

Sidney Elementary School Parent Handbook



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Mission Statement

Belief Statement

Policies and Procedures

STUDENT GUIDELINES

Saanich Elementary Schools/Sidney Elementary School Code of Conduct

WITS Program

GENERAL INFORMATION

Absentees/Safe Arrival

Accidents

Administration of Medication

Arrival and Departures from School

Clothing

Dress Code

District Resource Teachers

Emergencies

Field Trips

Health Teaching

Illness

Lice Control

Open Door Policy

Parent Advisory Council

Parent Driven Vehicles

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Parent Volunteers

Pick Up & Drop Off

Private Vehicle Transportation

Procedures - Voicing Your

Concerns

School Supplies

Shoes

Telephone

Withdrawal

School Programs

SCHOOL SERVICES

Athletics

Art Performances

Assemblies

Book Fair

Crossing Guards

Counselling

DARE Program

ESL Program

Extra-Curricular Activities

French (FSL)

Fruit and Veggie Program

Grade 5 Leadership

Hot Lunches

Ice Castles

Intra-Murals

Learning Assistance

Library

Lost & Found

Newsletters

Read To Me Sidney

Runs

Skating

Spirit Days

Sports Day

Spring Fling

Student Photos

Student Services

Swimming Club

Symphony

Toast Club

Year End Breakfast

Miscellaneous Information

Homework and Study Skills

School System
School District Staff



Sidney Elementary School

Introduction

The staff and students would like to welcome you to Sidney Elementary School.

We believe that we have an excellent school. Our students perform well in many areas of school life including academically, athletically, culturally and socially. We pride ourselves on being a school that offers its students a wide variety of opportunities and experiences. We want our students to be successful and happy learners.

The maintenance of an effective educational program requires that the home and the school work together. To achieve this objective, parents and students are encouraged to make the best use of the services available at the school.

This handbook for parents and students has been prepared to assist you in becoming familiar with the school policies and procedures.

We hope that each student will contribute his or her best efforts in class and school activities. This will make the school year both successful and enjoyable.

We are looking forward to working with you and your child.

The Sidney Staff

Mission Statement

At Sidney School our mission is to provide a safe, supportive and inclusive learning community, where all individuals develop to their full potential intellectually, socially, aesthetically and physically. We strive to develop healthy, lifelong learners and contributing members of society.

**Sidney Elementary School
“Home of the Penguins”**

At Sidney Elementary School:

- We take care of ourselves
- We take care of others
- We take care of this place
- We take responsibility for our actions

Policies and Procedures

Student Guidelines

SIDNEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SAANICH SCHOOL DISTRICT #63 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR

CARING RESPECTFUL SAFE PEACEFUL SCHOOLS

a. Statement of Purpose:

A caring, orderly and safe school is the foundation for a successful learning environment. In Saanich School District, our “Code of Conduct” for elementary students is designed to reflect Social Responsibility Performance Standards established by the Ministry of Education.

- b. Conduct Expectations:** In Saanich School District Elementary Schools, children contribute to the classroom and community by:
- Being caring, considerate and helpful; and
 - Positively participating in and demonstrating commitment to classroom and group activities.

In Saanich School District Elementary Schools, children demonstrate that they value diversity by:

- Treating others fairly and respectfully; and
- Showing support for others.

In Saanich School District Elementary Schools, children learn to appreciate the relationship between rights and responsibilities by:

- Following classroom and school expectations;
- Understanding that they have a right to a safe, secure and orderly learning environment; and
- Taking responsibility for their own actions.

In Saanich School District Elementary Schools, children solve problems in peaceful ways.

c. Consequences

In Saanich School District Elementary Schools, when students do not demonstrate age-appropriate social responsibility, these times are viewed as learning opportunities. We have established inclusive school communities and we endeavor to implement strategies that will enable each child to be successful in his/her school environment. The frequency and severity of the unacceptable conduct is considered when determining the appropriate intervention. As we support children to make better choices, we help them to develop skills in the following areas: empathy, impulse control, anger management and problem solving. A variety of strategies, including appropriate consequences such as reflection time, restorative activities and restricted privileges may be used. Dialogue with parents /guardians is ongoing and occurs in a variety of ways as described below:

