

STUDENTS

Safe Arrivals

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 All elementary schools should have a written Safe Arrival practice that is conducted in conjunction with daily school attendance procedures. The purpose of the Safe Arrival practice is to account for any pupil's unexplained failure to arrive at school through reasonable efforts to make timely contact with parents, guardians or caregivers.
- 1.2 The principal is responsible for a Safe Arrival practice that is developed or reviewed and implemented with advice from the school council, parents, volunteers and other community members.
- 1.3 The development and implementation of a Safe Arrival practice is not intended to alter the law as it exists with respect to any duty of care or standard of care of parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers and school community councils.
- 1.4 The Board's liability insurance protects both staff and volunteers who are working within the scope of their duties for the Durham District School Board. This coverage responds to law suits that are brought against staff or volunteers who are supervising school programs.

Guidelines on the Design of Safe Arrival Practice

Safe Arrival practice should be designed to reflect the characteristics listed below in 2.0 Delivery and 3.0 Information and Communication.

2.0 Delivery

- 2.1 The practice should be developed in a manner that complements other school and community safety programs and initiatives.
- 2.2 The Safe Arrival Practice should be assessed on a yearly basis by the Safe and Accepting Schools Team.
- 2.3 The Safe Arrival Practice should align with the Safe Welcome Program (refer to Appendix A).
- 2.4 The roles and responsibilities of parents, pupils, the school, the school council, volunteers and others should be clearly identified and documented, and broadly communicated to all concerned.
- 2.5 Minimum Responsibilities of parents/guardians
 - (a) Parents and guardians are responsible for their children's safety. Safe Arrival practices are a mechanism that parents and schools can use to account for any pupil's unexplained failure to arrive at school.
 - (b) Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for communicating planned pupil absences or lateness to the school on a timely basis. Their reports should be reconciled with information obtained through classroom attendance-taking procedures to identify any unexplained absences that require timely follow-up contacts.
 - (c) Parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for providing the school with complete and current emergency information to enable the school to make any necessary follow-up contacts (including telephone number updates which are specific to a particular day or pattern of days).

- 2.6 Safe Arrival practices should take into account normal events, recurring circumstances and unusual events and conditions. For example, practices could be modified on days when students are likely to arrive late due to inclement weather or bus cancellations.
- 2.7 Safe Arrival practices should take into account that alternate methods of communication may be required to contact the absent pupil's home (including a language other than English or special needs services such as Bell Relay Service).
- 2.8 Safe Arrival practices should specify the steps that are to be taken when a follow-up contact cannot reasonably be made.
- 2.9 Individuals involved in implementing the Safe Arrival practice should receive appropriate training and supervision.
- 2.10 Safe Arrival practices should be reviewed on an annual basis to confirm their effectiveness.

3.0 Information and Communications

- 3.1 Information about the school's Safe Arrival practice, and about the roles and responsibilities of all interested parties, should be communicated clearly and effectively by the principal to school staff, parents, guardians, caregivers, pupils, school councils, volunteers and others in the community who have an interest in the matter.
- 3.2 There should be a reliable method for parents, guardians and caregivers to communicate planned pupil absences or lateness to the school on a timely basis, particularly outside school hours.
- 3.3 A reliable system of documenting key information should be developed and maintained. Subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, key information could include those listed below.
 - (a) A log of calls from parents or others who report absences or lateness
 - (b) Names and current telephone numbers, in order of priority, of parents, guardians, caregivers or others to be notified in case of an unexplained pupil absence
 - (c) A log of actions taken by school staff (and volunteers) in accordance with the provisions of the Safe Arrival practice should be recorded on a daily basis.

Appendix:

C.F. Safe Welcome Program Appendix A.pdf

Effective Date

99-05-17

Amended/Reviewed

2009-10-07

2014-02-18



DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

400 Taunton Road East, Whitby, Ontario L1R 2K6 Tel: (905) 666-5500

C.F.-13/14-017
SEC-13/14-016
ELEM-13/14-015

MEMO TO: GRPAdmSupers, GRPAdmOfficers, GRPPriAllElem, GRPPriAllSeco,
GRPVPriAllElem, GRPVPriAllSeco

FROM: John Bowyer, Superintendent of Education, Whitby Schools/Safety & Security

RE: Safe Welcome Program

DATE: March 24, 2014

The Safe Welcome Program was initiated in 2005-06. At that time, the Ministry provided funding to elementary schools to install access device systems including, security cameras and buzzers. Schools eligible to receive this funding were those where the front door could not be seen from the office of the school. Schools were required to have locked doors as a condition of the funding.

On December 20, 2012, the Ontario government announced it was providing renewed funding to elementary schools across the province to support a locked-door policy while students are in class. The Ministry re-opened the Safe Welcome Program to allow elementary schools that currently do not have the necessary devices required to lock their front door during the school day to access funds to purchase and install equipment and devices.

Durham District School Board is committed to safety in schools. The Safe Welcome Program works in conjunction with policies, regulations and procedures and central file memos including:

- Police/School Board Protocol (Regulation 3041),
- Safety and Security (Policy, Regulation and Procedure 4255),

- Code of Conduct, and Discipline for Students (Policy, Regulation and Procedure 5500),
- Positive School Climate (Policy, Regulation and Procedure 5148)
- Video Surveillance Systems (Procedure 4251)
- Central File Memo 13/14-003: Expectations for Safe and Secure Schools; and
- Central File Memo 13/14-004, School Climate Survey and Safety Audit.

As a result of the Safe Welcome Program, the doors of all elementary schools will be locked 10 minutes after the morning entry bell and will be unlocked at dismissal time. During the lunch hour, school doors may be unlocked.

As a safety feature, each office will have an override switch so that doors may be locked with one touch from the office.

Schools will develop practices that meet the needs of their individual facility and the requirements of the legislation. Schools with daycare centres need to work with these partners to ensure the protocol works for both partners.

Broad based communication of expectations/practices should be available to staff, students, parents and community partners.

Staff members, volunteers and visitors in the school should wear identification badges.

Schools should have a process in place to distribute and collect (upon exit from the school) keys, fobs and identification badges for staff, including occasional and supply staff.

The practices derived from the Safe Welcome Program should be reviewed by the Safe and Accepting Schools Teams on a yearly basis.

John Bowyer
Superintendent of Education
Whitby Schools/Safety & Security