

Ness Middle School

Parent / Student Handbook 2009-2010

The Key to Success is at Ness



SCHOOL WIDE VALUES & BELIEFS

CREATED BY STAFF & STUDENTS

OUR BELIEFS

At Ness, we believe *people* are at the heart of what we do every day. When people *show respect for themselves and others*, any problems that may arise can be resolved in a positive manner. Staff and students should feel *safe* every day and know that they are *cared about* and *valued* at Ness. We all have this *responsibility* to maintain our learning environment.

OUR VALUES

Totally Unacceptable Behaviours at Ness because our BELIEFS are protected by these Bottom Lines:

- No Direct Defiance - we believe in **Learning**.
- No Harassment - we believe in **Respect** for individual differences.
- No Violence - we believe in **Safety**.

Code of Behavior

We hope that all students learn and abide by our "R and R" policy – **Respect and Responsibility**. We expect students to show respect for teachers, classmates, parents and the school building itself. We trust students will learn to be responsible for their homework, supplies and their behavior.

Special Features @ Ness

- Emphasis on fundamentals – strong scholastic program
- Security of a well-disciplined school
- Experienced and dedicated staff
- Comprehensive co-curricular programs, enhancing academic, artistic and athletic development.
- Training in computer applications for all students using cutting edge iBooks
- An AWESOME Band program
- An EXCITING Art program
- A VIBRANT Choral program
- A DYNAMIC Drama program
- Effective Guidance, Counselling and Family Life programs
- Resource Centre
- French Program
- An active Student Advocacy program
- Staff-student intramural competitions
- An active and supportive Parent Advisory – recognizing the need for active parental involvement in the community
- Trained Peer Mediation Program
- Supervised lunch hour facilities for all those who qualify as per lunchroom policy

School Objectives

- To create a **positive environment** where there is a mutual respect, cooperation and consideration for others.
- To offer opportunities whereby students can build **self-confidence** and develop a positive self-image through experiencing success.
- To provide a comprehensive curricular program of **academic** skills, concepts and content that will foster personal development according to student interest and potential.
- To develop in students a sense of **responsibility** for daily assignment completion and regular home study. To provide a variety of **activities** to aid in the development of social, emotional, intellectual and physical skills.
- To promote an educational environment that will recognize and be sensitive to students as **individuals**.
- To continue the development of strategies to assist the needs of all students.
- To make provision for open, honest and **regular communication** between home and school with the view to supporting students in their school endeavours.



ADMINISTRATIVE & INSERVICE DAYS

Education Manitoba recognizes the need to continually strive to improve student learning. Schools are allowed ten days each year for program planning, professional development and parent/teacher conferences. On such days, students do not attend classes. To assist parents, we will make every effort to advertise these days well in advance so that they may be used for medical, dental and other appointments.

AWARDS

At the conclusion of each academic year, the following awards are presented to deserving students during the Closing Exercises:

1. Choral, Band and Physical Education Scholarships.
2. Grade 6, 7 and 8 Merit Pins - High Academic Studies and Good Citizenship
3. Grade 6, 7 and 8 Honor Certificates -Final Average 80% or higher
4. Parent Advisory Award – High Average Grade 6
5. Parent Advisory Award – High Average Grade 7
6. Scholarship Foundation Awards – High average Grade 8/Second Highest Average Grade 8
7. Student Services Award – Outstanding Progress/Service Related to the Resource Program
8. Lawrence Melnyk Memorial Award – Outstanding effort in Grade 8 Mathematics
9. Ness Staff Award – Outstanding Student in Grade 8
10. Athletic Participation Award – Male/Female
11. Witold Milejsjo Memorial Award – Student in Grade 6 with outstanding spirit.

BICYCLES

Bicycles are to be parked in the designated area in the bicycle corral are to be kept locked. The school is **not responsible** for any damage or theft.

