

Brookhouse Elementary School Newsletter

Where Busy Bees Thrive!

September 2026

Brookhouse Elementary School

15 Christopher Ave, Dartmouth, NS B2W 1W9

Phone: (902) 435-8318

Fax: (902) 435-8323

Safe Arrival: 1-833-582-6940

E-mail: bes@hrce.ca

Website: <https://brk.hrce.ca/>

Important Dates to Note

September

17 - Curriculum Night 6 to 7pm

18 - Lockdown drill

21 - SAC names due - email bes@hrce.ca

23 - Hold and Secure Drill

24 - School Photos

25 - Professional Learning - no school for students

28 - First SAC meeting - virtual 5:30

28 - First Home & School - in person - 6:35

29 - Orange Shirt Day (observed at BES)

29 - Classroom teachers to send home *Class Plan for Communicating Student Learning*

30 - National Day for Truth and Reconciliation - No school

October

1 - Treaty Day (this is a school day)

2 - School-wide Terry Fox Walk

Week of Oct 5 - Fire Drill #2

12 - Thanksgiving Holiday - no school

22 - PTO Trunk or Treat

23 - NSTU Conference Day - No school for students

Message from Principal

Welcome back to another school year. I am the acting principal filling in for Mr. Rutledge while he is off. September will be a month of making adjustments and establishing routines to ensure that our school days run as smoothly as possible and that we maximize opportunities for learning. We are looking forward to a great year!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via our main line 902-435-8318 or by email ayerxa@hrce.ca

Angela Yerxa-Weeks
(ps - I go by Ms. Yerxa or Ms. Angela)

Brookhouse Elementary School Advisory Council - SAC

Please join me in welcoming the current members of our SAC:

Parent Members: Gillian Roseway, TBA, TBA

Staff Members: Tracey Grouse (Teacher), Charmaine Willis (Support staff), Lisa MacIsaac (VP/Teacher), Angela Yerxa-Weeks (Acting Principal)

Community Members: Belinda Oxner, D'Arcy Morris-Poultney, Francina Daigle

We do require two parent member spots to be filled to complete our council. If you are a parent interested in joining SAC please send an email to bes@hrce.ca Names need to be put forward by Monday September 21st. If we have more than two parents interested, we will hold a virtual election to determine our new SAC parent members.

Brookhouse PTO Volunteers Needed

Parent and Guardian Volunteers are needed to help the Parent Teacher Organization. Let's work together to create fun & special experiences for our school community! Give as much or as little as you are able. Every person can make a difference.

PTO Events Include:

*Halloween

*Spring Fair

*Movie Nights

*And More...

Scan the QR Code & join the Facebook Group



The first meeting will be on Monday September 28th at 6:35 in-person at Brookhouse Elementary.

Physical Education Reminder

Sneakers are the safest option for students when they are participating in phys. ed classes. Crocs, sandals, and any

loose-fitting footwear become a safety hazard for students. If you can, please have your child bring sneakers to wear on the days they have Phys. Ed in their schedule. If needed, students can borrow from our used sneaker stash in the gym.

Provincial School Lunch Program

Please see the attached schedule of ordering dates for the school lunch program.

Student Cell Phone Use in Elementary Schools

Our NS EECD has developed rules for student cell phone use in schools. Below are the core rules for elementary schools. We do adhere to the rules at Brookhouse.

Core Rules for Grades PP–6

- **No Use During Non-Instructional Times:** Phones must remain off and stored even during **recess, lunch breaks, and between classes.**
- **Privacy Areas:** Cell phones and personal mobile devices are strictly **prohibited in washrooms and change rooms** at all times.
- **Scope of Devices:** The directive applies to cell phones as well as any other **personal mobile devices with similar functionality**, such as portable gaming systems, iPods, smartwatch, and wireless earbuds.
- **Storage Location:** Devices are typically stored out of sight in the student's backpack or locker, depending on the individual school's structural setup.

Permitted Exceptions

Exceptions to these rules can only be made to accommodate a student's **individual medical or ability-related needs**. For example, a student who requires a phone to monitor a medical condition like diabetes must have this approved through a consultation with their school's **Student Planning Team**, which includes the parents/caregivers.

