

2019-20 SCHOOL HANDBOOK



MISSION

Our school is a place where all students can achieve success

Web: <http://www.esd.ca/school/gjms/Pages/default.aspx>

Twitter: @drgjms

ABOUT US

The Dr. George Johnson Middle School is part of Evergreen School Division, located along the western shores of Lake Winnipeg. We are a Grade 5-8 school of approximately 200 students located in Gimli, Manitoba, Canada.



Our school is named after a famous resident of Gimli, the **Honorable Dr. George Johnson**, who in 1986 was appointed Manitoba's 20th Lieutenant Governor, the first person of Icelandic descent so honored; subsequently he was the recipient of many other outstanding honors, including the Order of Canada, our highest civilian honor.

Staff

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Jim Gibbs - Principal - james.gibbs@esd.ca
Mrs. Raya Charrier – Assistant Principal and Grade 7/8
Ms. Linda Arnason - Resource Teacher
Mrs. Kelly Croy - Resource / Counsellor
Mrs. Elly Acton- Secretary

TEACHERS

Mr. Richard Truscott- Grade 5/6
Mrs. Linda Stevens - Grade 5/6
Ms. Maureen Fergus - Grade 5/6
Mrs. Pam Einarson- Grade 5/6
Mrs. Janice Arnason- Grade 7/8
Mrs. Patricia Stouffer- Grade 7/8
Ms. Shawna Pawluk - Grade 7/8
Mr. Justin Charrier – Grade 5-8 Phys. Ed and Math Support
Mr. Patrick Mills - French and Grade 7/8
Mrs. Heather Clarke – Music(5/6) / Band (7/8)

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS

Ms. Sherry Arnason
Mrs. Kimberly Becker
Ms. Laurie Braun
Mrs. Patty Specaluk

LIBRARIAN

Mrs. Karen Smith

CUSTODIAL STAFF

Mr. Robert Dahlman- Head Caretaker
Mr. Vince Tourand - Caretaker

Our School Priorities

Wellness

Literacy

Numeracy



INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared to provide parents and students with an overview of the programs and routines of our school. It is hoped that you will find this handbook to be a useful and helpful reference.

On behalf of the staff I would like to welcome you and your child(ren) to the Dr. George Johnson Middle School. With your support and cooperation, we trust that your child(ren) will experience success and happiness as a member of our school community.

SCHOOL VALUES

Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe

CODE OF CONDUCT

All students and employees at our school have a right to work and learn in an environment supportive of their personal health, safety and well-being.

We will work together to provide a safe and caring school environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviors. Therefore, students, parents and staff will do their best to act respectfully, responsibly and safely. In pursuit of this goal the following is unacceptable at our school:

- ~ Bullying, or abusing physically, sexually, or psychologically - orally, in writing or otherwise - any person;
- ~ Discrimination based on any characteristic set out in the Human Rights Code;
- ~ Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs at school;
- ~ Gang involvement;
- ~ Possessing a weapon (as defined in Section 2 of the Criminal Code of Canada)



Dr. George Johnson School...A CAREing School

Welcome to Dr. George Johnson School where you will find the awkward, confusing, hormonally charged world of middle school! A time during which kids grapple with schoolwork, puberty, romance, identity, and new kinds of relationships with their parents and peers. It is the baffling no-man's-land between child and teen, the time when children don't want to grow up, and so badly do.

Catering to such a unique clientele requires special people and special efforts. Middle years schooling means that we consolidate skills learned in the early years while developing new ones that will serve children as adults. While our school focuses on reading as the academic entry point to all subjects and success in the future, developing awareness of their abilities and strengths, as well as pro-social behavior in all our students is at the core of resiliency development and student engagement. It requires strength based approaches built upon the belief that every child has potential and unique abilities which will direct their journey in life, and help them define who they are.

