

# Sandhills Elementary School PARENT HANDBOOK 2021-2022



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P.O. Box 59  
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Phone: 780-928-3947 Fax: 780-928-2337

**Sandhills Elementary School is a safe, fun place where our  
minds and bodies grow.**

*Written by the Students of Sandhills*

## Sandhills Mission Statement

Sandhills Elementary School is a safe, fun place where our minds and bodies grow.

(Written by Sandhills Students)

## The Vision of Sandhills Elementary School

A positive attitude towards learning.

Success for **all** students.

## School Slogan

**C**

Caring

**A**

Accountability

**R**

Respect

**E**

Excellent effort

## Sandhills Staff

| Teachers               | Assignment             | Support Staff         | Assignment            |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Mr. Gilbert Morris     | Principal              | Mrs. Liz Klassen      | School Secretary      |
| Mrs. Rachel Dika       | Assistant Principal/IE | Mrs. Twila Olson      | School Secretary      |
| Mrs. Maureen Borges    | Pre-Kindergarten       | Mrs. Trudy Peters     | Librarian             |
| Mrs. Lucy Wiebe        | ECS                    | Miss Susan Bueckert   | K-3 Speech Assistant  |
| Mrs. Sarah Fyke        | ECS                    | Mrs. Becky Banman     | Educational Assistant |
| Miss Rachel Pihrag     | ECS                    | Miss Amanda Cameron   | Educational Assistant |
| Miss Brittany Anderson | Grade 1                | Mrs. Shelly Banman    | Educational Assistant |
| Miss Natalia Henry     | Grade 1                | Miss Kaitlyn Fehr     | Educational Assistant |
| Mr. Kevin Janzen       | Grade 1                | Mrs. Gitty Giesbrecht | Educational Assistant |
| Miss Chloe Arnett      | Grade 1                | Miss Shaelyn Goertzen | Educational Assistant |
| Miss Samantha Straub   | Grade 1                | Mrs. Katherine Janzen | Educational Assistant |
| Mrs. Stephanie Acreman | Grade 2                | Mrs. Kenzie Wiebe     | Educational Assistant |
| Mrs. Cheryl Bueckert   | Grade 2                | Miss Johannah Loewen  | Educational Assistant |
| Miss Lauren Brager     | Grade 2                | Mrs. Agnes Martens    | Educational Assistant |
| Miss Chantelle Peters  | Grade 2                | Mrs. Ann Schapansky   | Educational Assistant |
| Mr. Jackson Murrell    | Grade 3                | Mrs. Connie Wiebe     | Educational Assistant |
| Miss Lori Cox          | Grade 3                | Miss Jeannie Wiebe    | Educational Assistant |
| Mrs. Morgan Derksen    | Grade 3                | Mrs. Helen Buller     | Educational Assistant |
| Miss Jaycee Muzychka   | Grade 3                | Miss Dayna Peters     | Educational Assistant |
| Mr. Jacob Conrad       | PE                     | Mrs. Brittany Derksen | Educational Assistant |
| Mrs. Susan Fehr        | PE/ELA Intervention    | Mrs. Joyce Zacharias  | Educational Assistant |
|                        |                        | Mr. George Boehlig    | Head Custodian        |
|                        |                        | Mrs. Margaret Braun   | Custodian             |
|                        |                        | Mrs. Elizabeth Dyck   | Custodian             |

## Student Registration

In order to improve our record keeping of student information we send out the **FVSD student registration forms** annually and we ask that you update this form to assist us in improving our record keeping. Please have the form returned to the school as soon as possible so we can update our school records. If you have any questions regarding the form, you can contact the school at **780-928-3947**.

In order to keep our records as accurate as possible we would appreciate the cooperation of parents in informing us of any changes in information that may occur throughout the school year (e.g. phone number, land description, Post Office Box etc.). Please contact the School Office at **780-928-3947** to inform us of any changes. Thank you for assisting us with this matter.

## Hours of School Operation

Fort Vermilion School Division #52 mandates that the total number of Elementary program minutes for this school year be 325 minutes per day - 1625 minutes per week. We officially **start the day at 8:45 a.m. and end at 2:45 p.m.** The daily schedule for Sandhills Elementary School is as follows:

| Time               | Event                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 8:25 - 8:35 a.m.   | Students Arrive                   |
| 8:40 a.m.          | Morning Bell                      |
| 8:41 - 8:45 a.m.   | Announcements & Opening Exercises |
| 10:15 - 10:30 a.m. | Grade 3 Outside Recess            |
| 10:30 - 10:45 a.m. | Kindergarten Outside Recess       |
| 11:40 - 11:55 a.m. | Grade 2 Outside Recess            |
| 12:00 - 12:15 p.m. | Lunch Time                        |
| 1:20 - 1:35 p.m.   | Grade 1 Outside Recess            |
| 2:45 p.m.          | Dismissal                         |
| 2:45 - 2:55 p.m.   | Parent Pick up                    |

## Sandhills School Council

Sandhills Elementary has a duly elected School Council with the following membership: 10 members elected by Sandhills parents, 1 teacher representative and school administration. School Council members are elected at the Annual General meeting held in the fall.

