



Cogito Alternative Program Parent and Student Handbook 2016-17

10541 – 60 A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 1K4

Tel: 780.434.6766
Fax: 780.435.8891
mpleasant@epsb.ca



In the late 1800s, Mount Pleasant Hill was just a bush-covered hill surrounded by flat grassland. It was a good lookout for the Aboriginal people who came along the trail that went right through where the schoolyard is now. From this hill they could see the little settlements of Strathcona on the south side of the North Saskatchewan River and Edmonton on the north side. Around 1900, most of the land in this area was sold to David Martin and it was used for growing crops or raising livestock. In 1912, a four acre park, called Allendale Park, was set aside. Forty-four years later this was where Mount Pleasant School was built. Although this land was part of the city, it remained as an agricultural area until 1945 when some of the wheat fields were sold to Veterans returning from World War II.

As this community grew, it was obvious that a new school was needed. Up until this time, the children had gone to the old Allendale School, but in the 1940s it became so crowded that there had to be two shifts of classes. In 1954, Mount Pleasant School was built on Allendale Park. Mount Pleasant School received several "modern" features, including a paved patio for clean outside play and a gymnasium, which could be divided into two classrooms. This room later became the library. Mr. Charlie Clement was the first principal and he was particularly delighted with his assignment as he lived directly across the street. During the 1950s and 1960s, the school grew dramatically, with two or three additional classrooms needed each year. In 1960, an additional new wing was added to the original L-shape. In 1967, portables were added to accommodate 700 students from Kindergarten to Grade 8. Throughout the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s the neighborhood matured and the student population gradually declined. In 1995, Edmonton Public Schools began to offer the Cogito Alternative Program at Mount Pleasant School in order to increase the student population. However, the student population of the Mainstream program continued to decline and the Board of Trustees voted to close the Mainstream program effective September, 2007.

The modernization of Mount Pleasant School presents a vibrant and contemporary image of the building constructed in 1954. As well, in July 2007 a new playground was built due to years of hard work and efforts of the Mount Pleasant Parent Advisory Association and a determined group of Playground Committee members.

Centrally located on the south side of the city, the school proudly serves 350 students. A dedicated school staff has established a sound reputation of providing quality education to all students.



Principal's Message

On behalf of the staff of Mount Pleasant School, I would like to welcome you to the 2016-17 school year. At Mount Pleasant, we believe the quality of education is greatly enhanced when home and school collaborate. Successful collaboration requires ongoing communication. The Cogito Alternative Program handbook is designed to give parents an understanding of the daily operation of the program and school. Please read and retain this handbook as a reference throughout the year, and if you have any questions or concerns, please call the school at 780.434.6766.

Our school community is the result of strong relationship building and the collaborative work of students, parents and staff. High standards of student conduct are supported by school-wide practices such as a positive behaviour and conduct policy, student clubs and services that foster leadership skills, character education through *The Leader in Me* program, and monthly student assemblies. Our policies and practices reflect the rights of students to learn and of teachers to teach. We encourage our students to accept responsibility for their learning and conduct.

Our most important work is student learning. Our student achievement results provide strong evidence to support this belief. This year our school will continue to engage in:

- Setting and pursuing individual goals,
- Developing metacognitive strategies,
- Using higher order thinking skills,
- Improving problem solving,
- Acquiring academic vocabulary,
- Reading for comprehension, and
- Writing


At Mount Pleasant School, parents and staff have common goals. We want our students to know what is expected of them and we provide them every opportunity to do their best and succeed. Supports include excellent home and school communication, structured learning environments, and a focus on academic excellence.

Our students and parents bring their hope and dreams for the future, and they depend on us to provide students with an outstanding education.

We look forward to working with you toward achieving excellent results from all students.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Carol Van Kuppeveld
Principal



EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

VISION
Transforming the learners of today into the leaders of tomorrow.

MISSION
We inspire student success through high quality learning opportunities, supported by meaningfully engaged students, parents, staff and community.

VALUES
Supporting the Vision, Mission and Priorities are the District's cornerstone values of accountability, collaboration, equity and integrity.



EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**DISTRICT PRIORITIES
2014-2018**

1. Foster growth and success for every student by supporting their journey from early learning through high school completion and beyond.
2. Provide welcoming, high quality learning and working environments.
3. Enhance public education through communication, engagement and partnerships.

Mount Pleasant School Mission

We are a capable, connected, committed school community.

We practice outstanding achievement and foster leadership.

We believe in consistent behavioural expectations that promote safety, pride, respect, and honesty.

Mount Pleasant School Plan

The Mount Pleasant School Plan addresses the district priorities. Input was sought from parents, students and staff. Parents or community members can obtain a copy of this document from the school office.



