

MILK RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STATEMENT



“In partnership with parents and community, Milk River Elementary School will provide a safe and caring environment for learning, celebrating the uniqueness of each individual, exploring and encouraging the development of distinctive talents, and creating self-motivated, lifelong learners.”

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

1. The fundamental principle of the Milk River Elementary School is that each student is an individual. The school will make every effort to provide a school environment that allows for and encourages a high level of learning for each student.
2. The high level of learning is aided by providing a highly positive, safe, friendly and pleasant school environment, where students and staff will be encouraged to do their best at all times and be proud of their accomplishments.
3. All aspects of education will be presented as outlined in the provincial curriculum, and any locally designed curriculum approved by the Horizon School Division: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Health, Music, Art and Physical Education. In addition, the school will attempt to provide each student with the critical thinking skills that will help him/her make important decisions in our changing society.
4. The school will encourage student growth academically, physically, socially, and emotionally. Through the learning process, it will provide the student with the opportunities to work with other students, teachers, other school personnel, and parents, to develop responsibility, self-understanding, self-worth and confidence necessary to achieve good work habits for the future, and to instill the desire for lifelong learning.
5. The school will utilize available technology to enhance student learning.
6. Milk River Elementary School believes in a set of standards for student behavior and expects all students to abide by them.
(See Code of Conduct)
7. The school operates in co-operation with the home and the community, and enhances the learning that is taking place in the home. As such, the school and parents are partners ensuring that children are well prepared for their encounters with life. This partnership is strengthened and maintained on a continuing basis by frequent communication by the school with its parents, by the parents and the community being encouraged to take part in school activities and events, and by an active Parent Council.

THE SCHOOL

Milk River Elementary is a Kindergarten through grade 5 school. We offer a pre-school program, special education program and have the benefit of a Speech Pathologist, speech assistant, and librarian, as well as other support staff.

E.L.I. – Milk River Elementary offers an Early Literacy Intervention program for students at risk for literacy learning in grades 1 & 2. The program provides intensive intervention in the areas of reading and reading comprehension.

Students will be able to consistently implement 21st century learning skills (such as critical thinking, problem solving, and creative thinking) specifically within their reading strategies, and within the broad context of their daily lives.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Phone – (403) 647-3747

Fax – (403) 647-2404

P.O. Box 330

Milk River, AB T0K 1M0

PRINCIPAL
SECRETARY
CUSTODIAN

- Mr. Allan Rancier
- Mrs. Sheina Russell
- Mr. Jim Middleton

SCHOOL HOURS

Monday – Thursday

Doors Open - 8:15 A.M.
Preparation Bell - 8:25 A.M.
Classes Begin - 8:30 A.M.
Lunch Begins - 12:05 A.M.
Classes Begin - 12:37 P.M.
Dismissal - 3:25 P.M.

Friday

Doors Open - 8:15 A.M.
Preparation Bell - 8:25 A.M.
Classes Begin - 8:30 A.M.
Dismissal - 12:10 P.M.

Monday – Thursday there will be two 15-minute recesses; in the morning from (10:10 – 10:25) and in the afternoon from (2:07 – 2:22). On Friday there will be one 17-minute break during the morning (10:10 – 10:27).

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FEE

The instructional fee for Kindergarten is \$50.00 per student. For grades 1 to 5, the fee is \$45.00 per student.

The instructional materials fee covers the cost of agendas, paper and other items provided by the school, as well as the actual rental of the textbooks.

Students receive copies of supply lists for the upcoming year in their June report card. Supply lists are listed on our School Web Site and also displayed on Horizon School Division #67 Web Site @ www.horizon.ab.ca.

A receipt will be issued and sent home with your child, unless a parent comes in personally to pay, and then it will be issued immediately. In sending money to school with your child could you please make cheques payable to the Milk River Elementary School.

ABSENTEEISM

In the event that your child is away from school because of illness, medical/dental appointments or any other reason, please send a note, or call the school. This will be considered a legitimate excuse.

BUSES

School buses load and unload on the South Street in the bus-loading zone. Section 105(3) of the Highway Traffic Act states: *“Where a school bus is displaying alternately flashing red lights, the operator of a vehicle approaching the school bus shall*

(a) when approaching the school bus from the rear, if the school bus is on a highway that is divided by a median into 2 separate roadways, or

(b) when approaching the school bus from the front or rear, if the school bus is on a highway that is not divided by a median into 2 separate roadways,

Stop the approaching vehicle before it reaches the school bus.”

