

Report to Community Forest Park School 2023-2024



As the school year comes to a completion, there is much to celebrate at Forest Park School. We continue to work on our school goal's identified in our school plan, with an emphasis on our student's feeling a sense of belonging. This year we offered more opportunities to learn and socialize with peers through clubs including beading, book club, games club, signing club, drumming, crocheting and makers space (to name a few). Our Grade 5 Leadership Group spent the whole year planning, organizing and facilitating events for our students. We also celebrated everyone at our Whole School Birthday Party. This event was a highlight for many students and is something we will plan to do each year. We also created new friendships amongst younger and older students who became classroom buddies. There were at least two after-school family events that allowed our families to participate in various cultural and academic activities. As new students arrived during the school year at Forest Park School, we announced their names during announcements as a welcome to our Forest Park family. As a staff, we did intentional work around literacy this year on our professional development days and Teacher Talk Time opportunities. This work included investigating in and experimenting with the science of reading; focused lessons and learning opportunities that provided daily verbal prompts in areas such as rhyme production, initial phoneme isolation, blending phonemes, segmenting, adding, deleting, and substituting phonemes, alphabet knowledge and language awareness. As a result, we will continue to make this a priority in our learning goals and collect data on student progress that is supported by research.

This report is a culmination of classroom stories that celebrate students engaged in their learning.



Ms Genny: Kindergarten



This year at school, the Kindergarten children have been learning all about trees. We watched the leaves change colour and fall from their branches in autumn. Collecting and comparing leaves helped us to notice just how many different kinds of trees we have growing in our neighbourhood! The bare branches in winter made it much easier to spot nests in the high branches. This helped us to learn about the different animals who rely on trees to provide them with food and shelter during the cold winter months. We also learned about evergreen trees that hold onto their needles all winter long. This spring, the children observed the gradual opening of tiny buds. We dropped "helicopter

seeds" and learned about all the different ways that trees spread their seeds far and wide. On our walks, we noticed that some special trees have blossoming flowers, cherries and apples. Over the course of the year, we learned about all the special gifts that the trees give to us, animals and the world. "Trees only need 3 things to grow (sunlight, water and a place to grow), but they give us WAY more than 3 things! They can give flowers, a home for the birds, nuts, cherries, apples, wood, paper . . . shade and clean air and a place to climb!" - E.C.

Ms Justyna: Grades 1/2

Room 3 started the year with exploring and learning about our local community. We visited a Fire Station where we learned about the fire fighters' work. They showed us around the fire trucks and how they look fully dressed in their safety gear. A highlight of the visit was shooting the safety cones with the water hose. Next, we went to the Police Station and learned about their procedures when someone gets arrested and is brought in for questioning. We also got to sit in a police car and turn the sirens on. Our last community field trip was to the West Kildonan Library where we learned about cataloguing books and listened to a story. We also got to know about all the fun programs that were happening in the library. The community project did not end there ... we researched many places in our neighbourhood that are important for people to have around. Some of those places were: grocery stores, hospitals, restaurants, schools, daycares, sport arenas, pools, gyms, pet stores, parks, malls, etc. As a class, we created our own community using boxes and coloured paper. It was such a fun project, and we even made a classroom book out of it. During Holiday Season we send holiday greetings cards to the fire fighters, police officers and librarians to thank them for their time and for being part of our community. They were very touched and grateful. Students in Room 3 often talk about those walking fieldtrips and even visited those places with their families!



Teacher Noel: Grades 1/2



Growth and development is a concept that Room 4 has learned in Science. They started their study by looking at groups of animals (mammals, amphibians, birds, fish, and reptiles) and their characteristics. They looked at how animals in each group are similar and different from other groups. Then, they looked at the needs of these animals to grow and develop. They talked about the importance of these needs for growth and development. They watched the developing chicks starting from fertilized eggs to observe their growth and development. To see the development, the students made sure to candler them each week and watch the humidity and temperature of the incubator. The students had a recording booklet to record their observations. On day 21 of incubation, the students witnessed the hatching of the 1st two chicks. Out of 8 fertilized eggs, they were able to hatch 6

chicks. After hatching, they kept on observing their growth and development. The students were involved in observing the development of feathers from down feathers, to wing feathers, then tail feathers.

Mrs. Diana: Grades 1/2



In the Fall, we were learning about our local community and important community helpers. We visited several different locations such as our local police station, our community centre, and the fire station. The visit to the fire station was a definite favourite about which the students often reminisce. They loved this experiential learning opportunity that allowed them to gain first-hand understanding about fire safety and the role of firefighters in our community. By interacting with the firefighters, exploring the station, and seeing the equipment up close, students developed a deeper understanding of and appreciation for our community helpers.

Mrs. Judge: Grades 3/4

This year, Room 7 discovered the author, Katherine Applegate. The class completed novel studies on the books, *The Wish Tree* and *The One and Only Ivan*. *The Wish Tree* explored many current topics, such as the importance of trees, anti-racism and community building. *The One and Only Ivan* explored true friendship, the treatment of animals, and how people/living things have individual talents. Katherine Applegate became a favourite author of everyone in Room 7 – teacher and students. She made Room 7 students think about the world critically and how they can make a difference in the world through using their voices and speaking up for what is right and what is unfair!



Mrs. Jackson: Grade 3/4



This year room 8 learned about helpful and harmful things that humans do to the environment. One area of interest that they wanted to investigate is food waste. Food waste happens for different reasons in different countries. In Canada, and other wealthy countries, food waste mainly happens at the consumer level, examples of this is stores not selling food because it is deemed "ugly" and people throwing food in the garbage. Room 8 noticed, that food from snack and lunch, was being thrown in the garbage. They wondered if this was happening in other classrooms at Forest Park as well. They wanted to know why, what, and how much. They made predictions, collected, and sorted the waste into categories and plan to create an awareness campaign to share their findings with their fellow students.