Cogito Program

The Cogito program is offered as an alternative program within Edmonton Public Schools. It was started at Mount Pleasant School in the fall of 1995. The program has grown steadily over the past twelve years. Currently, the program is provided at Mount Pleasant School (Kindergarten to Grade 6), Allendale School (Grades 7 to 9) - located just four blocks north of Mount Pleasant School, Richard Secord School (Kindergarten to Grade 6), Meyokumin School (Kindergarten to Grade 6), Pollard Meadows School (Kindergarten to Grade 6), Edith Rogers School (Grade 7 to 9), Stratford School (Kindergarten to Grade 9), Northmount School (Kindergarten to Grade 5) and Kameyosek School (Kindergarten to Grade 3).

Fundamental Goals and Objectives

Cogito students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and training necessary for success in a rapidly emerging global economy. Students will develop strong ethical and civic standards and a solid commitment to their neighbourhood, province, country and global community.

(Report to Board of Trustees, April 25, 1995)

Program Philosophy

Cogito is a knowledge-based program with clearly defined standards of achievement and measurable learning objectives. Cogito is dedicated to helping average students maximize their academic potential. *Cogito* (k ō gi t ō) is Latin for *I reason*. The program provides a Classic Liberal Arts Education and is designed for the student who is willing to work to achieve a high level of academic excellence, in a knowledge-based program, and in an atmosphere of structured and sequenced learning. Critical thinking is stressed. Students work in an environment that encourages self-discipline.

The unique program characteristics include:

- Enriched curriculum
- Sequenced knowledge content
- Focus on attention and increased concentration
- Early literacy developed through explicit phonics
- Strong mental and written math skill development
- Teachers oriented to a classical approach
- Direct whole group instruction
- Strong work ethic expected
- Regular homework required
- Committed parental support

Foundational Principles for Defining Methods and Practices of a K to 12 Cogito Program

1. Cogito upholds academic excellence for all students and encourages and expects their best possible work. Standards of achievement and measurable outcomes are clearly laid out for each grade level. The curriculum systematically builds the strong knowledge base essential for formulating meaningful opinions, analysis and processes.
2. Cogito actively fosters an orderly, disciplined and secure school environment based upon clear ethical principles (focused on learning) that are firmly adhered to and enforced. Standards will be set for dress of students and staff (which may include uniforms), classroom organization (desks in rows), as well as other features described in *Effective Schools* research.
3. Cogito approaches subjects as separate but inter-related disciplines necessary for a broad liberal arts education. The program focuses on a solid foundation of English, mathematical concepts and other basic academic skills, as well as seriously attending to sciences, geography, second language, fine arts and physical education. History focus occurs at appropriate grade levels. Complementary courses are set and designed to enrich the core, often showing the connections between the disciplines.
4. Cogito challenges and encourages students to always produce the best work they can. Teachers assign, correct and return in a timely fashion, regular homework that reinforces and applies what has been explicitly taught. Homework is meaningful and in measured amounts. Systematic attention is paid to teacher marking of student work and errors corrected by the student, thus promoting accuracy and precision in expressive language, mathematical solutions, penmanship and spelling, in addition to curricular content.
5. Cogito provides clear, timely and objective reporting of students' progress and individual achievements to grade level, district and provincial standards and norms in a quantified fashion. Student marks will be reported as percentages at appropriate grade levels.
6. Cogito recognizes that diligence, effort and scholastic achievement generate self-esteem, attention span and powers of concentration by providing a classroom environment where students work hard, spend their time on task and are actively engaged in learning.
7. Cogito limits instructional methods and practises to those that fit the school's philosophy and are supported by *Effective Schools* research. Whole group, teacher directed instruction is stressed. Cogito does not allow computer technology to be the focus of education; instead computer skills are taught directly as a practical art.
8. Cogito holds teachers, and the principal who leads the program, accountable for the effective teaching of a sound knowledge-based curriculum, the ability to maintain an orderly, emotionally secure and productive environment, adherence to the Cogito philosophy, and the measured performance of their students. Parents recognize that the principal is the primary decision-maker on all instructional matters.
9. The principal ensures students, teachers and parents are instructed as to their roles and responsibilities as detailed in the *School Act* and all foundational Cogito documentation.
10. Cogito realizes that the primary responsibility of the teacher is to deliver the curriculum, not to function as a social agency or as an instrument of social engineering. The work of teachers is compromised when they assume the role of parent, nurse or social worker.
11. Cogito recognizes that, while schools are set up to teach students, parents have a primary stake and rightful interest in the education of their children and in the operation and performance of those schools in which their children are enrolled. Parents are true and valued partners in their children's education and can look to the teacher and administration to foster this important role.

