
WEST-MONT MONTESSORI SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK: UPDATED 2010



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INTRODUCTION

Since 1954, West-Mont Montessori School has been promoting excellence in education and a life-long love of learning. At the school we hope you will see many examples of our primary focus – “*Children Come First*”. West-Mont offers a challenging program that brings a sense of fun and cooperative spirit to learning. We seek to complement the role of parents and family in developing a child’s strength of character and positive, mature attitude. These skills are essential for turning knowledge and experience into a fulfilling life.

At West-Mont we encourage students to incorporate virtues such as good manners, courtesy, integrity and respect for others. We hope students will develop a zest for learning and a commitment to achieving their personal best.

This Parent Handbook has been created to provide you and your family with essential information about how things are done at West-Mont School. Please talk with the Principal if you have any questions or need further clarification on any topics discussed in the Handbook. If you can’t find information that you think is important, please let us know so we can add it for future updates.

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

WHO WE ARE

West-Mont School is a small, community-and-family-oriented school located in Metchosin. At West-Mont students have fun, explore their creativity, take risks, and are challenged to do their best. We endeavour to provide students with an enriched educational experience that reflects our mission and guiding principles.

West-Mont’s community is a group of people who value education and mutual respect. Because of this our students are able to learn in a safe and supportive environment where virtues are celebrated. At West-Mont School parents, teachers and members of the community work as a team.

SCHOOL MISSION

At West-Mont School our mission is to build a learning community founded upon respect and harmony that graduates students who embrace life and learning with personal, communal and global integrity. To this end, the school community follows these guiding principles:

- Children come first
- Values are important
- Our learning environment has no walls
- We work as a team

COVENANT

The commitment to working together is called our covenant.

At West-Mont we believe that the strength of an education is forged from a bond between the student, the school and the home. Each partner must be committed to building a foundation of trust from which the child dreams, questions and works to become all that is possible.

There are many ways that the covenant comes to life at our school. They include detailed reporting on student progress, regular communication from teachers and curriculum information nights for parents. Our teachers all have an open-door policy where parents are always welcome to observe classes, volunteer in the classroom or meet with the teacher.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

What began as Victoria's first Montessori school, in 1954, has blossomed into a unique and innovative independent school serving students from Early Primary through Grade 8.

Today West-Mont is owned and operated by the families it serves - some of whom are former students who attended the original school! The Western Communities Montessori Society (WCMS) is a registered charity and non-profit society under the Society Act of B.C., and is comprised of parents, grandparents and other members of the community who share West-Mont's vision. The pioneering spirit that started it all is still alive and well in an innovative curriculum that reflects the needs of a rapidly changing world.

SCHOOL PROGRAM

At West-Mont we believe that a holistic education develops not only the mind, but also the body and soul of each student. The child's intellect and imagination, physical fitness, health and nutrition, spiritual development and sense of humanity are key components in the West-Mont curriculum.

The Tree provides a suitable metaphor for West-Mont. The roots represent our youngest students, covering the Early Primary and Kindergarten classrooms. This is where they become "rooted" in their search for their inner self. This journey will last a lifetime and experiences at this stage are crucial for further growth and development.

The trunk represents the Grade 1 to Grade 3 classrooms. This is where the majority of basic life skills are learned and refined. Positive habits of the mind, body and soul are becoming internalized. The children travel along a similar path towards increased independence, responsibility and self-directed learning.

The branches represent the Grade 4 to Grade 8 classrooms. The students are branching out with the knowledge that they have acquired and are going beyond the school's boundaries for further exploration and the pursuit of personal interests and passions. Application of knowledge and individualized programs are key aspects at this level.

THE WEST-MONT SCHOOL TEAM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Western Communities Montessori Society (WCMS), a non-profit society registered under the B.C. Societies Act, operates West-Mont School. The WCMS is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors elected by the Society membership at the Annual General Meeting each June. All of West-Mont's parents/guardians are required to be members of the Society and are encouraged to actively participate in the democratic process by attending monthly meetings and voting at the Annual General Meeting. The Board is the keeper of the Mission and Guiding Principles of the WCMS. It sets policy, establishes the budget (including tuition fees) and employs the school principal. The Board has several committees to help do its job which may include a Policy Committee, a Finance Committee, a Site Committee, a Marketing Committee, and a Communications Committee.

PRINCIPAL AND BOARD LINK

The Board's only official connection with the operations of West-Mont School is through the Principal. The Board policy Manual addresses the relationship between the Board and the Principal which establishes that the Principal is the Board's only employee, and is accountable to the Board. Accordingly:

- Only decisions of the Board acting as a whole are binding on the Principal, unless specifically otherwise delegated or decided by the Board.
- The primary contact between the Board and the Principal is through the Board President, who meets regularly with the Principal and has the authority to interpret and carry out Board decisions regarding this section of the Board Policy Manual.
- The Board, including the President, deals only with the Principal, and does not give direction to any other staff member.
- The Board does not interfere in the work of the Principal, except as per its monitoring and evaluation responsibilities as described in the Board policy manual.
- The Board will provide the Principal with the support/resources required to carry out his or her responsibilities, as agreed to on an annual basis through the budget development and the evaluation processes. Should support/resources be unavailable, written protocols will be developed to support collaboration between Board members and the Principal in carrying out the Principal's accountabilities.

SCHOOL SECRETARY

The School Secretary position is a key information source for parents, students and staff. If you need to see someone or get information on most issues of the school you can contact the office and the secretary will get you the information or pass you to the person who can help you. If you need to see the Principal you can make appointments to see him through the secretary.

TEACHING STAFF

In a fundamental sense, West-Mont is the staff. West-Mont's faculty is a collection of people who are not only qualified and proficient, but also truly caring. Our hallmark is individual attention for every child. In a personal and professional way, each teacher and staff member takes the time to connect with the child. Student and teacher create a special relationship to ensure that the student is developing the skills and the confidence to become the best he or she can be. Each teacher and aide cares about the whole child, and works to foster self-reliance, personal responsibility and fundamental respect.

Our staff is proud to be at West-Mont. They dedicate their time and expertise, and are passionate about the educational betterment of every child. We are fortunate to have a collection of people who strive to make a difference every day.

PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC)

The **Parent Advisory Council (PAC)** is an active group of parent volunteers who work to enrich the learning environment at West-Mont. Reporting to the Principal, they are the fundraising arm of the School, and organize social events and coordinate volunteer activities. Like the Board, all of West-Mont's parents/guardians are members and are encouraged to actively participate by attending a monthly meeting and voting at the Annual General Meeting. The PAC has several positions these include a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, volunteer coordinator, emergency preparedness coordinator, charity auction fundraising chair, hot lunch coordinator, garden committee chair, parent education coordinator, and school uniform coordinator, among others.

