



Grace Martin School 2016- 2017 Family Handbook

Table of Contents

TEACHING AND LEARNING FOCUS

Grace Martin School will support our students 21st Century Literacy learning by providing, through teacher and student collaboration, focused work promoting student self-reflection and assessment practices common across all core subject areas. Conversations and understandings will emerge through the development and implementation of school wide quality assessment practices.

Our Philosophy Our History Our District Priorities	3
School Calendar	4
Hours of Operation Child is Absent	5
Medication Illness Emergency Plan Cold Weather Policy Field Trips Electronics	5
Co-Curricular Programs Breakfast Club Special Events School Patrol School Supplies	6
Parent Involvement Volunteer Opportunities Visitors/Volunteers Special Services Lost & Found	7
Our Programs School Zone	8
Respectful Learning Environment Learning to Learn Communication is Key	9
Positive Behaviour Plan	10
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People	11

Principal’s Message

It is truly a privilege to be the principal of Grace Martin School. Our school’s highly skilled and caring staff continually work to ensure Grace Martin is a school of excellence, ensuring high levels of engagement and learning are possible for all of our students. Our staff is committed to this goal by focusing on student learning, on collaboration, and on results. We do this by developing a sense of family and community second to none in the District.

This family handbook is to provide some important information and guidance for students and their families around our school’s policies and routines. All have been developed to ensure that a school climate is created that allows all students and staff to experience success. Please read this handbook carefully with your child as it is important that all students understand the policies and available supports contained within. If you have any questions regarding these policies, please feel free to contact me.

*For those students returning, Welcome back!
For those students new, Welcome to the Grace Martin Family!*

Lon McMullen
Principal

Our Philosophy

Giving life to learning, our school's motto, illustrates our belief that each child is unique. We understand that every child's learning is different and full of as many possibilities as the children themselves. Learning involves intellectual, emotional, creative, social, physical and technical experiences promoting their development. We are all responsible for these experiences.

Individually, students need to experience challenge and success in a safe and caring learning environment that promotes strong character. Parents are our partners in their children's education. Together, with our highly skilled staff, we work to successfully accommodate the needs of all of our students.

Our Vision and Mission

At Grace Martin School our Vision and Mission are those of our Districts. Our vision is to transform the learners of today into the leaders of tomorrow. Our mission is to inspire student success through high quality learning opportunities, supported by meaningfully engaged students, parents, staff and community.

Our 2014 – 2018 District Priorities

- ⇒ Foster growth and success for every student by supporting their journey from early learning through high school completion and beyond.
- ⇒ Deepen students' understanding of equity and empathy as key citizenship traits.
- ⇒ Provide welcoming, high quality learning and working environments.
- ⇒ Enhance public education through communication, engagement and partnerships.

Our History

The opening of Grace Martin School on December 1, 1972, was the 70th anniversary of the opening of the first school in the Ellerslie district whose first teacher was Mrs. Grace Martin McEachern. Mrs. McEachern played an active role in the first few years of Grace Martin School attending special functions and joining classes on field trips. At the age of 105, she was still able to join us for a birthday party in her honour and paid a visit to our Volunteer Tea in June, 1984. She passed away at the age of 109.



We are honoured to carry the name of such a marvelous lady and the children of this school have a constant challenge before them represented in the courage, kindness, integrity, and good citizenship that Mrs. McEachern demonstrated throughout her life.

School Calendar for 2016 - 2017

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. First Day of Instruction | Wednesday, August 31 st (Sakinah Circle students). |
| 2. First Day of Instruction | Thursday, September 1 st (All Other Programs). |
| 3. Labour Day | Monday, September 5 th |
| 3. Id'al-Ahda (religious holiday) | Monday, September 12 th (Sakinah Program, No School). |
| 4. Meet the Staff Evening | Thursday, September 22 nd (4:00 pm—7:00 pm) |
| 5. School Zone Sessions | Thursday, September 22 nd |
| 6. Thanksgiving | Monday, October 10 th |
| 7. Professional Development Day | Friday, October 21 st |
| 8. Goal Setting Conferences | Wednesday, November 2 nd - Thursday, November 3 rd |
| 9. November Break | Thursday, November 10 th - Tuesday, November 15 th |
| 10. Goal Setting Reports to go home | Friday, November 25 th |
| 11. Winter Family Night | Thursday, December 22 nd |
| 12. Winter Break | Monday, December 26 th - Friday, Jan 6 th . |
| 13. Professional Development Day | Monday, February 6 th |
| 14. Family Day | Monday, February 20 th |
| 15. Teacher's Convention | Thursday, March 2 nd and Friday, March 3 rd . |
| 16. Progress Reports to School Zone | Friday, March 16 th . |
| 17. Professional Development Day | Friday, March 17 th |
| 18. Student Led Conferences | Thursday, March 23 rd (3:30 pm—8:00 pm) |
| 19. Spring Break | Monday, March 25 th - Friday, March 31 st |
| 20. Good Friday | Friday, April 14 th |
| 21. Easter Monday | Monday, April 17 th |
| 22. Professional Development Day | Monday, April 28 th |
| 23. Victoria Day | Monday, May 22 nd |
| 25. Day in Lieu | Tuesday, May 23 rd |
| 26. Day in Lieu | Wednesday, May 24 th |
| 27. Last Day of Instruction | Tuesday, June 29 th |