The School Council acts as an advisory body to the School Administration, offering feedback on school matters pertaining to students, and of interest to parents.

Council meetings are held once per month at 7:00 p.m. at the school – on a date set by Council and are open to the public. It should be noted that while issues of general concern are discussed, School Council is not a forum for personal concerns or concerns related to specific students or staff. Parents are welcome to attend, however only duly elected School Council members have voting rights on issues discussed.

As a vehicle for conveying general concerns, parents are invited to contact a School Council member. A list of School Council members is published and distributed to all parents after the Fall Annual General Meeting and Election.

## Meetings with Parents

We welcome the opportunity to meet with parents through the following formats.

### 1. School Open House:

Each fall Sandhills hosts an Open House for parents to meet their child's teacher. We invite all parents to come out to our Open House, meet staff and engage in some discussion about their child's education.

### 2. Parent-Teacher Meetings:

Formal parent-teacher interviews are held twice yearly, typically in December and March with parents to discuss their child's progress as reported in the report card. For the past few years, we have scheduled a two-evening format to meet with as many parents as possible.

### 3. Additional Meetings:

If concerns arise throughout the course of the school year, parents and teachers are encouraged to meet at times that are convenient to both parties. We have found that by working together, problems that occasionally arise can be resolved in a timely and effective manner.

## School Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in the delivery of effective programming at Sandhills and are very welcome. Involvement can take many forms:

1. Working with children in a particular classroom - either in a group or one-to-one basis.
2. Assisting staff with the preparation or organization of learning materials.
3. Assisting with student supervision on field trips or for special events.
4. Facilitating special services for students: (example: Hot Dog sales, picture taking, etc.)

If you are interested in volunteering some time at Sandhills - a little or a lot - please contact the School and speak to your child's teacher. Volunteers that work alone with groups of students or volunteer for field trips must have a clean vulnerable sector check and intervention record check on file at the school. **When volunteering we ask that you sign in at the main office** for record keeping purposes in case of an emergency.

## Nut Safe School Policy

We are committed to providing all students a safe environment in which to learn. We consistently have some students attending Sandhills who have allergies. Some allergic reactions can be more serious than others. Peanut / Tree nut allergies can cause serious allergic reactions and we wish to prevent this from happening. Every student's safety is of our utmost concern and **we ask that parents do not send/bring any food items to school that contain nuts of any kind, including peanuts.** This is especially important if you are bringing a snack to a class for a celebration. Thank you for your assistance in this important matter.

## Emergency Contact

On rare occasions, we may need to get in contact with parents regarding an emergency situation involving their child, such as a playground accident or sudden illness. We would appreciate the following information to assist us in contacting you should the need suddenly arise:

1. **Home Phone Number** (or Cell phone number if available)
2. **Work Phone Number** (if working outside the home)
3. **Emergency Contact:** The phone number of a close relative or friend who can take responsibility for your child, should we be unable to contact you directly. This person should have your permission to legally act in your absence.

Although we make it a practice of soliciting emergency contact information at the beginning of each school year, please contact the School Office at 780-928-3947 to let us know if any changes occur during the course of the school year.

## Student Attendance

We request parent support in encouraging regular attendance as it greatly impacts a students' academic success. In the event that your child is absent, we would appreciate being informed in advance of all absences (e.g. illness, medical appointments, holiday trips, funerals, etc.). A call to the school or a note in the agenda (for planned absences) to your child's teacher would suffice. Sandhills has a *SAFE Arrival Procedure*. If we are not informed of your child's absence, a computer-generated phone call will be made to you the morning of the absence.

## Lates

We do monitor the number of times a student is late, excluding lates due to delayed buses or other transportation problems. Except for transportation problems, students shall be considered "late" if they arrive after the "*Morning Announcements*" (after 8:45 am) Absences and lates will be reported on your child's *Report Card* at the end of every school term. In the event of a pattern of repeated lates, parents will be notified by the classroom teacher.

## Student Sign-in and Sign-Outs During the School Day

For safety and legal reasons, we need to know the whereabouts of all of our students during the regular school day. If you plan to withdraw your child from class during the regular school day, please inform your child's teacher and sign your child out at the office. Likewise, if your child arrives late they will be expected to sign-in at the office. In cases where you are not picking up your own child, and for your child's safety, we request that you send a note in your child's agenda or call the school authorizing another adult to pick up your child.

## Morning Drop-Off and After School Pick-Up Procedures

Please read carefully as our drop-off procedures have changed for the 2021-2022 school year.

