

# Sandhills Elementary School PARENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025



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**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
Mrs. Wendy Morris	Principal	Mrs. Liz Klassen	School Secretary
Mrs. Julie Gallant	Assistant Principal/IE	Mrs. Twila Olson	School Secretary/EA
Mrs. Vicky Pitre	Pre-Kindergarten	Mrs. Trudy Peters	Librarian
Mrs. Lucy Wiebe	Kindergarten	Miss Susan Bueckert	K-3 Speech Assistant
Mrs. Sarah Fyke	Kindergarten	Miss Amanda Cameron	Educational Assistant
Mrs. Jessica Voke Itietie	Kindergarten	Mrs. Shelly Banman	Educational Assistant
Miss Brittany Anderson	Grade 1	Mrs. Amanda Dyck	Educational Assistant
Miss Natalia Henry	Grade 1	Mrs. Justina Krahn	Educational Assistant
Miss Nicole Walker	Grade 1	Mrs. Mary-Ann Schellenberg	Educational Assistant
Mrs. Suzanne Fehr	Grade 1	Miss Abby Harder	Educational Assistant
Miss Jennifer Jiang	Grade 1	Miss Coralee Doerksen	Educational Assistant
Mrs. Stephanie Acreman	Grade 2/Numeracy Coordinator	Mrs. Tracy Neudorf	Educational Assistant
Mrs. Cheryl Bueckert	Grade 2	Mrs. Anita Friesen	Educational Assistant
Ms. Ryane Cole	Grade 2	Mrs. Tammy Cameron	Educational Assistant
Ms. Joanie Allison	Grade 2	Mrs. Agnes Martens	Educational Assistant
Mr. Chen Wu	Grade 2	Mrs. Connie Wiebe	Educational Assistant
Miss Alicia Gross	Grade 3	Miss Dayna Peters	Educational Assistant
Miss Lori Cox	Grade 3	Miss Jeannie Wiebe	Educational Assistant
Mr. Erik Nielson	Grade 3	Miss Jalayna Buller	Educational Assistant
TBD	Grade 3	Mrs. Ally Janzen	Educational Assistant
Mr. Josh Krahn	PE	Mrs. Heidi Goertzen	Educational Assistant
Mrs. Susan Fehr	Reading Intervention/ Literacy Coordinator	Mrs. Stephanie Wiebe	Educational Assistant
		Mr. George Boehlig	Head Custodian
		Mrs. Lisa Neufeld	Custodian
		Mrs. Elizabeth Dyck	Custodian
		Mr. David Krahn	Custodian

## Student Registration

For the 2024-2025 school year the Fort Vermilion School Division (FVSD) is providing an online re-enrollment form where parents and guardians can review their child's information and sign the form. The online re-enrollment form is for students who attended an FVSD school last year and will be attending an FVSD school in the 2024-2025 school year.

You can now sign in to MyFVSD at [my.fvdsd.ab.ca](http://my.fvdsd.ab.ca) to view students you are associated with and review their student profile.

There are two ways you can sign into MyFVSD:

1. Using a Google (@gmail.com) or Microsoft (@outlook.com) email account.

OR

2. Through text messaging which will require you to enter the Alberta Student Number (ASN) for one of the students you are associated with. A student's ASN can be found at the top of their report card.

In order to keep our records as accurate as possible, throughout the school year, if changes should occur to your child's information (e.g. phone number, land description, Post Office Box, etc.) please log into MyFVSD and make those changes or call the School Office at **780-928-3947**.

## Hours of School Operation

*Fort Vermilion School Division* 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 8:40 a.m. and end at 2:56 p.m.** The daily schedule for Sandhills Elementary School is as follows:

Time	Event
<b>8:30 - 8:40 a.m.</b>	Students Arrive
<b>8:40 a.m.</b>	Morning Bell, Announcements & Opening Exercises
<b>10:15 - 10:30 a.m.</b>	ECS/Grade 2 Outside Recess
<b>11:45 - 12:00 a.m.</b>	ECS/Grade 2 Lunch Time Grade 1/Grade 3 Outdoor Recess
<b>12:00 - 12:15 a.m.</b>	Grade 1/Grade 3 Lunch Time ECS/Grade 2 Outside Recess
<b>1:45 - 2:00 p.m.</b>	Grade 1/Grade 3 Outside Recess
<b>2:56 p.m.</b>	Dismissal
<b>3:00-3:05 p.m.</b>	Parent Pick up

## Sandhills School Council

Sandhills Elementary has an 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, which will be held on September 23rd at 7:00 p.m.

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 the Council, and are open to the public. It should be noted that while issues of general concern are discussed, the School Council is not a forum for personal concerns or concerns related to specific students or staff. Parents are welcome to attend, however only elected School Council members have voting rights on issues discussed.

If parents have general concerns, they 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:

Sandhills will host 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, (November/December and March) with parents to discuss their child's progress as reported in the report card. 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 for both parties. When we work together, problems that occasionally arise can be resolved in a timely and effective manner.

## School Volunteers

At Sandhills we welcome parent volunteers. Volunteers play an important role in the delivery of effective programming. 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 at Sandhills - a little or a lot - please contact the school and speak to your child's teacher. Volunteers who 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 school year.

## Student Attendance

We request parent support in encouraging regular attendance as it greatly impacts a student's academic success. If you know ahead of time that your child will be absent, we would appreciate being informed in advance (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 on 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:

Parents can begin dropping off their children at **8:30 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.
- Students will be dismissed at 3:00 pm each day.
- Teacher responsibility for supervising students ends at 3:05 pm. Please arrive before 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 the 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. Please contact the School Division Bus Garage at 928-3860 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 cooperation 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, thick 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.

## Second Step Program

We also use the Second Step program at Sandhills, which compliments our Physical Education and Wellness curriculum. The Second Step promotes self-regulation and teaches skills for learning that are necessary for having empathy, managing emotions, and solving problems both in and out of the classroom.

**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.**

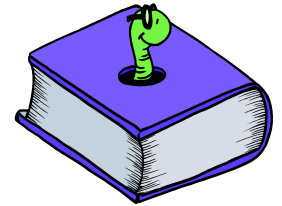
Discipline Incident <u>not</u> requiring office intervention	Discipline Incident requiring <u>immediate</u> office intervention
Teasing	Fighting
Not telling the truth	Vandalism
Abusive language (Shut up, etc)	Disrespect / Defiance
Classroom disruption	Bullying / Excessive Teasing
Washroom behavior	Profanity
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 it may be 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 daily. 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 to develop 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.*

## 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), 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 before 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. 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 their child’s belongings whenever they 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**

**Math 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, Mrs. Gallant, 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 22, 2024
Report 2	February 28, 2025
Report 3	June 6, 2025

## 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** posted on the SHES school website
  - 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.fvsd.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.