- Restitution strategies are used with all students at the elementary level, to encourage positive behaviours.
- School-Based Team meetings, including parents/guardians, and students on occasion, school staff and appropriate District personnel and/or agencies when warranted, focus on identifying appropriate strategies to support the student.
- The District Behaviour Support Team is accessed when the School-Based Team requires additional expertise/resources to address the student's needs.
- The District Screening Committee designates students according to Ministry guidelines.
- In serious cases, the Student Review Process takes place at the District level.

d. Notification:

In Saanich District Elementary Schools, we believe that children learn best when teachers and parents work together. We also believe that learning to develop age-appropriate social responsibility is a natural part of the 'learning process' for all children. If the classroom teacher has ongoing concerns regarding the social responsibility of a child, he/she will ensure that this is communicated to the parent or guardian. For all serious incidents, the parents/guardians of the children involved will be contacted by the School Administration.

WITS Program

At Sidney School we teach all our students to use their WITS when dealing with problems on the playground or around the school.

W- Walk Away

I – Ignore

T – Talk it out
S – Seek Help

This program is taught in class with the support of our local RCMP Liaison officer.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Absenteeism/Safe Arrival

Parents are asked to call the school (250-656-7425) by 8:40 A.M. when students are away. If we do not hear from you by 8:40 A.M., our Safe Arrival Volunteers will contact homes to make sure that everyone is safe.

Additionally, teachers appreciate a note from home that explains why their child is away.

Accidents

During the period of a school year, we are bound to have a few accidents. Every precaution is taken to prevent such mishaps. The staff offers only minimal first aid in the case of injury. We always attempt to contact parents if the school personnel consider the injury or illness to be at all serious. If it is deemed an emergency an ambulance will be called.

Administration of Medicine

If you require a teacher to administer any medication, including Adrenalin and Epi-pens to your child while at school, please note the following procedures;

1. Obtain a copy of the school's form called "Request for Administration of Medication at School". You and your doctor must complete this form.
2. Parents must return this form to the school and discuss the information with the office staff who will give the medication.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL

Supervision of students commences at 8:25 a.m. We request that students do not arrive at school before 8:25 am, as supervision will not be available.

Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds during the day, unless a parent or guardian signs them out or provides the school with a note allowing a student to go home for lunch. Students leaving the school during school hours must sign out at the office. After school, students are to go directly home

following the 2:40 p.m. dismissal, unless they are participating in an after school extra-curricular activity. Supervision for the day concludes at 2:55 p.m.

District Resource Teachers

We frequently have district support teachers in our school working with our children. Students can receive help in Speech, Physiotherapy, ESL, Counselling and Occupational Therapy. As well we have a District Psychologist often working with our children.

Clothing

Students should have mitts, boots, toques, snowpants, and a suitable jacket during the winter months. All clothing and personal belongings should be labeled to prevent the annual accumulation in the lost and found.

Dress Code

The community of Sidney Elementary School expects children will arrive at school appropriately dressed to honour the elementary school learning environment and the weather of the day. Clothing should be modest, socially acceptable, not promote the use of drugs or alcohol, make racial inferences or promote violence. Spaghetti strapped tops and bare midriffs should be avoided. Flip flop sandals and platforms shoes are difficult to walk in and may promote accidents. Hats are not permitted indoors as a sign of respect. We ask students to use good judgment, take responsibility and show respect for themselves and others.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, such as fire, earthquake, lack of water, or illness, etc., the school has an emergency plan that involves contacting parents or guardians and if necessary school closure. Please be sure to keep the office up to date on your emergency number.

Field Trips

The whole school and individual classes may go on a few field trips each year. The teachers and their classes will be deciding on their activities as the year goes along.

If for any reason you cannot afford the cost of a field trip please contact Mr. Russell for information on financial assistance.

Health Teaching

The Public Health Nurse is available as a resource person on the health issues to parents and family, as well as to the teachers and parent advisory committees.

Please contact the Vancouver Island Health Authority at 250-544-2400 if you have any questions or concerns.

Illness

Normally, children who are too ill to go outside for recess are too ill to be at school. This is particularly true with severe colds. Children coming to school with severe colds are unable to function well, provide a source of infection for other children and would probably recuperate faster at home.