CANTEEN

The canteen service offers milk chocolate milk, soup, and promotes healthy lifestyle choices in accordance with the St. James-Assiniboia School Division Nutrition Policy CGE. Please refer to the copy of the Nutrition Policy located through a link on our homepage.

CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

Ness offers its students a most comprehensive co-curricular program. The opportunities range from athletic and academic to leisure and high interest activities. We have something for everyone. The only prerequisite is one's desire to become involved and to take advantage of the opportunities.

INTRAMURAL PROGRAM

Intramural activities are designed to allow all students to enjoy as many athletic activities as possible during the school year. Competitions are held among rooms during the lunch break and immediately after dismissal.

INTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

The staff and students at Ness Middle School support the concept of interschool competition. It is our belief that preparing for interschool games may provide the students with better physical fitness and an opportunity to meet students from other schools with similar interests.

Interschool competitions at the Middle Years level are available to both the boys and the girls.

SCHOOL CLUBS

A large number of students take advantage of these special interest and leisure activities. Examples of co-curricular activities that have been held in past years include:

Floor Hockey	Yearbook Club	Knight's Challenge	Rock Bands
Student Council	Cross Country	Art	Choir & Vocal Jazz
Computers	Basketball	Intramurals	Jazz & Concert Bands
Volleyball	Badminton	Improv	Dance
Track & Field	Cheerleading	Noisemakers	

CO-CURRICULAR AWARDS

Our entire co-curricular program involves an individual point system, which rewards students for taking part in co-curricular activities. Points, usually 5 to 20 for each activity, are awarded to a student who has taken part in intramural games, clubs, interschool teams, officiating, or any other school supervised activity other than regular classroom work.

A student must consistently attend the activity in order to receive those points. The awards are school crests. Level One is awarded when a student accumulates 150 points; then continues towards 300 points for Level Two. Those students who achieve over 400 points are awarded a plaque. Point totals are kept from year to year as long as a student attends Ness.

DRESS CODE

All students are expected to be well groomed and to wear clothing appropriate to the school setting. Students are expected to dress for serious classroom work, not as they would for a recreational program. Inappropriate apparel during instructional hours includes: caps, hats, torn clothing, clothing in bad taste (tshirts which suggest/advocate violence or are offensive i.e. swearing, sexual commentary and other similar statements, alcohol, drugs), and shorts, shirts or tops which are revealing.

Students who are in violation of this code will be required to go home and return to school appropriately dressed.

Outdoor jackets/clothing may not be worn indoors during instructional hours. Walkman radios, portable stereos, headsets, CD players, **cell phones and Ipods** are not allowed at school .

EARLY DISMISSAL

Permission for early dismissal may be obtained from the Principal or Vice-Principal through the presentation of a signed parental note to the office staff. Parents are asked to make every effort to set up medical, dental and other appointments after school hours or during administrative and in-service days.

The first and third Tuesdays of each month are early dismissal days – all students are dismissed at 2:40.

EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES (ESS)

Social work, psychology and speech and language referrals are available through ESS. Referrals to ESS are made through the Resource teacher or counsellor and approved by the administration. Parental contact is made and permission from parents is required before a referral is completed.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The Guidance program includes classroom groups, individual counseling and mini group sessions. Topics include study skills, self-awareness, communication skills, peer relationships, family relationships, career awareness, youth and law, tobacco, drug and alcohol awareness and Family Life education. Many community groups and speakers are utilized in the classroom. The program centers on how the adolescent sees him/herself as a result of physical changes. The emphasis is on helping the adolescent deal with these changes effectively and continue along the process of establishing his/her own identity. Students and parents may arrange an appointment by calling Ness Middle School. The School counsellor is Ms Heerah.

INTERIM PROGRESS REPORTS

An interim progress report is sent out by teachers to all students. These are sent near the mid-term of Terms 2 and 3. In addition, teachers may send interim reports whenever deemed necessary. Parent may also request an interim report on their child as needed.

