

In an effort to improve communication between school and home, VCS is continuing a curriculum update program. We will be sending home class updates monthly, to help parents be better informed about what their children are currently studying and working on in their core courses (including Second Language courses). It is a short summary. If parents need or desire more detailed information than they are receiving, we encourage them to contact classroom teachers directly.

Kindergarten Class Update – Mrs. Stockman

We are moving along very smoothly in Kindergarten. We are down to our last 6 letters of the alphabet already.

All 3 Reading Mastery groups are working hard sounding out and reading words. Our language program is moving along nicely as well. We have mastered our Days of the week and Prepositions.

In math, we have started a new unit on flat and 3D shapes as well as patterns. We will be experimenting with making our own repeating patterns as well.

We have been busy this month talking about our Families and how to be a good friend. We have talked lots about what kinds of things we can do for others to make them feel special and cared for. Our skating unit in Gym has been a ton of fun. All the kids seem to be really enjoying themselves. A huge thank you to all the parents who have helped us tie and untie skates for us! Looking forward to another fun filled month with these amazing students!

Grade 1/2 Class Update

Language Arts – Mrs Mumert

Reading 1/2 Excellent work in your workbook pages and extra practice duotangs class!! Many are receiving 90-100 % on their daily work, so I am running low on chocolate and other treats!

We are learning about analogies, cardinal directions and opposites in grade 1 Language and grade 2's are learning to write deductions and creating true/false statements.

Math – Mrs. Lowen

The Grade One's are finishing up a unit on measurement, while the Grade Two's are working on a unit called Patterns and Algebra. Basic math and number concepts set the foundation for learning more advanced math concepts. I would like to encourage all parents to practice skip counting by 2, 5, and 10, as part of your nightly homework routine to strengthen this skill. A solid base in counting will make math concepts much easier for your child to learn.

Science – Mr. Heikel

We are working through our unit of the needs of animals. The terms carnivore, herbivore and omnivore have been taught, as well as an in-depth discussion on habitats and how they are different around the world. Currently we are working on the Alberta fish and wild life bear aware work book/colouring book for kids. They are learning how to identify different kinds of bears and what to safely do if they encounter them.

Social Studies – Mr. Heikel

For social we are continuing to examine three different communities in Canada, one in the north one on the prairies and one on the east coast. We are looking at similarities and differences between different places in Canada. Currently students are working on a land mark and mapping assignment to compare where they live and their community to the ones in the text book. Students will be creating a large poster of their yard and surroundings with major things they identified as land marks that make their homes unique. We are working on how to utilize rulers are tools to create straight lines for this assignment.

French – Mrs. Mumert

In French 1/2 we have been learning about snowmen. The students made beautiful Valentines to give to their friends and family! I will be giving them an oral quiz on Thursday February 25. They will need to answer questions about what a snowman is wearing in a picture, and recite the months of the year and the numbers 1-20. I will give them a quiz on the spelling of the words 1-5 on Friday.

Grade 3/4 Class Update

Language Arts – Mrs. Lowen

Reading Mastery

In Reading Mastery the Grade Three's are starting a new story about a boy named Waldo. The grade Four's are reading short stories about Helping Others.

Language Arts

Students in grade Three and Four are practicing for the upcoming spelling bee. A list of words has been sent home so students can practice spelling out loud at home, as well as at school. The students have also been doing a lot of writing and are showing a lot of growth in this area.

Math – Mrs. Lowen

Thank you for including skip counting in your nightly homework routines. The students have shown a lot of improvement in this area! In addition to skip counting practice, I have sent home a copy of multiplication facts for your child to practice. In February we are working on rounding, estimating and counting money.

Social Studies – Ms. Fowler

Students will be looking at the Boreal forest region of Alberta and getting an insight into the Salt Industry of Lindbergh. We will be looking at the landforms, climate, vegetation and towns in this area.

Science – Mrs. Lowen

We will be wrapping up our study of rocks and minerals in the coming weeks. As a final activity for our Rocks and Minerals unit, we will be doing a rock wrapping activity. I will be sending an e-mail out soon with more details about this.

French 3/4 – Mademoiselle Lewis

Bonjour!