Such a school must be a caring school, and so with this in mind our school community has come together to apply this acronym to describe and guide our school – **C.A.R.E “Cultivating Abilities, Resiliency, Engagement and Empathy”**. By becoming a CAREing school we are also able to strive to meet the goals of Evergreen’s Strategic plan in the areas of Citizenship, Student Engagement, and Sustainability in many ways. In addition, we have built C.A.R.E. upon three beliefs about our students and what our job is as educators and parents:

1. Every student can achieve success
2. Every student is worth our time and effort
3. Relationships matter

Attendance at School

All students are expected to attend school regularly as per the Manitoba Public Schools Act. Please contact the school by phone, notes, or visit, if your child will be absent for any reason or will be leaving the school at an earlier time. If a parent wishes to pick up their child(ren) during school hours, you are requested to send a note to the teacher and report to the office at the school to wait for your child. Our school operates a Call Back Program. This is to ensure that students who have left for school have arrived safely. At 9:00 and 1:35 teachers submit a list of students who are absent from school without reason. The parents of these children will be contacted to verify the reason for the absence.

Bussing

Students who live a distance of 1.6 k from school are eligible for bussing. Parents will be notified of bus number and pick-up time. Any changes in drop-off location, etc. must be requested by parental written request to the office.

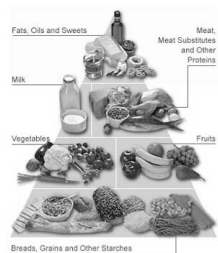
Late Arrivals

Students who are late arriving at school should report to the office that they have arrived and then go directly to their classroom / class. If the student arrives after roll call, the teacher will inform the office that the student arrived late. Parents please ensure that your children are in school on time. Late arrivals cause class interruptions and unnecessary work for the teachers and office staff. Being on time at school is also an important life skill.

Volunteers

Like every school, ours welcomes and depends upon volunteers. If you wish to volunteer, please inform the office. Prospective volunteers require a Child Abuse Registry Check and Criminal Record Check, as well as a short orientation from the principal. The principal will review our Volunteer Guidelines with each volunteer during the orientation.

School Nutrition



All publicly funded schools in Manitoba are required to have a written school food and nutrition policy as part of their school plan. Dr. George Johnson School, in partnership with its community, seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and environment required to make healthy food choices.

Our school nutrition policy is based upon the “The Foods in K-12 Schools in Manitoba Guidelines”. We encourage teachers, students, and parents to send to school food that meets these guidelines and of course to avoid foods that may be

known allergens for students (i.e. nuts based, fish, etc).

Our Parent Advisory Council or student’s groups will sell periodically hot lunches at noon hour as fundraisers. These may include, perogies, pizza, hot dogs, etc. As these are infrequent events they fall outside the food guidelines.

- **Food Program**

Snacks of fresh fruit/yogurt and granola bars are available at the office throughout the day. Funding from our Parent Advisory Council and various community organizations supports the program. Hot lunches are offered by the Parent Council.

- **Canteen**

There is a canteen open at noon hour each day (and for special events) where students can purchase foods. Students operate it and all profits support school programs and humanitarian work students identify. Drinks include milk and 100% juice. Other foods sold or offered at the school will also be according to the “The Foods in K-12 Schools in Manitoba Guidelines”.

Lunch Policy

All bus students are permitted to stay for lunch. Non-bus students may stay, particularly during periods of inclement weather. As much as possible, it would be desirable that students living within walking distance go home for lunch. Non-bus students who do not behave appropriately may lose their noon hour privilege to stay in school. Bus students who do the same may have to eat in a location other than their classroom.

Students will be eating in classrooms and we also have a lunchroom for grade 7 and 8. All lunch students must remain in their classrooms until they are finished eating. Those requiring more time will be given additional time. Since we often have peanut allergies in the school we request that parents refrain from sending lunches/snacks to school, which contain peanuts/nuts or peanut/nut by- products. Your cooperation is a matter of life and death to certain individuals in our school. We ask that parents send leak proof, unbreakable, easy to open Reseal-able containers, and spoons, etc. Pizza sales take place several times a year and are organized by the Parent Advisory Council. A canteen is open for students several times a week as well. Funds raised are for school usage. All bus students are required to eat lunch in school and remain on the school grounds during the noon hour. If parents wish to allow their children to leave the school, a dated note is required, indicating the reason for leaving the school.