Family Communication & Enforcement

- **Contacting Your Child:** Because students cannot access their devices, parents or caregivers who need to reach their child or pass along an urgent message must **call the school's main administration office.**
- **Non-Compliance:** If a student violates the policy, teachers and administration will address it as a minor infraction under the Provincial School

Code of Conduct Policy. Principals and vice-principals hold the authority to require a student to **surrender their phone** until a parent or guardian can be contacted.

SchoolCash Online

HRCE uses an on-line system that allows families to make payments electronically. From lunch orders to school trip fees, you will be able to make all payments safely, securely, and quickly through SchoolCash Online.

When applicable, our school will post items for purchase or assign school fees relevant to your child. You can make all purchases and payments from your phone, tablet or computer.

If you have not already done so, please register as soon as possible. It's free and takes less than two minutes. When you create an account, you will receive an email once items are posted for purchase.

Visit <https://hrce.schoolcashonline.com/> and click Register to get started.

Need support? Connect with the SchoolCash Online help desk at [schoolcashonline.com/Home/Support](https://hrce.schoolcashonline.com/Home/Support) (copy and paste into your browser)

Pre-Primary and School Events

There have been some questions around how pre-primary students are integrated into the events we have at school. On days when school staff are engaged in PD, there will be no pre-primary program those days. As well, all school holidays are observed in pre-primary.

Any curriculum-based events (curriculum evening, parent/teacher...) are not pre-primary events as there is no curriculum being followed for those students. If you have any questions or concerns your lead ECE is available via email.

Pre-Primaries are welcome to participate in other school events such as PTO events and the school lunch program.

Picking Up Students from School

We would like all student pickups to continue to take place from the main office. If you are picking up students

from school at dismissal time, please meet them at their regular entrance doors.

If you are picking up students outside of dismissal time, please follow the directions below:

- Call the school when you are on your way to the school to let them know who you are picking up and what class they are in. 902-435-8323
- Buzz the doorbell when you arrive.
- Enter the school and speak with our school administrative assistant.
- Your child will be brought to you.

Picking up from pre-primary, you must knock on the door of the appropriate pre-primary class.

Allergy Alerts / Medication

Please keep in mind we have numerous students and staff with severe allergies to food and scents. Please refrain from wearing scents when in our school and be diligent about the food items your child brings to school.

Nut products cannot be sent to school.

If your child requires medication to be given during school time, an "Administration of Medication" form must be filled out and on file in the main office. All medicine is kept secured and distributed from the main office. Medications are required to be in the original container and clearly labelled for your child.

If your child has a **severe or life-threatening allergy or medical condition**, families must complete a Life-Threatening Allergies form to ensure all necessary staff members have access to this information. It is also important that you call the school to obtain the appropriate medical forms. This is important to ensure all staff is aware of any conditions or allergies so they can respond appropriately in the case of an emergency. You must complete a form indicating appropriate medical care for your child.

If your child requires an Epi Pen, they **must** wear their Epi Pen on their person. If you decide that you do not want your child to wear the Epi Pen, it can be left in the office but you must complete signed documentation and submit it to the principal in September of each year. If you want to send in a second Epi Pen, it can be left in the main school office.

School Photos

This year, school photos will be taken by Photomaster Studios. Our school photo day is Thursday September 24th. Retake date is November 3.

Safe Arrival

On days when your child will be late or absent, please be sure to let us know. One of our greatest priorities is ensuring that all our students arrive safely at school each day. Families must report absences through SchoolMessenger. You are able to report future absences using an app, website, or toll-free phone number. Any time your student is absent (or late after 8:55) and the absence has not been reported in advance, you will receive notifications via email, text, and phone calls from SchoolMessenger. If SchoolMessenger cannot reach you, office staff will follow up.

Moving forward, to report your student absences, any of the following methods can be used:

PowerSchool Parent/Student Portal

Parents/guardians can log in to <https://sishrsb.ednet.ns.ca/public/> to access the SchoolMessenger website to report future absences.

