

PRINCE OF WALES MINI SCHOOL

2019-2020

Providing challenge through enrichment.

Information Package

for applicants currently in Grade 7



Prince of Wales Mini School Students

“My five years at PW Mini School have been amazing – stimulating classes and field trips, great friendships, and a chance to develop and test myself.”
- PW Mini School Student

“The benefits of this school were obvious from day one through to graduation. An excellent place for students needing greater challenge.”

- PW Mini School Parent

Contact Information

Prince of Wales Mini School
4750 Haggart Street, Vancouver, BC V6L 2H8
Phone: 604-713-8974
Email: pwmini@vsb.bc.ca
Website: www.pwminischool.com

Overview

Prince of Wales Mini School is a district enrichment program offered by the Vancouver School Board. The school was established in 1973 in order to meet the academic and social needs of highly motivated students. Prince of Wales Mini School consists of approximately 150 students from Grade 8 to 12 (28-30 students in each grade).



Students

Our students are self-motivated and enthusiastic. They enjoy the challenges and rewards of an enriched program. Each class is defined by hard work and camaraderie.

Parents

Our parents are supportive and involved. Many parents play an active role in our school community by volunteering as guest speakers, science mentors, Parent Executive Committee members, fundraising coordinators and trip chaperones. Periodic parent meetings are well attended.

Teachers

Our teachers bring a wide variety of progressive teaching skills and methodologies to the classroom. They are committed to providing enrichment opportunities for PW Mini School students. They have self-selected to work at this school, and to actively develop their teaching practice to meet the needs of academically capable students.

School

Our school occupies a self-contained building on the grounds adjacent to Prince of Wales Secondary School. The building includes four classrooms, a science lab, two computer labs, an office, a student lounge and a small gymnasium. All students at Prince of Wales Mini School are considered part of Prince of Wales Secondary School (100m from PW Mini School). They have full access to teams, clubs, and facilities in the Main School.



School Motto

Omnis Partis Referret (All the Pieces Matter).

Vision

Our graduates will be recognized for their character, intellect, and action.

Guiding Principles

- Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Compassion

Purpose

The purpose of Prince of Wales Mini School is to create a positive learning environment where students are challenged to excel in a broad range of subjects. We offer an intellectually rigorous academic curriculum, as well as exposure to a wide variety of enrichment activities. We encourage students to develop as well-rounded individuals – to find an appropriate balance of academic, athletic, artistic and social pursuits.

Program

Our school program is based on the cohort model, in which 28-30 students in each grade pursue many of their courses as a group. This model allows staff to prepare an effective program that matches the needs of students, and provides support for students as they work collaboratively with their peers.

Students in Grades 8 - 10 take four enriched Mini School courses with their cohort group (English, Social Studies, Math, and Science). Four elective courses are taken with students from the Main School.

Students in Grade 11 take three enriched Mini School courses with their cohort group (English, Social Studies, and Math). Five other courses are taken with students from the Main School.

Students in Grade 12 take Mini School English and Mini School Leadership with their cohort group. All other courses are taken with students from the Main School.

	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4	Course 5	Course 6	Course 7	Course 8
8	Humanities 8 (English & Socials)		Math 8/9	Science 8/10	PE 8	Applied Skills	Fine Arts	French
9	Humanities 9 (English & Socials)		Math 9/10	Science 9/10	PE 9	AS or FA 9	AS or FA 9	French
10	Humanities 10 (English and Socials)		Pre-Calc 11	Science 10	PE 10	AS or FA 10	Planning 10	Lang.
11	English 11	Socials 11	Pre-Calc 12	Science Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Lang.
12	English 12	Leadership	Math Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective

*Shaded courses are taken with the cohort group.

Enrichment

Course work at Prince of Wales Mini School often goes beyond the provincially prescribed curriculum by examining topics in greater detail. In some subjects the prescribed material may be covered more quickly in order to allow time to explore other areas of interest.

Teachers at Prince of Wales Mini School use a constructivist approach, where the student is an active participant in the learning process. Constructivism is a theory about how we come to know what we know. The meaning of “knowing” is an active and evolutionary process. At Prince of Wales Mini School this process is supported by a wide variety of enrichment activities and events.

Enrichment occurs in the classroom, and through field trips in the community. Examples from various subjects are as follows:

- English: theatre and opera performances, Writer’s Festival, Shakespeare workshops;
- Social Studies: student-led discussions of current events, guest speakers, art gallery visits, law courts tour, film screenings, museum visits, day trip to the Legislature in Victoria, Sustainability Action Project;
- Math: math contests, problem of the week, Math Challengers competition, accelerated study;
- Science: study of current scientific discovery and advancement, Grade 8 and 9 Science Fair Project, Grade 10 Science Mentorship Program, 4-day trip to the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre on Vancouver Island, nighttime visit to the GMS Observatory, ecology study of Jericho Beach Park, biology and geology study of Lynn Canyon, Camosun Bog study;

Each year all PW Mini School students travel to Strathcona Park Outdoor Education Centre on Vancouver Island for a 5-day wilderness adventure, and to Whistler for a 3-day skiing and snowboarding experience.