Lunches & Microwave

All classrooms and the lunchroom are equipped with a microwave oven to warm lunches for the students in that class. Please send food in microwave-safe containers and only send food that needs to be warmed up, not cooked.

Student Dress

To help promote positive relationships among friends and peers, and to reduce competition, we request that students dress and groom themselves **modestly**. This includes clothing with inappropriate messages. Students will be asked to change or cover up their clothing if it is deemed inappropriate.

Students Going Uptown During Lunch

Town students do not require permission to leave the school premises during the lunch hour. All bus students must stay on school grounds unless a daily note is provided to the classroom teacher requesting that the students go uptown. Grade 7 & 8 students may bring **ONE** parental note granting permission to go uptown for the entire school year.

Please Note: The school is only responsible for students' conduct off school grounds as it relates to their behavior toward each other. Acts of vandalism, theft, loitering, etc. will be referred to the police. The school may cancel uptown privileges at any time.

Break Times



All students are encouraged to go outside at break to be physically active, weather permitting. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Students will remain indoors if the temperature is - 27C or colder, including the wind chill. However, we have a "Polar Bear Club" where parents give their child signed permission to go outside in temperatures not colder than -30. Parents are reminded to ensure students have warm clothing.

In addition to outside activities the school Library and Student Recreation Room are open during breaks. Also, student groups/clubs are active during breaks and Intramurals are held during noon hour.

Roller blades, skateboards, scooters, and bicycles cannot be used on the school grounds but students may use them for transportation to school and then park/store them during the school day. Only soft balls (rubber, tennis, etc.) may be used for ball games.

Footwear

Regulations require that an immediate evacuation of the school take place in the event of a fire drill or emergency. Because of this requirement, as well as for health reasons, it is important that students wear shoes inside the building at all times. We require footwear that does not mark the floor. Shoes that mark the floors cannot be worn inside.

Field Trip Permission Forms

Every out of town field trip must have parent permission. Permission forms, with all details, will be sent home prior to a field trip or excursion. When a field trip is within town a notice will go home to parents informing them the nature of the trip.



The Organization of the School Day

The school has a six-period day of 300 minutes that we call a Balanced Day with an activity/nutrition break and a lunch break.

9:00 – 9:50

9:50 – 10:40

10:40 – 11:10 – ACTIVITY/NUTRITION BREAK

11:10 – 12:00

12:00 – 12:45

12:45 – 1:35 – LUNCH

1:35 – 2:25

2:25 – 3:20

3:20 – 3:30 - HOMEROOM



Study Hall

Students may go to the library at noon hour to read or work on assignments. They are expected to work quietly, and an educational assistant will be on hand to aid if requested.

Information & Communication Technology

The school has an ample supply of computing devices for students to use including laptops, desktop computers and iPads. In addition, each classroom is fitted with a SMART Board and projector, and the library has several Kobo e-readers to support our digital library of books. Students are permitted to bring their own device (BYOD) and WIFI is available throughout the building to provide access to our network and internet. Instruction in programming/coding takes with the use of a Sphero and Raspberry Pi in Gr. 7/8 Exploration class. The use of ICT in learning is ubiquitous in teacher instruction and student learning, but our network is monitored and students who are determined to be using ICT inappropriately will have that use restricted or removed.

PLEASE NOTE: Neither the school, nor Evergreen School Division will assume responsibility for the loss, destruction, damage or theft of these devices. School staff may seize these devices if inappropriate use is detected or suspected.

Cell Phones



Students are permitted to have cell phones during school hours but their use during class time is only acceptable with teacher permission. If you have a need to contact your child during school hours, we recommend you phone the office so as not to disturb classes.

