

Holy Saviour School Bear Protocol

Responsibility Protocol Procedures

The community of Marathon faces the challenge of coping and dealing with the ever-increasing problem of bears. This is a real and imminent danger that poses a safety concern for staff and students at Holy Saviour School.

The following procedures have been put into place at Holy Saviour School to ensure the safety and protection of all staff and students from the potentially precarious situation that exists with bears and humans within the community of Marathon.

This Policy has been developed in cooperation with the staff of Holy Saviour School, and the Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee of the Superior North Catholic District School Board. It has been reviewed by a Conservation Officer with the Ministry of Natural Resources, and Trow Associates Inc., Consulting Engineers. (see Preliminary Risk Assessment, Holy Saviour / Ecole Val des Bois Marathon, Ontario 2003)

As a precautionary measure, during the months of September, October, April, May and June, when bear sightings are highest, all staff who are responsible for outdoor supervision of pupils during the school day are required to have an air horn with them at all times. A bear drill procedure will be conducted at least twice per year, in September and March.

A. Bear Warnings

If the authorities, a parent or community member notifies the school that a bear has been sighted in the vicinity of the school:

1. The secretary will phone the proper authorities to get accurate information and advice regarding the bear sighting (Police and By-law enforcement officer).
2. The secretary will fax a copy of all bear sightings to the Board Office at the end of every week from April to October, omitting the summer months.
1. The principal, upon verification of a bear sighting from the proper authorities, will:
 - a) inform all students and staff about the bear sighting.
 - b) if near lunch hour or dismissal, all walkers will be directed to
 - i) walk home with a friend or sibling.
 - ii) leave the school grounds immediately
 - iii) go directly home and notify a parent/guardian of their safe arrival.
- 2) ensure that all bus students have safely boarded buses before they depart the school grounds.

B. Bear Sightings on School Property

i) During the school day:

- If a bear is sighted immediately outside of the fenced area that borders the school property, or within the school grounds while students are outside at recess or lunch hour, staff members on supervision duty will blow their air horns several times as a warning to the students.
- Upon hearing the warning the students must quickly vacate the playground area and go directly into the school. The supervisor on duty must ensure that all students have vacated the school playground.
- Students must enter the school immediately and proceed quickly and quietly to their classroom.
- All staff and students working within the school during the warning must also proceed immediately to their classrooms.
- All teaching staff are required to take attendance promptly and must notify the office that all students are present and accounted for.
- Proper authorities will be immediately contacted by the secretary or principal.
- If the problem bear still persists on school property during the day, students will not be allowed to go outside or leave the school building unless supervised by a parent/guardian.

ii) During School Dismissal:

- If the problem bear still persists on school property at dismissal time, students who normally walk will not be allowed to walk home.
- If time permits the secretary will notify the transportation carrier (Trottier Bus Lines) to have students picked up at the front entrance of the school.
- If there is sufficient time, the principal will be responsible for insuring that busses re-locate to the front entrance of the school to pick up students.

Duties of the Principal:

1. Shall notify staff and students of dismissal procedures.
2. Ensure teaching staff remain in their classroom until all students have been picked up by a parent/guardian or transported home by bus.
3. All Educational Assistants who have no specific responsibilities with a special need student at dismissal time will assist the principal with bus students at the main entrance of the school.
4. Bus students will be called down to the main entrance of the school by the principal according to bus colour. Students are required to line up inside the school at the front entrance. Students will be escorted out to the bus by an adult.
5. Make sure that yard supervisors carry a horn during bear season.
6. Inspect the fence on a weekly basis and record this action on the logsheet.
7. Ensure that no attractants (e.g. someone's leftover lunch) are left in the school yard.
8. Inform the principal from the french school board of the protocol (copy).
9. Conduct a bear drill in September and March of each year.
10. Review the bear procedure at September staff meeting. Copies are to be made for all staff.
11. Ensure that staff and students are compliant with the bear protocol.

Duties of the Secretary:

12. Notify the proper authorities of bear sightings.
13. Notify the transportation carrier to pick up students at the front entrance of the school.
14. Activate the emergency phone list plan to notify parents/guardians of walkers who will need to be picked up at the school.
15. The secretary will be responsible for answering any incoming telephone calls and relaying any messages to staff/students as required.

Revised: September 10, 2003

