

Report to Community Forest Park School 2022-2023



As we reflect on this school year, we have achieved many of the goals we set for ourselves and our students, created and cultivated relationships with one another and took time to celebrate many occasions. As a staff, we collectively focused our efforts on a sense of belonging in our community, thus many new and returning clubs provided opportunities for our children to develop and demonstrate their strengths while connecting with different peers and staff. Each month we proudly displayed a new flag outside our school that welcomed our community and visitors as another way of saying, "You belong here". As a staff we started each staff meeting with an opportunity to share celebrations, often highlighting a success for a child. These stories were both proudly told, and even more proudly received. And we shifted our thinking of students to see them as ALL our children and responsibility. As a result, students connected with adults in our building in a deeper and more meaningful way. This year we saw older classrooms partner up with younger ones for learning opportunities above and beyond reading buddies. These planned interactive activities cultivated relationships that continued on our playground at recess. Our work this year continued to focus on Land Based Learning and many parks in our community became the perfect outdoor classrooms (with appropriate names from our students).

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

Mrs Justyna and Ms Genny: Kindergarten

In Kindergarten, we have spent our first full year of school learning how to follow routines, work together and create memories through play. Over the course of the year, we worked on learning letter names and sounds. Next, we turned our knowledge of letter sounds into "kid writing."

Just in case you don't know, Kid Writing is what we call our children's first attempts at writing words. Just as babies babble before they learn to speak, young children experiment with letters and sounds before they become proficient writers. At the start of our writing journey, we say words very s-l-o-w-l-y, stretching them out to hear beginning, middle and ending sounds. Kid Writing isn't about memorizing the exceptions to rules in our tricky written language, it is all about listening, thinking, and making connections between our mouths and letters on the page.





Kid Writing is not quiet, it is thinking out loud. It isn't something we do alone, it is a partnership between people big and small. We use tools to help us like our illustrated alphabet chart and our favourite alphabet sound song. Kid Writing is about celebrating our efforts, taking risks, and reading our own words.

Mrs. Yakiwchuk: Grades 1/2



Throughout the year in Room 3, we have been exploring photography with our school cameras. To begin, we went on a shape walk and documented with photos all the different 2D and 3D shapes we could find within the community. We have just finished up our class book inspired by Peggy Christian's "If You Find a Rock". To create this book, we studied different types of rocks, took our own photographs of rocks that inspired us, and wrote a passage to accompany our photo. We are a group of budding photographers!



Teacher Kat: Grades 1/2



In Room 4 this year, we examined the idea of community in depth. We focused on building a strong classroom community and getting acquainted with the larger community around us. Throughout the year, we discussed the importance of caring for our community and took action to clean up our environment, raise our voices to protect our plant and its inhabitants, and show compassion towards all living things. One significant project was our community mapping initiative, where students went on walks to different beloved places like Secret Park and Ice Park in various seasons. We examined and recorded the natural, human, and constructed resources in our community. Finally, we learned about map features and created a topographic map of the Forest Park Community, consolidating our knowledge. Through these activities, students observed and appreciated the small wonders around them, connected with nature, and explored the concept of community in depth.

During our explorations, students developed an appreciation for the little wonders surrounding us and delved deep into the essence of being part of a thriving community!



Mrs. Diana: Grades 1/2



An event that my students really loved was the STEAMfest day put on by our grade 1/2 cohort of teachers. When we couldn't attend the divisional STEAMfest event we decided to take lemons and make lemonade. Each teacher planned a STEAM activity and the three 1/2 classrooms rotated through each activity. The kids LOVED it! They were excited and engaged.



They were frustrated and overcame those feelings to persevere. My challenge was to build a catapult using craft and popsicle sticks, elastic bands, and other materials. The next day, a student from another classroom that doesn't always experience success at school came up to me to tell me he showed his mom, and she liked his catapult. He was so proud! These are the moments as educator that I live for.

Mrs. Judge: Grades 3/4



This school year in Room 7, we spent time outside, observing the changing seasons and connecting with the land, plants, and animals in our community. We discovered the Vanier Drive Park and began to explore why we enjoy this park and how we think it could be improved. In small groups, we created plans and designed dioramas to show how we would change the park for the better, keeping the animal residents in mind. We wrote letters to our local city councillor to practice using our personal voices to ask



for change and to build our sense of activism and citizenship.

Mrs. Jackson: Grade 3/4

In room 8, we dug deep into all things water. Using the guiding questions of "Where does water come from?, Why is water important?, and How can we be water protectors?", we learned about the water cycle and how little fresh water is available on Earth, and why we can't drink salt water. We researched how different communities around the world get their water and the challenges that come with water insecurity. Our novel *Thirst* became a window into what life might look like for some of us if we had to collect and boil all of our water. Our class identified many human rights that are difficult to maintain without easy access to clean water. Room 8 consider themselves water protectors and have created action plans to conserve this critical resource.



Ms. Lee: Grades 3/4

During our study of human rights, one human right we thought applied to kids was “you have the right to a decent life, including food, clothing, housing and medical care.” We know all humans, regardless of race, age, gender etc., have human rights. But many people’s human rights are not respected by their government, and accessibility to necessities can be challenging. We took inspiration from new articles of high school students helping others and Hannah Taylor, an 8-year-old girl who started the “Ladybug Foundation”, to create a fundraiser for hygiene and dental products. Students enthusiastically prepared speeches and posters, and some brave students made daily morning announcements! We got so much positive support (thank you!) from our community. We sorted all the goods and used our knowledge of addition and multiplication to divide goods into care packages. Lastly, we had community connectors from the Elwick Village Resource Center come by our school and pick up the packages. They were so happy to see how much the school collected. We found this an enriching, rewarding experience!