PAC meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 9:15am unless otherwise noted.

2010/11 DATES:	TIME:	NOTE:
September 16, 2009	9:15 am	
October 14, 2009	7:00 pm	Evening Meeting
November 18, 2009	9:15 am	Third Wednesday due to Remembrance Day
December 9, 2009	9:15 am	

January 13, 2010	9:15 am	
February 10, 2010	9:15 am	
March 2, 2010	9:15 am	First Wednesday due to Spring Break
April 14, 2010	9:15 am	
May 12, 2010	9:15 am	
June 9, 2010	TBA	AGM

2010/11 PAC EXECUTIVE:

- President – Robin Dean PAC@west-mont.ca
- Vice President – Kate Wells
- Secretary – Katherine Caughran
- Treasurer - Cecilia Jenkins

VOLUNTEERS AND VOLUNTEERISM

At West-Mont School we are fortunate to have a vast resource in addition to the talents of our staff: the parents and the community. This group represents a wide pool of interests and expertise. Because we are an independent school we are able to freely draw from this resource. The result is a program rich in life-experiences. Volunteers play a key role at West-Mont. They help in all areas of life at our school: curriculum support, library assistance, fund-raising, administration (by serving on the board), and long- and short-range planning, to name a few.

12 HOURS PER FAMILY: Effective September 2009, each family at West-Mont is asked to volunteer for a minimum of 12 hours of volunteer time per year. ***A card box will be located at the front desk for each family to record their volunteer hours. It's very important to maintain an accurate record.***

In the first year of this program we will be billing families in June if they have not completed their volunteer hours. Effective next fall, in September 2010 a cheque in lieu, in the amount of \$250.00 will be requested from each family. Cheques are to be post-dated to the following June. This cheque will be cashed at the end of the school year in the event that the full volunteer hours have not been completed. Alternatively, if circumstances do not allow a family to participate in **any** volunteer work, a \$250.00 cheque will be accepted in lieu of volunteer hours, which will be cashed in mid-September at the start of the school year. Please make cheques payable to "West-Mont School".

Options for volunteering vary depending on your interests, skills, and time – see suggestions, below. Whatever your level of commitment, all roles are important and make up an important part of our school community and make West-Mont such a vibrant, dynamic school. All volunteer activities are centered around the needs of the child. Parent supported volunteer activities enrich the child's experience, create a sense of community and keep operating costs down so the school can maintain moderate tuition fees.

Volunteering at West-Mont is flexible to accommodate the busy lives of our community members. Our goal is to have a wide base of volunteers so that the work is shared. Every family can feel the satisfaction of making a valuable contribution.

VOLUNTEERS OPPORTUNITIES:

CLASSROOM

- Art project helper
- Teacher-directed prep work,
- Coordinating parent phoning,
- Field trip driving (When you are driving more than 2 other children from the class on the trip and this is only for the driving time of the trip)
- Field trip photographer
- Library helper
- Material maker/Sewer
- Reader
- Scholastic book order organizer
- Subject assistance
- Teaching helper
- Theme/Project worker
- Typist/Editor

SCHOOL

- Board of Directors (Board)
- Cultural Fair
- Dances
- Emergency Preparedness
- Extra Curricular Activities
- Extra Curricular Sports
- Fundraising Charity Auction
- Fundraising - Other
- Grant Researcher and Writer
- Learning Garden
- Library
- Love of Books Tea
- Parent Advisory Council (PAC)
- Parent Education
- School Promotional and Marketing Activities such as Open Houses
- Volunteer Coordination
- Website updating
- West-Mont Wednesdays
- Winter Celebration

GUIDELINES FOR OUR CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS:

- Volunteers are asked to respect the confidential nature of student-teacher information
- Volunteer visitations are arranged and scheduled beforehand with the teacher. Most teachers will have a roster to accommodate all those interested
- Remember, volunteers are there to assist the whole class. They must resist the temptation to help just their own children
- At all times volunteers are under the teacher's direction

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK

We are asking that all parents who volunteer at the school get a Criminal Record Check completed. This is free of charge. Pick up a form letter from the front desk that asked for the Criminal Record Check be done for working with or transporting students at West-Mont school. Take this to your local RCMP station and present the letter at the front desk and the check will be completed free of charge.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

EARLY PRIMARY PROGRAM - MONTESSORI PROGRAM (PRE-SCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN, AGES 3-5)

West-Mont offers a Montessori Early Primary program for children aged three to five years which includes a Kindergarten program. Students may attend full days or half-day morning or afternoon classes when (*half-day afternoon classes are offered*).

Since 80% of a child's mental development takes place before the child is eight years old, quality education during this period is critical. In the Montessori tradition, each class is a prepared environment alive with a wealth of intriguing material. The child moves at his/her own pace through all areas of the room – Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics and Cultural. The teacher's job is to observe and guide the child as his/her natural development unfolds. Children are also introduced to French as a second language. The Early Primary program was developed to meet the specific and changing needs of the children within the room. The holistic approach helps each child to grow with balance, health and joyfulness.

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

West-Mont School is continuing the Montessori program up to the Grade 4 level. Along with this, the classes are receiving the full B.C. curriculum as prescribed by the Ministry of Education. The Elementary classes are multi graded to have a diverse group of students in each class. The program works on the individual nature of the child. Each child is given the opportunity to work and progress at their own rate.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

In Grades 5 through 8 we offer an enhanced BC curriculum with a focus on academic rigor, leadership and values education. The small class sizes ensure that teachers can cater to individual needs and strengths. The school takes advantage of the amazing surroundings of Witty's Lagoon to offer an Outdoor Education program. Students can participate in both intramural sports leagues and tournaments and competitions against other schools.

COMPONENTS OF WEST-MONT'S CURRICULUM

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- Students follow the British Columbia Curriculum in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, French and Music

VALUES BASED EDUCATION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- Students participate in community based projects with the goal of helping others in the local and global community
- Virtues Program and West-Mont Values and Code of Conduct are emphasized on an ongoing basis

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

- Students participate in studies focused on one area, such as: *Pond, Garry Oak Meadow, Forest, Ocean and Global Issues*

OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES AND PHYSICAL FITNESS

- Students participate in physical fitness two to three times a week
- Students participate in one class hike per week
- Students Grades Four and above participate in overnight camping, hiking trips and additional outdoor experiences throughout the course of the school year

FINE ARTS AND PERFORMING ARTS

- Students participate in “West-Mont Wednesdays” where they may choose either a Fine Arts or an Applied Skills activity.
- The school encourages artists to come to the school and provide learning workshops and performances for the students

MINISTRY REQUIREMENTS

As an Independent School, West-Mont’s curriculum is regulated by the Ministry of Education under the Independent Schools Act. The Act ensures that instruction offered to students at West-Mont in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science, and the mandatory second language in Grades 5-7 meet the learning outcomes set out in the educational program guides. West-Mont is able to enhance their students’ learning experiences by augmenting these outcomes with the unique curriculum West-Mont offers.