A month gone already!?!? As most of you know report cards season is upon us, and it is vital that

your son or daughter is getting everything in and is coming to class prepared and organized to have success. It would be a great idea to have a conversation with your child ensuring that they are on the right track and completing assignments so that all is accounted for on their report card ☺

I believe communication with parents is important and contributes to each child's success in school. As I am learning myself, I am going to try my best at communicating with parents as often, and as necessary, as I can. But, I like to work on the idea of "no news is good news" for most of the time. I try not to assign a lot of homework, but expect students to be working hard and efficiently in class. The less disruption we have in class, the easier it is to get their assigned work completed and not have homework.

Now that we have wrapped up our Food Unit (finally!), back in January, we have been working hard on making posters for common classroom expressions (May I go to the bathroom? Puis-je aller a la salle de bain?), and are now finishing up our winter (d'hiver) unit. Students have an upcoming oral test and written test (Feb 24th and Feb 29th), and are encouraged to review with their parents using their "cheat sheet" that I have sent home. Shortly after our tests, we will be moving into our animal and family units while incorporating more numbers.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me by email (ttorielewis@gmail.com) or by phone (250-306-9077).

Merci Beaucoup!
Mademoiselle Lewis

PE – Ms Fowler

We are finishing our outdoor unit with skating, floor hockey, and (x- country or snowshoeing-equipment and weather permitting). We will be starting badminton in March.

Grade 5/6 Class Update

Language Arts Grade 5/6 – Ms. Fowler

Students are reading about the Underground Railway in Reading Mastery. They will be presenting the poem Casey at the Bat. Students will be expected to memorize their parts.

Novel study LA 6 - Students are writing an essay as a concluding part of the novel "Silverwing" by Kenneth Oppel. We will be starting the next unit- Into the Spotlight. Students will be looking at the difference between facts and opinions, reading editorials, viewing cartoons, and writing news articles. We will continue work on parts of speech and affixes. Short stories and poems accompany this unit.

Math 5/6 – Mrs. Flint

We are currently at lesson 60 in our textbook. Hooray, about 2/3 of the way finished the curriculum. Concepts that we have covered are:

Grade 5:

- Relating multiplication and division

- Multiplying 2 and 3 digit numbers
- Adding/subtracting decimal numbers
- Equivalent Percents/Fractions/Decimals
- Prime and Composite Numbers
- One-digit division with remainders
- The calendar
- Rounding numbers to the nearest thousand

Grade 6:

- Expanded Notation
- Solving multi-step word problems
- Finding Average
- Perimeter and measures of a circle
- Multiplying by 3 digit numbers
- Probability
- Writing quotients with mixed numbers
- Fractions equal to 1 and subtracting a fraction from 1

Social Studies – Ms. Fowler

We are studying the importance of representatives and their accountability to their role. Students will be creating questions for an interview to help them discover the duties and responsibilities of a representative. Students will also be learning the roles of associations such as: the Metis and Francophone Associations of Alberta.

Science – Mr. Mumert

The grade 5/6 Science class has wrapped up its unit on Electricity and Magnetism and begun its next unit: Sky Science. The students and I are eager to explore the mysteries and beauty of the night sky!

Looking ahead, we'll be studying:

- the difference between light emitting and light reflecting bodies in space
- locations of individual stars and constellations as they move through the night sky
- the apparent movement of objects in the night sky ... regular, predictable and related to the earth's rotation
- understanding how to view the sun safely
- devices for plotting the sun's movement over the course of a day
- seasonal changes in day/night length and angle of sun over the horizon
- moon phases and cycles
- solar system: planets, moons, asteroid belts as well as the relation of our solar system to the vast universe
- technologies for gathering information about planets and other objects in the night sky

As always, we practice our skills of note-taking and organization as we work through the unit and look for as many opportunities as possible for hands-on learning. Your children are eager learners of science and a great pleasure to work with!

If you have any questions or concerns about our science class, or anything else that I might be able to help with, please feel free to drop in or give me a call.

French 5/6 – Mademoiselle Lewis

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Merci Beaucoup!

Mademoiselle Lewis

PE – Ms Fowler

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Grade 7 Class Update

Language Arts – Ms. Lewis

Hello Grade 7 Language Arts parents!