PLEASE NOTE: Neither the school, nor Evergreen School Division will assume responsibility for the loss, destruction, damage or theft of these devices, nor any communication bill associated with their unauthorized use. School staff may seize these devices if inappropriate use is detected or suspected.

Physical Education Classes

For safety reasons, Physical Education classes require a separate pair of clean, non-scuffing gym/running shoes. No sandals or any shoes that have thick soles or heels can be worn during gym classes. Socks or bare feet are also not permitted. Gym shoes can also be used as indoor shoes. All students must change into a T-shirt, and shorts or sweats for Phys. Ed. Students who need to be excused from Phys. Ed. for health reasons need to have a signed and dated note from a parent, or in the case of a long-term absence, indication from a physician is required.

Please Note: Phys. Ed is a compulsory course in Manitoba schools from K to 12.

Sports

It's important for middle schools to have active sports programs. All students in grades 7 & 8 are encouraged to join school teams that compete in divisional and out of division competitions. These include basketball, volleyball, badminton and track & field. There are no "cuts" made to teams so any student who is interested in playing and regularly comes to practices will be a team member. Additionally, students in 5-8 are encouraged to join intramural sports that take place at noon hour, as well as join our Track & Field team.

French

Our school has a dedicated French teacher for all grades. Instruction focusses on conversation, vocabulary development and cultural appreciation; with an emphasis on being highly interactive and engaging.

Please Note: French is a compulsory course in Manitoba schools from K to 8.

Music / Band

Our school has a dedicated music specialist. Grade 5/6 music instruction focusses on Orff and music appreciation. Beginning in Gr. 7 students have a choice of taking Band. Students who choose band take part in an assessment to find the instrument that best suits them.

Explorations

Middle Year's students demand interaction, engagement with their learning, and opportunities for exploration. To meet these needs the school provides a wide variety of programming beyond the core curriculum. Gr. 7/8 have programming that includes – Foods and Nutrition, and Woods and Metals at Gimli High School. School based courses include such classes as: Drama, Career Education, Coding, Stained Glass, and Communications application, etc.

Recycling



Our school has recycling stations located throughout the building. Each Friday a group of students empties the recycling bins and prepares them for pick. **Parents are encouraged to provide students with snacks and lunches that come in re-usable containers or with a minimum of non-recyclable material.**

Renaissance Learning

Our school has a license to several software programs from Renaissance Learning including assessment programs called Star Math/Reading and instructional resources Accelerated Math and Accelerated Reading. Students regularly take Star Math/Reading tests to monitor their progress and establish learning goals. Additionally, Accelerated Math can be used to provide computer guided instruction to groups of students to supplement regular class instruction. Accelerated Reading allows students to take short tests on books they've read to accumulate points towards reading goals. Students regularly receive rewards and recognition for reaching goals with the highest level of success being membership in the 100 Club.

100 Club

Reading is the #1 priority at our school. Developing student's skill and love of reading is an ongoing effort in and outside the classroom at our school. Students may win recognition by meeting their grade level reading benchmarks through the Accelerated Reader Program, and become members of the 100 Club. In addition to prizes, members take part in a year-end field trip to celebrate their success.

Service Clubs

The qualities of caring and service to others are the qualities of the person our school is named after and are the qualities we encourage and nurture in our students. Therefore, students are offered many opportunities to be of service to others. These include K-Kids (Gr. 5/6) and Builder's Club (Gr. 7/8) sponsored by our local Kiwanis Club. In addition, students operate the school canteen and donate a portion of the profits to a charity of their choice, students also serve as Tec Support in our Recreation Room and with the support of CAA and the local RCMP, school safety patrols monitor the crosswalk for students before and after school. Finally, students are encouraged to support organizations in need through their own self-initiated projects.

Student Awards

Our school focuses on encouraging all students to do their best. We also like to recognize those who have done exceptionally well. Below is a list of year-end awards we hand out at years end to celebrate student success.

