



## Getting Ready for School in Canada

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The Surrey Schools Welcome Centre provides free transition and settlement support to all newcomer and English Language Learner families new to the school district. This resource provides information on getting started in school.



### **To Do List for Students New to Surrey Schools:**

- Save the school's telephone number in your mobile phone
- Save email address for your child's teacher in your mobile phone
- Go to the school website to find the school supplies list for your child
- Prepare backpack, lunch kit, and water bottle ready
- Prepare your child for the weather – have good footwear, comfortable clothing, and outerwear ready for different seasons and school activities
- Set up a study area with good lighting and quiet space at home
- Set up a routine for success (wake up time, breakfast, getting dressed, leaving for school, study time and sleep time routines)

### **Allergies**

The Surrey School District strives to keep schools safe for all students and staff. Where there is a student with a life-threatening allergy, school staff, students, and parents work together to make the school "allergy-aware" and prepare a plan to reduce the risk of student exposure to the allergen. Be sure to advise your child's teacher if your child has any allergies.

### **Digital Resources:**

Teachers often use various digital platforms to support student learning. Talk to the school or your child's teacher to learn more.

### **Dress Code**

The Surrey School District does not require students to wear uniforms. Members of our school community are expected to dress appropriately for a positive learning environment and treat school as "their place of business".

We want to see clothing worn that will ensure the physical and personal safety of all our students. Students will be provided alternate clothes if their own clothes display:

- clothing with negative or inappropriate symbols, pictures, or slogans
- short shorts or skirts (length below fingertips when hands by sides)
- strapless tops, spaghetti straps, or crop-tops exposing tummy area
- low rise jeans exposing undergarments or bottom
- footwear that is unsafe for activities including gym (no flip flops)

## **Food – Lunches, Snacks, and Water**

Your child will need snacks for recess and a lunch. Children should also bring a water bottle with them daily. Food sent to school should be nutritious and healthy. Talk to the school about health food ideas. Some schools offer hot lunch programs. Contact your school for more information. High schools may have a cafeteria where students can purchase hot lunches.

**MyEducation BC (MyEdBC) Parent Portal** This online portal provides parents with a way to access their child's school information directly online. With this portal account, you will be able to view attendance, term grades, and other information about your child(ren). The MyEducationBC application is a secure portal used in most school districts in BC. For direction on how to login and navigate the Parent Portal:

[https://media.surreyschools.ca/media/Default/medialib/family\\_portal\\_user\\_instructions\\_v01-2\\_20170208.98aa5952850.pdf](https://media.surreyschools.ca/media/Default/medialib/family_portal_user_instructions_v01-2_20170208.98aa5952850.pdf)

## **Parent Teacher Meetings**

Parent Teacher Interviews are one way for parents to participate in their child's education. An important opportunity to find out about your child's progress, interviews are not just for parents of students who are struggling. Parents are encouraged to come prepared with questions and concerns. Parent-teacher interviews occur a couple of times per year. You may need to register to meet with the teacher and should do so early. If you have concerns about your child's education, you can also reach out to your Settlement Worker or directly to the school or teacher at anytime during the school year to set up a meeting time.

## **School Supplies**

School supply lists are created each year by teachers for each grade. School supply lists are usually available on the school's website. School supplies can be purchased by the parent or ordered online, via phone, or email. Ask the school for more information.

## **School Start and Sharing Information:**

Schools work with families to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment.

At the start of the school year, you will be asked to provide the school with information on any special needs, medical concerns, emergency contacts, allergies etc. Look out for a package of forms to be sent home.

## School Communication

It is important to stay connected to your child's school. Keep the telephone number of the school handy and save it on your mobile phone. Schools may communicate with you via phone or email. They may also use an online tool, such as Teams to communicate with parents. Schools may provide regular updates using an online tool or via newsletters. Ask the school for more information.

## Timetables and Reporting to School

Each school has a timetable and bell schedule, see the "Contact Us" tab on the school's website. Children must be at school from the start of the school day until the end. If your child will be absent from school, always inform the school or teacher directly. Most school telephone lines also have an automated system for you to leave a message regarding your child's absence. If your child will not attend school, advise the school in advance.

- **Elementary School (Kindergarten to Grade 7)** Elementary students usually stay in one classroom and with one teacher all day. They may leave the classroom for a few classes only, such as, physical education (PE), Art, or Music.
- **High School (Grade 8 - 12)** Most schools run on a semester system (Day 1 and Day 2). There are two semesters each year. The first semester starts in September and ends at the end of January. The second semester starts in February and ends in June. Most schools are closed in the summer, but some are open for summer programs. High school students are assigned a "homeroom" but move from class to class throughout the day. Each student usually takes 8 courses at a time (4 classes one day and another 4 the next day).

## Useful Resources:

- School Programs: <https://www.surreyschools.ca/page/1103/all-programs>
- Community events: <https://www.surreyschools.ca/page/105/community-information>
- Programs of Choice: <https://www.surreyschools.ca/page/820/programs-of-choice>
- School Policies: <https://www.surreyschools.ca/page/63859/policies-procedures>
- General Parent Resources: <https://www.surreyschools.ca/page/412/parent-information-brochures>

*Information in the brochure is based on a variety of Surrey School District resources. This resource is aimed at newcomer families and is intended to provide general information to families new to the district. For more comprehensive information, please see the links and resources shared in this brochure. This resource is a guide only, if you have a question or concerns about your child, please contact your child's teacher or other school staff. The Surrey School District provides many resources to support your child's learning journey. For more information:*

<https://www.surreyschools.ca/>

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