2016- 2017 Hours of Operation (Note: Early Thursdays)

8:20AM	Sakinah Bell
8:30AM	Sakinah Assembly
8:35AM	School Warning Bell (all students to make their way to their TLGs for morning attendance)
8:40AM	Morning Instructional Time (all classes begin)
10:15AM	Morning Recess
11:31AM	Lunch begins (Sakinah Circle begins at 11:41AM)
11:31AM	Kindergarten ends (Sakinah Circle Kindergarten ends at 11:41AM)
12:25PM	School Warning Bell (all students to make their way to their TLGs for afternoon attendance)
12:29PM	Afternoon Instructional Time (all classes begin)
2:00PM	Afternoon Recess
2:23PM	<i>Early School Dismissal, all programs (Thursday only)</i>
3:32 PM	School Dismissal, all programs



If Your Child will be Absent or Late...

Parents are asked to phone the school at **780-462-7121** before **8:40 a.m.** if your child will not be attending school.

In your message please identify the students first and last name as well as their teacher, grade and room number. Keeping in mind the answering machine is available 24 hours per day and you are able to leave a message anytime.

We request that this be done each day that your child is away; however, if you know that your child will be away for an extended period of time, please communicate this with a phone call and a note in the agenda identifying the dates of the absences. If your child has a medical, dental or other appointment, please send a note in the agenda the morning the absence will occur. This will allow less interruptions during class time.

Things You Should Know

Medication



Only medication prescribed by a physician can be administered at school. Medication must be stored for safekeeping in the school office. Parents/guardians must submit a **Authorization form for the Administration of Prescription Medications** signed by the physician and the parents/guardian to the school office before medication can be administered. School staff cannot administer over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol or cough syrup.

Illness

If your child is not able to participate in regular school activities, including outdoor recess, please do not send them to school. First Aid is administered to any child experiencing an injury at school. If a student becomes ill or injured while at school, we will attempt to contact the parent or the person listed for emergencies. If the illness or injury appears to be serious and we are unable to contact a responsible party, medical advice will be sought and followed.



Emergency Plan

In the event of unusual circumstances that affect the normal operation of the school, Grace Martin School has an **Emergency Plan** in place. Unusual circumstances may include emergency situations such as water main breaks, fire, natural gas leaks or other situations. The purpose of this plan is to ensure the safety and well-being of Grace Martin students and staff, and to inform parents and the community of actions that will be taken in the event of usual circumstances. Every effort shall be made to provide parents and students with prompt and accurate information.

Cold Weather Policy

During periods of inclement weather (-23° or colder with or without wind chill) we will have an indoor quiet recess. On occasions such as this, dismissal will remain at the normal time. There will be no early dismissal on days when outdoor recess is cancelled.



Field Trips



Our classes go on a variety of curriculum related field trips during the year. Parents will receive information requiring signed permission prior to all scheduled field trips. A fee may be charged to cover the costs of these trips.

Electronics

Students are asked to leave their hand held electronic devices at home as this takes away from teaching and learning. Also, there is a chance of these devices being lost. We understand some students use cell phones and they are not to be used during class time or will be confiscated by the teacher. Failure to follow the rules will result in the device being turned into the principal's office where it may be picked up at the end of the school day.



