

Montague Public School (K-8)



Family Handbook 2023-2024

"Home of the Mustangs"

1200 Rosedale Road South

Smiths Falls, ON K7A 4S6

www.ucdsb.on.ca (Board Website)

<http://montague.ucdsb.on.ca/>

<https://www.facebook.com/montaguepublicschool>

Principal: Mr. Christopher Hannah

Elementary Office Administrator: Mrs. Lori McKenney

Parent Council Chair: Mrs. Cathrina Pynenburg

Updated: September 1, 2023

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at Montague Public school!

Outlined below is important information on specific notices and routines:

Montague Public School Code of Conduct

Montague Public School aligns Code of Conduct practices with those of UCDSB. Montague engages students to pursue the following as proactive steps to facilitate a successful learning and school experience.

1. Arrive on time and be prepared to learn;
2. Be kind to everyone all of the time;
3. Work hard to be successful;
4. Respect people and the environment

Enhanced Public Health Measure Highlights:

- a. Students, staff and visitors will not be required to wear masks on school transportation or at school. However, if students and staff choose to wear masks at school, their decisions will be respected. Masks will be provided to students upon request
- b. Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette will continue to be promoted within schools
- c. Hand sanitizer will be available at different locations within schools for use by students, staff and visitors
- d. Regular hand hygiene will continue in schools

Bullying Prevention and Intervention

During the 2023-24 school year, school staff will be continuing to support the WITS Program (additional information shared below) and exploring/supporting initiatives that are proactive in nature to support healthy, happy and equitable practices. We will also be supporting a Safe and Accepting School Team comprised of educators, students, community members and parents. If you are interested in participating on this committee, please reach out to the school.

Mustang Public School staff will also be supporting the WITS Program. This anti-bullying initiative focuses on four important aspects of dealing with conflict. WITS stands for “W”alk away, “I”gnore, “T”alk it out and “S”eek help. On a daily basis, we will continue to support discussion in this area as we strengthen student understanding of implications of choices. If you wish to learn more about the WITS program, feel free to contact your child’s teacher or visit the website <https://witsprogram.ca/> or contact the school.

Medication

All medication brought to school is kept in a safe location in the office to be administered by a staff member. A medication form must be completed before medication can be given to any student. Even non-prescription drugs are to be stored in the office with a permission form.

Vulnerable Sector Checks

It is required by the Upper Canada District School Board that vulnerable sector checks are on file at the school. If you plan on volunteering at the school or accompanying your child on a class trip you must have a criminal reference check on file at the school office. Please reach out to the office to express interest in volunteering opportunities as it is now all completed online with the OPP and you will require a letter from the school.

2022-2023 School Day

9:30am – School Day Begins

9:30-11:30am – Instructional Block #1

11:30-12:10pm – Recess and Lunch

12:10-2:10pm – Instructional Block #2

2:10-2:50pm – Snack (10 min.) and Recess (30 min.)

2:50-3:50pm – Instructional Block #3

3:50pm - Dismissal

****There is no supervision before 9:30am. Therefore, it is important that students do not arrive before this time.***

UCDSB Calendar

Please refer to the attached link: https://www.ucdsb.on.ca/for_families/school_year_calendar

Important Dates:

a) PA Days:

- a. September 1, 2023
- b. October 27, 2023
- c. November 24, 2023
- d. February 1, 2024
- e. April 26, 2024
- f. May 31, 2024
- g. June 27, 2024

b) Statutory Holidays:

- a. September 4, 2023 (Labour Day)
- b. October 9, 2023 (Thanksgiving)
- c. February 19, 2024 (Family Day)
- d. March 29, 2024 (Good Friday)
- e. April 1, 2024 (Easter Monday)
- f. May 20, 2024 (Victoria Day)

c) National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

- a. September 30, 2023

d) Holiday Break:

- a. December 25, 2023 - January 5, 2024

e) March Break:

- a. March 11-15, 2024

f) Terry Fox Run

- a. September 22, 2023

School Procedures

- School Attendance/Safe Arrival:
Please remember that when your child will not be attending school (or will be late arriving) we MUST have a phone call from a parent advising us of their absence. This is necessary to ensure the safety of your children, and information must be given by an adult, not relayed through the student or a sibling. Calls can be left on the school answering machine 24 hours a day. Please remember that it is only one call for you but sometimes many calls for the office administrator.
- Inclement Day (Snow Day Policy):
Further details relating to inclement day planning will be shared once finalized. This information will be shared through all UCDSB platforms (e.g., Facebook, family email, MyFamilyRoom).
- Transportation:
The Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario provides detailed guidelines for parents and guardians regarding the transportation of students. Parents/guardians should be aware that school bus drivers can only pick up and drop off riders at one authorized regular daily stop. Drivers cannot make changes to stops without authorization from the Transportation Department. Transportation for all non-school related functions is the responsibility of parents/guardians. Transportation cannot be provided for sleepovers, a homework project, to complete community service hours or for an after-school job. These requests cannot be permitted for safety reasons. Resource - www.steo.ca

Cell Phone/Personal Technology Device - Acceptable Use @ Montague P.S.:

... in the classroom

- During class instructional time, please ensure that your cell phone or personal technology devices is **OFF**.
- Staff will expect and assume that all cellphones or personal technology devices are OFF in class.
- Please be clear – this means OFF, not ON silent, or ON vibrate. Cell phones and Personal technology devices should be *powered OFF*.
- Unless *invited* by an educator, your cell phone or personal technology device should be *Out of Sight, and Out of Mind*. That means cell phones and personal technology devices should be stored in your back-pack, your desk or your pocket, but should NOT be in plain view.
- The Traffic Light System will identify when and how cell phones and personal technology devices can be used in the classroom



... technology breaks

- During the 20 minute Lunch Break (11:30-11:50 or 11:50-12:10), students (Gr. 5 to 8) will be permitted to log on to their cell phone or personal technology device.
- Classes with Gr. 5-8 students will have a 5-10 - minute technology break in the afternoon (around afternoon recess time).
- Students will be permitted to interact with Social Media, YouTube and downloaded games. STUDENTS must choose appropriate options and be ready to show staff the content of the site/game they are on. If a staff member does not feel the content or circumstances are appropriate, they will take measures to end the interaction.
- At no time are students permitted to take pictures and videos at school and/or post pictures and videos

... outdoor recess

- Cell Phones and Personal Technology Devices will **NOT** be available to students.
- Students are encouraged to engage in socialization and active play.

... indoor recess

- Cell Phones and Personal Technology Devices will **NOT** be available to students.
- Students are encouraged to engage in socialization and indoor activities.
- In keeping with established classroom routines, students from Gr. K-4 will be permitted to engage with school devices (computer/tablet) during indoor recess.
- Students in Gr. 5-8 will not be permitted to engage with cell phones, personal technology devices, or school computers or tablets during indoor recesses, as regular routines accommodate on a regular basis (technology breaks)

* There will be occasions where staff deem it necessary to grant students time on a cell phone or personal technology device during 'off limit' times. When this occurs, students will be provided with a *private space*.

Dress Code:

- Students are to wear clothing that is neat, clean and appropriate for the school environment. Any clothing that promotes a lifestyle or an attitude that is contrary to a positive and safe learning environment is deemed to be inappropriate and cannot be worn.

Fire Drills:

- When an alarm is sounded, the building is evacuated. Each classroom has a fire exit instruction sign posted near the door which directs students to the appropriate exit. When the alarm sounds, students must file out in a calm and orderly manner while moving with their class. Once outside they must move away from the building with their class. Attendance will be taken outside once the class is a safe distance from the school. You must cooperate fully with school officials and fire fighters. A similar procedure is to be followed in all emergency evacuations.