A month gone already!?!? As most of you know report cards season is upon us, and it is vital that your son or daughter is getting everything in and is coming to class prepared and organized to have success. It would be a great idea to have a conversation with your child ensuring that they are on the right track and completing assignments so that all is accounted for on their report card

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often, and as necessary, as I can. But, I like to work on the idea of “no news is good news” for most of the time. I try not to assign a lot of homework, but I do expect students to be working hard and efficiently in class. The less disruption we have in class the easier it is to get their assigned work completed and to not have any homework.

In Language Arts, we have now completed our public speaking unit, which was a fabulous event and I am so pleased with all the students’ hard work and effort. We are now moving into a Fractured Fairytale unit while incorporating cursive writing (which will be done almost daily until the end of the year), and then we will head into doing some Readers Theatre and Poetry work. In addition I try to give the students 15-20 minutes daily to silently read a novel, as being a good reader is an essential skill.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me by email (ttorielewis@gmail.com) or by phone (250-306-9077). Thank you for your support and time!
Miss. V. Lewis

Math – Mrs. Flint

We are at lesson 60 in the textbook. Hooray, about 2/3 of the way finished the curriculum. Concepts that we have covered are:

Grade 7:

- Expanded Notation and rounding for decimal numbers
- Circumference and Pi (π)
- Subtracting Mixed Numbers with regrouping
- Decimal number line (tenths)
- Reducing and converting fractions and common denominators
- Probability and Chance
- Polygons

Grade 8/9:

- Scientific Notation
- Graphing Functions
- Solving Rate Problems
- Graphing Transformations
- Negative Exponents
- Measures of Central Tendency
- Angle Relationships
- Slope-Intercept of a Line
- Nets of prisms, cones, cylinders and pyramids

Social Studies – Mr. Heikel

We have just completed the French section of Canadian history and are moving on to topics in pre-confederation history. We will be visiting the causes of the American Revolution and its impact on Canada. The migration of loyalists into Ontario and how it impacted Canadian identity will be a theme addressed. The point of view of British patriots, black slaves, natives

and religious pacifists will all be case studies. Students will be encouraged to try to put themselves in the shoes of various players during this conflict.

Science – Mr. Heikel

We have just wrapped up our unit on plants in science. The last topic was crops weeds and pests in Alberta. Our next unit will entail an exploration of heat and temperature. We will be examining how thermostats and thermo-couplers work and their application. The particle theory of matter will be reviewed from elementary school.

Discussions on renewable versus carbon based technologies will be featured in this unit.

Grade 8/9 Class Update

LA8/9 – Ms. Fowler

Students are reading the novel " And Then there Were None" by Agatha Christie. We are looking at the elements of a story and the techniques to creating suspense. Students are working individually answering comprehension and vocabulary words. They are working in a group to create a chart of the characters, setting and to display the plot of the story.

Math – Mrs. Flint

We are at lesson 60 in the textbook. Hooray, about 2/3 of the way finished the curriculum.

Concepts that we have covered are:

Grade 8/9:

- Scientific Notation
- Graphing Functions
- Solving Rate Problems
- Graphing Transformations
- Negative Exponents
- Measures of Central Tendency
- Angle Relationships
- Slope-Intercept of a Line
- Nets of prisms, cones, cylinders and pyramids

Science – Mr. Heikel

We have just completed our unit on chemistry and are moving on to a mixed unit. The chemistry unit test will be sent home to get signed.

This new unit entails discussions on nutrition, acids and bases and pollution. Each topic will be treated separately then loosely tied to the others.

Social Studies – Mr. Heikel

We are close to wrapping up our unit on collective rights in Canada.

Three communities with collective rights have been examined, English French and aboriginal.

The topics of separate schools and language rights have been discussed as case studies. Also a close examination of treaty 8 and the Indian Act and how it affects the lives of Canadians was discussed.

Grade 7/8/9 Combined Classes

French – Mademoiselle Mumert

We are on Duolingo unit #3, Common Phrases. This week the students are presenting skits using the phrases for the oral part of their term mark. I am impressed with the new feature on Duolingo that allows me to easily set up assignments and keep track of who has done the exercises and when they are completed. Keep practising at home, there will be a written quiz on Unit 3 on Feb. 29!

