

September 2011

I imagine a school system that recognizes learning is natural, that a love of learning is normal, and that real learning is passionate learning. A school curriculum that values questions above answers...creativity above fact regurgitation...individuality above conformity.....and excellence above standardized performance..... - Tom Peters

It is indeed a pleasure to welcome all our returning families and new students to the 2011/12 school year! We consider it an honor to service your family's needs. As we partner with you, we will work together to create a rich and fruitful educational journey for your children. The Meridian School is truly a very special place to be.

At this time, there is great anticipation of what is to come! Many diverse learning experiences are in place for your children this year. Our focus will be on providing each child with new challenges that will result in a rewarding school experience. Academic emphasis on the core content areas of reading, language arts, science, and math will remain a priority as well as providing a program that focuses on character education. Instruction in music, art, foreign language, technology, and physical education complete our program by providing each student the opportunity to develop areas of interest and skill.

Our Academic Team

The Meridian School staff is, as always, energized and ready for an extraordinary year. We look forward to innovative academic experiences with our students. We are pleased to introduce this year's outstanding academic team.

Nursery – Ms. Jill & Ms. Vernessa Nursery – Ms. Cian & Ms. Taylor

Rising 3s – Ms. Dedrie & Ms. Aisha Rising 3s – Ms. Tina & Ms. Tamara

Rising 4s – Ms. Terez & Ms. Kai Rising 4s – Ms. Renay & Ms. Tara

Rising 5s – Ms. Keva & Ms. Ms. Paula Rising 5s – Ms. Jasmine & Ms. Cherise

Grade 1 – Ms. Nadia & Ms. Racine Grade 1 – Ms. Tangerine & Ms. Naja

Grade 2 – Ms. Lauren & Ms. Sheryl Grade 3 – Ms. Clarissa & Ms. Temeka

Grade 4 – Ms. Lesley & Ms. Loniece Grade 5 – Ms. Allyson & Ms. Ashleigh

Grade 5 – Ms. Deanna & Mr. Heston Grade 6 – Ms. Jennifer & Ms. Condra

Art – Ms. Temeka & Ms. Lisa G.

Music – Mr. Heston

Primary P.E. / Swimming – Coach Travano

Spanish – Senora Layla & Senora Yvonne

Campus Enhancement

You will notice that there is still a bit of construction going on at the school. As you are all aware, we undertook a large expansion project in June. Thankfully, in spite of torrential rains and the tropical storm, we are just a little behind schedule. All classrooms are complete and fully operational. Likewise, all restroom facilities are operational, however, stall partitions and doors are temporary as the new ones have not yet arrived. We only await a few cosmetic items and the completion of the new music studio and Director's office.

I wish to publicly thank Mr. Shlomi Zlich and the amazing team at All Island Construction who worked seven days per week over the past 3 months to complete our 4 new classrooms, music studio, bathroom block and Director's office. תודה, תודה לך. (Thank you)

Celebrate!

We are always so proud of our students. This year was particularly rewarding as our children tested exceptionally well in various entrance exams. As always our boys and girls are transitioning into 'Big School' with a solid academic foundation, a keen sense of accountability, maturity and eagerness to learn.

Special mention is made of Yaritza Santana who joined us two years ago in 4th grade speaking no English. She left our 5th grade this summer and tested into 8th grade at St. John's College. We are so proud of you!

Our goals are to challenge your children intellectually and socially, and to guide them toward independent thinking and problem solving. As we strive to promote healthy development in all aspects of each student's life, we also strive to develop a student body of good character. We encourage students to demonstrate their best every moment of every day and to make positive contributions to the groups and organizations to which they belong. We strive to instill within our student body a sense of personal and collective pride as well as a love of and for our school. We are eager to implement our school-wide goals for the 2011-2012 academic year, together with many exciting events and activities to be enjoyed by the students and to create opportunities for community with our families.

Character Counts.....Everywhere All The Time!!!

As we begin our year, we are pleased to announce the inclusion of many new elements as we diversify our curriculum. We believe in the holistic approach to educating a child and our character focus has always been the nucleus of our program. To this end we have adopted the '8 Keys' program. Our students will

again be exposed to the concepts of Integrity, and accountability, through this comprehensive curriculum.

The 8 Keys are:

1. THIS IS IT! – Make the most of every moment

Focus your attention on the present moment and keep a positive attitude.