LOCKS AND LOCKERS

Generally, each student will be assigned one locker and one combination lock at no cost. Additional locks are to be purchased only from the school office if lost or misplaced. Students are responsible for the care of personal belongings and for keeping lockers locked. The school is **not responsible** for lost items. **Students are advised not to tell anyone their combinations.**

LUNCHROOM

Ness Middle School has an open lunchroom policy. Any student may use this privilege during the school year. Lunch personnel are hired to supervise and take attendance during the lunch hour. Students are expected to comply with lunch supervisors' directions for the safety of all. **ALL students are expected to stay on school property unless a note is received from a parent/guardian.**

Students are indoors/outdoors on a seasonal basis. During peak periods, we have more than 200 students staying for lunch. To accommodate the large numbers of students, we have devised lunch procedures and rules.

LUNCHROOM RULES

1. Students will eat in their assigned advisory areas.
2. Students are to clean up after themselves prior to dismissal. A schedule will be set up to empty the room garbage container.
3. Students are to remain seated in their desks from 11:55 to 12:15, use reasonable table manners and speak only at conversational levels.
4. After 12:15 students have 5 minutes to decide on a desired activity i.e., library, gymnasium, choral, band or outside. Students may reenter the building at the 12:50 bell. Wandering the halls after 12:20 will not be tolerated.
5. Students are to be respectful and obedient to all classmates, staff and lunch supervisors. Failure to abide by lunchroom rules will lead to disciplinary actions which include:
 - Reprimand/warning by lunch supervisors (recorded)
 - Removal of student privileges from regular lunch program for a period of time (within the school)
 - Suspension from lunch program
 - Expulsion from lunch program

NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters are sent home with students on the Thursday following the monthly staff meeting and are also posted on the school home page.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION DRESS CODE

Ness Middle School has adopted a dress code for Physical Education which is listed on the student supplies list because:

- we believe that a change of clothes for activities is important for personal hygiene;
- we believe that no undue hardship is created by requiring everyone to meet this dress standard;
- the dress items we have selected are readily available (school t-shirts and shorts may be purchased from the Phys. Ed. Department).

Since it is expensive to replace lost items, we strongly recommend that the clothing, etc. is **well identified** and carried in a bag of some kind (a homemade drawstring bag is fine). Some soft-soled shoes are not acceptable in the gym because they do not provide enough support. Gym shoes that mark the floor and skateboard style shoes will not be permitted.

NOTE: Long-term (more than once a week) absences from Phys. Ed. require a medical certificate.



REQUIRED SUBJECTS

All middle school students are required to study a basic program of studies which includes: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education (including Fitness for Living & Guidance) Practical Arts, French.

All students will participate in a grade 6-8 arts rotation which will function similarly to the practical arts rotation. Included in this will be visual arts, music awareness and drama.

All grade 6 students will have the option to take band or media literacy and grade 7 & 8 students will be allowed the choice of band or art.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

The Principal is available to students and parents to discuss issues and concerns which may arise. We are interested in all feedback concerning the operation of our school.

SKATEBOARDS, ETC.

Skateboards, roller blades and scooters will not be permitted at the school at any time. School facilities are not designed for this use, therefore students who bring the above mentioned items to school will have them confiscated.

STAFF & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS

Staff Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month. Professional Development meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month. Students are dismissed 30 minutes early on each of these days.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Students are evaluated on a continuous basis. This may include:

- a) daily assignments
- b) special projects
- c) oral presentations
- d) periodic tests and quizzes
- e) school examinations
- f) division examinations

Student Achievement reports will be issued three times during the school year – December (term 1), March (Term 2), June (Final Mark).

Parent/Teacher conferences will be scheduled in November and March (one half day and one evening). Additional conferences may be scheduled as required.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Ness Middle School has an active student government. Representatives are elected from each homeroom to organize various activities for the student body.

STUDENT GRADE LEVEL PLACEMENT

The Board of Trustees recognizes that students vary in their abilities to learn and the rate at which they learn. Reliable educational research does not support grade level retention as an intervention to improve a student's learning. Policy IKE-E, *Appropriate Practices for Student Advancement: Research and Literature Highlights for Alternatives to Retention*, highlights the research and literature on appropriate practices to support student learning.