◆ **Dr. George Johnson Award**

For most well-rounded student (academics, athletics, school activities) in Grade 8. There is one award for each class.

◆ **Kiwanis Award**

Student Leadership Award for Gr. 8

◆ **Principal's Award**

Given to the student who most exemplifies the qualities of caring, compassion and concern for others in her community and around the world

◆ **Top Academic**

Highest overall achievement in each classroom

◆ **Honor Roll Awards**

Given to students in each class for highest achievement in Math, ELA, French, Social Studies, Science. Separate Awards for Music, French and Phys Ed. will also be given.

◆ **Citizenship Award**

One award per class for student who exemplifies the virtues of a good citizen of the school and world

◆ **Athletics**

Top male and female athlete in the school

◆ **Morale Booster**

Awarded to the student in each class who demonstrates the best school spirit and contributes to a positive classroom environment

◆ **Most Improved Student**

◆ **Summer Bursaries**

In partnership with community partners we offer financial support for selected students to attend some of the following summer camps.

*Band Camp, Legion Sports Camp, Rotary Youth Leadership Camp, Manitoba Theatre for Young People, Sailing Camp, other athletics camps as may become available.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

The school requests that all parents leave **the name and phone number of someone who lives in town to contact in case of an emergency**. It is important that this information be kept up-to-date, particularly when parents are away from town. Your child should know the identity of the person(s) to be contacted.

🔑 STUDENT ILLNESS

Our staff will attend to a child who receives a minor injury such as a scrape, bruise, cut, or bump. In the event of a more serious illness/injury, all attempts will be made to notify a parent at home or at work. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person as listed on the September registration sheet will be called. The emergency contact **MUST** be available to pick up the student if necessary.

If your child needs emergency medical attention, you will be contacted as soon as possible. If you cannot be reached or are unable to come and pick up your child an ambulance will be called, and your child will be taken to the nearest hospital and attended to by the physician on call. The cost of the ambulance is covered by Evergreen School Division insurance. An adult representing the school will remain with the child until the parent/emergency contact person arrives at the hospital.



🔑 MEDICATION

If an adult at school is required to give your child medication of any kind, we must have a signed authorization by the parent. A form is available for this purpose from the school office. **Medication will not be given without signed permission.** The medication must be in pre-measured pill form and in the original, labeled container. Liquid medications will not be administered at school. Students who may require an injection via an epi-pen are required to have the epi-pen with them at all times. Adults in their care must be informed as to the location of the epi-pen.

🔑 STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Evergreen School Division provides basic insurance for each student enrolled in the division, while they are in school. Forms for additional insurance coverage are sent home with students in the fall. If you are buying insurance, please mail your application directly to the company. Completed insurance forms will not be accepted at the school.

🔑 School Supplies

Students are not required to bring their own school supplies as they will be purchased by Evergreen School Division to ensure all students have the same supplies and the supplies they need. Parents are responsible for a \$40 fee to cover the cost of school supplies and for purchasing such things as shoes, backpacks, headphones, lunch kits, etc.

🔑 Fundraising

Each year our school participates in several fundraisers. Any money raised by the student body for school activities goes directly to the student fund. This money helps subsidize such as equipment purchases, student awards, science fair, artists in the school, band, etc. Our Parent Advisory Council also holds fundraisers to support the school.

Occasionally, monies are raised for various charitable organizations and causes.

Communication

Communication between home and school is extremely important in the success of any student. Our primary means of communication is through, our school website, Twitter account, Edsby student portal as well as email and voice messages (School Messenger). Students may receive a bound student planner if they wish.

We encourage parents to maintain close contact with the school. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you become concerned about your child's behavior or achievement. **In most cases, the teacher is the first person to be contacted in these matters.** Please contact the teacher to discuss these matters in advance. If concerns remain, you may bring them to the principal's attention. Families are welcome to attend our assemblies and special events.