Lice Control

Lice is a common occurrence in schools, please examine your child's hair weekly. Early detection and treatment of lice and removal of nits is essential for control of this problem. Prior to returning to school following holidays, please examine your child's hair carefully to prevent introducing lice into the school. We will have periodic lice checks at school through the year. Children with lice must be treated before returning to class.

Open Door Policy

Parents and guests are always welcome to the schools in School District No. 63 (Saanich). It is necessary, however, that visitors first report to the office to make administration aware of their presence, the reason for their presence and to obtain approval to remain in the school. Visitors may be requested to provide appropriate identification to validate their presence in the schools (e.g. social worker, community service worker, etc.).

Parent Advisory Committee

The Sidney Parent Advisory Council is the officially recognized voice of the parents at the school level. It is composed of parents who advise the principal, staff and the school board of the parents' views on school programs, policies and activities. The first meeting of the school year will be held in early September. All parents are encouraged to attend.

Parent Driven Vehicles to School and Youth Recreation Activities

In order to use parent driven vehicles to school and youth recreation activities, parents need to have parent driver form completed. This form can be found on our website or you can get a form from the office.

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Parent/teacher meetings will be held during the school year to allow parents to meet formally with their child's teacher(s) to discuss progress. If at any time, you would like to make an appointment to meet with a teacher, please call the school. Knowing how your child is doing in school and how you can support their

educational program is the best possible insurance you can have that your child will have a happy and productive year.

Parent Volunteers

Parents are an important part of the day-to-day happenings at our school. Our parent volunteers are very much appreciated. They create a special atmosphere in each classroom and become involved in a wide variety of school activities. We hope that you can find the time to become involved with our school.

District Policy requires frequent volunteers in the school to submit to a Criminal Record Search. Sidney School realizes that this is an invasion of personal privacy; however, the safety of our students is always our first concern.

Pick Up and Drop Off

Parents driving their children to school are reminded to be very careful and observant when in the school zone. School opening and closing times are when we all need to be particularly careful and note where children are walking or riding their bikes.

There is a designated handicapped-parking area next to the school entrance, if needed. **Please do not drive into the parking lot to drop off or pick up your child.** Driving through the parking lot during school opening and closing times creates a potentially dangerous situation for children coming to or leaving school.

Procedures for Voicing Your Concerns

All parents will, on occasion, have questions regarding their child's education. The staff at Sidney Elementary School wants you to contact the school when a problem or question arises. To facilitate action on any concern regarding the schools policies, procedures or curriculum, we ask that you take the following steps:

1. Contact your child's teacher.
2. If you do not receive a reasonable explanation or positive action, contact the principal.
3. If the situation is still not handled to your satisfaction, contact the Superintendent of Schools.
4. Request an audience with the School Board to make your concerns known.

Rainy Days

We try to get the children fresh air and outside playtime everyday at lunch and recess. Unfortunately there are some days when this is impossible because of

the weather. On those days we have a variety of activities to keep children busy inside. These activities include: playing quietly in the classrooms, games in the gym, reading in the library, a movie in the MPR, computer time and a games room.

School Planning Councils

Each school in the province has a School Planning Council. Our school will select its council in early September. This will consist of the school principal, a teacher representative, and three parents. They will be responsible for ensuring the school growth plan is meeting the needs of our students.

School Supplies

A school supplies list for the upcoming year goes out with the report cards in June. Copies are kept at the school office for those parents who cannot find their list.

Shoes

All students should have a pair of shoes or runners that can be left at school. These become the indoor shoes. The goal is for each child to have a pair of clean runners in the school, so that our rooms remain clean.

Telephone

Students may use the telephone in the case of an emergency. The secretary will phone your home or your emergency contact when your child is ill. Please arrange your child's appointments, transportation or alternative after school plans ahead with your child to avoid interrupting the classes.

Withdrawals

The school should receive notice of a withdrawal at least two days before the pupil's last day of attendance. With reasonable notice, the teacher can prepare the report and obtain information for a transfer slip. Please ensure that all school properties, such as books, are returned so that the transfer can be done quickly.

School Programs

SCHOOL SERVICES

Art Performances

Several times throughout the school year, we host Art Performances. These include musical performances, plays and other cultural performances by various artists. A district Arts Performance Committee attends performances annually to select the year's performances that they think our students would enjoy and benefit from watching.