In situations where grade level advancement is in question, the teacher(s), student support personnel and parents/legal guardians consult with the principal.

TELEPHONE

A telephone is available for student use outside of the regular school hours. During school hours students must receive permission from the office staff before using this telephone.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are responsible for the care of their textbooks. Texts are to be covered when issued and are to remain covered throughout the school year. Students are to identify their textbooks properly (eg. JOE SMTH 8-1). At year-end, books are assessed. If there is an unreasonable deterioration in the condition, a fine is issued.

TIMEGUIDE

8:17	Entrance of students
8:27	Opening Exercises Roll Call, Announcements
8:30	Period 1
9:10	Period 2
9:50	Period 3
10:35	Period 4
11:15	Period 5
11:55	Noon Dismissal
12:51	Entrance of students
12:56	Roll Call, Announcements
12:59	Period 6
1:40	Period 7
2:21	Period 8
3:12	Dismissal

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Rules and regulations are necessary for a happy, peaceful life. If our students are to become successful citizens, they must adapt themselves to some orderly pattern of living, learn to think and act in line with social regulations, adjust to their environment, and develop a sense of responsibility. **It is this process that we call discipline.**

Our goal is that teachers and parents will work together to help young people learn to live successfully in a changing world. No set of rules guarantees success or excludes conflict; therefore **each student is expected to make behavioral decisions that demonstrate intelligent self-control.** We feel strongly that students must be allowed to accept natural and logical consequences that result from any behavior.

GENERAL CONDUCT

The following conduct is expected of students:

- a) **Orderly** and **courteous behaviour** at all times
- b) **Appropriate** use of **language**. No profanity.
- c) **Respect** for school **property** and the personal property of others.

Students needing to be out of class during class time must obtain a hall pass from their teacher.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The first steps are always with the teacher – they are the adult in your class and they need to ensure that everyone in the room is able to learn without interruption.

Disruptive or inappropriate behaviour is dealt with according to the following procedures:

- a. Teachers inform students what is expected of them and the steps dealing with disruptive behaviour are outlined clearly.
- b. Teachers attempt to correct the inappropriate behavior. Correction may take many forms such as verbal reminders, counseling, and removal from class, detention after school and parental contact.
- c. If unacceptable behaviour persists, or if the behaviour is severe, the teacher refers the student to the office for discipline. The administration may impose disciplinary action similar to that used by teachers and in addition, suspensions (in and out of school) may be incurred. Office referrals are kept on file. Parents are always notified in the case of suspensions.

BULLYING

Bullying is defined as an action or is unfair and one-sided. It involves an imbalance of power and strength. Someone who keeps hurting and frightening someone in a repetitive way. Bullying is targeting someone with repetitive, negative actions. It is intentional. It has unequal levels of affect – the bully walks away while the victim is in distress. Bullying may not be conflict.

TYPES OF BULLYING:

1. Physical aggression

2. Social aggression

- a) spreading rumours
- b) excluding from group

3. Verbal aggression

- a) name calling
- b) teasing
- c) intimidating phone calls

4. Intimidation

5. Written aggression

- a) letters, notes, graffiti

6. **Cyber Bullying** - Using the internet or other information or communication technologies, such as e-mail, text messaging sent by cell phone or pager to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm someone.

Ness Middle School very strictly follows the guidelines of the St. James Assiniboia School Division, Harassment Policy Code: GBEA in regards to bullying. Consequences of bullying are:

- a) Warning
- b) Disciplinary Directive – specifies certain behaviour with which the party(s) must comply. If the directive is disregarded, further action will be taken.
- c) Suspension – exclusion from attending class for a specific period of time. Suspension may include exclusion from the school.
- d) Withdrawal/Dismissal – termination of student status.

A complete copy of Harassment Policy: GBEA is available on request.