REPORTING

Student evaluation and informal parent reporting is an on-going process throughout the year at West-Mont School. Students are continually evaluated in a variety of different ways in order that they may demonstrate their unique and individual strengths.

First Impressions reporting takes place during the second week of October. The First Impressions report is a verbal report and the purpose of this report is for the teacher to communicate to the parents their impression of how the child has begun the year.

Formal reporting happens three times a year. The first formal written report takes place for students in Grades 1 to 8 at the end of November. The second formal reporting period takes place before March Break with reports from Grades 1-8 sent home in the second week of March. The final formal report for all students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 is given to parents at the school on the last day of the school year. Parent teacher interviews for students in Early Primary are also held at this time.

HOMEWORK

Homework can contribute to the learning of skills and the development of consistent work habits and therefore forms a regular part of a student’s educational program.

Homework may include any of the following:

- completing daily assignments
- preparing for future tasks
- working on long term projects
- performing on-going study and review

Homework is more effective when it is actively supported in the home. While it is recognized that some days students will have more homework than on other days, the following is a guideline:

- Grades 1-2 – one hour per week
- Grades 3-8 – 2 to 4 hours per week

STUDENT PROJECTS

Throughout the year, students will be required to complete projects that are either assigned by the teacher or develop out of a personal interest of the student's. While it is recognized that students may require assistance outside of the classroom to complete their assignments, please ensure that any help that is given at home is of a guiding and supervisory nature and assists the student in their learning journey.

STUDENT POLICIES

CODE OF CONDUCT

RESPECT: Always show respect for yourself and others.

HONESTY: Always tell the truth.

SPIRIT: Always try your best.

RESPONSIBILITY: Always "own" your words and actions.

COURTESY: Always display excellent manners and be considerate of others.

COOPERATION: Always remember to help because we're all part of a team.

STUDENT CONDUCT

At West-Mont School we believe that children must learn self-discipline because it is an essential quality of a well-balanced, happy and successful individual. Self-discipline means that each individual accepts responsibility for the results of his/her behaviour. It is based upon self-esteem, respect and dignity and taking responsibility for one's behaviour.

At West-Mont we promote self-discipline by giving children clear expectations for behaviour. The staff model this behaviour and expect all children to do likewise. Through the understanding of these expectations, practicing and receiving positive reinforcement, children learn to take control of their behaviour.

All members of our school community have a responsibility to:

- be courteous, respectful and considerate
- use appropriate language and behaviour
- demonstrate good sportsmanship
- care for their personal belongings and show respect for other people's belongings
- respect the rights of others
- demonstrate care for the environment by keeping it neat and tidy
- co-operate with others

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the manner of a West-Mont community member from the time they leave home to come to school until they arrive home after school, anytime they are in the West-Mont uniform or acting as a representative of the school, on all field trips or school sponsored activities, and at anytime they are under the supervision of a member of the school staff.

For those students who do not to conduct themselves in the manner outlined above there will be appropriate consequences for their actions. These consequences are most effective when they are the natural result of a child's actions (i.e. if a child does not show respect for the classroom environment they will have to spend time outside of class to neaten and tidy it).

West-Mont School has a zero-tolerance policy for violent actions and/or words and incidences of bullying. This means that there will be appropriate consequences for all infractions:

CONSEQUENCES FOR MISCONDUCT

- Teacher will talk to the individual/group involved and an Incident Report will be filled out. A record of the report will be kept in the student's file and a copy provided for parents. An appropriate consequence for the student's action will be decided upon and recorded.
- Teacher will communicate with parents if the situation warrants, or if the behaviour persists.
- A meeting will be held with student, parents, teacher and Principal present to discuss the behaviours and consequences. A record of such a meeting would also be added to the file.
- Student may be suspended if the situation warrants and a record of the suspension would be kept in the student's file and a copy provided for parents.
- If means of dealing with a student's behaviour have failed, or if a situation warrants it, the student will be expelled from the school.

At every stage of the discipline process, the teacher will attempt to assist the student to develop an awareness of the effects of his/her misconduct and to see more appropriate ways to behave. At every stage in this process, the student is given the opportunity to express his/her point of view in the matter. The student is also asked to write his/her version of events, which is kept on file.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR AT WEST-MONT SCHOOL:

- Any behaviour intended to hurt, embarrass or humiliate another person
- Verbal abuse, isolating peers through exclusion, humiliation and physical abuse that may be an isolated incident or repeated over time
- Any serious misbehavior will be examined and dealt with in consultation with the principal, administrators, teachers and parents.
- Suspension from school will be considered in dealing with incorrigible negative behavior.

OUTDOOR RECESS SUPERVISION

The Early Primary playground is supervised by the Early Primary staff during student breaks (11:00-11:45 a.m. & 2:30-2:50 p.m.). There are always two staff supervising this playground at these times. Students stay within the boundaries of this playground at all times during class breaks (except for trips to the washroom). The Early Primary playground is enclosed by a fence.

The playground areas in front of the school are for Grades 1 and up. (exception: K's in a K/1 split class.) These areas are supervised by two staff during recesses (10:45 am to 11:00 am and 12:00 pm to 12:25 pm and 2:00 pm to 2:15pm). While students are eating their lunches they are supervised by their classroom teacher (11:45 p.m. to 12:00 p.m.).

While students are outside on a recess break, they are required to stay within the playground boundaries. Students are able to play on and behind the cement pad, the school field, and the play equipment. Students are not permitted to play behind the Middle School and are not allowed to enter the Garry Oak meadow, the school garden (unless under supervision or have specific permission), the parking lot or school driveway, or enter or cross Metchosin Road.

Unless an announcement is made, all recesses will be spent outdoors. Students need to bring appropriate clothing to wear during these times.

INDOOR RECESS SUPERVISION

During inclement weather, students will be supervised indoors during recesses. Students are to play inside their classrooms and school buildings during these times. Supervision will be present in the Middle School, Gym, and in the Main School.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION - W.I.T.S.

It is only natural that from time to time, students will find themselves in a situation that could lead to a potential conflict. In these situations, students will be asked to use appropriate words and appropriate manners to solve the issue. Students will be also encouraged to use the WITS Program to communicate their feelings and help solve the issue in an appropriate manner.