French – Mademoiselle Lewis

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I believe communication with parents is important and contributes to each child's success in school. As I am learning myself, I am going to try my best at communicating with parents as often, and as necessary, as I can. But, I like to work on the idea of “no news is good news” for most of the time. I try not to assign a lot of homework, but expect students to be working hard and efficiently in class. The less disruption we have in class the easier it is to get their assigned work completed and to not have any homework.

Now that we have wrapped up our Food Unit (finally!), back in January, we have been working hard on making posters for common classroom expressions (may I go to the bathroom? Puis-je aller a la salle de bain?), and are now finishing up our winter (d'hiver) unit. Students have an upcoming oral test and written test (Feb 24th and Feb 29th), and are encouraged to review with their parents using their “cheat sheet” that I have sent home. Shortly after our tests, we will be moving into our animal and family units while incorporating more numbers.

We have not been using our very cool Duolingo App as much as I have liked but as we develop a better routine, I am going to try to implement it much more as it reinforces vocabulary use, sentence structure, and oral practice.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me by email (ttorielewis@gmail.com) or by phone (250-306-9077).

Merci Beaucoup!

Mademoiselle Lewis

PE – Ms. Lewis

Hello Grade 7/8/9 P.E. parents!

A month gone already!?!? As most of you know report cards season is upon us, and it is vital that your son or daughter is getting everything in and is coming to class prepared and organized to have success. It would be a great idea to have a conversation with your child ensuring that they

are on the right track and coming to gym class prepared, ready to participate, and put in their best effort so that all is accounted for on their report card. ☺

I believe communication with parents is important and contributes to each child's success in school. As I am learning myself, I am going to try my best at communicating with parents as often, and as necessary, as I can. But, I like to work on the idea of "no news is good news" for most of the time. I try not to assign a lot of homework, but expect students to be working hard and efficiently in class. The less disruption we have in class, the easier it is to get their assigned work completed and not have homework.

The boys had a great Basketball unit and it was/is so nice to see all the hard work the boys and girls teams have put in this year. Our Basketball unit in gym has now wrapped up and we have began our handball games unit, while skating a couple days a week (Feb 24th will be our last day skating). We will then be moving into some organized games and hopefully badminton (these may change).

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me by email (ttorielewis@gmail.com) or by phone (250-306-9077).

Thank you for your support and time!

Miss. V. Lewis

Upcoming Important Dates:

February 26 – Pie Throw and Fly on the Wall Fundraisers

March 3 & 4 – Teachers Convention, No School

March 7 – Early Dismissal

March 8 – School Council Meeting, 7pm

March 8 – VSF Board Meeting, 7pm

March 8 – Kindergarten Registration, 6-7pm

March 10 – Camouflage Day

March 11 – Report Cards Issued

March 16 – Parent Teacher Interviews

March 17 – Jimmy the Janitor Fundraiser

March 22 – Twin Day

March 23 – VSF AGM

March 24 – Day off in Lieu

March 25 to April 3 – Spring Break, No School

Information Items:

Speech Competition Winners

As always, the VCS Public Speaking Competition which was held on February 5 showcased great speeches by our students. Everyone who came out and presented is a winner!

The final standings were as follows:

Junior - 1st – Brooklyn Stedel, 2nd - Ruben Morales, 3rd - Taryn Stedel

Intermediate - 1st - Hemi Barclay, 2nd - Rain Odd, 3rd - Cole Fletcher

Senior—1st - Kaleigh Dwyer, 2nd - Josie Kjemhus 3rd - Sabrina Isaac

Congratulations everyone on a job well done!

Registration Week April 18, 19, 20, 2016

Administration has given a lot of thought into ways to strengthen the relationship between the school and our families. We want to be more intentional about working with families and having parents involved and active in the school.

Again this spring, we will be hosting a 2016/2017 Registration Week for our students. From **April 18 to April 20**, we will ask parents to book one evening appointment at the school to come in and complete the registration process for 2016/2017 school year. From **4pm to 8pm** each evening, bookings for 30 minute time slots will be available. Please bring birth certificates or Canadian citizenship documents with you. We also need to know your legal land description or town /county address. School fees are due at this time to complete registration.

Once all our existing families have registered (by April 20), the school will be considering wait list students for any class spaces that remain available.