Parents dropping off and picking up children are asked to do so on the North side of the school. Students should then walk along the gymnasium on the sidewalk.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The school employs 1 part-time learning support teacher to facilitate individual program plans for a variety of needs. Special needs students are integrated in regular classrooms and participate in our appropriate instructional groups where possible.

HORIZON FAMILY SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM

The school has the benefit of a Family School Liaison Counselor that is here one day a week. The program provides support for students, families, and school staff to enhance the student's personal, social, emotional, and academic success. Support is provided through individual counseling for students/families, group counseling, and educational presentations to students, parents, and/or staff.

We are also fortunate to have a Mennonite Liaison Worker and a First Nations, Metis, Inuit (FNMI) Liaison Worker that provide support to students and families within the Division.

STUDENT EVALUATION, REPORTING AND PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Report cards will be distributed during the following months:

Report 1 – November

Report 2 – February

March – Student-Led Conferences

Report 3 – June

Following the first and second report cards will be parent-teacher interviews. There will be school wide student-led conferences in March. All interviews and student-led conferences will be held after school. Further details will be forthcoming through the newsletters.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS & ASSEMBLIES

A monthly calendar and newsletter will be sent home with the children at the beginning of each month (the first Monday) to help keep parents informed of events and happenings taking place at the school. Updates and additional information notices will be sent periodically to account for any changes that you need to be informed of. At times, teachers send out updates for their particular classes.

There will be a general assembly the last Thursday of each month @ 2:30 P.M. unless otherwise notified. Assemblies are open and parents are welcome to attend!

STUDENT LIBRARY USE

1. Students in **Kindergarten – Grade 3** may take out a maximum of **two** hardback or paperback books (novels) for two weeks at a time. Students in **Grades 4 & 5** may take out a maximum of **four** hardback or paperback books (novels) for two weeks at a time.
2. Lost books must be paid for at a replacement cost or replaced. No books can be borrowed until the book is paid for or replaced.
3. Overdue lists are posted weekly in the library.

BILLET LIST FOR BUS STUDENTS

When conditions make it necessary for bus students to remain in town, they will be billeted with a family in town unless other arrangements have been made. A form will be sent with each bus student. Please fill it in and return to the school.

FIRE DRILLS/LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES

Fire drills and lock down procedures are held periodically throughout the year. For this reason, footwear must be worn at all times throughout the school day in case they must exit quickly into wet or cold, snowy weather conditions. Please assure that your child has an extra pair of indoor shoes.

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION AND LOST AND FOUND

ALL PRIVATE PROPERTY, ITEMS OF CLOTHING, BOOTS, SCHOOL SUPPLIES, AND LUNCH BOXES MUST BE CLEARLY LABELLED WITH THE STUDENT'S NAME. Students store their coats and lunches in their classroom, and boots, when required, in the entrance boot rooms.

A lost and found box is kept at the school in the front entrance. By the end of the school year, there are usually many "found" items filling the box. Articles with the owner's name labelled on them makes it possible for them to be easily returned. On visiting the school, parents are invited to check the lost and found box occasionally.

NOON HOUR POLICY

Supervision is provided at school during noon hour. Students who stay for lunch will be having lunch in their homerooms, under

teacher supervision. Students staying for lunch during noon hour are not allowed to leave the school grounds. Exceptions to this can be made by a written request signed by the parent.

REGISTRATION

A. **For Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten**

Registration for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten in the Horizon School Division starts the month of January. In registering for the Kindergarten programs, please bring and present the Birth Certificate and Alberta Health Care Card.

B. **Other Grades**

New students should register for class assignments at the office the first day of school or during the week preceding school opening.

POLICY REGARDING ENTRANCE AGE TO GRADE ONE

Students turning age 6 by December 31 of the year are eligible for grade 1 in September of that school year. Policy requires that no extensions past that date be considered.

SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

If a child becomes ill or is injured at school, parents will be contacted to come and pick up the child. If this is not possible, the child will be kept in another room at the school. In emergency cases, the child will be taken to the clinic or the hospital. No medication (aspirin, etc.) can be given to students at school. Students contacting contagious diseases should stay at home until the contagious period is over.



CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

No society, organization or group operates well without a set of rules and regulations. If we wish our schools to be successful, where all have an equal opportunity to learn, we need well-defined expectations for behavior. This section of the handbook outlines our expectations at Milk River Elementary School.