(Report to Board of Trustees, March 7, 2000)



Method of Instruction

Cogito uses a teaching approach that values the acquisition of knowledge. The teaching methods used are proven by research to be effective. Whole-group, direct instruction is employed. Each lesson is designed to teach the student a specific, carefully sequenced skill or concept. The teacher focuses student attention on the concept and purpose of the lesson through explicit instruction, the provision of examples, and through modeling performance learning. The teacher outlines the activities, directs the events, guides the lecture and discussion, and monitors the progression of the lesson. There is a focus on interacting with the whole class. With guided practice first, students learn from corrected responses provided within the large group. Independent practice of the instructed concepts and skills is then provided. Competency is achieved as students correct their errors and the teacher checks corrections. Teacher correction attempts to encourage children to think about their responses. The teacher determines activities to ensure that students develop high levels of proficiency with curriculum concepts. Recitation, memorization, practice exercises and the use of effective questioning techniques that promote analytic thought are included in the students' academic preparation.

Learning Environment

When students are taught in an orderly and structured setting they can excel in an academically oriented program such as Cogito. The development of good work habits and organizational skills is a priority.

Cogito provides a working environment that is disciplined and non-distracting. To ensure this, the program sets high standards for student conduct and behaviour. Consequences for inappropriate actions are clearly and promptly communicated to and supported by parents and students.

Generally, students' desks are organized in rows for most of each school day. When teachers are not teaching the class, they circulate through the rows, checking for understanding and providing help as required. Instruction is delivered in the overall atmosphere of firm, but fair, discipline. Good manners are modeled and mutual respect is expected. Praise is given when due and encouragement is given to persevere. Students learn skills such as how to listen, make good decisions, follow directions, apologize, ignore distractions, and share. Throughout the year, the same skills are modeled and consistently reinforced.

Program Commitment

Commitment by principals, teachers, parents and students is based on the clear understanding and expectation that:

- Principals ensure an environment is developed in which the Cogito philosophy can be fully implemented, and that teachers are knowledgeable of Cogito philosophy, methodology and expectations. Teachers ensure that the Cogito methodology and expectations are implemented in their classrooms.
- Teachers and principal endeavor to maintain close and appropriate communication with parents.
- Parents sign a commitment form indicating their understanding and support of the Cogito philosophy including the discipline and the homework expectations.
- Parents encourage student progress, provide a distraction-free time and place for homework, and examine student work and sign the homework book. Parents communicate

appropriately with the teacher and principal about their child's learning. Parents schedule holidays and overseas trips during non-instructional time.

- Students demonstrate diligence and effort to achieve expected results. Students work hard, complete assignments to expected program standards, and obey all the rules of the school.

Homework Policy

An important component of the Cogito Program is its emphasis on homework. Homework is assigned in various subjects according to curricular expectations and the teacher's professional judgment. Homework should be meaningful and measured, but time will often vary depending upon each child's individual skill level and ability to complete daily work in class. It is marked and students are expected to make appropriate corrections.

Teachers in the Cogito Program will provide parents with a homework information sheet that describes the homework practice for the student's specific grade level.

Regular homework, central to the Cogito Program, has three major purposes:

- Teaches personal responsibility and time management skills;
- Provides additional opportunities for enhanced academic growth and development; and
- Involves parents in the learning process and keeps them informed.

Parent responsibilities concerning homework are as follows:

- Provide a time and a place, free from distraction, for the work to occur;
- Sign the daily homework book, after examining the child's work;
- Provide encouragement with respect to daily work as well as homework; and
- Work closely with the teacher if a problem occurs.

Homework greatly enhances student potential for success. In the Cogito Program, it is a **daily** expectation from Monday to Thursday. Long-term assignments, missed daily work, or review for tests may also be done on the weekend.

Homework reinforces concepts covered during class time. Students may expect to review, practise skills, catch up, and prepare for tests. Students often require help in developing their study skills, and in organizing their time so as to balance homework, extra-curricular activities, and free time. Long-term projects or assignments that are to be completed over an extended period of time build on previous knowledge and skills and expand the student's knowledge and skills of research, organization, and time management. The requirements and scheduling of all assignments will be shared with students and parents. All students will have a home reading program in addition to their daily homework to encourage a life-long reading habit.

When appropriate, parents can use the homework book as a means to provide small written messages to the teacher. The teacher in turn may also use the homework book to provide appropriate communication back to the parent. **Parent, student, and teacher initial that they have read all correspondence.** Please note that these messages can and will be read by your child. We are unable to guarantee complete confidentiality within the homework books. This should be taken into consideration when determining the level of sensitivity of the correspondence and how your child might misunderstand events. Issues of a highly personal nature should be addressed by other means such as a phone call, a personal meeting or a confidential sealed letter.

Parental Involvement

Mount Pleasant School Council (MPSC)

A School Council is a group of stakeholders who work together to promote the well-being and effectiveness of the entire school community and thereby enhance student learning. A school council facilitates cooperation among all those who have an interest in the programs and policies of the local school. School councils provide advice and consultation to the principal and trustees regarding educational issues. Schools need parents to be part of the team. Research provides evidence that parental involvement has more influence on a child's education than anything else. It is important for parents to be effectively involved in the policies and decisions that affect their children.

The Mount Pleasant School Council is primarily comprised of parents of children enrolled at Mount Pleasant. Other members are the principal, assistant principal and one or more teacher representatives. Elections for the executive positions are held each fall at the Annual General Meeting.