PW Mini School Student Council also organizes activities throughout the year including dances, movie nights, and intramural (lunch time) events.

Evening enrichment events include: PW Mini School Arts Night, Family Winter Supper, and our Year-end Picnic.

Senior students at PW Mini School develop their leadership skills by taking an active role in one of our many student-led enrichment activities.

Our enrichment program also emphasizes three intertwined themes:

1) Developing Strength of Character

The underlying purpose of our enrichment program is to provide experiences that help students learn about themselves. We create a physical and social environment that supports the development of positive character traits such as: honesty, respect, responsibility, compassion, independence, initiative, confidence, openness to new experiences, helpfulness, self-discipline, enthusiasm, courage, leadership, critical thinking, intrapersonal skills (looking inward), interpersonal skills (reaching outward), creativity, and concern for health & fitness

2) Building and Sustaining Community

Everyone involved in Prince of Wales Mini School continuously works on developing and maintaining a strong sense of community. Students are asked to take an active role in all school activities, as we believe these events are an important part of our program. We encourage students of various grades to interact throughout the school year. We promote cooperation between students, teachers and parents as we work together to build a supportive community. All students at Prince of Wales Mini School are required to be involved in school and community service throughout the school year.

3) Being Personally and Socially Responsible

Personal and social responsibility involve actions and skills that lead to the successes of oneself and others. At Prince of Wales Mini School, we encourage students to act respectfully and responsibly in order to foster their own successes while supporting, encouraging, and celebrating the successes of their peers. We aim to develop skills and knowledge in areas such as organization, time management, physical and mental health, personal and social awareness, group dynamics, global issues, and sustainability.

Please Note

The above events and activities are subject to change due to the interests and expertise of the teaching team, and the changing needs of students. While every effort is made to provide continuity from year to year, we make no promises to provide particular enrichment activities.

Funding

The Vancouver School Board provides funds for teaching staff and instructional facilities. PW Mini School generates funds for optional enrichment materials, activities and trips through a combination of enrichment fees and fundraising projects.

Enrichment and trip fees total approximately \$900 per student per year. No student will be denied an opportunity to participate in an activity or trip because of an inability to pay fees. A bursary fund has been

established by PW Mini School alumni (managed by the Vancouver Foundation). Families may apply for a bursary (in confidence) by contacting the Head Teacher.

For successful fundraising to occur, both student and parent involvement is required.

Who Should Apply to PW Mini School?

Students who are:

- living within the boundaries of the Vancouver School District;
- interested in what the school has to offer (not just a parent telling the student to apply);
- needing greater academic challenges at school;
- interested in opportunities to go deeper and wider into the curriculum (going beyond the regular secondary school curriculum);
- interested in developing their leadership skills, and volunteering in their local community;
- willing to play a positive, contributing role in a smaller school community;
- interested in building relationships with others by participating in school camping trips and social events;
- capable of some self-directed learning (without teacher or parent supervision);
- interested in developing as well-rounded individuals (finding a balance of academic, athletic, artistic and social pursuits).



Criteria for Selection of Students

Each year 28 students are admitted at the Grade 8 level. Prince of Wales Mini School seeks students who have demonstrated a high level of academic achievement. Acceptance is based on the merit of the application and an interview process. We have developed a point system to help us evaluate each application. The following criteria are used to select students for the school:

- **Academically capable** – as demonstrated by a record of academic excellence (“B” or better in English, Social Studies, Math, and Science), and by scores from a set of VSB administered tests;
- **Self-motivated and hard working** – as demonstrated by report card grades and teacher comments;
- **Involved** in school and community activities – as demonstrated by a written statement from the student;
- **Socially skilled** (attributes that enable the student to establish and maintain positive relationships with students from a variety of backgrounds and viewpoints) – as demonstrated by report card comments and a group interview.

Extra-Curricular Activities at Prince of Wales Secondary School

Students Helping Students: Student Council, Peer Counsellors, and Peer Tutors.

Athletics: Badminton, Basketball, Cross Country Running, Field Hockey, Golf, Gymnastics, Ice Hockey, Rugby, Soccer, Softball, Swimming, Table Tennis, Track and Field, Ultimate, Volleyball, Wrestling, and Intramurals (lunch-time athletics).

Clubs: Prince of Wales Secondary School has more than 40 different clubs for students.





Application Procedures and Timeline

Tuesday, October 16, 2018 - Prince of Wales Mini School Information Night for all interested students and their parents at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium of Prince of Wales Secondary School (2250 Eddington Drive, Auditorium)

Friday, October 26 to Thursday, November 08, 2018 - On-line Registration for the Test. The Vancouver School Board requires all applicants to write a District Alternative Programs Test. Register on-line at: www.vsb.bc.ca and follow the prompts. No late registrations will be accepted. Please note that registering on-line for the test does not register you for admission to Prince of Wales Mini School. You must also complete and submit an application to PW Mini School.

