



R.F. DOWNEY PUBLIC SCHOOL

Character Does Make A Difference

1221 Neptune Street,
Peterborough, Ontario

K9H 7L9

742-7201 / Fax 742-1370

STUDENT / PARENT HANDBOOK 2016-2017

MISSION STATEMENT

In the R.F. Downey school community, it is our mission to:

- seek the best in ourselves and others
- participate in all aspects of our education
- pursue excellence and lifelong learning

SCHOOL MOTTO

To Be The Best You Can Be

WELCOME TO R.F. DOWNEY PUBLIC SCHOOL!

Principal	Mrs. Barb Beath
Secretary	Mrs. Sherry Elcombe (Mrs. E)
Resource Teacher	Mrs. Jenny Moore
Head Caretaker	Mr. Marty McArthur

NUT SAFE – PEANUT SAFE SCHOOL!

In order to protect students and staff from an anaphylactic reaction (which could result in death) all R. F. Downey classes are nut free classes. Please do not send peanut butter or any foods that contain nuts, nut oil etc. to school. Your co-operation in this regard is greatly appreciated. The safety of every child is our utmost concern.

SCHOOL PROFILE

R.F. Downey Public School officially opened its doors on May 8th during the Centennial year of 1967. The school is named after Roscoe Frederick Downey who served the area of Peterborough as teacher, principal, inspector and educational counsellor. The community surrounding the school is both urban and rural, with approximately a third of the students travelling by bus. The school is within walking distance of The Portage Place Mall in the northwest part of the City of Peterborough.

R.F. Downey has a dedicated and enthusiastic group of teachers and support staff who provide our 250 students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6 with an outstanding education. Thirteen teachers, 3 Early Childhood Teacher, five support staff and two caretakers make a difference in the lives of our students each day. We offer a wide variety of curricular and extra curricular activities to help prepare our students for life-long learning. Sports teams, clubs, choirs, drama, play days, et cetera compliment our curriculum. Students are continually encouraged to be their best in every endeavor. The staff and students of R.F. Downey are fortunate to have an extremely active and supportive School Council. This group provides financial and moral support to the various projects at the school. The staff, students and parents of R.F. Downey are very proud of their school.

HOURS OF INSTRUCTIONS

- 9:00 AM - yard supervision begins
- 9:15 AM - entry bell
- 9:15 AM - 10:55 AM - first instructional block
- 10:55 AM - 11:35 AM - first nutritional break
- 11:35 AM - 1:15 PM - second instructional block
- 1:15 PM - 1:55 PM - second nutritional break
- 1:55 PM - 3:35 PM -third instructional block
- 3:35 PM - dismissal

PLEASE NOTE: Yard supervision begins at 9:00 am.
Students should not arrive prior to this time.

SAFETY PATROL TIMES

- 9:00 AM - 9:15AM
- 3:35 PM - 3:45 PM

Please remember that our Safety Patrollers are student volunteers. While we work hard to make sure that the crossing area is covered all of the time, ultimately the responsibility of children arriving safely at school is a parental responsibility.

STUDENT SAFETY

The following routines have been established and are practiced each day to ensure student safety as well as a positive school environment:

Attendance - at the beginning of each morning session and afternoon session attendance will be taken.

When your child is sick or absent:

1. **Call Safe Arrival** - parents are requested to contact the school office and leave a message stating the student's name, grade, teacher and reason for absence at 1-866-740-2902.
2. **A written explanation** addressed to the teacher in the student's agenda is required upon the child's return to school.

Late Arrival - students are requested to sign in with the office if arriving late, before going to their class.

Lunch Routines - lunch is eaten in your child's classroom.

Students are expected to remain on school property during both nutritional breaks. A written note in the student's agenda from a parent directed to the teacher and principal is required before a student can leave school property. *Parents of children who walk home for lunch are requested to establish a consistent routine so that staff know where your child should be during lunch recess.*

Inclement Weather - if the weather does not permit the students to go outside for recess, they are expected to find a quiet activity in their classroom.

Snow Days - the school is open on "snow days" even if the buses are cancelled. Parents may transport their children to school but must make arrangements to pick them up at 3:20 pm. Depending on the number of students at the school some classes may be combined and classes may not run as normal but there will be instructional activities provided for all students who attend.

Student Access to School - students are not allowed in the school before 9:00 a.m. except for Breakfast Club, during outside nutritional breaks or after dismissal unless they have permission from a teacher and are directly supervised by an adult.

Before School Supervision - parents and students are reminded not to arrive at school before 9:00 AM as there is no adult supervision on the yard.

Student Access to Telephone - the telephone is for school business only and to be used by students for emergencies only.

Visitors - Under the Safe Schools Act, all visitors to R.F. Downey MUST report to the office. Visitors should enter and exit the building through the front doors.