BELIEFS

Our expectations are based upon the belief that we all have certain rights and responsibilities that must be recognized in order to make our school community a safe, inviting place where all can grow and become contributing members of our society.

- **OPPORTUNITY** -each child should be given the opportunity to grow to his/her potential and develop a positive self-worth.
- **COLLABORATION** -responsibility for developing and enhancing a child's self-worth and self-image lies with the **child, parents, teachers and community members** who touch the life of each child. Parents, as the prime educators of their children, must accept and share with the school the responsibility for teaching children appropriate, acceptable behavior. By working together in a cooperative manner, we can ensure positive student conduct. Discipline is essential in building accountability, responsibility, respect for others, and most important, **self-respect**.
- **RIGHTS** -all students have the right to learn. This right should be exercised in a school climate that is satisfying and productive, without disruptive behavior by any student that infringes upon the rights of others.
- **RESPONSIBILITY** -all students must understand and accept that they are responsible for their behavior. They must recognize that any behavior, which disrupts or detracts from the educational climate of the school, is unacceptable. Any behavior, which interferes with the rights of others, is neither responsible nor acceptable behavior. Students are expected to follow reasonable rules, which are established for the benefit of all students, the school staff and the greater school community. Conduct should be governed accordingly.

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

All students must know what behavior is acceptable, where it is acceptable, and when it is acceptable. We at M.R.E.S. believe the majority of the students behave in reasonable, responsible and positive ways and understand the need for the following list of student rights, responsibilities and school wide expectations. Examples of inappropriate behavior are not all-inclusive.

1. I HAVE THE RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION

It is my responsibility to listen, to learn, to practice, to complete school assignments and to graciously accept remedial assistance when necessary. I will not disturb, disrupt or interfere with the instruction of my teachers and/or the learning of my fellow classmates.

2. I HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAPPINESS AND TO BE TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT IN THE SCHOOL.

It is my responsibility to treat others with honor and polite consideration. I will not laugh at, tease or put down other students, staff or adults.

3. I HAVE THE RIGHT TO HEAR AND BE HEARD IN THIS SCHOOL.

It is my responsibility to help maintain a calm peaceful and quiet school. I will not interrupt, shout, or make loud noises when others are speaking.

4. I HAVE A RIGHT TO BE SAFE AND SECURE IN THIS SCHOOL.

It is my responsibility to contribute to the safety and security of others by being kind and considerate. I will not threaten, push, pinch, hit, kick, spit at or hurt others.

5. I HAVE THE RIGHT TO FREE EXPRESSION IN LEARNING ABOUT OTHERS AND MYSELF.

It is my responsibility to learn about others and myself in this school. I am free to express my feelings and opinions as long as I am not rude nor disrespectful nor disruptive to the order of the school and/or personal and public property

6. I HAVE A RIGHT TO BE MYSELF IN THIS SCHOOL.

It is my responsibility to respect the uniqueness of others as individuals and not to treat others unfairly because of differences.

7. I HAVE A RIGHT TO PRIVACY AND TO MY OWN PERSONAL SPACE.

It is my responsibility to respect public property, the personal property of others, and to accept their right to privacy. I will not use others property or possessions without permission.

8. I HAVE A RIGHT TO ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT IN LEARNING SELF-CONTROL.

It is my responsibility to practice self-control and ask for assistance when necessary. I will expect to be corrected when I abuse the rights of others, as they shall be corrected if my rights are abused. No one will silently stand by and witness the violation of personal rights.

I CAN EXPECT THAT ALL THESE RIGHTS WILL BE MINE AS LONG AS I AM FULFILLING ALL MY RESPONSIBILITIES!

SCHOOL-WIDE EXPECTATIONS

1. I am expected to show consideration, courtesy and respect to others and their property.
2. I am expected to walk quietly and safely to and from all activities in an orderly manner. Common sense and safety are our guides.
3. I am expected to avoid the use of profane language and inappropriate gestures.
4. Student doors will open at 8:15 A.M. at which time teacher supervision will begin. I may enter the building to put away supplies and then should return outside. During inclement weather, I may be allowed to remain in my classroom.
5. I am expected to wear clean, dry footwear in the school. If I have boots or wet footwear I will remove them and place them in assigned areas, and put on suitable footwear for use in the school. Fire regulations state that students must always have footwear on, and therefore, students are required to have shoes or runners on at all times.
6. If I remain at school for lunch, I am expected to eat lunch in my classroom and behave appropriately, showing due respect for others.