Mount Pleasant Parent Advisory Association (PAA)

The Parent Advisory Association is a fund-raising entity. Its main objective is to ensure that funds are raised and dispersed according to government policies, and in accordance with the Cogito program's needs at Mount Pleasant School. Parents involved in the School Council are also often involved in PAA. Meetings typically occur in the evening of the second Wednesday of each month in the school's staff room. Meeting dates are decided by members of the School Council and Parent Advisory Association at the start-up meeting in the fall. Notices and information are posted on the bulletin board of the school's main foyer.



Operating Procedures

Absences for Holidays

We strongly discourage extended absences. Regular attendance at school is a vital factor in the successful completion of the program at each grade level. A great deal of learning occurs daily in the classroom through guided questions, dialogue and problem solving. Extended absences due to family holidays or overseas trips negatively affect your child's learning due to the enriched Cogito curriculum and the faster pace of the Cogito program. We request that you schedule family holidays or overseas trips during school breaks.

Parents who choose to take their children out of school and go on a holiday or trip are choosing to accept responsibility for their children's learning during that period of time. Home education imparts responsibility to the parents to provide programming that meets the Alberta Education Curriculum guidelines. **Teachers are not required to develop handouts or specific lessons for extended absences.** Evaluation on the progress report may indicate "Insufficient Evidence Available (IEA)". Any extended absence must be discussed with the teacher well in advance and a formal letter submitted to the office.

Accidents

First aid will be administered as needed, and an attempt will be made to notify the parent(s) if the situation warrants it. When a parent or guardian cannot be reached, and the injury is serious, a staff member will accompany the student to the nearest clinic or hospital. If necessary an ambulance will be called to transport a critically injured child to hospital. Every effort will be made to contact the parent first. **The school requests to have the student's current Alberta Health Care number on file.**

After School Care (YMCA)

Please contact the YMCA for additional information.

YMCA Child Care Centre: 780.437.4125

Hours of Operation: 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Assemblies

The school holds regular monthly assemblies to celebrate student learning, recognize positive contributions to the school, showcase student talent, leadership and build school spirit.

Attendance

Your child must be on time for school every day. Parents are requested to notify the school if their child is going to be absent.

To ensure your child's safety, we will call home if your child is absent and we have not been previously notified. **Our answering service phone number is 780.434.6766.**

Regular attendance at school is a vital factor in the successful completion of the program at each grade level. We strongly discourage extended absences due to family holidays or overseas trips while school is in session. Formal notification of any such absence by letter to the office is required. (Refer to "Absences for Holidays").

Bicycles and Personal Property

The bicycle rack area is out-of-bounds except when parking or picking up bicycles. All bicycles must be locked and must not be ridden on the playground or in the parking lot areas. We cannot assume financial responsibility for damaged or stolen bicycles, but we will make every effort to assist students in recovering their property. Students must wear bicycle safety helmets.

Skateboards, scooters, and in-line skates need to be left at home. They are not allowed on school property. Toys and cards must be kept at home as they are easy to misplace, are distracting, and interrupt classroom instruction. Headsets, video games, CD players, and other electronic toys are not permitted.

Students are also discouraged from bringing large sums of money to school. Students who need to bring a large sum to school must bring the money directly to the office for safekeeping. If an item is valuable, it is safest at home.

Bus Passes

Students must have in their possession and display a valid bus pass when riding the bus. Student bus passes will be distributed to students the last two days of the month. If other transportation arrangements have been made, parents are required to notify the bus driver and inform the school office immediately. Bus fees are payable by cash or cheque payable to *Mount Pleasant School*.

Capital Health

Capital Health works together with schools and community agencies to provide a range of coordinated community health and support services for school age children and their families. Our common goal is to build on the health and education potential of students by providing nursing services, rehabilitation services, speech and language therapy and dental services in targeted schools. If you have any concerns about your child's health, please talk to your school nurse at the Bonnie Doon Health Centre 780.413.5670.

Character Education – Leader in Me

Mount Pleasant is proudly a *Leader in Me* school! This powerful program teaches students the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and is designed to help students be successful, feel good about themselves and their ability to make good decisions and be responsible. All staff will use the language of the 7 Habits and classroom teachers will have a range of strategies and activities designed to support this student learning and use of the 7 Habits. This program provides a school-wide focus on the 7 Habits as they are defined, discussed and applied. Such actions assist our students to gain a deep understanding of these habits and their own leadership skills and talents

and are embedded in school-wide expectations. Modelling of the desired habits of highly successful people at all times by everyone demonstrates and reinforces acceptable behaviours that lead to success. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People are: Be Proactive, Begin With the End in Mind, Put First Things First, Think Win-Win, Seek First to Understand, Synergize, and Sharpen the Saw.

The *Leader in Me* program ensures that students in all grades will have opportunities to engage in leadership experiences throughout the year.

