, it can found on our school's website (<http://evalley.rockyview.ab.ca/>) under the EVE Office header are the: Forms for Parents (Homeroom Teacher Volunteer Form, School Wide Volunteer Program and the Confidential Volunteer Form) that are required to be filled out to volunteer in your child's classroom and throughout the school. A reminder that to volunteer in your child's school and/or help with supervision on a field trip, that a **Mandatory Criminal Police Check** must be completed. Please go to the school website, look under Parent Links for the relevant form. Take this to your local police agency. Checks can take approx. 4 weeks and usually require a small administrative fee. Each class will have a parent coordinator who will contact and organize volunteers accordingly. Schedules will only be forwarded home to the volunteers. The volunteer schedule will not begin until October so routines and student teacher relationships are established.

I welcome your help with and not exclusively to:

- **Parent Coordinator:** schedule parent volunteers for classroom preparation, scheduling the Home Reading Program, assistance with Mathathon, Sports Day etc.,
- **Class Party Co-ordinator-** organizing party food requirements (food kept to minimum for small tummies and food wastage)
- **Book Club Coordinator:** Compile booklets and date for return, make orders, forward payments and sort and distribute the books when the orders arrive
- **Parent readers** (small group of 6-7 parents): listen to the children reading their home reading books and exchange books
- **Classroom helpers-** classroom preparation, working with children on crafts activities etc.,

If you are interested in a specific position(s) please drop me a line or write specifically on the school volunteer forms.



### Nutrition

Research increasingly supports that quality nutritious food choices enhance student learning and attention throughout the day and conversely confirms high sugar foods interfere with learning. Please have your child eat a nutritious breakfast to start their day and pack a snack and balanced lunch to help maintain high energy levels. A brief snack time is provided every morning before recess about 10:20 and students sit to eat their lunch at 12:15. Students are asked to bring one quick and nutritious snack such as a small sliced apple, peeled orange, cheese and crackers, a few carrot sticks, juice box etc. I discourage snacks that require a spoon in the morning snack time. Snacks such as candy and chocolate are discouraged. Spare spoons and forks are provided but these are only if your child has forgotten. Please provide your own as we have a very limited supply. Please label lunch bags/food containers etc., with your child's name. Students are not permitted to share their food for allergy reasons.

### Forgotten Lunches

If your child has forgotten his/her lunch they are asked to notify myself at snack time (or earlier). An alternative snack will be given at this time. This also provides me with the opportunity to contact you. If you are unable to drop off a lunch, a

school alternative will be provided. Forgotten lunches should be dropped off at the office, the office will send for your child. This helps to prevent class disruption.



### **Special Lunches**

Please see the school's website for the information. To help alleviate any concern for your child, please write down in the agenda if an order has been placed. If you have any queries with the lunch provided please check the school website for the organizer/company contact rather than myself.



### **No Nut and Peanut Policy**

Elbow Valley has a 'no nut and peanut' policy. Please read the ingredient labels of the foods you are sending with your child. Packages reading "may contain nuts" are also unsuitable. We do have a number of children with severe peanut allergies in the school; therefore, we take this very seriously. We also follow the protocol set down by the school's parent committee for allergies (information on the website and in the newsletters). Your child will not be permitted to eat a nut item.



### **Recycling**

Elbow Valley encourages everyone to recycle in the school (we have recycling boxes in the classroom for milk and juice containers, clean plastics and paper-recycling box). Whenever possible please use washable tubs/containers instead of disposable packaging. Please discuss with your child that any food that is not eaten should go home at the end of the day.



### **Milk Orders**

If you may decide to purchase milk/juice at school:- orders start, within the first or second week, your child will have a choice of white milk, chocolate milk, orange juice or apple juice daily. If you wish for your child to only order a specific item please let me know and I can record this down on their cards as a reminder for

him/her. I will notify you in the agenda if your voucher supply is low. See school web-site for order information (under forms).



