



ROCK CITY ELEMENTARY

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Lillian Carefoot

PRINCIPAL

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PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME SEPTEMBER 2009

Dear Parents and Students:

A big welcome to Rock City School for the 2009-2010 school year. We would like to extend a very hearty welcome to all pupils and parents, and a special welcome to parents and students who are new to the school. The mission of Rock City Elementary School is to provide a safe and strong academic setting in which the children will be instilled with a love of lifelong learning, a respect for themselves and others, and a dedication to meet the challenges of the future through a combined partnership of home, school and community. Our motto of REACH FOR YOUR BEST will help challenge each child to develop his/her unique potential. We feel that parents are true partners in this process.

You are invited to become involved in the life of the school through either the Parent Advisory Committee or any one of the many volunteer activities. Our communication lines with parents are wide open. Please feel free to make an appointment at any time with your child's teacher, or with me, to discuss your child(ren). I look forward to spending some time with each of you.

We are often complimented about our school. We have an excellent staff of competent and creative teachers, keen and able support staff and a helpful, caring office team. The teachers, support staff and administration are completely focused on the happiness and success of the children in our care. We thank you for your trust and cooperation in our day-to-day efforts.

We continue to have solid goals in place. They are centered around academic achievement and social responsibility. We see parents as partners in all we do. You can look forward to continued communication between school and home, beginning with these planners.

Please take the time to read through this handbook. It will help provide some basic information about our school, our school district and policies and procedures. I look forward to spending time with each and every one of you! I am so excited about this coming school year; I know 2009-2010 will be the best yet!

Yours in education,

Lillian Carefoot
Principal

STUDENT BEHAVIOUR & EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL

Mission Statement for the BC Education System

The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable all learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

Mission Statement for School District #68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith

To inspire students to develop a love for learning in a caring and stimulating environment.

Mission Statement for Rock City School

The mission of Rock City Elementary School is to provide a safe and strong academic setting in which children will be instilled with a love of lifelong learning, a respect for themselves and others, and a dedication to meet the challenges of the future through a combined partnership of home, school and community. Our motto of REACH FOR YOUR BEST will help challenge each child to develop their unique potential.

Expectations of Participants in the Educational Process

To achieve an effective learning environment for our students, the school community must function well together. For the educational process to be a successful and enjoyable one:

- the child must be prepared to learn
- the climate of the school and classroom must be conducive to learning, and
- the teacher must be prepared to help the child.

Expectations of Pupils

- to always work and play safely and responsibly.
- to be courteous and to practice common manners.
- to respect the rights of others.
- to come to school properly equipped and willing to work.

Expectations of Parents

- to ensure that students attend regularly and punctually.
- to ensure that the child is prepared to work while at school.
- to be prepared to work with the child and the teacher in planning and carrying out a suitable educational program.
- to work with the teacher to help the child develop responsibility, self-discipline, and respect for the rights of others.

Expectations of Teachers

- to present to a group of individual students a planned basic program.
- to acknowledge the individual differences of pupils, and to make adjustments to the basic program, so that each pupil is challenged to reach his/her potential.
- to be courteous, practice common manners, and to enforce the expectations of the school and the classroom consistently and with impartiality.
- to work with pupils and parents in planning and implementing a suitable educational program for each child.

Expectations of the Principal

To administer and supervise the school, including:

- placement and programming of pupils in the school.
- general conduct of pupils at school, going to and from school, and participating in extra-curricular activities.
- provision of guidance, advice, support, and direction to pupils, parents, teachers, and support staff in all school matters

Attendance

Attendance at school is important for two reasons:

1. Pupils miss concepts taught and assignments when away.
2. Perhaps more important in the long run, if absence with parent permission is due to any other reason except illness or medical reasons, it places a lesser value on school education in the eyes of the child.