SchoolMessenger App

Parents/guardians can download the SchoolMessenger app for Android and iOS devices and use their username and password for the PowerSchool Portal.

Toll-Free Number

Parents/guardians can call 1-833-582-6940 to report future absences using an automated system.

All three methods are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Absences can be reported at any time before the start of school on the day the student will be absent. Up to five consecutive absences can be recorded at once.

Lost and Found

Just a reminder to have your child(ren) take any of their lost items from the Lost and Found each week. Once a month, we will be donating all items in the Lost and Found to charity. We do not have the space and capacity to keep lost and found items for long periods of time. Please have your child(ren) check the lost and found on a regular basis. It is also important that your child's name is written on their clothing. As we go through the lost and

found items for donation, we do check for student names.

Arrival, School Bell Times and Dismissal Arrangements

Please note: at 8:35 inside supervision begins and students can begin to enter the building; instruction begins at 8:55 and all students should be at school by that time; **ALL** students dismiss for the day at 2:45pm. **Students may not be on school grounds before 8:35am.**

Side doors will be open and monitored by school staff from 8:35 to 8:45. After 8:45, students must enter through the front doors. Our bells indicate the start of the school day at 8:55 and the end of the school day at 2:45. We have no other bells during the school day.

It is extremely important that families make arrangements to pick up students at 2:45. We do not have supervision for students after the 2:45 bell.

Registration Forms & Parent Contact Information

It is extremely important that all families have a Power School account to verify and confirm the information contained in your child's electronic file. The Returning Student Registration Form (formerly Demographic Updates Form) is available to families from September 9 to October 5. This form is accessed via the Parent Portal and is an opportunity each year to review and update student information and includes our yearly permissions and consents.

If you have already registered for the Powerschool Parent Portal, that's awesome! If you are new to Powerschool or have forgotten your password, please use the link below to get started.

<https://sishrsb.ednet.ns.ca/public/>

Terry Fox Walk

WHEN: This year our Terry Fox activities to support cancer research and awareness will take place on October 2nd. Classes will learn about Terry's marathon of hope in age-appropriate ways and participate in a walk on the field in honour of Terry.

DONATIONS: We do not accept donations at school. We ask that anyone interested in donating do so on-line. If you wish to **donate online**, Income Tax receipts will be

issued by the Terry Fox Donation directly to you by e-mail.

Head Lice Reminders

We encourage parents to make checking their child's head for the presence of nits and/or lice a regular part of their routine. Please notify the school if your child has head lice and provide the recommended treatment before returning to school. Call 8-1-1 at any time to speak with a Registered Nurse for more information and guidance if head lice are still present after the second treatment. For information on the prevention and treatment of head lice, refer to the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness pamphlet, ***How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice***. It can be located by cutting and pasting the pamphlet title into your website browser.

Communication

Communication is extremely important for our home-school relationship and for the positive development of your child. We strive to work in partnership with families. Sharing what you know of your child helps us provide the most supportive learning environment for him/her. We are happy to answer questions, clarify information and listen to what you have to share.

Please note that calls and emails sent to staff members will be returned within two business days.

Breakfast Basket

We offer a daily breakfast food for students at our school. Please note that we will continue to offer an in-class breakfast basket with healthy food items. Students may enjoy breakfast items including granola bars, yogurt, fresh fruit, and cheese strings directly from their class baskets each morning.

Other School Safety Items

Please help to keep our students safe when dropping off and picking up your children. Here are a few friendly reminders:

- Please do not ever drive on the school grounds when students are present.

- Parking on the school grounds is limited to staff.

- When parking on the street, please abide by the no-stopping zones on either side of the street. Parking can only take place on side streets or further away from the school. It is especially important to abide by this during drop-off and pick-up times as parking or stopping in front of the school makes it impossible for school busses to drop-off or pick up students.

- Do not block bus zones or no-stopping zones.

- Dogs are not permitted on school yard or playgrounds while students are present. This included dogs of all sizes. We appreciate your cooperation with this.

- Students are not permitted to drive bikes or scooters on the school grounds. These items must be locked in the bike rack outside of the school.