### Shoes and Coats

Our school has a two-pair shoe policy. Many of the gym classes will be outdoors (weather permitting) so it is asked that students wear footwear (shoes and boots) that lend themselves well to fitness activities (running, jumping, skipping etc.). Students are also required to keep a pair of indoor shoes at school. Please label all footwear with your child's first and last name in case they are misplaced. All children are encouraged to wear footwear that they can put on themselves without adult help- we encourage independency and children do thrive on this. I am unable to tie twenty plus laces, so please teach at home or provide lace alternatives. Regarding clothing, again it needs to be suitable for gym wear and 'messy classroom activities'- they are after all Grade Ones and if the opportunity arises they will get messy- it's their nature!! Please again clearly label jackets, snow pants, snow boots, mitts etc.

### Physical Education Classes

During the week, we have approx. 3 scheduled physical education classes in the gymnasium, On the other days, we will have outdoor/indoor classes. If the weather is not permitting we will have fitness, stretching, yoga lessons in the classroom/hallways. Throughout the year we have organized activities- in the recent past we have enjoyed: -Hip Hop dancing, in-line skating, ice-skating and soccer to name just a few. During these times, the regular physical education lessons may not take place as scheduled. For these activities and for gymnastics you will receive further information from the school.



### Learning Commons A.K.A Library

Grade One students are initially allowed to take out one book; this needs to be returned for each library session for exchange or renewal. Information on when your child will be exchanging their book will be forthcoming. A reminder note will be issued from the school librarian if it is overdue. **If you have concerns regarding missing books, please contact Ms. Wendy Glidden directly.**

E-mail: [wglidden@rockyview.ab.ca](mailto:wglidden@rockyview.ab.ca)

If you require more information on what the Learning Common's offers please go to the school website main page, and scroll down on the left.



### Money

Payment for school field trips, milk orders etc., are now paid on-line directly to the school. However, if your child is to bring money to school (Terry Fox etc.,) please place it in a **sealed envelope or Ziploc with your child's name, class (1P) amount and purpose**. This makes my job so much easier and ensures that money will not be misplaced or found loose on the floor/agenda box and we do not know whom it belongs too. Scholastic Book orders- many parents now order and pay directly on-line- however if you wish to forward payment with order (I direct this to the Book order parent) please sent payment via a **cheque**- see details on the order sheet for payment specifics.



### Backpack

Students should bring a backpack to school everyday. This is necessary to ensure that all reading books, student agenda, library book and projects make it safely to and from school. Please, as always, make sure that it is clearly labeled; many bags look the same and can be mistaken.



### Toys

Any toys brought to school are the student's responsibility and are kept in their backpacks until recess. However, we encourage students to run around, play on the equipment, build snow-people, play tag games and generally socialize. Exercising and breathing in the fresh mountain air right on our doorstep- how fantastic is that!!! **D.S's etc., are not permitted at recesses.** It is recommended that special or expensive toys not be brought to school because they can get lost or damaged. The teacher or the school cannot take responsibility should this occur. For any beeping toys, watches, cell phones etc., students will be asked to make sure that they are turned off during instructional times to reduce disruptions to the teaching and learning day.



### Student Agenda

Student agendas will be used as a 3-way means of communication between student, teacher and parent. Please check your child's agenda every day for class messages and letters. Inform me regarding a change to after-school arrangement (bus/pick up/change in person etc.), **please write this in the agenda rather than e-mail, agendas are checked during the working day, e-mails may not be looked at until the end of the day.** Please be advised that grade ones can confuse an instruction (i.e. "Can't remember if I am being picked up today or tomorrow???"), it does happen and they tend to tell me minutes before the bell rings and I may be frantically phoning you to confirm or not!!! PLEASE NOTE- SCHOOL POLICY DICTATES THAT WE GO BY THE NORMAL AFTER SCHOOL ARRANGEMENT IF WE ARE UNSURE AT THE END OF THE DAY. If you miss writing the change in the agenda please contact the secretary who will forward the message just before close of the day. Should you have a message to keep confidential, please send it in a sealed envelope or e-mail. If your child is having a play date and **is going home on a different bus you will need to confirm this with the bus company** directly and let me know accordingly.