W	<i>Walk away - tell an adult</i>
I	<i>Ignore it - tell an adult</i>
T	<i>Talk to the person - tell an adult</i>
S	<i>Seek help</i>

UNIFORMS

Uniforms are a necessary element within West-Mont and set the tone of the school while presenting an image of neatness and respect. Each student is required to be dressed in a uniform while attending West-Mont, except on designated "Casual Days". ***Please make sure all clothing items are clearly labeled with your child's name.***

ORDERING UNIFORMS

All uniform pieces will be purchased by parents via on-line with NEAT Uniforms via RJMcCarthy. The school will have a sample rack available for sizing.

- You can place your order at www.rjmccarthy.com
- Click on: NEAT UNIFORMS → choose West-Mont School, and then follow instructions.

Earrings/Hair Accessories

Small pearl or gold studs or "sleeper" earrings in the ear may be worn. No other jewellery is acceptable. Girls may wear small, colour-coordinated hair clips with their uniform to keep their hair tidy.

OUTDOOR CLOTHING FOR CLASS HIKES

Each class goes on a weekly class hike in Witty's Lagoon Park. Teachers will let parents know which day is the "regular hike day" for their class. **It is expected that all children will have appropriate outdoor clothes and footwear to accommodate all kinds of weather.**

UNIFORM OPTIONS	BOYS	GIRLS
Tops: <i>with West-Mont logo</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long sleeve golf shirt • short sleeve golf shirt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • short sleeve white blouse (XXS to M) • 3 / 4 sleeve white blouse (M to XXL) • long sleeve golf shirt • short sleeve golf shirt
Bottoms:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pull-on pant • twill pant • shorts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tunic dress • twill skirt • pull-on twill pant • twill pant
Sweaters: <i>with West-Mont logo</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pullover knit vest • pullover knit sweater • micro fleece vest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pullover knit vest • pullover knit sweater • micro fleece vest
Gym clothes: <i>with West-Mont logo, required by students</i> Grade 3-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • t-shirt • jersey short • hoodie (optional) • track pant (optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • t-shirt • fleece short • hoodie (optional) • track pant (optional)
Socks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • navy dress socks • white sport socks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • navy knee socks • white sports socks • navy tights
Shoes: Indoor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plain black leather • non-marking soles • lace-up or loafer • Velcro close ok for EP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plain black leather • non-marking soles • lace-up or loafer • Velcro close ok for EP
Shoes: Gym	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-marking sole gym shoes to be worn in the gym only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-marking sole gym shoes to be worn in the gym only
Shoes: Outdoor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pair of running shoes • pair of boots • for all outside activities as appropriate depending on weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pair of running shoes • pair of boots • for all outside activities as appropriate depending on weather

SHOES

At West-Mont School, shoes are an important part of the school uniform. Students are expected to have a pair of shoes to be worn indoors, a pair to be worn outdoors, a pair of non-marking sole gym shoes and a pair of rain boots/shoes to be worn during inclement weather. A note from parents will be a suitable excuse for not having these, but only for a short time.

INDOOR

Indoor shoes are required to be in a good state of repair. Shoes which have a high heel or/are backless are not suitable. Shoes are to be worn with laces tied and without stepping on the back of the shoe.

Indoor gym shoes should be used only for in the gym and not other outside activities. We would like students to walk from the classroom in their outdoor shoes and change into their clean gym shoes at the gymnasium.

OUTDOOR

Outdoor shoes are to be a pair of running shoes to be worn during recess, gym class, and any other time spent outside in the school day. Outdoor shoes are also to be worn with the laces tied or other fasteners closed and are expected to be in a state of good repair.

LOCKERS AND CUBBIES

West-Mont students in Early Primary (EP) – Grade 2 will be assigned a cubby-space for the duration of the school year where they can store their coats, shoes, hats, and backpacks. Students are expected to keep their cubby area clean and tidy. Teachers and the Principal will conduct cubby inspections throughout the year.

West-Mont students in Grades 3-7 will have the opportunity to have a locker to store their personal belongings for the duration of the school year. Students are required to bring their own combination locks to attach to their locker. Students will be assigned lockers by the classroom teacher. Teachers will ask students for a record of their locker combination to keep on file in case a student isn't able to remember their combination.

Students are responsible for keeping their locker and the area around their locker clean and tidy. Students must store their belongings inside the locker and keep their locker door closed or secure at all times. Teachers and the Principal will conduct locker inspections throughout the year.

Students who are found to be tampering with other people's locks/lockers or misusing their own locker will have their locker use privileges revoked. Depending on the severity of the situation, students may undergo further disciplinary procedures.

TOILETING POLICY

At West-Mont we expect that all students coming to the school have completed their toilet training. This is one of the criteria for acceptance into the Early Primary Program. As the EP classes have a ratio of one instructor per eight children we want all students to have the benefit of this close attention. If a teacher has to be called away from the students she is working with, in order to take care of toileting issues, the learning session is disrupted and the other children in that particular group lose the continuity of instruction and supervision. Toileting problems also cause stress and embarrassment to the child involved.

Our policy is that the teacher be free of the intense needs of a child who is not toilet-trained. In the case of young children who may have an accident from time to time we understand. If we find that a child has taken a backward step for any reason we will consult with the parent and work on a temporary solution. This may include parent attending washroom duties or the child remaining at home for a few days until their normal toileting behaviour can be resumed. For extreme cases, in which the toileting issues cannot be remedied in a few days, we may need to ask the parents to keep their children home for a longer period of time. In these situations, the staff works carefully with the parents to ensure a successful return to class.

FAMILY POLICIES

TUITION FEES

The majority of the cost of education at West-Mont School is covered by a child's parents/guardians through tuition fees. The WCMS establishes tuition fees that support the financial stability and sustainability of the school. Accordingly:

- The Board sets tuition fees for the following year by mid-February, giving parents/guardians ample notice of any increase.
- A onetime deposit of \$400.00 per student is payable at the time of enrollment. It will be refunded when the student leaves the school, less any outstanding arrears, and subject to the withdrawal policy below.
- Tuition for the following year may be paid in full or in 12 equal monthly installments. When paid in full, fees are due July 1st. When paid in installments, they are to be paid through automated bank transfer on the first of each month July through June. Tuition payments for students enrolling after September 1st will commence on the date of enrolment and be paid in equal monthly installments pro-rated based upon the remaining number of school days.
- Students who are re-enrolling must pay any outstanding arrears prior to acceptance for the following year. If these are not paid by the re-enrolment deadline, they will be taken from the deposit and the student will not be re-enrolled until the deposit has been topped back up to the \$400.00 per student level.
- Students whose parents/guardians are not permanent residents of B.C. are not eligible for provincial government funding. Therefore, they are required to cover the expected provincial grant amount in addition to the regular tuition fees. This additional amount constitutes an increase in tuition fees and is payable at the time of enrolment. All other tuition policies apply.

