

# TRAFFIC SAFETY RULES AT BELMONT

Here are the traffic rules we have developed over the years at Belmont. Parents and other caregivers who deliver children to our school need to understand the following important points:

- we have very limited access to our site
- we are situated on a busy thoroughfare (40th Ave)
- we have a large student population (approx 520)
- many students arrive by car
- over 60 K students now all arrive and leave at the same time (this used to be somewhat staggered when we had morning and afternoon K)
- parents are responsible for conveying traffic rules to other caregivers (grandparents, nannies) who may be delivering / picking up children

*It is vital that drivers use caution and respect all traffic rules in order to avoid accidents and harm to our children.* The traffic rules make the best of a very limited area given our student population.

Haste is usually the main culprit when dangerous situations arise: a driver is late for work; the bell has already rung; children are anxious to get out and greet their friends. It is always better to arrive late than engage in risky behaviours! Of course, the optimal approach is to leave home in plenty of time, but, if you are running late, please slow down and be careful.

The vast majority of Belmont parents are wonderful role models. Occasionally, it pains us to note, parents blatantly disregard the rules or become aggressive toward staff members charged with enforcing them. This is unacceptable on many levels. Not only does this result in unsafe situations, it is also a terrible example for the children of those parents. Since we learn in a community, we all must put aside what we may want at the moment for the common good.

## ***Drop-off routine - front parking area***

Our only drop-off zone is in our front parking lot. All other areas require you to park and leave your car. When dropping off your children in the drop-off zone, please use the right hand lane (marked "kiss and go" lane) and:

- ✓ pull forward as far as possible - this minimises jams on 40th Ave
- ✓ **do not leave the driver's seat while in this zone - this is not a parking area**
- ✓ have your children leave your car from the doors on the **right** side (the side closest to the building)
- ✓ instruct children to step over the concrete safety barrier onto the walkway

*(see diagram enclosed)*

**Using front crosswalk: "POINT YOUR WAY TO SAFETY"**

The crosswalk is the only area of the front lot that drivers expect children to be in. Please use it. If your child is very young, hold his/ her hand. Children should be trained by their parents to make eye contact with drivers of oncoming cars and to "point their way to safety". That makes children more visible and their intentions clear.

**Staff parking lot**

This area is clearly marked. Please do not enter this area! This is not only to allow our staff (some of whom are part time and arrive at later times in the day) a place to park, but is also to prevent dangerous turning around or even backing out into a pedestrian area.

**203A Street** (back of school- west side)

There is very limited parking on this street and along the neighbours' fence, it is clearly marked as parallel parking only. Do not "nose" your car in.

Note that this is not a "drop-off" area. You are on a public street and traffic rules apply: no U-turns, no dropping your children off on the street!! These are very dangerous practices. If all the parking spots are taken, you need to park further afield and walk your children to school. An alternative would be to keep driving, and use the drop-off routine in the front area as described above.

**No stopping on 40th Avenue**

This is a busy street and is clearly marked "no stopping". Expect to be ticketed by police if you use this as a drop-off or pick-up area.

**After school**

If you pick your children up in the front lot after school, please pull into the drive through lane. If you do not see your children standing ready, please circle around and try again. This will allow the traffic to keep flowing. Do not park in the "kiss and go" lane!!

We have supervision until 2:45 daily. At 2:45 an "end of supervision" bell rings. This is the signal that students are now in their parents' care. If students are unattended when this bell rings, they are instructed to come into the office and wait for their parent/caregiver there. If you are running late, kindly call the office to minimise your child's anxiety.

**Parent responsibility for "defensive walking"**

"Defensive" drivers always imagine that their fellow drivers will do the one thing that is most unpredictable or dangerous. Since a driver cannot control what other drivers do, this is the safest approach.

The school regularly reminds to students to follow safe, "defensive", pedestrian practices. However, it is up to parents and caregivers (including daycare providers) to *train* children to be good pedestrians.

Parents must model how to cross safely at crosswalks and show children to “point their way to safety” by having one arm out, and by making eye contact with the driver to make sure their intentions are clear.

Here are some suggestions for easing the traffic situation: (“traffic do’s”)

1. Set up carpools with friends to reduce traffic. Walk to school if possible.
2. Leave the house earlier. It is often the panic of arriving late that leads to unsafe practices.
3. Use the front drop-off for your children. There is no need to accompany most children onto the school grounds. Even primary children can be trained to get out of your car safely, and proceed to the playground until the bell rings.

***"Who is picking you up after school?"***

Please inform your child of the plans for getting him or her after school. Frequently children come to the office with no idea how they are getting home. A daily note in the planner is helpful if your routine is irregular or if children go to more than one home.

If you have an older child responsible for picking up younger children, please make your expectations clear to the whole family. For example, your Grade 5 son goes to the classroom of your Grade 2 daughter, who waits for him to arrive.

***Bikes, trikes, skateboards on campus***

We ask students to walk their wheeled vehicles once they are on campus. Students who wish to skateboard after hours (2:45) while in the eye of the watchful administration, at least, must wear helmets. This is not the law yet (although it should be), but we will ask your children to put on helmets if we see them skateboarding. We do this to honour the memory of a child we knew who died as a result of a fall from a skateboard in his own driveway.



*Thank you for doing your part every day to keep our students safe!*