Classroom Organization

Classroom organization is determined by student needs and teacher strengths, as well as enrollment figures. Should any change be necessary, we ask your support in helping children accept the change and understand that it is made in the best interests of all of the children in the school. We will communicate this information as early as possible.

Cold and Inclement Weather Policy

Recess for elementary school students is a time to provide a break from regular school routine and a chance to get some exercise and fresh air. It is expected that children will dress warmly enough to be outside for 15 minutes (30 minutes at lunch). When the temperature is -23 Celsius or colder, or if the wind-chill factor creates an equally cold situation, or if there is a storm or extreme wind conditions, regular outside recess is cancelled and students are allowed to remain indoors under their teacher's supervision. Students will be dismissed at the regular time. District schools are generally not closed during periods of cold weather, heavy snowfall or rain. It can be expected that unless weather conditions become extremely severe, all Edmonton Public Schools will remain open. Any notice of school closures will be made known through television or radio announcements.

Communication

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher(s) to provide information that may be helpful in planning their child's program as well as to answer any questions or to provide support. Parents may use the Homework Book as a communication vehicle or contact the school office to make an appointment to see the teacher.

Parents are advised of school activities by a monthly school newsletter that includes a curriculum update from the classroom teacher. Newsletters and school information are available on SchoolZone at <https://SchoolZone.epsb.ca> and our website at mountpleasant.epsb.ca. Bulletin boards in the school's main hallway provide additional information for parents regarding program, school, district and community information, as well as student work samples.

Consulting Services

A consulting services team consisting of a reading specialist, a psychologist and a social worker are available to our school. These consultants can assist by providing assessment information and programming recommendations, by acting as a liaison for community resources and by providing helpful tips for parents. Please make the school aware of any problems that may affect your child's learning. Your child's teacher will keep you informed of any concerns.

Curriculum Support for Parents

Many stakeholders, including parents, play a vital role in the education of Alberta's students. In order to help parents reinforce learning at home, Alberta Education has published the Curriculum Handbook for Parents series. Visit www.education.alberta.ca to download a copy of this helpful document.

As partners in education, this resource provides parents with valuable information about the learning goals that have been set for students. Parents are encouraged to discuss the contents of the Curriculum Handbook for Parents at home with their children and at school with teachers, who can provide further information and guidance.

Parents may also find it helpful to log onto LearnAlberta.ca to find other curricular support materials. LearnAlberta.ca is a web site that offers a wide range of resources directly tied to what Alberta students are learning in the classroom. These multi-media resources engage students by using video clips, animations, interactive lessons, problem-solving strategies, glossaries and much more to help them learn new things in fun ways. The site creates a unique learning environment that can help students in and out of class. Parents will gain a better understanding of what their children are learning and be better prepared to assist at homework time.

Dress Code

High standards of academic excellence in conjunction with appropriate dress help students to perceive themselves as successful. Professional dress ensures the atmosphere is non-distracting and conducive to learning. Proper dress sets the tone and fosters success. Cogito advocates modest standards of length, fit, style and degree of gaudiness in clothing so as to allow for individualism, yet encourages the students to view themselves and others with propriety and respect. Parental support is requested to ensure that students adhere to the standards and wear neat and clean clothing that is free of holes, rips, and inappropriate logos. Any messages on shirts should be supportive of the Cogito philosophy of respect. Shirts or dresses with spaghetti straps are not acceptable for school, neither is clothing that exposes the midriff. Shorts need to be mid-thigh or longer in length. Hair is to be kept clean and well groomed. Each child needs to have indoor shoes to be left at school. Footwear should be safe and appropriate for walking and running. Makeup and excessive jewelry, except for watches and modest jewelry, are not appropriate for school.

Early Departure of Students

If your child is to be excused from school before regular dismissal time (doctor, dentist appointments etc.), in the interest of safety we ask that you meet your child at the school office. **Students will not be sent to wait outside for parents.** The sign-out book is located in the General Office. This allows teachers to ensure that an appropriate adult has safely picked up and signed out a child. It also allows the student to maximize valuable classroom time. No child will be allowed to leave early (lunch included) without a note or call from a parent.

Education and Health Services

School administrators are available to parents and students to discuss matters relating to personal, family, or academic issues. They may provide follow-up for referral services or the provision of information for access to counseling services.

Mount Pleasant School has access to a team of Edmonton Public Schools specialists including psychology, reading, behaviour, and family liaison consultants. Capital Health also works with schools to provide the following support to schools: speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, nursing, physical therapy, and other health services (as per availability of service providers). The classroom teacher or parent can initiate the referral process by contacting the principal. Written parent consent is required prior to any referral.

Emergency Plans

Edmonton Public Schools requires each school to develop a plan for evacuation in the event of a fire, bomb scare, gas leak, or an overnight situation which makes it impossible to open the school on the next school day. If the emergency occurs during school hours, students will be removed to Allendale School at 6415 - 106 Street, 780.434.6756. Parents will be notified to come and pick their children up by a phone fan-out system. Should the emergency occur out of school hours, an announcement will be made via radio and television news.