Parents can begin dropping off their children at **8:25 am each morning**. **The front of the school will be designated for pull-through drop-off only.** Please **do not park in front of the school** during this time as traffic flow will be restricted should vehicles park in front of the school. For those parents requiring wheelchair access, please use the designated spot in the staff parking lot.

**In the morning, parents may park in the first 4 bus lanes. For the safety of students, we request that parents escort their child to the school sidewalk.**

## After School Pick-Up Procedures

**There is one designated spot for picking up children at the end of the school day – the basketball pad at the southwest corner of the school.**

- Teachers have been instructed to escort children being picked up to that location, and to release them only to parents, or those authorized by parents to do so.
- Students will be dismissed at 2:45 pm each day.
- Teacher responsibility for supervising students ends at 2:55pm. Please arrive prior to this time.
- We have three lanes of parking available to parents at the end of the day. **One lane for parking is in front of the school** closest to the main road and there are **2 additional lanes in bus lanes closest to the main road for parking.** Vehicles parked in front of the school must form a single lane nearest the main road. Please park in a single line (do not double park) at any time.
- Parents who live across from the school can have their children walked across the street at the end of the day. Designated staff will wait at the front of the school for students who are walking home and escort them across the crosswalk.

**Note: Buses take priority and will need to exit the bus lanes promptly once Sandhills and Ridgeview students have boarded. At this point, parents are requested to wait for all buses to depart before leaving the parent parking lot.**

## School Bus Policies and Procedures

Many of our students ride school buses to and from school on a regular basis. If this includes your child, you should be aware of the rules of conduct that bus students are expected to follow. These are available from your child's bus driver.

Some parents of children who live in town may wish to have them ride the bus. This service will be available to parents starting October 1, 2021. Please contact the School Division Bus Garage at 928-3860 in order to get more details as to sign-up procedures and the costs involved.

Regardless of whether students ride the bus daily or only occasionally, it is important that both the bus driver and the school be kept informed **by a written note from parents of any changes in the regular routine. Parents must make arrangements with the bus driver if their child will be riding a different bus at home-time (this is to ensure adequate seating is available on the bus).**

## Cold/Inclement Weather Policy

We ask for parent co-operation in ensuring that students are appropriately dressed for the weather conditions. Due to safety concerns, students may be refused permission to ride on a school bus if they are not appropriately dressed for cold weather.

**Inclement Weather:** Recess may be indoors and some standard criteria are listed below:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Rain, sleet, freezing rain, smoke                      | Temperature below -25 degrees Celsius.        |
| Temperature with wind-chill below -25 degrees Celsius. | Playground conditions unsuitable for students |

According to School Division policy, in the event of extremely cold weather conditions, an ambient temperature of -40°C and below or a windchill factor of -48°C and below as measured by Environment Canada, school buses will not be running. The School Division may also cancel buses during other inclement weather conditions (e.g. freezing rain, blizzard conditions, etc.). Public notification of this situation is made by early morning notifications via the FVSD Bus Status app and a call from your child's bus driver. You should be aware however, that in the event that school buses do not run, the school is still open for instruction. You have the option of sending your child to school, or transporting him or her yourself. When buses are not running, parents are held responsible for the transportation of their children to and from the school.

## Student Phone Policy & Messages For Students

Due to the young age of our students, we do not provide unrestricted phone access for students. For the most part, we have found that phone access is not required. In the rare case of an emergency or special circumstance, students are allowed to use one of our office phones under the supervision of their teacher or the school secretary. **If your child is doing something other than usual after school, e.g. birthday party, please send a note in your child's agenda or call the school to inform us about the changes.**

## CARE BEAR Program

At Sandhills, our CARE BEAR Program serves to teach, model and reinforce positive behaviours and expectations. Part of the program also has discipline protocols in place to address, track, and support students who require extra assistance in meeting the behavioral expectations set by the school.

**Action Regarding Student Discipline Incidents** – Below is a chart outlining what discipline incidents require office referrals and what incidents are dealt with on the spot by the supervisor; **this includes any staff member.**

| Discipline Incident <u>not</u> requiring office intervention | Discipline Incident requiring <u>immediate</u> office intervention |
|--|--|
| Teasing  | Fighting   |
| Not telling the truth  | Vandalism  |
| Abusive language (Shut up, etc)                              | Disrespect / Defiance  |
| Classroom disruption   | Bullying / Excessive Teasing                                       |
| Washroom behavior  | Profanity  |
| Running in hallways  | Stealing   |
| Being too loud   | * No Bicycle Helmet *  |
| Not using playground equipment properly                      |  |
| Poor sportsmanship   |  |
| Other  |  |

**Documenting and Contacting Parents** – For various reasons throughout the year we sometimes find it necessary to document and to contact parents to discuss problematic student behaviors at school. The protocol listed below is followed in all situations unless extenuating circumstances exist concerning a specific discipline incident.