Assemblies

We have been holding weekly assemblies every Monday this year. The objective is to meet regularly as a school to highlight our successes, talk about upcoming events, celebrate our diversity as a school, and say Happy Birthday to our students.

Athletics – The Saanich School District offers a variety of athletics opportunities for elementary students. In December there is an indoor soccer jamboree. In February we have a basketball jamboree and a swim meet. March and April is Cross Country season. We have three meets that we attend. And finally we end the year with a District Track Meet. Grade 4 and 5 students are encouraged to participate in all these activities. Grade 3 students may take part in Cross Country and Track.

Book Fair

Each year our school Librarian hosts a book fair. Books are sold outside the school office and money raised goes to buy the school new library books.

Crossing Guards – We run a Crossing Guard Program for grade 5 students. Students who signed up are responsible for helping people across the road at Henry and 7th Ave.

Counselling

We have a school counsellor who visits our school every other week. Our school counselor works with small groups and classes on social skills. Additionally, the counselor works one on one with students in need of counseling support. Students who are in need of one on one support will only receive counseling only with parent permission.

DARE Program – Each year our grade 5 student's participate in the DARE Program. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) This is taught by our local RCMP

Liaison officer and teaches children to make good choices. The program winds up with an assembly that parents are invited to attend.

ESL Program – At Sidney we have ESL (English as a Second Language) support for our students whose first language is not English. These children receive extra support and help in improving their English Language skills.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We offer a variety of extra-curricular activities for students at Sidney. The success of these programs is dependent on the interest and commitment of the students. We offer a variety of options depending on student interest. Some of these activities include: athletics, gardening club, and chess club.

Family Groupings

Every student in our school is a member of a multi-grade family group. Periodically throughout the year these groups will meet in the gym for an activity that focuses on cross grade social skills and friendship.

French (FSL)

Saanich is the only school district in the province to offer Core French to all its students from Kindergarten to Grade 5. In our Core French Program students in Kindergarten receive 50 minutes of Core French instruction a week and students in grades 1 to 5 receive 80 minutes. Tres Bien!

Friendship Club

Our School Youth and Family Counsellor operate a Friendship Club every Tuesday and Thursday in our MPR at recess to allow students an opportunity to play games in an area with adult support. This is a positive way for our school to help students develop social skills.

Fruit and Veggie Program

Our school participates in the BC Fruit and Veggie program. We will be receiving fresh fruit every other week to distribute to students in their classrooms. This food is handed out during instructional time to give the students a nutrition break. The goal of the program is to teach students about healthy eating and promote the eating of local and provincial fresh fruits and vegetables.

Grade 5 Leadership

Our grade 5 students are all given the opportunity to take a leadership role in the school. Three times a year students are encouraged to sign up for a leadership position. Leadership opportunities include: Public Speaker, Percy's Press, Library Helpers, Equipment Crew, Media Crew, Green Team, Nutrition Crew and Playground Pals.

Hot Lunches

Once a month our PAC offers the students a hot lunch. Whole-wheat pizza is served with fruit juice and a small snack.

Ice Castles

Every year in February our school has an Ice Castles Day. Classes meet on our playground to build Ice Castles made from snow from the hockey rink and ice made at home. The structures are colourful pieces of art. Watch out Quebec Winter Carnival!

Intra-mural Sports

We have intra-mural sports at lunchtime. Intermediate students are encouraged to participate in the following activities:

Sept. –Oct. Soccer

Nov. – Dec. – Floor Hockey

Jan. Feb. – Basketball

March – April – Cross Country

May – June – Softball and Track and Field

Learning Assistance

The school has a Learning Assistance Program for students who need some one on one or small group instruction. Assessment of students is on going and both short and long programs are implemented.

Library

Our library has a great collection of books. Each class visits the library twice a week. One of those times they attend to sign out new books and the other time to learn research and library skills.

Lost & Found

The school lost and found is located across from the school kitchen. Clothing will be spread out periodically so that students and parents can go through it. If clothing is not claimed it will be eventually donated to charity.

Newsletters

The Penguin Pages Newsletter will be distributed on the third Wednesday of every month. Additionally, Penguin reminders will be sent home periodically to keep parents up-to-date with what is going on in the school.

Read to Me Sidney Home Reading Program

Student in Kindergarten to Grade 3 take part in our home reading program. Students are rewarded with special prizes for reading regularly at home with their parents.

