



Craig Blue, who has lived in East Kildonan for four years, said he is concerned there is not enough supervision of children at Neil Campbell School.

# Division says safety number one priority

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"We're not saying kids can't be kids, just move them. I was a kid once and did things I shouldn't, but I got detention," said Blue, seated at his well-kept kitchen table.

"Move them back. They have such a big field, just say 'No, you're not allowed to play right against that fence.'"

Blue said it was the damage to the gate last year that was the last straw because he is certain it was broken when a child stood on the bottom wooden plank on the gate to try and reach the latch to retrieve a ball.

It wasn't the damage that bothered him but the knowledge that a child had left the safety of the schoolyard in order to retrieve a ball.

"It's mostly the safety of the kids

we're concerned about. When the bottom of that gate was broken, we thought enough is enough because they're damaging people's property," he said. "I don't think a teacher in their right mind would say 'Okay, go across a busy back lane to get the ball.'"

Blue said that when he spoke with the principal at Neil Campbell, he was told there was enough supervision, but he remains skeptical due to another incident he frequently sees happen from his home.

"We see kids climbing on top of it," said Blue as he pointed to a metal shed more than five feet

high attached to the school building wall and with a steep, sloping roof.

"If you have supervision out there, then tell them to get down... What if one of them falls? What do you tell the parents?"

Wanda McConnell, senior communications co-ordinator for the River East Transcona School Division, said the school has four or five adult supervisors roaming the area and watching the kids during recess and lunch hours.

"We review these matters very carefully because the safety of

our kids is our number one priority," said McConnell.

"You constantly remind the kids to be careful but sometimes accidents happen and the balls do leave the schoolyard."

McConnell said that the procedures Neil Campbell abides by involves three options - either the adult goes to retrieve the ball, an adult and a student go together, or the student may be allowed to go with an adult watching him or her.

"In this division, the schools always try to be a good neighbour," she added.

McConnell said that supervisors would never allow students to climb the metal shed and if this situation did occur, it must have happened outside of school hours, either after-school or during a weekend.

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