Call the school office to book your appointment! If the school does not hear from you we will be contacting you to arrange a time. Registration must be completed by April 20, 2016.

Jimmy the Janitor - March 17th, 2016

Help Required

Volunteers needed to make our fundraiser a success!

We are asking for anyone interested to assist with set-up, serve tables and/ or be part of the clean-up crew to contact Brandie as soon as possible.

Who: You

What: Community Event

When: March 17th, 2016

Where: Valhalla Community School

Why: Annual Board FUN Fundraiser

Contact: Brandie Skaksen phone: 780-356-3400 or email: bhill@tpi.ca

It's Time for Kindergarten Registration!

Kindergarten registrations are now being accepted at Valhalla Community School!

Orientation will be held on March 8, 6-7pm in the Kindergarten room.

Valhalla Community School welcomes all children to a safe and nurturing learning environment that respects the uniqueness of each child. We take pride in helping students learn and explore while they build relationships that are based on respect, honesty and integrity. As a public Charter School, our students not only learn the skills they need to excel academically, but they also develop the qualities that will allow them to become confident, compassionate citizens of the future. Kindergarten lays the foundation for future success – both in the classroom and in life. At Valhalla Community School, we work to create a learning experience that recognizes children's individual strengths and encourages their natural inquisitiveness, while preparing them for academic success through our Direct Instruction program

We invite you to call or visit the Valhalla Community School to learn more about our exceptional Charter School program, outstanding teachers and unique learning opportunity. See why so many parents are choosing Valhalla!

To register your child for kindergarten, please call Valhalla Community School

780-356-2370.

Casino

The Valhalla School Foundation has a casino scheduled for May 16th and 17th, 2016. Volunteers are needed to help at this event. If you can help please contact the school @ 780-356-2370.

School Council Meeting Student Attendance

The February School Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 8 @ 7:00pm. Please note this month the Grade 4 class is attending with a parent to do their meeting observation assignment. The meeting schedule is as follows;

March, 2016 – Grade 4

April, 2016 – Grade 6

May, 2016 – Term 3 Student Council

School Spirit Days

Our Next School Spirit Days are;

March 10 - Camouflage Day

March 22 - Twin Day

Dress up and show your school spirit. Every time a student participates in a school spirit day their name is entered to win a grand prize of gift cards movie passes and candy valued at \$100 . The winner is announced at our year end assembly.

Missoula Children's Theatre

Missoula Children's Theatre is coming to VCS! They will be here from April 11th to 15th, 2016 all the way from Missoula Montana. Students from Grades K to 9 will participate in an Aladdin themed play. We will have an afternoon and evening performance on Friday, April 15th. The school is going to begin fundraising to help fund this opportunity for our students. If anyone is interested in helping supporting this program please contact the school. We hope family, friends and community members can come and enjoy. Mark your calendars.

Spelling Bee

VCS is hosting our first Spelling Bee competition at our March 8th Assembly. Students from each class will participate in this event. Parent spectators are welcome to come. The spelling bee will be March 8th at 12:45 in our school gym.

Pie in the Face Fundraiser

When: Friday February 26th @ 1:15pm

Where: VCS Gym

Details: there will be 15 people to choose from to pie in the face. If you pay \$5 you will get to pie the person of your choice.

Fundraiser proceeds are going to Missoula Theatre Performing Arts in April 2016.

Cost: \$5.00 per pie.

People volunteering to receive a pie in the face;

Grade 1/2 – Ray S. & Judy D.

Grade 3/4 – Maya C. & Logan M.

Grade 5/6 – Seth M. & Torin H.

Grade 7 – Chelsie W. & Hemi B. & Devin D.

Grade 8/9 – Cole F. & Josie K.

Staff – Mrs. Gerow, Mr. Heikel, Mrs. Stockman & Mr. Mumert

Fly On the Wall Fundraiser

When: Friday, February 26th @ 1:15pm

Where: VCS Gym

Details: The school will be split into 2 teams and compete to have their fly stay on the wall the longest. They will duct tape their fly (student) to the wall for a minimum of 2 minutes. The winning team will receive a bag of chips each.

Fundraiser proceeds are going to Missoula Theatre Performing Arts in April 2016.