Student Related

Co-Curricular Programs and Special Events

Grace Martin offers a number of programs that promote school spirit, healthy lifestyles, a positive school environment and good behavior over the course of the school year. Some of these activities in 2015-2016 will include:

- ⇒ Read in Week (October)
- ⇒ Running Club (January-February-March)
- ⇒ Field trips (throughout the school year)
- ⇒ Intramurals (throughout the school year)
- ⇒ Clubs and special lunch hour activities (throughout the school year)
- ⇒ School Patrols (throughout the school year)
- ⇒ Celebrations and Assemblies (throughout the school year)
- ⇒ Buddy Classes (throughout the school year)
- ⇒ Parent volunteer program (throughout the school year)
- ⇒ Field day (May or June)
- ⇒ Volunteer tea (June)

Breakfast Club

Grace Martin School is very fortunate to offer a Breakfast Club for our students, sponsored by Breakfast Clubs of Canada. Beginning in October, Breakfast Club is open every school day at 8:15 a.m. The program is intended for children who have not had breakfast at home and for those who have eaten but still arrive at school hungry. A healthy breakfast and positive interactions with peers and adults are a wonderful way to start a day of learning. Please watch for more information about the program and a consent form to come home with your children in the fall.

School Patrol

Patrol crossing are in operation directly in front of the school. We would ask parents to model and explain to their children the necessity of crossing the street at designated crosswalks where the patrols are stationed. Particularly, parents of Kindergarten and Grade 1 students should remind their children daily about safety precautions when crossing busy streets. ***We expect parents to assist us and the school patrols by not blocking the crosswalks when dropping off or picking up students, and by observing the flashing yellow light and the crosswalk directly in front of the school.***



School Supplies



Students in grades 1-6 are required to purchase their own paper, pens, pencils, binders and other school supplies. All students in grades 1-6 will require an agenda. However if your agenda has been lost, a replacement agenda will be required. The cost of replacing an agenda will be \$7.50. Supply lists are available on our school website at: www.gmartin.epsb.ca

Club Moo

Student are able to purchase milk coupons as part of our nutrition program. Watch for more information in September for when the program starts.

Contributions to your child's Education

Parental Involvement

At Grace Martin School, we enjoy and appreciate exceptional parental involvement on a variety of levels. Parents are involved as volunteers at the school working with teachers and students as well as in the library and on special school projects. Our Grace Martin Fundraising Society (GMFS) and the Grace Martin School Council provide opportunities for parents to provide feedback about school plans and policies, to share ideas, to work on fundraising activities, and share their talents for the mutual benefit of everyone, especially our students. Please watch for further information regarding the School Council meeting dates.

Volunteer Opportunities

Grace Martin School programs and classroom activities sometimes become difficult to run without our volunteers.



If you could spare some time during the day to lend a helping hand please let your teacher know where you would like to volunteer. Also let them know your area of interest and availability. Without people like you we are unable to do all the programs or classroom activities during the school year.

Visitors/Volunteers

Visitors, whether they are parents, guests, or people on official school business, are welcome in our school. We ask that all visitors must sign in at the office prior to going anywhere in the school



Special Services

A number of specialist services can be accessed through our principal and the school district. These services include: School Psychologist, Reading Specialist and School Social Worker. Capital Health works together with schools and community agencies to provide a range of coordinated health and support services for school children and their families. Our common goal is to build on the health and education potential of students. Services include: vision, hearing or dental screening, follow-up of medical conditions, immunizations, speech and language services, rehabilitation services and emotional/behavioural support. If you have any concerns about your child's health, please contact the office; your child's teacher.

Lost and Found

The school requests that all articles of clothing - boots, shoes, coats, etc. and all school supplies be clearly labeled in order to assist in relocations should the articles be lost.



Lost and Found boxes are placed in the halls. Found articles should be placed in these boxes. Money, watches, rings, keys, glasses and jewellery items should be turned into the office. It has been our practice to hold the money and jewellery for a two-week period. If the items are not claimed, they are returned to the finder as an appreciation of his or her honesty.

Our Programs

Grace Martin School offers a variety of programs, including Kindergarten to Grade 6, Literacy (grades 4-6), Opportunity (grades 1-6), and Sakinah Circle—an alternative program which offers the Alberta Program of studies while providing a Qur’anic world view (Kindergarten to Grade 6).



SchoolZone is an information system developed by Edmonton Public Schools. This service provides parents and students with:

- ⇒ online access to daily homework assignments
- ⇒ attendance records
- ⇒ news of school and district events
- ⇒ achievement results
- ⇒ access to selected online educational resources

If you have access to the internet, you have access to SchoolZone. Please note for the 2016 - 2017 school year all progress reports and newsletters will be available through SchoolZone only. No paper copies will be sent home with students unless requested by the parent.

Respectful Learning Environment

Edmonton Public Schools is committed to creating a healthy, respectful learning environment for students, staff members, trustees, parents, volunteers and contractors.

We recognize the worth of every person without discrimination. We are committed to modeling positive behaviour in our school to maintaining an environment that is respectful, safe, nurturing and positive for everyone. We expect all of our school community members to interact in a manner which respects the dignity and value of others.

