

Community Spaces Permission Form

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians:

This is a permission form for your child(ren) to travel to a variety of defined *Community Spaces* located near our **WESTMOUNT CHARTER SCHOOLS** elementary campus.

Our school has many nearby facilities such as softball diamonds, green spaces, play parks, forest spaces, outdoor rinks, and views of the river. These spaces provide fantastic opportunities to enrich our school-based programs in ways we could not do inside our classrooms. We consider these spaces an extension of our immediate campuses. We have outlined five specific *Community Spaces* (A to E - refer to Table 1 and map) to ensure we can implement similar instructional considerations relative to the needs of the program.

All teachers who take their classes out into the community will carry first aid kits, cell phones, student's medical information, and will check in with the office to inform administration of which space they will be travelling to and their expected arrival time. Additionally, teachers will follow the "Safety Guidelines for Physical activity in Alberta Schools" (2008), when working within the *Community Spaces* areas. Any circumstances that require immediate or urgent attention will use the Critical Incident Response Manual to inform decisions and protocol.

Westmount Charter School has identified the following *Community Spaces* appropriate and valuable for K – 4 children and classes to visit.

Community Spaces Locations & Descriptions

Level 1: Common Areas, A - E

A: Helicopter Park Playground & Community Park

- **Location:** Community playground within one block of WCS Elementary campus; 2 playgrounds, soccer fields, baseball diamonds, diverse tree species, open field.
- **Route:** Accessible by crossing at 29th St. NW and 5th Ave. There is a well-marked crosswalk in a 30 Km/hr. playground zone
- **Hazards:** injuries incurred by using playground apparatus (scrapes, bruises, minor cuts, wounds from falling or tripping), uneven terrain, weather related ailments (chills, sun exposure, dehydration, etc.), road crossing, other park users.

B: Train Park/Parkdale Community Association

- **Location:** Community playground within three blocks of the WCS Elementary campus; playground, outdoor rink, baseball diamond, open field.
- **Route:** Accessible by walking directly west of school along 5th Ave. NW for three blocks.
- **Hazards:** injuries incurred by using playground apparatus (scrapes, bruises, minor cuts, wounds from falling or tripping), uneven terrain, weather related ailments (chills, sun exposure, dehydration, etc.), road crossing, other park users.

C: Parkdale Community Garden/ Parkdale Community Association

- **Location:** Garden beds within 4 blocks of the WCS Elementary campus. From Train Park, the garden is located north of the community centre; vegetable gardens with many natural ties to learning Science, L.A., S.S, Math, and Health.
- **Route:** Accessible by walking directly west of Parkdale school along 5th Ave. NW for three blocks and then NW across the open field.
- **Hazards:** Minor scrapes, weather related ailments (chills, sun exposure, dehydration, etc.), uneven terrain walking across the field, road crossing, other park users

D: Outdoor Classroom

- **Location:** Community forested and off-leash dog park. Located north of Parkdale United Church (8th Ave) between 29th St. and 27th St.; diverse native and non-native tree and plant species, teaching spaces.
- **Route:** Accessible by walking directly east of Parkdale school along 7th Ave. There is a well-marked blinking pedestrian crosswalk at 29th St. Continue walking 1 block east to 28th St., then turn north 1 block. Park access is by the brown garbage bin north of the United Church parking lot.
- **Hazards:** Minor scrapes, cuts, bruises, weather related ailments (chills, sun exposure, dehydration, etc.), uneven terrain, some dogs and owners sharing the space (students will be trained by teacher regarding what to do if dogs approach them), road crossings.

E: Bow River Pathway & Green Space between 29th St. and 33rd Ave.

- **Location:** Green space and paved trails north of the Bow River. Students will not be permitted to approach the water or travel down the bank to the river. Students will stay between the boundaries of 29th St. and 33rd St.
- **Route:** Accessible by walking south along 29th St. to the lit intersection and pedestrian crosswalk at Parkdale Blvd.
- **Hazards:** Minor scrapes, cuts, bruises, weather related ailments (chills, sun exposure, dehydration, etc.), uneven terrain, other park users, road crossing

If there are any seasonal hazards to be noted, teachers will communicate with parents to highlight what potential difficulties may be encountered on a particular outing ahead of time.

Overall Community Spaces Boundaries

North: Students will not be permitted to approach the road (Toronto Crescent NW) when visiting the Outdoor Classroom. There is a foot path that divides the hill from a mild slope and a steep hill, and that footpath in the Outdoor Classroom is the northernmost boundary. For visits to the Garden and Train Park, 7th Ave. is the northernmost boundary.

East: 27th Street NW.

South: The Bow River level bank (students are not permitted to go down to the water). Students will be invited to sit along the south side of the pedestrian path to make observations in a safe manner.

West: The alley immediately west of the garden between 34th and 35th Street.

Table 1. *Approved Community Spaces areas for Westmount Charter School students*

Level	Description	User group	Parent Initial
*Level 1: A - E	Utilized by classrooms to provide outdoor space for curricular and integrated connections including Daily Physical Activity. These spaces will be regarded as “on-site,” but require the same level of staff supervision as a being off campus. Ratio is 1 adult: 10 children	K – 4 students at WCS elementary campus	_____

It is important that your child participate safely and comfortably in the above Community Spaces as they would during onsite activities and off-campus field-trips. In your child’s best interests, we recommend the following:

- a) Appropriate attire for safe participation (water bottles, outdoor and weather appropriate clothing). Hanging jewelry must not be worn. Jewelry which cannot be removed and which present a safety concern must be covered with tape. Hoodie and toque ties should be tucked in or removed for some activities.
- b) The wearing of an eyeglass band and/or shatterproof lenses if your child wears glasses that cannot be removed during activity.
- c) The wearing of sun protection for all outdoor activities.
- d) Any other specific recommendations made clear for trips as outlined in the communication with home prior to the outing.

In addition to these recommendations, students will be accountable for their behaviors while in these community spaces. Students will be expected to act as they would inside the school yard or in the school building. Inappropriate or harmful behaviors to themselves, others or the environment may result in returning to the school and/or the loss of an invitation to the next class outing(s). In this event, the student will join another class during the time his/her class is away.

By signing this permission form, you have read and understood this agreement and are aware that you are accepting the same conditions pertinent to on-campus activities (e.g. financial responsibility for any medical assistance) the staff of **WESTMOUNT CHARTER SCHOOL** may deem necessary for your child’s health and safety and also for any damage to third persons or their property that you child may cause. Finally, please remember to update your child’s medical status should it change throughout the year.

Please sign below to show that you have read the above information. Furthermore, your signature indicates that you give permission for your child to travel to the identified **Community Spaces (A – E)** locations.

Name	Signature	Date
Student Name:		
Parent Name(s)		