In order that students may know how to act quickly and without confusion in case of an emergency, fire drills and security alerts will be held regularly through the year. It is important that the building be evacuated quickly and quietly. Instructions are posted in each room regarding exits to be used. It is necessary for students to have appropriate indoor footwear at school and to wear indoor shoes in the building at all times.

Extra-Curricular Activities

These activities take place outside the regular school hours and are provided on a voluntary basis. Students also participate on a voluntary basis. Potential activities that may be offered, usually during the lunch hour, may include: choir, musical clubs, running club, chess club, library or office helpers, and Student Council.

Field Trips

In the Cogito program, the emphasis is on the acquisition of knowledge, not on experiential learning. In keeping with the rigorous academic requirements of the Cogito program, instructional time is at a premium, and is maximized to every extent possible. All field trips (in-school and out-of-school field trips, as well as guest-speakers) will be curriculum-based, and will also provide direct support to the prescribed curriculum and/or extensions. Out-of-school field trips will immerse students in an environment that we cannot create, or provide them with an experience that we cannot facilitate in the school setting.

Parents will be notified of all field trips and subsequent costs prior to their occurrence. This notification will indicate the purpose and other requirements for the field trip. Written parent consent for the field trip must be received **prior** to each trip.

Footwear

Boot racks are located at several entrances throughout the school. Outdoor footwear should be left on these racks. All students need to have an extra pair of shoes for indoor use. These shoes must have non-marking soles. **All footwear should be marked with your child's full name.** The school cannot assume responsibility for lost footwear, but will make every effort to assist students in recovering their property. We ask that all visitors coming into the school respect our effort to keep the floors clean for our students and remove their dirty shoes at the door.

Hours of Operation

Kindergarten

Morning Kindergarten	8:30 a.m. - 11:26 a.m.
Afternoon Kindergarten	12:24 p.m. - 3:23 p.m.

Grade One to Grade Six

Mornings:	Entry and attendance	8:30 a.m.
	Classes begin	8:35 a.m.
	Recess	10:08 - 10:23 a.m.
	Dismissal for lunch	11:26 a.m. (M-F)

Afternoons:	Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri Afternoons:	
	Entry and attendance:	12:19 p.m.
	Classes begin	12:24 p.m.
	Recess	2:03 p.m. - 2:18 p.m.
	Dismissal	3:23 p.m.

Thursday – Early Dismissal	2:30 pm
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On Thursday afternoons, there is no afternoon recess as all students are dismissed at 2:28 p.m. The early Thursday dismissal permits staff to meet during the regular workday to plan collaboratively, engage in professional development activities and to develop instructional resources.

Identification of Personal Property

All student footwear, clothing, and personal supplies should be clearly labeled. This greatly assists us in returning lost items to their owners. Small items such as glasses, rings, watches, keys, etc., may be checked for in the school office. Found articles of clothing and footwear are placed in the Lost and Found boxes (benches) located in the hallways. The contents of these boxes are put on display periodically so parents and students can pick up lost items. Unclaimed items are distributed to others who are less fortunate.

Illness or Injury

If it is deemed that a student is ill or injured while at school, we will attempt to contact the parent/guardian or the person listed as the emergency contact to send the child home. In the interim, the child will be made as comfortable as possible in the school office. If it is deemed that the illness or injury appears to be serious, medical advice will be sought and followed.

Where exemption from recess or certain activities is needed, a medical certificate is required from your doctor. Generally speaking, if a child is too ill to go outside during recess, the child should remain at home in order to recover from the illness.

Insurance

Parents are reminded that insurance protection to cover costs that may be incurred as a result of accident or injury to a student is the personal responsibility of the home. The school does not provide insurance of this nature.

Library Services

The library and all of its resources are for the benefit and the pleasure of all individuals in the school. Students enrolled in the school may borrow books or use reference and periodical material in the library as long as they are considerate of other students' needs. Students may have access to the library at some time during the week either with a class group scheduled by the teacher, or when given permission. Library users are to sign out all items they borrow, and are responsible for returning them on time and in good condition. Charges are made for lost, damaged and over-due books or materials. Courtesy and consideration of others are a part of good library citizenship. Conversation and distractions should be avoided. Further detailed information on use of the library will be provided for all students and staff, with a general orientation lesson early in the school year and additional sessions on use of references and computer lab software as needed.

Lunch Program

Our school provides a supervised lunch program on a regular or drop-in basis as a service to parents. However, we encourage parents if at all possible to make other arrangements for lunch. Children benefit from a break in school routine.

Lunch program fees collected cover the costs of the noon hour supervision. Students typically eat in their classrooms.

Students staying for lunch are expected to behave in a respectful, responsible manner. **Our School Behaviour and Conduct Policy extends through the lunch hour.** Students who are not cooperative will be asked to eat their lunch with another class or they may be temporarily or permanently suspended from the lunch program.