2. OWNERSHIP – Take responsibility for actions

Be responsible for your thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. “Own” the choices you make and the results that follow.

3. SPEAK WITH GOOD PURPOSE – Speak honestly and kindly

Think before you speak. Make sure your intention is positive and your words are sincere.

4. COMMITMENT – Make your dreams happen

Take positive action. Follow your dreams without wavering.

5. FAILURE LEADS TO SUCCESS – Learn from mistakes

View failures as feedback that provides you with the information you need to learn, grow, and eventually succeed.

6. INTEGRITY – Match behavior with values

Demonstrate your positive personal values in all you do and say. Be sincere and real.

7. FLEXIBILITY – Be willing to do things differently

Recognize what’s not working and be willing to change what you are doing in order to achieve your goal.

8. BALANCE – Live your best life

Be mindful of self and others while focusing on what’s meaningful and important in your life. Inner happiness and fulfillment come when your mind, body, and emotions are nurtured by the choices you make.

As we begin this year, please remember that this is your school and your involvement is welcome. We encourage you to join us during school activities as we believe that this establishes strong foundations and begets positive role models for your children. Together, teachers, students, parents and guardians make a strong Meridian family. We expect and appreciate your support as your child enters the classroom, learns, and grows through the year. At The Meridian School,

the staff, faculty, and administration are honored that you entrust us with your precious ones. The hours that your children are with us each day are so important. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

We look forward to working with you and your child throughout the school year and to providing a productive and safe learning environment that supports student success.

Open House

Once our construction has ended, we will host our annual back-to-school Open House. This will be an opportunity for you to come and tour the campus, meet the staff and get acquainted with other Meridian families. We look forward to seeing you. More information to follow.

Dollar\$ for Dud\$

Friday 9th September is our first Dollar\$ for Duds\$. On the first Friday of every month students are allowed to dress in tasteful, modest clothing of their choice in exchange for \$2.00. Funds are used to purchase special items for classrooms or are donated to charity.

Uniform

At The Meridian School, it is mandatory that our students are well dressed, smart and presentable during both on and off campus activities. It is the policy of the school that students are to be dressed in proper school attire at all times. We encourage the parents of our students to ensure that their child comes to school neatly dressed in the correct uniform. Children not dressed in correct uniform must present a written explanation to their class teacher. If you are unsure of the uniform requirements, please visit the Welcome Centre for a list of approved school attire.

Meridian uniforms are now available at The Meridian Market at school. We have in stock, all uniform items with the exception of large sized tennis skirts, and swimwear. We expect these items by week's end. Please be advised that children who are not properly dressed will not be permitted to participate in school activities. It is advised that all students wear a hat or cap during outdoor play.

Sports & Swimming Schedule

Children wear sport kits on both sports and swimming days. Please pack swimsuits on swimming days.

Swimming /Sports

Nursery Ms. Jill Monday/ Thursday

Nursery Ms. Cian Thursday /Monday
Rising 3s Ms. Dedrie Friday /Wednesday
Rising 3s Ms. Tina Wednesday /Friday
Rising 4s Ms. Terez Wednesday /Tuesday
Rising 4s Ms. Renay Tuesday /Wednesday
Rising 5s Ms. Keva Wednesday /Monday
Rising 5s Ms. Jasmine Monday /Wednesday
Grade 1 Ms. Nadia Thursday /Friday
Grade 1 Ms. Tangerine Friday /Thursday
Grade 2 Ms. Lauren Friday /Tuesday
Grade 3 Ms. Clarissa Friday /Tuesday
Grade 4 Ms. Lesley Tuesday /Thursday
Grade 5 Ms. Ally & Ms. Deanna Thursday /Tuesday
Grade 6 Ms. Jennifer Tuesday /Thursday

School Hours

Pre-school classes (Nursery-Rising 5s) 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Primary classes, (Years 1 - 6) 8:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

We offer complimentary early drop-off supervision from 7:00 a.m. directed by by
Ms. Dedrie.

After Care

We offer an after care program from 3:30 - 6:00 p.m. (or any part thereof,) at a cost of \$10.00 per child, per day. Be advised that children not collected by 3:30 will be automatically placed in an after care activity. Please note that it is the policy of The Meridian School that all children on campus are supervised.