Ms. Lee: Grades 3/4



At Forest Park School, words we live by are “take care of yourself, take care of each other and take care of this place.” In the fall, we took nature walks to discuss how we can take care of our place to help animals that live in our neighborhoods. We took a trip to the Aki Center to further investigate what animals need to live in our local region. In the winter, Room 9’s big project blended habitats and communities with geographical regions of Canada, where every group researched a different region of Canada. Students thought critically of how living things play and interact in a community and inquired what would happen if one species did not exist. We also thought critically about how humans positively and negatively impact the land. We discovered we need to keep care of the land everywhere, not to be selfish and only take what we need. Room 9 made dioramas and poster boards to share their learning. Students also had the chance to use their confident, loud (but not too loud) presenting voice to other grade 3/4 classrooms.

Mrs. Cordova: Grades 3/4

"Take care of yourself. Take care of each other. Take care of this place." These are the words students hear every morning at school. Taking care of this place includes caring for the community and Mother Earth.

For Earth Day, Room 11 cleaned the area. While picking up trash, they noticed many cigarette butts scattered around. They discussed the impact of smoking on health and the environment and asked themselves how they could help solve this problem.

They decided to place cans in the community with posters saying, "Please put your cigarette butts here to help save the earth." Then, they returned to where they found the cigarette butts and hung the cans, reminding people to dispose of their cigarette butts properly to keep their community clean.



Mr Gebhardt: Grades 5

This year Room 10 continued to explore the Thinking Classroom model of problem solving in math class and once more the Big Stinkin' Thinkin' Problems were a hit amongst us. As the year progressed we became engrossed in the creative writing process and many of us turned out several stories that we then shared with our classmates on Publisher Fridays. The balloon powered car drag races and subsequent demolition derby in the gym was another highlight. Room 10 also got to enjoy several field trips including a December trip to the Aki Centre which happened to be one of the few days with snow that month, a trip to symphony

followed by a whole lot of fun at the Across the Board Cafe. Add to that the field trips for the grade 5 farewell and the whole school on the second last day, and it is pretty clear that Room 10 had a good time.

Mrs. Shields: Grade 5



This school year we spent time learning about mental health and wellness. One of our focuses was learning about how our brains work and respond to unexpected situations. We learned about our “survival brains” and the limbic system. This taught us about trauma responses including fight, flight, and freeze. We also learned about how to gain control of our amygdala (the part of the brain that tells us to go into survival mode) through mindfulness exercises. This learning has helped us to understand ourselves and each other better, giving insight into how we respond to our environments.

Mr. Ens: Physical Education

Throughout the school year, a range of activities aimed at promoting physical health and fostering a positive and engaging environment were provided for the Forest Park students. Clubs included Team Handball, Flag Football, X-country, Basketball, Volleyball, Floor Hockey, and Badminton. These clubs provided students with exposure to a wide range of physical activities, promoting physical fitness and skill development. Furthermore, they had the opportunity to participate in divisional extracurricular events at Sport Manitoba, Little Mountain Park, and Winnipeg North Soccer Plex. These events provided students with valuable experiences outside the school environment, allowing them to showcase their skills and foster school pride.



The goal has been to provide joy and build relationships while promoting physical, emotional, and social health. The daily smiles affirm that Forest Park students are indeed having fun and creating memorable experiences in the gym.

Mrs. Risbey: Music



The sounds of singing, recorders, xylophones and laughter filled the hallway when you walked past the music room this year. The students put their musical ensemble skills to the test in preparing for their spring concert which showcased the Orff way of learning music. They used speech, singing, dancing and instruments to bring a story book to life. The K-2's were crayons from the book, *The Day the Crayons Quit*, and the 3-5's were all sorts of characters from the book, *The Neighbors*. We had the opportunity to do one last reprise of our concert highlights at this year's Arts In The Park. What a way to bring the school year to a close!

Mrs. Uskalo: Learning Support Teacher

Roots of Empathy (ROE) is a classroom-based program for students that focuses on building the capacity for caring and compassionate citizenship and parenting. The heart of the program is the monthly family visit with a community baby and parent(s). The emotional bond that develops with the "classroom" baby over the school year increases students' emotional literacy, resulting in social-emotional awareness and increasing empathy.

This past year, Forest Park was proud to host our teacher, Mrs. Yakiwchuk, and her new baby Shai. We were thrilled to welcome them both to the Roots family this year.

Baby Shai was our Roots "teacher" in Ms. Justyna's grade 1/2 class. Through interactions, observations, reading, writing, and drawing the students learned so much about Baby Shai's care, growth, and development. The students were delighted to share and celebrate his first-year milestones.



Mrs. Bela: Learning Support Teacher

This year, Forest Park staff spent Teacher Talk Time and PD days focusing intently on literacy. Educators delved into the four strands of the curriculum – language as a system, language as sense-making, language as exploration and design, and language as power and agency – and collaborated in creating lessons that would authentically fit into what was taking place in their classrooms. In addition, during Teacher Talk Time, teachers discussed how best to teach phonological and phonemic awareness, while ensuring that a love of reading and writing continued to shine through in their classrooms. One way of doing this was by taking an inventory of the books in their classrooms, sorting them in ways that made sense to students, and then requesting new books that would fill in any gaps. Providing students with agency over the books available to them ensures that reading time is enjoyable as well as educational for each and every child, and this was evident in classrooms throughout the school.