Cost: \$1 per/1 metre strip of duct tape

February 19, 2016

Dear Parents of Valhalla School students:

Frequently I have discussions with parents, students and staff about ways to make partnership between the school and the family more effective and to help our students achieve their very best. One common comment from parents is, “I don’t know what to have my child do to study better”. Another frequent exchange is that parents ask their child, “What do you have for homework?” When the student says “nothing”, the conversation ends and the assumption is that then nothing more needs to be done. Often students may not have homework assignments due the next day as many assignments can be completed at school.

If students are to achieve their best though, excellent study habits and self-discipline must be developed. Here at the school teachers are always looking for ways to improve our students’ experience and learning. I know that as parents, you are also keenly interested in this quest. You’ve all agreed with the school that “It is our role as parents to provide a distraction-free space and to monitor and supervise our child’s homework assignments.” (Parent and Student Commitment Form)

May I make a couple of suggestions?

1. Let’s call it “Study Time”, not “homework time”. It should be a regular, set time each day where students sit quietly and study, perhaps 10-15 minutes for grades 1-4, and 20-40 minutes for older students.
2. If urgent assignments need doing prioritize them, but let’s designate one day each week to study each core subject. Ask your child to bring home study materials for the appropriate day. So if they say they have no homework, the response would be, “Great”, then let’s review your Social Studies notes from the past week, because today is Social Studies day!”

A possible schedule could be: Monday-LA, Tuesday-Math, Wednesday-Science, Thursday-Social, Friday-French.

3. For our part, the school can develop study suggestions for each subject to help parents with good study ideas when students don’t know what to do with the last ten minutes of study time.

I’m attaching an interesting article about these ideas that was written by a teacher. Let’s make our partnership in your children’s education more intentional. Let’s help them achieve their best and develop habits and disciplines which will benefit them for life!



Steve Mumert,

Principal, Valhalla Community School

Fill Up the Hour

Whenever I meet families at parent-teacher-student conferences, it's surprising how certain conversations seem to repeat themselves. The one that plays out most frequently goes like this:

Me: On average, how much time do you spend on homework each day?

Student: It depends ...

"It depends" is a secret code word in student language. It usually means:

I do the assignments that are due tomorrow, and as soon as I'm done, I go do something else.

Our students are clever, so they can usually translate it even further:

If I can get the assignments done faster, I can have extra time for myself.

So the final translation of "It depends" looks like this:

I'm getting my homework done as fast as I can. "It depends" means no more than twenty minutes unless there's a project.

When our students are thinking this way, you can understand why:

- many students make careless mistakes, and don't fix them
- students don't study effectively for tests

For the past several years, I've been recommending a study strategy, developed primarily by my former partner teacher Rachel Bradley. It's called "Fill Up the Hour". The idea comes from our student agenda, which states that on average, grade 7 students should have between 60 and 75 minutes of homework each day.

It works like this:

1. The student and the adult who supervises her/his homework discuss the need for regular homework time. This includes completion of assignments *and* study time.
2. The student and the adult agree on a one-hour period each day that will be uninterrupted homework time. Preferably this will happen at the same time every day, in a location that will be supervised and free of distractions.
3. The supervisor ensures that the student remains in her/his seat for a full hour.

That's it. Not very complicated.

For the first few days, the student may not like this arrangement. It will feel very uncomfortable. The student may not know what to do for the entire hour, or s/he may try to get out of it. The supervisor will have to be firm about this expectation.

But as the student gets used to the idea that there is no free time for finishing early, s/he may become open to trying some work and study habits that will lead to increased success.

If I have to be in this chair for an hour anyway, maybe I can

- *check over my work to fix careless errors*
- *do corrections on the quiz, so I'll be more ready for the exam*
- *read my notes or practice vocabulary, so I don't have to cram the day before the test*
- *ask about this part that I really didn't understand*
- *read ahead in the novel so I'll be prepared for the discussion*

I would welcome comments about this technique. Let me hear how it works for you!

If you have any questions about information on this letter please contact me anytime at the office, I would be happy to help. Please contact your teachers directly for any questions about your child.

Have a great day ☺

Anna Odd

780-356-2370 office

aodd@valhallaschool.ca

Teacher Emails

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