Mrs. Cordova: Grades 3/4



This year Room 11 worked on different projects to promote kindness and positivity. It started with a student who wrote three things about Pink Shirt Day back in the Fall of 2022 as one of their learning. The class became interested and decided to prepare for Pink Shirt Day 2023 in February. They wrote stories and scripts that eventually were used to tell the school during the assembly about its history. They then went to different classrooms to interview other students about what kindness means to them. To make their Kindness Tree grow, they asked each student and some adults to write on a leaf-shaped paper and branches what they could do to be kind. They prepared kindness challenges for the school for two weeks as the Pink Shirt Day approached. They made arcade games from recycled materials and invited the whole school to play. Each student was given a free pass to unlimited games. As a reward for having fun, they exchanged their free pass for a treat! The class made a lot of prizes too! Finally, Room 11 had the opportunity to participate in the Seven Oaks’ STEAM Festival at Red River College. In this event, they were interviewed by older students and adults about their projects. Students from other schools also had the chance to play their games and win prizes. It was a memorable and fun experience for all!

Mrs. Dech: Grades 5



Room 10 had a fun filled educational trip to The Forks. The students were able to walk around with a Parks Canada interpreter to learn about the epic stories behind this meeting place. Lots of interesting facts and beautiful scenery! In the afternoon the students got a chance to become archeologists and dig up and clean off some artifacts that have been found at The Forks and then estimate how old they were; some artifacts being thousands of years old!



Mrs. Shields: Grade 5



One of the most engaging learning experiences we had as a class this year was playing the "Fur Trade Game". In this role play, students were tasked with successfully navigating the fur trade in different capacities. Some students worked in the trading posts for either the Northwest Company or the Hudson's Bay Company, and others engaged in the fur trade as either First Nations trappers or Voyageurs. We played this game a few different times so that students could have a chance to participate in

different roles. We learned that none of the roles were easy. Certain furs, such as beaver, were more valuable than others, and the same could be said for certain trade goods. Students traded furs and trade goods with the Northwest Company or the Hudson's Bay Company to collect everything indicated on their goal card. After playing in one capacity, students were very excited to play again in a different role, or to try again in the same role, determined to be more successful by having developed a strategy.



Mr. Ens: Physical Education

This was the first full year of normality in the gym since the beginning of COVID. We were able to have the choice to venture outdoors or remain inside. We were able to have a full year of intramural activities. These clubs included Games Club, Gr.1/2 Hockey Club that was run by some older students, and a variety of other clubs such as Team Handball, Flag Football, X-country, Basketball,



Volleyball, and Badminton. We were also able to participate in divisional extracurricular events at Sport Manitoba, Little Mountain Park, and Winnipeg North Soccer Plex. At the end of the day, the goal has always been to provide some joy to the school day while building relationships along with improving physical, emotional, and social health. The smiles I see every day make it clear to me that Forest Park students are having fun and memorable experiences in the gym.



Mrs. Risbey: Music



This year, the music room was filled with singing, new instrument playing and performing. We were delighted to be back to making music together in small and large group ensembles. We spent time connecting with each other through clapping

games, singing games and sharing our musical ideas. Throughout the year we learned about each other's cultures through dance. The grade 5's spent time with Knowledge Keeper Chickadee and made Indigenous drums for the school, allowing all students to build community together through drumming and singing. A highlight of the year was working towards our school musicals. In February, the students took the stage at SOPAC and gave outstanding performances in the musicals, "Pajama Party" and "Snow Biz!" Once again, Forest Park students demonstrated their musical gifts with the community. I can't wait to continue our musical journey.



Mrs. Zajac: Learning Support Teacher



A group of six lucky students from Forest Park School, took part in an amazing program this spring offered through the Winnipeg Humane Society.

See Spot Read is an animal companionship literacy-based program which aims to boost student confidence in literacy skills. Children read aloud to trained WHS dog ambassadors for a 10-week session and participate in fun literacy-based activities. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to read without critique from these friendly dogs. It impacts the students' comfort levels around dogs and creates a humane connection between students and pets, while building a love of reading.

Mrs. Bela: Learning Support Teacher

This year our classrooms focused a great deal on exploring and learning in our community parks. We put up a large map near our front entrance that indicated where the parks are located, and during our daily walks throughout the seasons we adventured to discover what each greenspace had to offer. The students even labeled many of them with names that reflected what they saw there - Secret Park, Empty Park, Ice Park. Classrooms went on to do some mapping of the parks and the area, and room 7 even re-imagined Empty Park, and created dioramas which displayed their ideas. Our students confidently know where many of these spaces are now located, and they each have their favourites. We can't wait to see what next year's learning will entail, but we're confident that our community walks will most definitely continue.



FOREST PARK'S DEFINITION OF LAND BASED LEARNING:

As learners and educators of Forest Park school, we have chosen and are committed to engaging in time outdoors daily, in every season, and in all types of weather, looking to the Land as our teacher.

Sometimes we adventure outdoors with a lesson plan in mind, ready to learn from the Land in areas of Math, Science, Art, Social Studies, Literacy, Music and/or Physical activity.

Sometimes we look to nature to show us, with all our senses, what we should be paying attention to.

Sometimes the students are the teachers, sometimes it's the adults, but most often it's a collaborative effort.

Most often we return to the same places in our community, over and over again. Whether this is our own school grounds, the secret park, the empty park, the railway tracks, or one of the many green spaces that surround Forest Park.

We think about what these spaces look like today, as well how they have looked in history. And we contemplate how we can help to care for these special places for 7 generations to come.