WITHDRAWALS AND TUITION REFUNDS

The withdrawal of a student reduces the school's revenue but not its operating costs. Therefore, once a child is enrolled at West-Mont, the parents/guardians are expected to make a financial commitment for the full year. In the event of serious, unforeseen circumstances that cause a parent/guardian to permanently withdraw a child, the school will issue a tuition refund. Accordingly:

- Parents/guardians who withdraw a child at any time after enrolment are required to provide a minimum of one calendar month's written notice.
- In the event of permanent withdrawal due to the death of a student or serious medical reasons as certified by a legally qualified physician or surgeon, the school will return the deposit, less any outstanding arrears. In the event of a permanent withdrawal for any reason, including dismissal, the parent/guardian forfeits the deposit and any tuition paid to date, and is expected to settle any outstanding arrears. (If tuition has been paid in full, the school will refund the equivalent of the remaining monthly installment payments).
- If tuition is being paid in installments, the parent/guardian is expected to stop payment on the remaining installments.
- In the event of a temporary absence of a student, the parent/guardian is expected to continue to pay tuition installments.

TUITION DISCOUNTS

West-Mont offers tuition discounts in order for families with more than one child to enroll their children in the school. Accordingly, families with more than one child enrolled at the school are entitled to a sibling discount. The youngest child incurs full tuition fees; the second child receives a 30% discount; third child receives a discount of 45%; fourth child and subsequent children receive a discount of 60%.

PARENTS' ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Parents play an important role in the education of their children and have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill this responsibility when they:

- show an active interest in their child's work and school progress
- communicate regularly with the school
- help their child/ren be neat, appropriately dressed and prepared for school;
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival and provide a note in the case of absence
- become familiar with the Code of Conduct and school rules
- encourage and assist their child with following the West-Mont Student Code of Conduct
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues
- volunteer a minimum of 12 hours per year per family (see Volunteer section)

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR PROBLEM-SOLVING

The teacher is the first channel of communication for a parent regarding a student in their class. Parents must communicate clearly with the teacher through a scheduled meeting, phone call or a letter to discuss any questions or concerns they may have. At West-Mont it is important that there is a bond of trust and clear communication between the teacher and the parent. Each classroom has an open door policy and parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the learning process and in touch with their child's development.

If a parent continues to have concerns after meeting with the teacher to discuss an issue then the parent's next step is to bring their concern or question to the attention of the Principal. A meeting will then be set up between the student, the teacher and the parent. All efforts will be made to reach a successful conclusion to the problem.

If a parent is concerned about the process of any complaint/investigation conducted by the Principal, then they may take the matter (in writing) to the Secretary of the West-Mont School Board of Directors. If concerns continue to persist, parents can contact the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools at the Ministry of Education.

The Principal is responsible for all staff, and reports to the Board of Directors. Parents and volunteers who need assistance from a teacher or staff-member for a school-related project, are asked to direct their request to the Principal, who will consider the request and delegate accordingly. If a parent or volunteer requires assistance from the Principal for a school-related project, they are asked to direct their request to the President of the Board of Directors.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

If you have any questions in the following areas, please contact these people, either in person or through a written communication in their mailbox:

- Volunteering at the school – contact the PAC via email or the mailbox in the main lobby
- School or classroom related jobs – contact the Principal or related teacher
- Parent Advisory activities – contact the Parent Advisory Chair or the relevant sub-committee coordinator
- Board of Director activities – contact the Board of Directors Chair and/or Secretary
- Classroom related questions or concerns – contact the appropriate teacher
- School operation and overall questions and issues – contact the Principal
- Policy and long-range decisions – contact the Board of Directors' Chair

COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND STUDENT AGENDAS

The primary vehicles for communication at the school are: verbal communication, email (see school web page for addresses www.west-mont.ca), the telephone (250-474-2626), family mailboxes, and the school website. Teachers are expected to contact parents to communicate positive news or issues of concern. Similarly, we ask parents to do the same to provide as much information as possible on their child on a regular basis.

Another important communication tool for students in Grades 3 and higher is the “agenda”. The agenda is used to carry notes from parents and teachers to and from school, record homework and assignment due dates, and inform and remind parents of upcoming events. Parents should initial the agenda every week night.

COMMUNICATION SITES - MAILBOX, BULLETIN BOARDS, WEBSITE, EMAIL

At West-Mont we believe that regular communication is an active team-based process between parents, students and staff. An integral part of a parent’s involvement in their child’s education is through effective communication with the school. Teachers therefore, initiate communication with parents frequently and respond promptly to their inquiries or concerns.

Each family at West-Mont has a mail-box in the lobby beside the Communication Centre bulletin board. ***Parents are responsible for checking their mailboxes, email, and the school, PAC and Board bulletin boards regularly.***

Further information regarding happenings and important events at the school can be found on the outside white boards, the classroom bulletin boards, and the Parent Information bulletin board near the Principal’s office. School updates are sent biweekly by email on Fridays and the “Connections” school newsletter is sent via e-mail on the last Friday of the month. (Families who prefer hard copies, may make arrangements with the School Secretary).

EMERGENCY CARE CARD

West-Mont is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for students, staff and parents. At the beginning of each school year, each student’s parent or guardian and each staff member should fill out or update the emergency care card and return it to the school secretary. This card states allergies, specific medical needs and emergency contacts. The parent’s or guardian’s home and work telephone numbers will also be listed. The medical history and procedures to follow of a student or staff member who may require attention will be posted on a bulletin board in the staff room.

West-Mont requests that students who are ill remain at home. We appreciate that parents recognize the contagiousness of many health care problems in the school setting and the significance of lost time from school for both students and staff. West-Mont follows the directions laid out by the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) information sheet on contagious diseases.

If a student is feeling unwell during the day, he/she should make the principal or classroom teacher aware of their condition. If necessary, parents will be telephoned to take a student home. Minor cuts and scrapes are treated by the school staff. Parents are always notified about head bumps, however minor. In the case of a more serious medical situation, students will be taken to the hospital by ambulance (accompanied by a staff member) or taken to the hospital or medical facility by a staff member, depending upon the circumstances.