Runs

Each year our school has several school wide runs. Each year in September our school participates in the annual Terry Fox Run. In addition to running, we raise money for Cancer Research. In October we have a Pumpkin Run to help celebrate and before the winter break we have a Reindeer Run. Additionally, all our classes participate in Daily Penguin runs around the school to give our students an action break from their studies.

Skating

All our classes get the opportunity to visit the Panorama Skating Rink once a year to go skating.

Spirit Days

Periodically throughout the year, the grade 5 students will organize spirit days. This may include such events as wacky hair day, blue and yellow day, and other days that the students select.

Sports Day

Each Spring our school organizes a sports day for our students. This is a daylong activity featuring a variety of individual and team races. Parents are encouraged to attend.

Spring Fling

The PAC runs a very successful Spring Fling in May. This is a wonderful school and community event that raises much needed money for the school.

Student Photos

Individual pictures will be taken in the early fall. Students absent at this time must wait for retakes. The cost varies as to the photo package selected. Class and school photos are taken in the spring.

Student Services

The school has a Special Education Program for identified students who need some one on one or small group instruction. Assessment of students is on going and both short and long programs are implemented.

Swimming Club

Each year students in grade 3-5 are offered the opportunity to take part in Swim Club. Swim Club takes place at Panorama Leisure Centre on Mondays at 3:00 PM. The cost is \$25 per student for the year. There is a fun Saanich Schools swim meet in March for all swim club members.

Symphony – Every February all our grade 4 and 5 students visit the UVIC Theatre to listen to a performance by the Victoria Symphony.

Toast Club

We are pleased to have a Toast Program now operating at Sidney School from 8:25 to 8:35 AM every morning. The goal here is to provide students who have not had time to eat breakfast at home with a piece of toast. Research shows that students perform better academically when they have had a nutritious breakfast.

Year End Breakfast – The Pac and parents host a school community Breakfast on the last day of the year for students. Everyone is encouraged to come for breakfast before we pack up our stuff for the end of the year.

Miscellaneous Information

Homework

Students in grades 4 & 5 usually have homework during the week. Occasionally younger children may have work on a school project, incomplete schoolwork or home reading. Generally, homework is review work, project completion, preparing for a test and/or work that has been assigned and has not been completed in class. Since children work at different rates, the length of time may vary. Usually the homework should not exceed one hour for intermediate students and half an hour for primary students.

Homework during Absences

When your child has missed school, please use the following guidelines for requesting homework:

1. If a student is absent only one day, their teacher will handle the make-up work upon the student's return.
2. When a student misses two or more days of school, homework can be requested by calling the school office. The teacher will have homework available to be picked up in the office.
3. If the student will be away for an extended period contact your child's teacher.

Homework Hints

1. Provide a quiet, well-lighted and comfortable work area for students.
2. Schedule and maintain a time for homework or home study each night.
3. Show an interest in your child's work.
4. Don't wait until the last minute to do projects.

School System

How the School District Operates:

1. Ministry of Education – The responsibility for the education of children is shared by the Province and our locally elected School Board. At the provincial level, education in B.C. is governed by the School Act and its regulations, and by the Ministry of Education.
2. School Board - At the local level, the School Board develops educational policies for the school system, which are in the keeping with the School Act and the Ministry directions. Trustees also deal with

the school district's operation and capital budgets and monitor the operation of educational programs.

3. Superintendent - The Superintendent of Schools is the board's Chief Executive Officer and the administrator of its educational policies in the schools. He is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school system.
4. Secretary-Treasurer – The Secretary-Treasurer is the Corporate Officer of the Board responsible for the business administration of the School District. They are responsible for all matters of finance, labour relations, CUPE employees, maintenance of the grounds and the buildings, and bussing.
5. Principal – The school principal provides the educational leadership and administrative management necessary to ensure the best possible education for each student in the school. This is accomplished by working within clearly laid-out administrative regulations set by the Ministry of Education and by the School Board Policies.
6. Teacher – The classroom teacher is directly responsible for the education of the children. His or her task is to perform the teaching and other educational services specified by the Ministry and the School Board.

School District Staff

<http://www.sd63.bc.ca/StaffExec.htm>

Saanich Board of School Trustees

<http://www.sd63.bc.ca/BoardMembers.htm>

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