Students not in the regular lunch program who stay for lunch to attend a scheduled extra curricular activity will pay the daily fee to attend and be supervised within the lunch program.

Medication Management Plan/Administration of Medication

Edmonton Public Schools' regulation titled *Administration of Medication* requires the following:

- All students requiring medication management for physician-prescribed medications must have a **Student-Focused Medication Management Plan** to ensure that the medication information is complete and accurate. This plan is for students who regularly or infrequently take physician-prescribed medication at school.
- In cases where non-prescribed medications (such as Tylenol) are sent to school, parents must provide the following information to the teacher in writing:
 - date note is written (e.g., September 7, 2016)
 - exact dosage (e.g., 1 regular Tylenol)
 - frequency/time (e.g., twice a day, 9:00 am and 2:00 pm)
 - duration (e.g., twice a day for today & tomorrow – September 8 & 9, 2016)

Medication must accompany the note and must be appropriately labeled in the **original container**.

Nutrition

In the interest of promoting good nutrition and dental care, the consumption of gum, candy, soft drinks, and “junk food” is not encouraged in the school or on the playground. We encourage parents to support our efforts and not include such foods in students' lunches. We wish to help our students make wise choices in their selection of foods. Your assistance in helping your child make healthy food choices and in supporting this focus on nutrition by not sending such foods is appreciated.

Each year, we have a number of children with severe allergies that may result in life-threatening conditions. As a result, certain precautions may be taken in the classroom and specific school areas, including the identification of a classroom as “allergy friendly.” Parents and students are expected to adhere to the guidelines laid out in these instances.

Notification of Changes of Information

If during the school year, the address, telephone number, etc. of a student changes, please notify the school office as soon as possible. **Emergency contact numbers must be kept up-to-date.**

Out-of-Bounds Areas

During school hours students are not permitted to play in the following areas:

- the staff parking lot (west and south)
- the bicycle rack area
- east hill, and
- City of Edmonton east playground.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parents will be kept informed of the academic progress and behaviour of their children through the homework book, telephone and conferences. Parent and teacher conferences may be arranged by the school or by parents, at any time, to discuss student progress or behaviour.

Three comprehensive progress reports are issued during the year (end of November, end of March and year-end in June). Goal-setting conversations will occur in October. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for all elementary students during the week following the date the Term II progress reports are issued. Conferences strive to develop mutually agreed-upon strategies that can be implemented both at home and at school to encourage improved student achievement and behaviour. Information and additional resources will be provided as a support to address the concerns of teachers, students, and parents.

Parking and Student Drop Off

Limited visitor parking is available along 106 Street or 60A Avenue. When dropping off students for school or picking them up at the end of the day, parents **must** obey the parking and bus zone signs along 60A Avenue. Student safety is of paramount importance. Thus we ask that you exercise patience and follow proper driving protocol around the school. U-turns are illegal.

Parents are asked to **refrain** from:

- using the staff parking lot when dropping off or picking up students,
- making U-turns on streets around the school,
- parking on 60A Avenue directly in front of the school (reserved handicap parking and bus loading zones), and
- parking in the 106 Street area designated as a student drop-off area.

Pick-up of Students after School

The safety of students at Mount Pleasant School is of the utmost importance. If your child is driven home from school, it is vital that he or she is picked up promptly at our dismissal time of 3:23 p.m. every school day except Thursday when dismissal time is 2:28 p.m. If you are unavoidably delayed, and cannot make alternative arrangements for your child's transportation, please contact the school office at 780.434.6766 immediately. We would ask that you make alternate arrangements for your child if this is occurring on an ongoing basis. Your support in ensuring the continued safety of our students is invaluable. Please direct any questions you might have about these procedures to the school office.

Photos

Individual photos will be taken of all students. Class group pictures and a school photo will be taken in the spring. Parents are under no obligation to purchase the photographs. Retakes are offered for absences or flawed pictures.

Punctuality

Regular, punctual attendance is vital to academic progress. Please help your child learn responsible behaviour by ensuring they are at school on time. It is also important for your child to know he or she will be picked up promptly at dismissal time. Punctuality is a valuable life skill. Persistent lates will be referred to the principal.

Students are late when they are not in their homerooms by the second bell in the morning and afternoon. Tardiness is a form of absence and interferes with teaching and student learning. Late arrivals interrupt the learning environment and daily procedures. A student who is late must report to the general office in order to be admitted to class. **Students arriving late must enter the building by the main entrance on 60A Avenue.**

School Patrols

There is a student-patrolled crossing provided on 106 Street. We ask parents to explain to their children the necessity of using the designated crosswalk where the patrols are stationed. Parents should remind their children about safety precautions when crossing busy traffic streets. Please remember that our patrollers do require the cooperation of the parents and children.