“Learning to Learn” at Grace Martin School

Assessing learning provides the most leverage in terms of student growth. It is a process that helps not only to define how a child is doing, but how we are doing as teachers in teaching your child. Throughout the year, our staff will work collaboratively reviewing curriculum to determine the essential elements so that their instruction can be more focused. As well, we will Assess for Learning by incorporating a number of formative assessment strategies that *may* include:

- ⇒ *I Can/I am learning to statements*
- ⇒ *Multiple Trials*
- ⇒ *Descriptive Feedback*
- ⇒ *Exemplars and Common Rubrics*
- ⇒ *Self-Assessment Opportunities*

Teachers will continually collaborate to create common assessments in order to promote program continuity across the core and across the grades. To support this work, our teachers will continue to provide specific vocabulary instruction in all subjects and in all grades. As well, teachers will be supported in their continued growth toward excellence in differentiating instruction so they can better meet the needs of their students.

**For more information, please read our assessment plan on School Zone and our school’s website.

Communication is Key

We are continually working hard to ensure we are all working together for the success of our students. To do this, our school wide communication plan includes:

- ⇒ All teachers are expected to contact parents within the first two weeks of their child beginning at our school.
- ⇒ We request all to update SchoolZone with curriculum and academic information on a monthly basis.
- ⇒ Teachers are responsible to initiate contact and arrange to meet with parents of identified at-promise students.
- ⇒ Parents can request an interview at any time.
- ⇒ Teacher and parent communication via our children’s school agendas.
- ⇒ Monthly school updates via Parent Council meetings.

We believe that frequent communication with home is essential to ensuring parents are partners in their child’s education.

Grace Martin's School's Positive Behaviour Plan

Grace Martin School is a safe and caring environment that promotes diversity, dignity and belonging amongst our students, staff and community. Our school environment is conducive to learning, to developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to meet the challenges of the future and to becoming responsible and productive citizens. Any behavior that infringes on the ability of others to learn and succeed is unacceptable.

Grace Martin staff and students are working together to learn and use the *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* in our daily lives through the *Leader in Me* program (please see the following page for a description of the habits). These habits help us learn to be responsible for ourselves and our actions, to live balanced lives and to treat others with respect and dignity. Students and staff will be using the language of the habits to talk about our actions, our thoughts and our relationships with others as we learn, play and grow together. As part of this effort, each class will create a Classroom Mission Statement that specifies the expectations for their classroom. Mission Statements will be shared with parents. Students and parents will also know the logical consequences that follow when a student violates their classroom Mission Statement. Please stay tuned for more information throughout the school year about how you can support and participate in our *Leader in Me* initiative at home.

Grace Martin's philosophy is dedicated to teaching students responsible behavior towards themselves and others. All students have a right to learn. We believe home and school share the responsibility for teaching children appropriate behavior. By working together, we increase the success of children learning responsibility and respect for others. At Grace Martin School we focus on the positive and strive to enable students to learn to their fullest potential in a safe and caring environment. There are times, however, that a student may have difficulty meeting his or her responsibilities. If a student misbehaves, he or she can expect the adult in charge at the moment to apply the most appropriate actions. Our school-wide policy is designed to teach students that they have chosen to behave inappropriately and to teach them there are more acceptable alternatives they could choose.



The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Habit 1: Be Proactive

I am a responsible person. I take initiative. I choose my actions, attitudes, and moods. I do not blame others for my wrong actions. I do the right thing without being asked, even when no one is looking.

Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind

I plan ahead and set goals. I do things that have meaning and make a difference. I am an important part of my classroom and contribute to my school's mission and vision, and look for ways to be a good citizen.

Habit 3: Put First Things First

I spend my time on things that are most important. This means I say no to things I know I should not do. I set priorities, make a schedule, and follow my plan. I am disciplined and organized.

Habit 4: Think Win-Win

I balance courage for getting what I want with consideration for what others want. I make deposits in others' Emotional Bank Accounts. When conflicts arise, I look for third alternatives.

Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood

I listen to other people's ideas and feelings. I try to see things from their viewpoints. I listen to others without interrupting. I am confident in voicing my ideas. I look people in the eyes when talking.

Habit 6: Synergize

I value other people's strengths and learn from them. I get along well with others, even people who are different than me. I work well in groups. I seek out other people's ideas to solve problems because I know that by teaming with others we can create a better solution than any one of us alone. I am humble.

Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw

I take care of my body by eating right, exercising, and getting sleep. I spend time with family and friends. I learn in lots of ways and lots of places, not just at school. I take time to find meaningful ways to help others.