We urge parents to consider carefully an occasion when you plan to take your child out of school, for reasons other than those stated in the Provincial School Regulations. It is not only unfair to your child, but it is unfair to the classroom teacher, who needs to take time from other teaching duties and responsibilities to assist the student upon his/her return to school.

Lates

It is a matter of common courtesy to arrive for classes at the proper time and students are encouraged to develop life long habits of promptness.

Students who arrive late often disrupt the operation of the classroom by requiring the attention of their teachers or classmates to assist them in getting started on their assignments or to re-teach all or part of a lesson.

Student Access to the Building

As a student, your presence in the building prior to 8:45 a.m. is:

1. subject to the approval of your classroom teacher.
2. permissible if you are participating in a teacher-sponsored activity.
3. permissible in EMERGENCIES.

Noon Hour Policy

Students are encouraged to go home for lunch whenever possible, particularly if they are within walking distance of the school and have a parent or someone responsible at home. However, it is understood that many students will need to remain at school for the lunch period. Pupils staying at school during lunch recess cannot leave the school grounds during the noon hour without permission from their teacher and written permission from their parent. We strongly urge parents not to give permission for their children to go to any stores or shops unless it is absolutely necessary.

Expectations for pupils remaining at school over the noon hour must be well understood by everyone.

Pupils shall:

- Obey all school and playground rules, and be courteous and respectful toward the noon supervisors, **they are part of the staff.**

Consequences for failure to meet these expectations shall be implemented. Parents will be informed of unacceptable behavior. The consequences will be escalated to the point where students may lose the privilege to stay at school for lunch for a period of time.

Care of School Property

Pupils borrow library books and are issued textbooks. They use school supplies and equipment. It is the pupil's responsibility to take care of any item that is on loan to him/her. As the school has only limited resources for replacement of materials, any pupil who carelessly or willfully loses, defaces, or destroys books and other school property will be required to pay the replacement cost.

Every pupil is encouraged to carry books to and from school in a suitable bag.

Detentions

A detention is simply being detained by a teacher. It is used primarily as a logical consequence for a student's behavior. Frequently, it is used for completing unfinished work, for redoing work poorly done, or as a consequence for unacceptable classroom or playground behavior.

Teachers may detain a student for up to one half hour without parental permission, or longer, after consultation with the parent. A child may phone home, if necessary, to advise his/her parent of a detention.

Appeal Procedures

At times parents may have concerns regarding decisions in the area of behavior, pupil placement, and program. Most often any problems can be solved at an early stage through consultation. Parents are encouraged to use the following steps to address these concerns:

1. Discuss concerns with your child.
2. Discuss concerns with the classroom teacher.
3. If a successful conclusion cannot be reached, the counsellor, learning assistance teacher, or other support teachers can be consulted.
4. The situation can be reviewed by parents and the principal (with or without the use of school personnel).
5. Parents can appeal to the Superintendent.
6. Parents can appeal to the Board of School Trustees.
7. Parents can appeal to a Superintendent of Achievement.

School Telephone

Students are allowed to use the school telephone in the event of an emergency or as directed by a teacher. Use of the telephone is not to be used to arrange for rides home, or for permission to play at a friend's house. These arrangements should be made in advance.

Dress Guidelines

The school is a place to work and learn and as such students are expected to dress in a manner that is conducive to this expectation. At Rock City we rely on the good sense of students and their parents rather than a strict code as to what is suitable to wear to school. Some general guidelines are:

- Hats are not worn in the building.
- Beach wear or clothes that are revealing (low cut tops, spaghetti straps, muscle T-shirts, halter tops, bare midriffs and backs are not acceptable).
- Items of clothing that display offensive graphics/writing are not appropriate for school.
- Clothing needs to be suitable for the season (i.e. warm tops in winter).
- Tops must meet bottoms.

The appearance of any young person is primarily the responsibility of that individual and his/her parents. We expect students to maintain the type of appearance that is not distracting to teachers or other students or is to the detriment of the educational process of the school.