Please notify the school several days in advance if your child(ren) will be moving and transferring to a new school. This will give us time to prepare all the required records and forms and gather all their belongings.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

The Council meets monthly on the third Tuesday of each school month at 6:30 PM. The purpose of the council is to serve in an advisory capacity to school administration. In this capacity, they provide input on school policies, programs, initiatives and the school plan. Additionally, they undertake fundraising, and provide information to parents. The PAC operates according to a constitution and under the direction of an executive, which is elected each year in the Fall. Projects include the Food Program, Pizza Days, Teacher Appreciation Week celebrations, providing parent helpers for book sales, upgrading the playground facilities, providing funding for various instructional materials and new books for the library.

Student Assessment

Assessment practices should recognize all educational achievement, learning styles, and intelligences, enabling all learners to achieve their best in all learning activities. Teachers provide and review a subject outline in each subject at the beginning of the year to explain to students the content covered in each subject and how it will be evaluated. Student assessment occurs on a regular basis and teachers use a variety of sources when determining student's level of mastery of the learning outcome.

- *Reporting Periods*

Student Involved Conferences will occur in November and April of each year. Student report cards will be distributed in December, March and June of each year.

- *Provincial Assessments*

Grade 7 and 8 students are administered provincially developed and required assessments in mathematics (Gr.7), and English language arts (Gr. 8) each year.

- *School Based Assessments*

Teachers collect a variety of information on student learning throughout the year including assignments, projects, observation and conferences with students. This is reflected in student report cards three times a year. Additionally, and aligned to the priority placed on numeracy, monthly formative and a year end summative assessment in Math are held for every grade to assess our progress on key instructional benchmarks.

- *Retention*

In rare circumstances students may be retained in a grade if they have not sufficiently met the learning outcomes of that grade. Parents will be notified by February if there is a concern their child may have to be retained in a grade. At that time the teacher, student and parent will develop a plan to improve their achievement so that this does not have to occur.

Final decisions regarding student retention rest with the principal.

- *Year End Placement*

Each year in late spring classroom teachers, student services personnel, and school administration discusses class lists for the following school year. Much thought goes into placing your child into the most appropriate class.

School personnel take three key factors into consideration when establishing class lists.

1. Learning demographics,
2. Learning needs,
3. Social/personal needs

A final decision regarding the class assignment of students is the responsibility of the principal



Student Lockers

1. All students are assigned a locker for the storage of school supplies. It is expected that students will treat lockers with respect. It is also the responsibility of the students to keep the lockers clean, neat and tidy. At the end of the school year, students will be responsible for cleaning out the lockers, including the removal of all materials, posters, tape, etc.
2. It is expected that students lock their lockers. (The Office keeps a record of all combinations.)
3. Lockers are the property of The Evergreen School Division. ***Therefore, the Division reserves the right to inspect or search lockers at anytime.***
4. The School Division does not accept liability for personal property that is on School Division property or stored in lockers.

School Closure

The Evergreen School Division may, under extreme conditions, cancel all classes.

If a storm or emergency occurs overnight and cancellation of buses and school is necessary, radio stations will be notified by 6:30 a.m. The stations to listen to are:

CBC (990 AM) CKY (58 AM)
CITI (92 FM) MAGIC (99.9 FM)
CJOB (68 AM) CBC (French)
CIFX (1290 AM) Q94 FM
POWER 97 CIFX (1290)
CFRQX (104.1 FM) CFRY (920AM)(93.1FM)

In addition, Evergreen School Division will send an automated message via phone informing you of the closure, and the Division web site will also provide notice.

If a storm develops during the day, classes will continue as usual, however buses may be cancelled. In this case, radio stations will be contacted, rural students will be billeted in town, and every effort will be made to inform all parents by phone. **It is important that all bus students have a designated storm billet listed on their Student Information Sheet.**

Drivers have the authority to cancel all or part of the route if in their opinion the safety of the students may be compromised. If a driver cancels his/her run s/he will notify the parents of students on that bus.