

History

Lady Evelyn was first opened as a public school in 1905 to serve the town of Ottawa East and was named in honour of Governor General Earl Grey's daughter, Evelyn. The original corner stone can still be found in the front hall of the current building.

By the mid 1980s, the school population had shifted and Lady Evelyn was in danger of being shut down. In response, some parents, educators and community leaders (including our current trustee, Lynn Graham), worked to set up an "Alternative" school, with modern teaching concepts radically different from the typical school. And so was born Lady Evelyn Primary Alternative School (JK - Grade 3), the first "Alternative" school in Ottawa.

By 1991, the old building was showing its age and was no longer safe for students. The current building was built and opened in 1992 with an expanded playground, due to the acquisition of two adjacent properties, and added grades 4 through 6.

What is Alternative?

As parents and guardians at Lady Evelyn, it is assumed that you actively have chosen this school. But what does "alternative" mean, and what are the responsibilities and rights of parents?

Parental Involvement

Parents are actively encouraged to volunteer and take part in classroom activities. All teachers have an open-door policy and most set up schedules to try to ensure that there are parents in the classroom each day. This exposes our children to a wider range of expertise and increases the 1-on-1 attention available to students. It also allows parents to personally observe their child's social and educational development. At Lady Evelyn we enjoy a family and community centred school environment.

Family Groupings

Mixed grades (for instance, a grade 1 - grade 2 joint class) are not by-products of enrollment but a deliberate choice. It provides a wider range of learning levels for children and affords

opportunities for peer mentoring that teaches leadership and thinking skills. For some students it also allows them to have the same teacher for two years in a row.

Anecdotal Reporting

Report Cards are not for the grading of our primary and junior children but rather to provide information to parents on where our children are doing well and areas where they need encouragement. While the province currently mandates us to provide graded report cards, we preferred the anecdotal reports, which provided a fuller, richer and more meaningful picture to parents. Teachers at Lady Evelyn consider self-evaluation to be an important part of children's development.

Co-operation, Participation and Non-competition

Co-operation and teamwork are emphasized in all aspects of the school and help children learn the valuable lessons of team-building, respect and diversity. Competition is de-emphasized in order to foster a child's lifelong love of learning.

Child-directed

The teacher acts as facilitator/mentor/guide of the child's learning respecting each child's learning choices.

Holistic Programming

Children learn better when lessons involve many of the senses and relate directly to their experiences of the world. Integrated lessons work to capture and sustain children's interests and give real world meaning to math, science, language and social in a creative environment.

Homework

Homework can be a vital learning tool, provided it does not overwhelm a child or substitute for classroom learning. At Lady Evelyn we believe that homework is a tool for learning and not an end in itself.

Respect

All people deserve respect. While Lady Evelyn has a less

"structured" model than traditional schools, we are still respectful and caring. We have an ongoing conflict resolution and anti-bullying programme in place.

Innovative Approaches

Children at Lady Evelyn benefit from our teachers' commitment to innovative approaches to learning and teaching.

Contacts

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School Council:

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Views from some of our parents:

"Children have different learning styles and, in the alternative programme, this is understood, respected and appreciated."

"One of the really distinctive features of the alternative school is the encouragement and, in fact, necessity of parents to participate in the classroom."

"Being welcome at any time in the classroom has enabled us to work with our teachers to identify areas of success as well as areas of concern, and to witness the excitement of all the children's learning."

Lady Evelyn Alternative School A Primer



Lady Evelyn Alternative School Council
2003/2004