7. I am expected to remove headgear upon entering the school and refrain from wearing it during regular class time.
8. If I must leave the school during the school day, my parents/guardian will notify my teacher and/or office.
9. I am expected to leave the school promptly at dismissal time, unless involved in a supervised activity and report home or to a location determined by my parents or guardian.
10. I am expected to treat all school property (washroom facilities, walls, desks, books, etc.) with dignity, care and respect.
11. I am expected to be in classrooms during class time. To leave the room, I require the teacher's permission.
12. I am expected to be diligent in pursuing my studies, attend school regularly and punctually, cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the school to provide educational programs and other services, comply with the rules of the school, account to my teachers for my conduct, and respect the rights of others at all times. (*School Act, Article 7*)
13. I am expected to report any vandalism or damage of school property to the school office or classroom teacher immediately upon discovery.

SCHOOLGROUND EXPECTATIONS

1. I am expected to use school and recreational equipment appropriately.
2. I am expected to play safe games that will not harm or potentially endanger others or myself. Some examples of inappropriate games are; tackle football, tackle soccer, throwing snowballs, and play fighting.
3. I am expected to respect the rights of participants in organized games and not to disrupt their activity.
4. I am expected to gather and play in the designated recreational areas.

RECESS EXPECTATIONS

1. Students will be asked to remain outside for the whole break unless the weather becomes inclement. To facilitate this, teachers will remind students to take coats and hats, and use the washroom before going out for recess.
2. Students may ask the supervising staff member for permission to go back into the school if necessary.
3. Students, with permission from parents to stay in, will have their names written on their classroom white board for supervising staff to see.
4. Students will be asked to come inside as soon as the bell rings.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Each classroom teacher has reasonable expectations and consequences (both positive and negative) that contribute to the instructional program, classroom harmony, and development of student responsibility.

In the majority of instances inappropriate behavior will be handled “on the spot” **by any staff member**. The student will realize what poor judgement was on their part and will be assisted to choose and use more acceptable alternatives in the future. In most cases, intervention will occur quickly. Interventions will focus on problem solving/resolving, correction and restitution rather than punishment.

EXPLANATION OF SCHOOL RULES

1. Follow Staff directions promptly.

PURPOSE OF RULE: To keep order in the classroom and building.

EXAMPLE OF MISBEHAVIOR: Not following instructions by the teacher, principal, custodians, secretary or other adults related to the school.

2. Use respectful language.

PURPOSE OF RULE: To prevent offending others.

EXAMPLE OF MISBEHAVIOR: Inappropriate gestures or language. (curse words, profane sayings, talking out of turn and name calling)

3. Respect our school and the personal property of others.

PURPOSE OF RULE: To prevent damage, loss or theft of school or student property.

EXAMPLE OF MISBEHAVIOR: Writing on or scratching desks, lockers, bulletin boards, walls, or fixtures. Taking things without asking to borrow or use them.

4. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.

PURPOSE OF RULE: To keep students from hurting each other.

EXAMPLE OF MISBEHAVIOR: Hitting, kicking, tripping, and/or throwing things or public displays of affection.

(Intentionally hurting another student or staff member will result in immediate suspension.)

DISCIPLINE PLAN

Educators and parents agree: schools need discipline. That's why the staff at Milk River Elementary School supports a school discipline policy which is consistent and fair. When there are no rules, people do not know what is expected of them. Students should follow rules in school so that:

- School is a safe place for everyone.
- School is a caring place for everyone.
- Students learn to follow rules - as there will always be rules to follow throughout life.
- All students will have the chance to learn.

At Milk River Elementary we are committed to a proactive approach in modeling and reinforcing appropriate and positive student behavior. Respect for others, using common sense, following school rules and procedures should result in limited discipline concerns.

On occasion, students will make inappropriate choices. When this happens, the behavior will be assessed and students will face appropriate consequences. These will be developed in consultation between the student, teachers and administrator. Depending on the severity of the issue, parents may also be a part of this process.

The school counselor may be involved to guide the student in developing coping strategies to use to prevent a recurrence.

A serious breach of student conduct may result in school suspension by the principal. Suspensions may range from single or multiple class periods up to five days. The Horizon School Board shall deal with all matters of suspension for more than five days and with recommendations for expulsion.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

The following describes the usual order of consequences.

(Step 1) Reminder

- Unacceptable behavior will be identified and a choice of changing the behavior or moving to Step 2 will be given.