School Supplies and Fees

There is a \$70.00 non-instructional fee charged to students in Grades K to 6 in the Cogito Alternative Program. This fee has been kept to a minimum and covers such items as specialized Cogito resources and print consumables, field trips, guest speakers and presenters to the school and to the classroom, materials for the homework program, and other resources to support the delivery of the Cogito Alternative Program. Should you wish to obtain a breakdown of expenditures for this fee, please contact the office.

Textbooks for certain subjects will be loaned to students. Parents will be charged for damaged or missing textbooks. The students must supply all other non-instructional school supplies such as pencils, crayons, scribblers, rulers and notebooks. We encourage you to have your child come to class the first day with the supplies requested. Please ensure that all supplies are clearly labeled with your child's name.

Student Use of Telephone

Students should be reminded to make arrangements to "stay and play" or "go over to a friend's house" in advance as the school telephone is not available for this purpose. We expect students to be responsible about remembering to bring to school homework, lunches, and field trip forms. Student phone calls home regarding these matters are not permitted.

Supervision

We request that students arrive at school so that they will have a minimum amount of waiting time before beginning classes (**supervision does not start until 8:15 a.m.**). When the weather is very cold or wet, children may wait on hallway benches until bell time. All students are asked to practise good behaviour when waiting in the entrances. Paid lunchroom aides supervise students while they eat their lunch and when they are on the playground during the lunch hour. The teaching staff

provides supervision 15 minutes before school, and during the morning and afternoon recesses. At dismissal time, students are to proceed directly home or to their after-school care.

Vandalism

We request the support of all community residents in reporting any acts of a suspicious nature or vandalism.

If you see someone on the roof of the school, throwing objects at windows or doors, destroying shrubbery or playground equipment, or committing any other acts of vandalism or of a suspicious nature, please call the Edmonton City Police Dispatcher at 780.423.4567. Give the name Mount Pleasant School, its location, and a brief description of what is happening. You need not give your name. Edmonton Public Schools officials will prosecute offenders. If further information on the school security program is desired, please call the security supervisor at 780.429.8295.

Our school is protected by an alarm system. However this does not negate reporting vandalism procedures. Vandalism costs taxpayers large sums of money every 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 sign in at the office prior to going anywhere else in the school.**



Behaviour and Conduct Policy

Our goal at Mount Pleasant Elementary School is to help students behave appropriately and assume responsibility for their own actions. Students are encouraged to realize that any behaviour that disrupts or detracts from the general learning environment in our school is unacceptable. Our *Positive Behaviour Program* reflects the belief that students can and will make good decisions if given positive support and skills, from both the home and the school. *Our objective* is to provide an environment in which all individuals in our school can be successful, respected, and valued.

Our school-wide approach to discipline will:

- help students accept responsibility for their actions;
- help students identify and solve problems;
- leave students' dignity intact; and
- involve parents

Student Behaviour and Conduct

(from Edmonton Public Schools *Student Behaviour and Conduct Policy*):

Students shall be responsible and accountable for their behaviour and conduct:

- *while involved in school-sponsored or related activities;*
- *while on school property;*
- *during any recess or lunch periods on or off school property;*
- *while traveling to and from school; and*
- *beyond the hours of school operation if the behaviour or conduct affects the welfare of individual students or the governance, climate, or efficiency of the school(s).*

Parents play a vital role in developing student behaviour and conduct. It is the district's expectation that parents:

- *be aware of the board policy and regulations and the school's expectations for student behaviour and conduct;*
- *review the board policy and regulations and the school's expectations for student behaviour and conduct with their child(ren);*
- *work with the school to resolve student behavioural issues when they affect their child(ren); and*
- *co-operate with the school's or district's recommended course of action prior to re-admission of the student following a student suspension.*

Students shall show respect for:

- *school authority;*
- *others and their property;*
- *ethnic, racial, religious, and gender differences;*
- *school attendance and punctuality;*
- *work habits, assignments and homework;*
- *school property such as textbooks and equipment;*
- *fire alarms and safety equipment; and*
- *District policies relating to smoking, alcohol, drugs and inhalants.*

Failure to meet the expectations for behaviour and conduct shall result in some or all of the following consequences:

- *problem solving, monitoring or reviewing behaviour expectation with student and reprimand;*
- *parental involvement;*
- *temporary removal of privileges;*
- *temporary exclusion of student from class;*
- *in-school or out-of-school suspension;*
- *behaviour contract with student;*
- *restitution for property damage to an individual or board;*
- *assessment of student to develop appropriate programming.*



Mount Pleasant School Song



Reach for the top, top, top.
Don't ever stop, stop, stop.
Live by the golden rule,
At Mount Pleasant School.

We're going to learn, learn, learn.
For others show concern.
This is our special rule,
At Mount Pleasant School.

Every day we learn our daily lessons A, B, C.
Arithmetic and reading make a better you and me.
And caring for our neighbours,
Is the way we want to be.
Body, mind, and spirit are together,
Don't you see?