Tuesday, November 20, 2018 - Test for all District Alternative Programs. Vancouver School District students will be given a place and time for the test when they register. All other students (private school, home-school, etc.) will receive an email telling them where and when to take the test. No sample questions or information on the content of the test is available to parents or students. No test results are given to parents or students. The test consists of a Math component, an English component and a Cognitive Skills (puzzles) component. The test will begin at 1:00 p.m. and last approximately 3 hours (with breaks). Students are advised to bring a pencil, pen and eraser to the test and to arrive no more than 15 minutes prior to the time of the test.

Thursday, December 20, 2018 (by 4:00 p.m.) - Deadline for Receipt of Application. To apply to Prince of Wales Mini School, please submit the following information:

- 1) a completed Prince of Wales Mini School Application Form
- 2) photocopy of your Grade 6 Final report card (with teacher comments)
- 3) photocopy of your Grade 6 Term #2 report card (with teacher comments)

Do not submit any other materials.

Application forms must be received at either PW Secondary School – Main Office (2250 Eddington Drive) or PW Mini School (4750 Haggart Street) by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 20.

Tuesday, January 22, 2019 - Students selected for an Interview at PW Mini School will be contacted on or before January 22. We receive more than 300 applications each year. Based on our selection criteria we will short-list approximately 100 students to be interviewed. Due to a limit of time and resources, we regret that we are only able to contact successful interview applicants.

Thursday, January 24, 2019 - PW Mini School Interviews for short-listed students only. One hour in duration, during the day. Applicants being interviewed are asked to submit their Grade 7 Term 1 report cards.

Wednesday, February 20, 2019 - First offers of acceptance will be made via email.

Friday, February 22, 2019 - Deadline for acceptance by applicant and parent (first offers). Acceptance must be emailed to Prince of Wales Mini School at pwmini@vsb.bc.ca by 12 noon.

Wednesday, February 27, 2019 - Second offers of acceptance (students on the wait list) will be made via email.

Thursday, February 28, 2019 - Deadline for acceptance by applicant and parent (second offers). Acceptance must be emailed to Prince of Wales Mini School at pwmini@vsb.bc.ca by 12 noon.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does my ranking of alternative programs make a difference? - (You will be asked to rank your program(s) of choice when you register on-line.)

Yes, please consider your ranking of programs very carefully before making this selection. The ranking system gives the student an element of choice in the selection process. Our student selection process is based on the merit of your application and an interview process, but we also take the ranking into consideration. PW Mini School uses this ranking system, in consultation with other alternative schools, to find the best fit for as many students as possible. Students who rank a particular school as their “first choice” will have a greater chance of being selected by that school.

Note: be careful when making your choice on-line – the Vancouver School Board will not make changes to your selections once you have registered.

If I accept a position at school “X” during the first round of offers, can I still be offered a position at school “Y” during the second round of offers? - *No, once you accept an offer your name is removed from the list of applicants from all other schools.*

Can I take Math 9 or 10 when I’m in Grade 8? - *No. Part of the strength of our school is derived from students learning within their cohort group. Teachers have found that students with advanced math skills are adequately challenged within the Mini School math classes (Math 8, 9 and 10 are covered in Grades 8 & 9).*

Can I take an advanced French class if I’m a French Immersion student? - *Possibly. If there are no timetable conflicts and there is room in the class, French Immersion and bilingual students accepted to PW Mini School will be placed in French 10. If this is not possible, students will be placed in Spanish 9 or another fine arts elective.*

Will I find out the results from the VSB administered tests? - *No, test results are not given out to the student or parent. The test is only used to assist with the placement of students in specific alternative programs.*

Should I apply to Prince of Wales Mini School if I’m interested in applying to TREK in Grade 10 or the International Baccalaureate Program in Grade 11? - *No, your acceptance to Prince of Wales Mini School involves a 5-year commitment. Please do not apply if you cannot keep this commitment.*

Do I need to fill out a VSB Cross-Boundary Application Form? - *No, Prince of Wales Mini School is a district program – there are no boundaries to cross.*

Can I apply to Prince of Wales Mini School if I live out-of-district? - *No, this program is for students who live within the Vancouver School District.*

What percentage of PW Mini School Grads go to university? - *Our primary aim is to create a positive learning environment where students are challenged to excel in a broad range of subjects. Although we do not consider ourselves a university-prep school, each year more than 90% of our graduates apply to Universities in Canada and beyond. All of these students are accepted to a university of their choice.*

If I'm not admitted for 2018-19 (Grade 8) can I re-apply for 2019-20 (Grade 9)? - *Yes, you will need to submit a new application (available in April each year). If a space comes available (this happens occasionally) we will contact suitable applicants in a specific grade. These applicants will be interviewed and a new student will be selected. There is no test to be written, but up-to-date report cards are required. We do not accept new applications for our Grade 12 class.*

May I call or email PW Mini School to ask questions if I'm not selected for an interview, or position? - *No, we simply don't have enough time or resources to discuss unsuccessful applications.*