(Step 2) Time Out I (in class)

- 5–10 minutes or to period end with the choice of changing behavior or moving to Step 3 will be given.
- Parents will be notified in Agenda.

(Step 3) Time Out II (in hall or “time out” area)

- 10–30 minutes with choice of behaving or moving to Step 4
- Parents will be notified in Agenda

(Step 4) Detention I

- Students who violate school rules three times within a reporting period will be asked to serve up to four recesses and/or noon hour detentions. Parents will be informed by phone call or letter and the student will be asked to fill out a behavior contract in which they will outline the changes they need to make in order to improve their behavior.
- If behavior still does not improve, the student will be moved to Step 5.

(Step 5) Detention II

- Students who have served several detentions, with no visible improvement in their behaviors, may lose school privileges and the right to attend non-core subjects for 1–2 days.
- At this point a behavior team will become involved (parents, teachers, principal, CST, school counselor, Division Student Services Supervisor).
- The team will develop a restitution plan to address the specific areas of concern. This plan will also address the safety and learning needs of all students.

On occasion if the behavior is considered severe, highly dangerous, and/or occurs too frequently, the appropriate consequences will be determined with the following suspensions.

Suspension – in school

- Students who have committed a major offence, such as committing school vandalism, using abusive language, or abusive behavior, may be given an in-school suspension for up to 2 days.
- Parents are informed by the office and all contact with other students will be removed during this in-school arrangement.
- A behavior contract will be completed by the student which will again outline necessary changes the student needs to make in their own behavior before they will be allowed to re-enter their regular classroom.

Suspension – out of school

- Under extreme circumstances, students who have committed a major offence may be given an out-of-school suspension for up to five days.
- Parents and the Superintendent will be kept informed of this level, when and if a student requires such a severe consequence for their behavior.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (I.S.S.)

The student remains in school. All privileges are suspended. Students bring lunch and eat in isolation; classes are not attended (one or two days).

While on I.S.S., the student will be provided with materials and assignments that are relevant, realistic, and appropriate, and will be responsible for the completion of these assignments.

If the student is disruptive during an I.S.S., he/she will be given one warning. Should the disruptive behavior continue, he/she will phone his/her parents/guardian to discuss being picked up at school. If the parent/guardian is unable to pick up their son/daughter, they will arrange for an emergency person to do so. An out-of-school suspension may be initiated at this point. A record of the incident and student plan of action will be maintained in the teacher's/school file.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Out-of-school suspension is a formal disciplinary action for dealing with extremely disruptive and/or dangerous student behavior. It involves short-term exclusion of a student from class, from riding on a school bus, and from attending up to a maximum of five school days. The student may be considered as trespassing if present on school grounds during the period of the suspension.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is an action that can be taken only by the Board of Trustees. A student may be expelled from one or more specific schools or all schools in the District, and for a specified period of time or indefinitely.

M.R.E.S. ANTI-BULLYING PROTOCOL

Milk River Elementary School has, as part of our handbook, a formalized set of guidelines for dealing with the potentially devastating issue of bullying. This protocol is designed to be helpful for perpetrators of bullying, victims or targets, as well as the school staff.

This protocol is not designed to be a method of punishment or a disciplinary tool. Bullying is an emotional problem just as much or more than it is a behavior problem. The primary purpose of this tool is to provide intervention, protection, prevention and safety for the students involved. The goal is to identify what bullying behavior is, the students involved and then be able to assist them in removing this issue from their lives and the school.

The bully protocol is a specific set of steps for the staff and students to follow and understand, which will enable them to have a concrete method of determining if a problem is actually bullying and then what to do about it. The steps entail intervening as immediately as possible, working with both the perpetrator and the target. The target receives support, education and if necessary, counseling to assist them in coping with the trauma they have encountered, and the perpetrator receives the same in effort to help them stop their negative behavior. The perpetrator becomes part of a step system that increases in intrusiveness as they reach higher steps from continued bullying. If a student reaches step 4 or 5 out of 5 total steps, the primary concern becomes the safety of the students within the school and the student can be recommended for suspension.

All steps are designed to involve the families to ensure that they, #1 - are aware of the problem and, #2 - are able to be involved in the process of learning and working on behalf of their child. Students will be involved with the school administration and the school counselor learning about empathy (understanding the feelings of others), and various ideas and strategies to help them overcome this issue.

It is important to note that in order for this system to work the most effectively it can, it requires absolute follow through on behalf of the School staff and the parents of the students involved.