Study Hall runs from 3:30 through 4:30 daily. Children may use this supervised hour to complete homework, study or read.

Each day special interest activities are scheduled for the children who remain after school.

After care activities are as follows:

Monday Sportsmania- It's game time!! Indoor and outdoor age appropriate group games, to stimulate physical and mental development!

Tuesday Science Central – All new science club featuring hands-on science experiments each week!

Wednesday Music N' Mayhem – Strike up the band! Come join in the ultimate school band. Children rotate instruments including steel pan, drums, boom wackers, bells, xylophones and piano.

Thursday Aqua Club – Swimming lessons combined with water fun.

Friday Culinary Carnival- Kiddy Catering! A unique cooking (and tasting) experience.

Alpha Jam!

Let's Jam!!! Alpha Jam is our Christian values club. Open to boys and girls ages 5 through 12 years old, it is a comprehensive Christian curriculum, featuring music, drama, exploration and service. Alpha Jam is a community service initiative and there is no charge. Mondays, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Driveway Rules

Our driveway can be the source of many unpleasant experiences if we do not abide by the rules. Please do not park in the driveway under any circumstances. This area is designed for parents who would like to have their child escorted to and from their classrooms. If you wish to use the valet service, keep left as you enter the covered drive through, stop at the front door and someone will assist you promptly. Upon delivery or receipt of your child, continue forward to exit the school.

DO NOT DRIVE IN REVERSE TO EXIT THE SCHOOL. All pedestrian traffic must use the northern side of the driveway. When walking in or out of the school, please **KEEP WITHIN THE CONES.** Children are **NOT** permitted to walk on the side of the driveway near the tennis court. This means the small grassy embankment is **OFF LIMITS!!!**

What's Cooking?

Each child must bring snacks, lunch, and a water bottle filled with ample drinking water to school each day. **WE ARE A PEANUT-FREE FACILITY.** Please do not send peanut butter or peanut products to school. There are members of our student body who are **SEVERELY** allergic to peanuts. Contact with peanut butter, oil, or residue could be life threatening.

If your child is accustomed to a warm meal at lunchtime you must purchase a "Thermos" container for him/her which keeps meals warm for extended periods.

It is our school's policy that we do not warm food brought from home.

"The Playful Palate Bistro" is our school's kitchen and will provide a wide variety of healthy, delicious lunches. You may purchase food as and when needed. Breakfast items, healthy snacks, sandwiches and hot lunches are available. We are as equally committed to your children's health and well being as we are to educational excellence.

When purchasing lunch for your child, collect a menu from the Welcome Centre. Please complete your child's weekly order form at the beginning of each week. All lunch and snack orders must be paid in advance. If you would like your child to have items from the kitchen regularly, please create a food account at the Welcome Center on his/her behalf.

Sickness

Please be considerate of your child's classmates. If your child is feeling ill or displaying signs of illness, i.e. runny nose, fever or diarrhea, it is your responsibility to keep him/her at home. If these symptoms develop during the day, you will be notified immediately and asked to collect your child. We go to great lengths to ensure that our facility is kept in a clean and sanitary manner. Your cooperation in this matter will ensure the health and safety of all of our students as well as our staff.

Payments

Please be reminded that we do not accept cash payments in excess of \$100 at school. If you wish to make a payment using cash, you must make a direct deposit to the school's account at any Scotia Bank branch. Please collect a deposit slip from the office. The white copy is for the bank, the yellow copy must be brought into school and the pink copy is for your records.

Social Media

The internet, when used wisely can be a wonderful tool for keeping in touch with friends and family. We encourage you to be aware of your child's internet activity. Effectively immediately, staff members of The Meridian School are not permitted to be "Friends" with students of The Meridian School on Facebook or other social networks. Please be advised that no person is permitted to post photographs or videos of the school or any student without express written permission from The Director. This is in an effort to protect the privacy of our families.

Birthday Parties

The demands of our curriculum are such that we must be prudent with our time during school hours. If you're child celebrates a birthday on a school day, and you would like to bring a cake to school, you may do so during lunchtime only. We

are unable to host elaborate birthday parties during school hours.

If you decide to have a party outside of school and are inviting the entire class, all boys, or all girls, your class teacher will be happy to hand out invitations on your behalf. If you are inviting only a few children from the class, it is your responsibility to contact parents and deliver invitations outside of school.

Welcome to our school!