MEDICATION

Staff should be notified in writing of any prescription or non-prescription medication their children will be taking throughout the day. In the case of a request for school staff to administer medication, please complete and submit a written medical form for your child’s file. Student’s medication to be administered by staff will be kept in the locked medical box at the school’s front desk. Staff should also be notified if any medication administration instructions change through the year.

Students age 7 and older who have personal Epipens due to personal health reasons are responsible for carrying them in a pouch with them at all times. For children under age 7, a classroom teacher will be responsible for carrying the Epipen for the student.

Parents are responsible for ensuring this medication is current and available for the student. It has been recommended that there be two Epipens available at the school for cases where the child needs to be transported for medical attention.

SHORT-TERM STUDENT ABSENCES

Parents are asked to notify the school by phone or another method of a child's absence – preferably on the morning of the day of the absence. Please give the date of the absence and the reason why. You may call the school office at any time, 24 hours a day, as there is an answering machine to receive messages: 250-474-2626. The office email address is info@west-mont.ca

When your child has been away, **the office requires a note with the date of absence and the reason for the absence.** These notes are filed in the school records for inspection by the Ministry of Education and help to maintain our current levels of funding. Homework for short-term unplanned absences may be provided at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

LONG TERM STUDENT ABSENCES

Periodically, students are absent from school for an extended period for personal or family reasons. Due to instruction that needs professional support, hands-on equipment or peer interaction teachers are not able to supply the body of work that would ensure the child covers the same material that would be done in the classroom. The teacher may be able to provide general work that will help to strengthen, introduce or reinforce concepts learned during the period of absence.

If a student is going to be absent for an extended period, please give written notification to the school in advance of the absence if possible. If it is not possible to provide a note before the absence, please ensure it is provided once the student returns. As noted above, these absence notifications are kept on file to be reviewed by the Ministry of Education in order to ensure the maintenance of our current level of funding.

ALLERGIES AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Please notify your child's teacher at the beginning of the year of any allergies, medications or disabilities regarding your child. It is important to have the **Emergency Consent Cards** filled out and returned to the office to be kept on file. It is important to note that due to licensing requirements, the school must follow Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) health regulations pertaining to absences etc. which result from specific illnesses.

Children need to ask their teacher's permission before phoning home. Be sure to inform the school's office staff if your child will need to use the phone regarding any potential health issues during the school day.

PEANUT POLICY

In an effort to ensure the comfort and safety of all students at the school we ask that students, staff, parents and guardians are mindful of the allergies of those in their classes and school. Teachers will let families know if there is a child in the class with a peanut allergy.

SNACKS AND LUNCHES

We have a garbage-free policy at West-Mont. Please try to send food in reusable containers. We will send any garbage home and compost fruit and vegetable peelings.

We are encouraging healthy snacks and lunches each day. For drinks, please send water, milk or 100% fruit juice.

Candy, Pop and Kool-Aid are not permitted. We follow the Act Now BC Guidelines for Schools.

BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

For birthday celebrations, you are welcome to send a healthy snack for your child's class to share (i.e. fruit or veggies, healthy muffins, whole grain crackers and cheese, etc.)

There will be occasional special days or parties throughout the year where sweet treats may be offered in addition to healthy choices

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

School starts at 8:45 a.m. for Grades 1-7 and 8:50 a.m. for Early Primary. All children are expected to be in their classroom by that time. Students who arrive at school late are at a disadvantage as they miss out on the early morning welcome, connecting with their peers before class starts, and other important instruction. **The playgrounds are not supervised before school.**

School ends at 3:15 p.m. for grades 1-7 and 3:00 p.m. for Early Primary. Parents are requested to pick up their children on time. On Wednesday the school day ends at 2:30 for early dismissal.

Parents of students in Grades 2 and below must make contact with the teacher while picking up and dropping off their children (unless the child is coming from or going to Daycare). If students in Grades 3 and below are not picked up by 3:30 p.m. they will be sent to daycare.

Students in Grades 4 to 7 who are still on the school grounds after 3:30 p.m. will be asked by staff to go to Daycare. Similar to school hours, students are expected to respect school rules and behave in an appropriate fashion before and after school while they are on the school property.

Any changes to your child's arrangements for being picked up or dropped off from school should be written in your child's agenda the day before or called into the school office by 2:30 p.m. or 1:45 p.m. on early dismissal days.

Please use caution when walking or driving in the school's parking lot and observe posted speed limits. **All students, parents and visitors are asked to use the sidewalks on either side of the parking lot.** The parking spots closest to the school on either side of the lot are reserved for handicapped parking. Under no conditions are parents permitted to leave children in cars unattended while siblings are being picked up or dropped off.

PARKING LOT GUIDELINES

The **speed limit in the parking lot is 5 km/hr.** The school needs the compliance of all parents to ensure the safety of our school community and to avoid a collision involving adults, children and pets who may be in the parking lot. Parents are requested to **park facing inwards.** The parking spots closest to the school on either side of the lot are reserved for handicapped parking.

Please use caution when walking into or out of the school. **All students, parents and visitors are asked to use the sidewalks on either side of the parking lot.** Under no conditions are parents permitted to leave children unattended in cars while siblings are being picked up or dropped off.

LATE POLICY

During the taking of attendance in the classroom the name of each student who is absent is noted and sent to the office. If you bring your child to school after the attendance is sent to the office you must get a late slip from the secretary, where she will note the time of arrival. If students in Grades Kindergarten to Gr. 7 are more than 15 minutes late, parents must give the office a note as to the absence. This is due to the Ministry of Education Funding Policy.

CHILD RELEASE*

West-Mont School believes in providing a safe and secure environment for your child. In order to ensure this, written notification is needed if a child is to be picked up from the school at any time by a person other than the child's parents or guardians (**listed under "people who can pick up my child" on the Application form**).

Parents of students in **Early Primary to Grade 3** are expected to come to the classroom door to pick up their child. Teachers will not release a child until he/she has made visual contact with the persons authorized to pick up the child involved.

In custody and other court cases, West-Mont's policy is to follow the written orders that are included in the child's file. No child will be released to an individual who is not legally allowed to pick up that child.

If a child is not picked up at the designated time, the staff can place that child in Daycare. Parents know that their children will be placed in Daycare if they are not there to pick up their child at the appropriate dismissal time and charges will apply. When the parent does arrive they have to sign their child out of care in the daycare room.

If a parent/guardian or authorized person arrives at the school and it appears that they are unable to safely pick up a child due to impairment or any other reason, the following steps need to be taken:

- Staff should offer to call a relative or friend to pick up the parent and child. If this is not acceptable, an offer to call a cab can be proposed.
- If the parent insists on driving the child, inform the parent that they are breaking the law and endangering the child. Tell them clearly that you will be contacting the police immediately. Call the police if the parent and child get into the vehicle. Follow the procedures for reporting suspected child abuse if you are worried that the child may be at risk.