Children with Medical Needs

- As the primary caregiver for your child, parents/guardians are expected to be active participants in supporting the management of your child's medical needs (e.g., Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, Epilepsy, or other medical requirements) while they are in school. At a minimum, parents/guardians should:
 - **inform the school of your child's medical needs and co-create the Plan of Care for their child with the principal or the principal's designate;**
 - educate your child about their medical condition(s) with support from their child's health care professional, as needed;
 - guide and encourage your child to reach their full potential for self-management and self-advocacy;
 - communicate changes to the Plan of Care, such as changes to the status of your child's medical condition(s) or changes to your child's ability to manage the medical condition(s), to the principal or the principal's designate;
 - confirm annually to the principal or the principal's designate that your child's medical status is unchanged;
 - initiate and participate in annual meetings to review your child's Plan of Care;
 - supply your child and/or the school with sufficient quantities of medication and supplies in their original, clearly labelled containers, as directed by a health care professional and as outlined in the Plan of Care, and track the expiration dates if they are supplied;
 - seek medical advice from a medical doctor, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist, where appropriate.
- **Bikes on School Property:**
Students who live within biking distance of the school are welcome to bring their bike to school. As a safety precaution, students are reminded that by law, every cyclist under age 18 must wear an approved helmet. Students are required to wear a bike helmet if they are riding their bike on school property or taking part in a school related cycling activity. The school and UCDSB are not responsible for stolen or damaged personal property.

- Parents and Volunteers Within Schools:
Parents and volunteers are welcome at the school. Upon arrival and departure at Montague, we ask all visitors and parents to sign-in/out and pick-up a visitor card at the office.
- Emergency Medical:
If your child/ren has an allergy and/or an emergency medical need, we ask that you connect with the office to complete some additional documentation that can assist the school in supporting student safety.
- Distribution of Medications:
If your child/ren requires medication (prescription or over-the-counter) throughout the day, we ask that you connect with the office to complete some additional documentation that can assist the school in supporting this need.
- Nut-Aware Policy:
Students exposed to peanut butter or even the smallest amount of peanut, a peanut product, or any type of nut may experience very strong reactions. In response, the school has set-up a protocol to address these types of immediate medical emergency situations. However, prevention is the best approach for reducing the risk of a severe reaction. At school, we have asked students not to share snacks, treats, or lunches. In addition, students have been asked to speak with an adult if they suspect there is a problem. We are also asking that families carefully monitor what is placed in lunches on a daily basis. There are food suppliers who are marketing peanut-free products that look, taste, and smell like peanut butter (e.g., WOW Butter). These peanut butter substitute products can cause confusion and create an unsafe environment for our students and staff. Therefore, due to the difficulty in differentiating between peanut butter and a peanut butter substitute, we do not allow these products in our school. Therefore, we are requesting your cooperation in not sending these food products to school with your child.
- Emergency Drills and Codes:
Over the course of the year, we will complete six (6) fire drills and two (2) lock downs. The purpose of these drills is to ensure that staff and students are aware of protocol in place to support the safety of all in the event of an emergency.
- Student Registration (K-8):
If you are interested in registering your child/ren, please feel free to connect with the office at any time from 8:45-4:15pm, Monday through Friday.
- Daycare Information (Montague Extended Care):
Currently situated onsite is a before and after-school child-care program provider. Should you wish additional information regarding registration, please contact Ashley Mantle at montagueextendedprogram@outlook.com

School Support:

- School Council:
School Council meets monthly and Cathrina Pynenburg is the current School Council chair and coordinates each meeting. All are welcome to attend! Should you be interested in joining School Council, joining a sub-committee, volunteering for work crews, or receiving copies of the minutes, please connect with Cathrina Pynenburg via cathrinapynenburg2019@gmail.com
- School Programs:
Montague offers a range of programs to support learning within and outside the classroom environment. Some programs include: intramural/extramural programs (e.g., soccer, dance showcase), student council, workshops with school partners (e.g., Girls Inc.), instrumental music, etc.

Communication with Teachers:

- Teachers use a variety of strategies to support communication home. Some methods include: a newsletter, class Facebook page, website, telephone and/or email. In communicating with teachers, please feel free to use any manner with which you feel comfortable

Student Resources for the Year (K-8):

- As students and families prepare for September start-up, the only items that every student is asked to acquire and bring to school are a backpack, a pair of indoor shoes, a water bottle and a lunch bag. All other instructional resources are provided by the school.