1. Sandhills staff have a responsibility to document discipline incidents by completing a discipline incident form for incidents that are becoming habitual or more serious.
2. Classroom teachers will be the first contact home when other minor discipline incidents are becoming habitual or for discipline incidents that require an immediate office referral.
3. Administration will call parents with any follow up actions imposed at the office level.
4. FVSD 52 discipline procedures will be followed for the most serious of discipline incidents.
5. If a student requires additional behavioural support, school administration, inclusive education coordinator, the child's teacher along with other important adults in the child's life, including the parent may develop a *behaviour support plan*. Assistance from the Connectivity Team (mental health team), the Diverse Learning coordinator or other specialized services may assist with the development of the plan.

## At Home Reading

At Sandhills, we encourage all parents to read with their children on a daily basis. Studies have shown that daily reading helps in developing and strengthening reading skills in children. As a parent, it is important to give your child time to read, as reading is a skill that takes time to develop. Consider taking 15-20 minutes a day to read with your child, and discover the adventures amongst the pages!

Thank you for supporting and encouraging your child in developing this skill!



***‘The more you read the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.’ Dr. Seuss.***

**Reading is a gift. Let's all do our part to encourage children to embrace it.**

## Student Field Trip

As part of the school curricular program, field trips are offered for student participation. Field trips may take the form of educational visits to community facilities or businesses (e.g. La Crete Fire Hall, La Crete Post Office, etc), recreational trips (e.g. La Crete Arena for skating, High Level Swimming Pool), or other educational activities (e.g. Division Science Fair, FVSD Music Showcase, La Crete Heritage Museum, Fort Vermilion Museum). Regardless of the exact nature of the activity, it is our practice to specifically request parental permission for a child's participation.

Notification will consist of:

1. The **date, time, and nature** of the activity.
2. The **adult supervisors** who will be in charge of the activity.
3. A request for **signed permission**.

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher prior to a scheduled field trip with any questions or concerns.

## Student Personal Belongings

We would appreciate your assistance in helping your child become responsible for their own belongings by:

1. Placing name identification on all personal belongings, including jackets, footwear, lunch kits, and school supplies.
2. Discouraging the bringing of toys or personal items to school. These can cause unneeded jealousy or envy in other children - particularly those that are younger. Also, if lost or damaged, these items become a source of unnecessary anguish or distress for a child.

For items that can not be identified, a "Lost and Found" box is placed at the main entrance of the school. Parents are encouraged to check this box for any of your child's belongings whenever you happen to be visiting the school.

## Specialized Services

Sandhills staff offers a wide variety of Inclusive Education services for children with medical disabilities, as well as those experiencing learning difficulties, language delays or behavioural challenges. Some of the services we currently offer are:

**Early Intervention Program** for pre-K children with diagnosed speech & language delays or medical disabilities.

**Referral to Outside Agencies** for specialist assessment of possible identification and diagnosis of learning disability.

**Individualized Program Plans (IPP)** for students experiencing learning difficulties, language delays, behavioural challenges or medical disabilities.

**Behaviour Support Plans** for students experiencing behavioural challenges

**Speech & Language Intervention**

**Reading Interventions**

**Mental Health Supports**

**Multi-Disciplinary Team** utilizes a team approach to ensure the learning needs of children on IPPs are met. Supports can include, but are not limited to speech-language therapy, physiotherapy, educational programming, vision, hearing, and psychology.

If you would like more information about any of our specialized services, please contact your child's teacher or the school's Inclusive Education Coordinator at 780-928-3947.

## Report Cards

Parents are officially notified of their child's progress in written form in report cards three times per school year.

| Report Card | Grades ECS to 3   |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Report 1    | November 26, 2021 |
| Report 2    | March 11, 2022    |
| Report 3    | June 23, 2022     |

## **Communication with Parents**

We believe in keeping parents informed about the progress of their child, as well as making them aware of school events and happenings. Specific efforts made to maintain home and school communications take many forms, which includes:

A **Parent Information Handbook** in the first few pages of the student agenda

A monthly **School Calendar**

A **School Newsletter (twice per month)**

□ **Student Agendas**

**Classroom Newsletters**

**Special Event Notices**

Notices of Events on the **School Communication Sign** located in front of the school.

Our **School Website** at <https://shes.fvssd.ab.ca/>

Our **Facebook Page** at <https://m.facebook.com/Sandhills-Elementary-School>

**Parent – Teacher Interviews**

**School Call outs**

**School Council Minutes** are sent out with the school newsletter and posted on our website

An **Open House** to meet your child's teacher

We also recognize that communication is a two-way process. We encourage parents to contact us anytime during the regular school day concerning inquiries, concerns, suggestions, or compliments.