Volunteers-Volunteers in the school provide additional human resources for improving instruction and assisting in the development of better understanding and support for student achievement. Volunteers can enhance student attitudes and skills. Throughout the school year, parents, community members and secondary school students are encouraged to assist the staff and the students in a variety of ways: in the school library, typing stories, listening to students read, supervising on class excursions or special events and preparing learning resources.

Your assistance on either a scheduled basis or on occasion is welcome. Volunteers will require a Police Records Check with a Vulnerable Sector Screening. These take a few days to a couple of weeks to be processed. Police require a Letter of Request for Police Records Checks signed by the principal of the school. Stop by the office to complete the paperwork; we do the rest for you. Police Record Checks are good for one year and are submitted by the school for filing at the board office.

Volunteers - all volunteers are requested to sign in at the office when arriving and sign out when leaving.

Wheels on School Property - roller blades, skateboards, running shoes with wheels on the bottom and bikes are not allowed on school property. Students are expected to walk their bikes while on school property and place them in the bike rack with a lock.

STUDENT SAFETY

Student Entry / Exit - students are expected to enter / exit by the appropriate doors.

Bus - students who ride the bus are expected to follow the bus rules and cooperate with the bus driver at all times. Riding the bus is a privilege!

Walkers - students who walk to and from school each day are expected to walk safely and cooperate with the safety patrols and adult crossing guards.

Dismissal - to ensure student safety at dismissal time, please obey the posted signs and do not park in front of the school or use the parking lot. Parents are reminded that walkers and buses have priority and must be given the right of way by not using the parking lot.

Student Conduct - students are expected to move about the school in a quiet and orderly manner. It is an expectation to walk at all times.

Dress Code - students are expected to dress appropriately for the weather. Indoor shoes are required for hygiene and emergencies and must, therefore, be worn at all times. Students wearing clothing deemed inappropriate (violent messages or inappropriate language or pictures) will be asked to change or be sent home. Undergarments must be covered and no bare midriffs should be shown. All straps must be at least two fingers wide (i.e. no spaghetti straps). Hats should be removed upon entry to the school. ***It is the responsibility of everyone to dress in a manner that is appropriate to school activities with regard to exposure, cleanliness and / or message.***

Guidelines for Participation in Co-Instructional Activities:

The student's work must be up to date.

The student's behaviour in class and on the playground must be acceptable.

The student must demonstrate sportsmanlike behaviour during all practices and games.

R.F. DOWNEY HOMEWORK POLICY

We believe that homework encourages the development of skills and attitudes for life long learning and is only one of the ways of supporting and building upon the critical role that parents have in a student's education.

The role and expectations of homework change as a child progresses from the Kindergarten Years through the Secondary Years. We follow these guidelines:

JK/SK - No assigned homework **READ DAILY!**

Primary (1-3) - Homework may be up to ½ hour/day. It is work assigned at school but not completed within the instructional time. **READ DAILY!**

Junior (4-6) - Homework may be up to 45 minutes/day. It includes completion of assigned work in class, studying for tests, completion of projects, etc....**READ DAILY!**

What is homework?

Building Habits of Success.....

Primary: taking notes, newsletters, student agenda and other items home.
bringing notes, hot lunch orders, items back to school.
mystery bag item, "book bag" program
taking care of library books
personal reading logs maintained based on reading each night
weekly spelling dictation

Junior: library responsibility
proper gym clothing
completion of work not finished in class - math questions
review/study for tests - spelling, Social Studies/Science
find items for research projects
current events

Role of the Parent:

to be supportive by creating consistent routines such as a drop off spot
for all notes and news about school
to continue to read with your child every night
to play games, cook, build things, etc...
to develop the habit of doing something other than watching
the TV for long periods of time
to enforce a schedule for homework time by balancing "play" time,
extracurricular activities and homework

HOMEWORK WITHOUT TEARS

Strategies:

- Have a family schedule of consistent routines
- Have a drop off spot for all school related items
- Designate a place where homework will be completed - away from the TV & distractions
- Have all the necessary materials - pencils, pens, rulers, dictionary, etc...
- Provide help where needed - review of spelling words, math facts, etc...
- Don't do the work!
- Provide immediate feedback to the teacher in the student's agenda if there is a major problem
- Stick to the guidelines of no more than 30 - 45 minutes of homework.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between home and school is extremely important to your child's success at school. The staff of R.F. Downey are committed to ensuring this link between home and school in the following ways:

- notes in the agenda
- monthly *class newsletter* highlighting areas of study
- monthly *school newsletter* highlighting school events
- welcome back BBQ / meet the teacher* night in September
- a parent-teacher interview* in December
- a progress report in the fall
- 2 official *report cards* in March and June
- an open invitation* to meet with staff when needed

TOYS FROM HOME

All of our classrooms have educational activities available to students for use during indoor recess times. Please do not allow toys or other items from home to come to school. Students may bring skipping ropes, tennis balls and other types of sports equipment to use on the yard at nutritional breaks.

It is also our policy not to allow students to have cell phones or electronic devices (MP3 players, video games etc.) at school.