***Child Release During Emergency Situations:** See the Student Emergency Release Form & Procedures section in the **Emergency Information for Families** area, at the beginning of this document.

BEFORE- AND AFTER- SCHOOL CARE

Before and after school Daycare is offered to all West-Mont students. The hours of operation are Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. until school begins and from the end of the school day until 5:00 p.m. for 3 and 4 year olds and 5:15p.m. for students ages 5 and above. Late charges will apply for those students who are not picked up by closing.

Please attempt to telephone the school by 2:30 pm at (250-474-2626) if you want your child to attend Daycare after school on a given day.

Daycare is also offered on early dismissal and half days. While in attendance at Daycare, students are expected to conduct themselves in the manner expected of a West-Mont community member. The school's student Code of Conduct is expected to be followed and consequences for misconduct will apply.

HALF DAYS AND EARLY DAYS

Early days and half days exist throughout the school year as opportunities for staff and students to attend extra-curricular activities, catch up on unfinished work, make a trip to the library to research an assignment, or to spend time reflecting on daily activities.

Every Wednesday of the school year is an early closing day. School is dismissed at 2:15 p.m. for Early Primary and 2:30 p.m. for Grades 1-8 on early days.

School is dismissed at 11:30 a.m. on half days. The first day of the school year and the final day of each term is a half day. A schedule/calendar is sent to families in the summer outlining the activities and dismissal times for the first week of school and other special event days.

FIELD TRIPS:

Throughout the year students are involved in day trips and excursions off-campus during class-time. Some examples of these trips are:

- Witty's Lagoon
- Pumpkin Patch
- CRD Parks Trips
- Museum
- Art Gallery
- Concerts

All parents are asked, at the beginning of the year, to sign a field trip permission form for their child. As stated on that form, parents will be given one week's advance notice of a field trip or excursion requiring transportation by a bus or car.

If transported by car, each child must have his/her own seat belt, the vehicle must carry a minimum of 2 million dollars third party liability insurance, and the driver must leave a copy of his or her insurance and driver's license with the school.

Effective July 1, 2008, car seats and booster seats must be provided by parents for those children required by law to use them (car seats are required for children 20-40 lbs, and a booster seat is needed for kids up to age 9, or who are under 4' 9" (see BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation website for more details: http://www.tsfbcaa.com/boost_bc).

If a parent decides not to allow his/her child to attend a field trip, they must keep their child at home that day. For most field trips, teachers will also communicate information specific to the upcoming trip regarding location, timing, extra costs, transportation and any lunch or special clothing requirements.

Teachers will leave a field trip plan with reception on the day of the field trip. Students are expected to wear school uniform on all field trips unless directed otherwise by their teacher.

Parent volunteers may be required to accompany field trips in order to maintain a reasonable supervisor to student ratio. These supervisors as well as teachers are there to guide students, model appropriate behaviour for students and support students in upholding the school's Code of Conduct.

END OF YEAR FIELD TRIP EVENTS

GRADES 5/6/7/8 CAMPING TRIP

The students in Grades 5/6 and 7 have the opportunity to go away on a two-night camping trip in June. This trip usually runs from Wednesday to Friday. Students experience putting-up and sleeping in their own tents, building camp-fires, preparing meals, a day-long hike, keeping their environment safe, an afternoon at the beach and a variety of outdoor and group challenges.

USE OF SUBSTANCES AT WEST-MONT

Smoking is prohibited within the school buildings and grounds. This policy applies to students, faculty, staff and parents. Alcohol is PROHIBITED in the school on any occasion at which students are present. Faculty accompanying students on school trips must abstain from consumption of alcohol. The use of non-prescription drugs is prohibited. This is a sensitive matter and we have an obligation to be concerned about the modeling of healthy behaviour.

SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES (WEATHER, POWER FAILURES, ETC)

EARLY MORNING (BEFORE SCHOOL BEGINS):

- Listen to CFAX (AM 1070) between 6:30 am and 8:30 am for school closure announcements. If the Sooke School District has closed all schools, parents should assume that West-Mont School is closed, unless there is a radio announcement or phone call indicating the school is open.
- Check the school phone (474-2626) for a message.
- Keep your phone line clear for a telephone call from an Emergency Phone Contact Parent. Be sure to keep the school informed of any changes to your contact information.

DAYTIME (WHEN SCHOOL IS IN ATTENDANCE):

Parents will be called at daytime contact numbers. Please ensure that numbers are kept accurate and current.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES INFORMATION

West-Mont School staff and administrators are currently prepared to care for your children for up to 72 hours in the event of an emergency. The PAC has supplied the school with food, water, shelter, emergency supplies and first aid materials for such an occasion, but we are now working towards increasing our supplies to manage for up to ONE WEEK if necessary. Stay tuned for more information about this initiative.

PREPARE YOUR FAMILY

Include family members when discussing emergency preparedness plans. Reassure your children that they will be cared for until you can come to get them. West-Mont's library has books and videos on Emergency Preparedness which you may wish to check out. Emergency Preparedness Week is always the first week of May.

Other excellent resources are the federal government's site: www.getprepared.ca or the provincial government's site: <http://www.pep.bc.ca/index.html>

Local Fire Departments also have annual information on fire safety in the home and encourage you to plan to "get out alive" by making and practicing an emergency escape plan for your home. Contact your local department for more information.

CHILD'S EMERGENCY COMFORT KIT

Until you can reach your child in an emergency, a personal comfort kit will provide some consolation and reassurance, as well as a distraction. Please write your child's name on a Ziploc bag and add:

- a family photo or two
- a comforting personal note from you (e.g. Dear Child: Mom and Dad love you very much and we will be coming to get you just as fast as we can. The teachers will take good care of you until we can get there.)
- a package of Kleenex
- a small toy, game, or comfort item such as a stuffed toy or finger puppet

Return the kit to your child's classroom teacher during the first week of school. The "Comfort Kit" will be placed in your child's "spare clothes" bag until the end of the school year, when you will take them home again. You will be asked to update a comfort kit for your child/ren each September.

EMERGENCY MEDICATION

Ensure that the school has a *7-day supply of medication* if your child has special medical needs. Please ensure the appropriate information is complete on your child's West-Mont Student Information (Emergency) card, if this applies to your child. *The medication is to be administered, when necessary, at any time, including an emergency situation, when medical personnel/hospitals may not be available or accessible.* All medication is stored in the front office emergency backpack or in the refrigerator, if necessary, in the staff room.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES/PROCEDURES DURING AN EMERGENCY

During an earthquake or other emergency, the two prime objectives of teachers and support staff are to ensure the safety and well-being of the children and to reunite them with their families as quickly as possible. The following contains essential information with respect to our school's disaster plan and the important role that parents/guardians play in this process.