### Parent Communication

You will be informed regarding upcoming events through the school monthly newsletters, calendars, memo's, Blog/Vlog, e-mails and student agenda. In the morning, my energies go to preparing for the teaching day and for my students as soon as the morning school bell rings. If you need to get in contact with me or you wish to make an appointment to discuss your child, please email myself [jpryor@rockyview.ab.ca](mailto:jpryor@rockyview.ab.ca). If you have an easy question or message (please be advised that I may not check these messages during teaching hours due to the nature of my job) but I will endeavour to reply to e-mails within 24 hours during the working week. If you have any questions, concerns or your child is unhappy about school at any time, please make an appointment with me. On the other hand, if there is something going on that you approve of, are impressed with or notice that your child is excited about, please let me know. This kind of feedback is essential so I know what works well. I usually send home End of Week emails rather than monthly or termly newsletters. Past parents have said they have benefitted from receiving current information, not only have they been kept up to date with immediate issues; relevant educational advice but they can readily engage with their child on the class

topics. Key information I often post to my personal website as we go through the year (School Web-site:- <http://evalley.rockyview.ab.ca>, Grade One- Mrs. Pryor). Please navigate around both the schools and my site, you will find heaps of useful information and many questions will be answered.

### Reporting Student Absences

You are welcome to e-mail [evalley@rockyview.ab.ca](mailto:evalley@rockyview.ab.ca) directly to report your child's absence. We are hoping you will find this method a convenient way to notify the school. Please ensure that the subject heading is "**absence**". As always, if you prefer to phone, you will still be able to notify the office by calling the attendance line. If you know you are going to be absent for say a vacation, please let myself and the office know the dates- the office have the ability to book you out in advance- I do not. I do appreciate parents giving me advance notice due to assessment purposes.



### Birthdays

**If** you would like to provide a treat in recognition of your child's birthday please let me know via agenda or e-mail **ONE WEEK** in advance. There may be multiple birthdays, allergies/medical concerns and **ALL** children need to be catered for (sometimes a modification can be made or the parent with the child with the concern can make an alternative arrangement- obviously, this takes time to organize). The Elbow Valley School Committee- parent run; has asked that the treat be not too 'sugary'. A **small** cupcake or cookie would be preferred. Again, all food items need to be **NUT - EVEN TRACE FREE**. Instead, you may simply wish to offer special pencils, erasers etc. Having said this there is no expectation that your child sends in a treat- about 50% of parents do. **It would be preferred that the classroom not be used to distribute personal classroom invitations unless all students have been included.** However, if your child does have invites, your child can hand them to me directly and I can discreetly place them into the agendas. Issues do arise if a child openly discusses who is and who is not invited, and this can cause relationship issues and sadness. **\*\*\*\*Alternatively, and much preferred, you can use the class parent email contact list that will be forwarded to parents and this by-passes the classroom.**

### Water Bottles

Students are encouraged to bring water bottles to class each day. Please encourage your child to fill up at home, they will be able to re-fill during the day if

need be. Students are free to drink during work time. These bottles are encouraged to go home each day for washing and refilling. Please clearly label.



### Star of the Day and Presentations

Near the end of September, we commence "Star of the Day". You will be notified of your child's date in the information. You will receive a letter outlining more information on this.... stay tuned! Students will have two other formal occasions to present in the school year (typically Favourite Book and Recycling theme). We usually have opportunities to do informal "Show and Tells" on a Friday, this is on a signed-up basis. These are opportunities to share "**value adding**" experiences and therefore preparation needs to be given in advance at home.



### Supplies

Classroom supplies are provided by the school.

I do have a Wish List (mostly recyclables) with approx. dates. I have given advance notice so before you have those house purges, please have a look. I do appreciate help with these items, not only helps with a tight classroom budget (and Mrs. Pryor's) but more importantly helps the planet too!

I hope that the detailed information in this letter is found to be helpful and informative. Please keep it on hand for reference purposes during the school year. These simple guidelines and routines help to make the year run more smoothly.

Many Thanks

*Jacqui Pryor*