A completed, yellow West-Mont Student Information (Emergency) card is due back to the school Secretary during the first week of school, or the first week your child begins at the school.

Please ensure you keep contact numbers, health information, alternate caregiver and pick-up permissions on them current. We can only legally release your child to people listed on the card.

- Please DO NOT phone the school. We must have the phone lines open for emergency calls. On February 28, 2001 when a 6.8 quake rocked Victoria and Seattle, the phone lines at the school were so overloaded with incoming calls, that had there been an on-site emergency, we would have been unable to summon help.
- DO tune into CFX 1070 am, a local radio station, using a battery operated radio or car radio for information and direction. Radio coverage of the February 28, 2001 quake was almost instant.
- DO make a mental note of pay phones near your home or place of work. Pay phones are given priority access and priority restoration during emergency situations. Be sure to have extra quarters or a prepaid phone card on hand. (911 calls are free from pay phones). Note: Nearest payphones to West-Mont School are at Metchosin Golf Club (4100 Metchosin Road) and Metchosin Country Store (4398 Metchosin Road – at Happy Valley Road)
- DO establish an out-of-area contact person. Phone service will likely be limited during a major disaster. It may be much easier to phone out of the immediate area than locally. Your contact should have voice mail. (Avoid listing Washington, Oregon, California, or lower mainland numbers as a quake that hits here could affect these areas too). If necessary the school will attempt to call your contact with your child's status should you or your alternate be unable to reach the school in a timely manner. Waiting can be the hardest part of a post-quake period, especially if your family is scattered and out-of-touch. This information is listed on the yellow West-Mont Student Information (Emergency) cards.
- DO have an email account you can access from anywhere: Electronic mail may also serve as a means of communication. Know how to access your account from any computer connected to the Internet. If unsure, create and use a free hotmail account: <http://mail.live.com/mail/about.aspx>

In May 2000, the Emergency Operation Centre (E.O.C.), situated near the Metchosin Fire Hall, donated a radio to our school that will enable us to have direct contact with the E.O.C. during an emergency. The E.O.C. is a level of the British Columbia Emergency Response Management System, a comprehensive management system that ensures a coordinated and organized response and recovery to all emergency incidents and disasters. In March 2009, an area-wide systems test was successfully completed.

TRAVEL

Following a major earthquake or other disaster, streets and access to the school may be cluttered with debris. **Before you travel, listen to public service announcements on the radio at CFX 1070 AM, regarding transportation routes.**

The first roads to be cleared may be a network of roads, designated as disaster routes. If you see a Disaster Response Route sign, you will need to find another route to get to your destination. Lifesaving personnel and equipment, i.e.: ambulances, police, fire, and supply convoys will need to get through. As soon as is possible Disaster Response Routes will be open to the public. **Only** when it is safe to travel, please attend the school to collect your child.

West-Mont's designated evacuation and disaster meeting area:
In front of the shed on the upper field near the school garden

EMERGENCY RECEPTION CENTRES

In the unlikely event that staff and students must leave the grounds of West-Mont School, signs will be posted indicating their whereabouts.

Please attend the school first. **As of this date, there are four official Emergency Reception Centres in Metchosin:** West-Mont School (4075 Metchosin Road); Metchosin Fire Hall (4440 Happy Valley Road); Hans Helgesen School (4983 Rocky Point Road) and BC SPCA's Wild ARC (1020 Malloch Road).

Reception Centres offer food and shelter to displaced persons during an emergency and help to unite families through registration and enquiry programs. The centres may stay operational anywhere from three (3) days to one (1) week depending on the need.

IDENTIFICATION WRIST BAND AND ID PHOTOS

During an emergency, an identification wrist band will be placed on each child. The wrist band gives basic information about the child, plus contains a medic alert when necessary. **The following information will be recorded on a label which will go on your child's wrist band:**

Caroline Smith Medical condition (if applicable)	(B.D. 25 Jan 02) Diabetic
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Children present on individual school photo day, and who will thus have a photo on record at the school, will also be given a photo ID card to wear around their necks for visual identification purposes.

STUDENT EMERGENCY RELEASE PROCEDURE

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that the information contained on the **yellow Student Information (Emergency) cards is kept up-to-date**, especially in the event that any changes occur during the school year.

- **West-Mont Student Information (Emergency) card:** Contains contact, medical, A.C. Alternate Caregiver information (should be local), names of other people who can pick-up your child, and out-of-area contact information. This card is due back to the Secretary the first week of school.

In the aftermath of a disaster, a controlled release of students will be implemented. **Students will be dismissed from the school to a parent/guardian or an alternate caregiver (A.C.) only.** An A.C. is someone appointed by the parent/guardian to pick up his or her child if the parent/guardian is unable to attend. If you list an A.C. you may wish to choose someone who lives close to the school.

Prior to the release of your child to an A.C., identification will be requested. **All children must be signed out at a release station at the school (or alternate reception centre if they have to move).** Please inform your A.C.'s about the release process. If you do not list an A.C., your child will remain in care of West-Mont School staff.

Currently, school staff will accept responsibility for students up to 1 week after the emergency incident takes place. After 1 week, the school may release the care of students to the municipal authorities.

Your cooperation will assist greatly in maintaining safety and order during an emergency situation.

FIRE AND OTHER EVACUATION EMERGENCIES:

In the event of a fire or other emergency requiring evacuation, with teacher compliance and guidance, students and teacher are to follow these guidelines:

- The students are to remain calm and follow all the instructions of the teacher
- The teachers will lead the students to the collection point on the soccer field.
- The teachers will hold the students until the parent comes to the school.
- The school will also be practicing Lockdown procedures. A Lockdown is like a fire drill where the students stay in their classroom with their teacher and then evacuate to a location close to the school. If there is a threat to the school by someone, the classes will be moved one at a time to the gym or over to the golf course. Parents will be notified where to pick up their children.

Parents may review/debrief this information with your children after a practice session.

EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY

In the event of an earthquake, with teacher compliance and guidance, students and teachers are to follow these guidelines:

- Take cover under a table, bed, or archway away from windows, in the "Drop, Cover, Hold" position
- Stay under cover until the shaking stops
- Stay in position and count to 60 out loud
- Proceed very carefully when safe and calm
- Follow evacuation procedures as outlined above under "Fire and other Evacuation Emergencies"