When a student's appearance is felt to be detrimental, the parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to bring appropriate clothing for the student. If the problem persists, a parent/administrator conference may be required.

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found Box is located in the main hallway by Room 101. Items are kept there a few months. Before taking items to a charity organization, students are given the opportunity to review the contents of the box. Please place name labels on all items left at school like boots, shoes, gym strip, and coats. If the child's name is on the article it will be returned.

School Program and Curriculum

Homework

The assigning of homework is recommended for pupils in Grades 1 to 7. The following time ranges serve as a guide: Grades 1-3, 10-45 mins. Grades 4-7, 45-90 mins. per night. This matter, however, is at the discretion of the teacher. Homework can be of many types. Study might include the following:

Primary Grades:

- regular reading with parents
- regular practice of arithmetic facts
- practice of spelling and printing
- completion of work not completed at school
- project work

Intermediate Grades:

- practice of spelling/number facts
- preparing for tests
- project work
- skill building work assigned by teacher
- completion of work not completed at school

Teachers assign homework with the hope of:

- encouraging self-discipline and responsibility.
- fostering good study habits, and
- motivating the students to want to learn more

Homework can also keep parents informed of the work done by the students. A student planner is used from grades 1-7 to assist in the communication between home and school.

It is recommended that all students set aside a certain time and place each day for doing school work, whether assigned or not. Homework is not a punishment. It helps students develop responsibility for their own learning.

Reporting Guidelines for Each Program

Primary Reports – Kindergarten to Grade 3

Teachers will provide parents with three written formal reports. Parents must be provided with information describing their child's progress in the curriculum with reference to standards of development for students in a similar age range. Teachers will include three formal written reports and information on standards of development for each school year in the Permanent Student file, as required.

In the Kindergarten and Primary report cards, major elements that are reported on include:
social responsibility – language arts – personal planning – mathematics – social studies – science – fine arts – physical education.

Intermediate Reports – Grade 4 to 7

Teachers will provide parents with three written formal reports. Letter grades will appear on report cards. Teachers will include formal written reports, including information regarding level of achievement as indicated by letter grades for each school year in the Permanent Student file, as required.

The intermediate report card includes:

language arts – social studies – mathematics – art/drama – science – music – physical education – work habits – information technology – personal planning – French (as a second language) – personal and social development.

On both the Primary and Intermediate report cards, space is given for additional comments by teachers and to note ways parents can support learning.

This year report cards will be sent home –

November

March

June

Parent-Teacher Interviews are in October.

School Newsletter

The Rock City Newsletter is sent home each month and contains information on upcoming events, dates for your calendar, educational items, directives from the School District Office, and requests for your suggestions and participation. Special events or announcements may also have their own special newsletter. Community events will not be put in the newsletter, please look at the community bulletin board.

Assemblies

Monthly assemblies provide us with a wonderful opportunity to bring together to honour and celebrate the learning community we have become. Parents are welcome to attend. Assemblies also provide us with an opportunity to practice good audience skills.

STUDENT SAFETY

Emergency Dismissal/School Closure

Unforeseen circumstances and conditions may result in a school closure. What do parents need to know?

1. Be informed. The local radio stations (WAVE 102.3 FM and WOLF 106.9FM) will start broadcasting bulletins by 7:00 am if circumstances force a school closure. These will be updated again by 11:00 am.
2. Prepare your child. If schools are closed during the school day due to some emergency situation, your child needs to know what to do. With approximately 300 students, we cannot contact all parents by phone. If your child's first option is to go home, be sure to instruct him/her on what to do (i.e. whom to phone if home alone). You may, especially if both parents work outside the home, need to establish a plan for your child after an emergency release.

This plan could include:

1. going to the home of a friend, neighbor or relative or
2. enlisting the support services of older siblings or neighbor's children to be responsible for the safety and care of your younger child.

Keep these things in mind:

- You may not be able to get home quickly or easily.
- Communication by telephone may be difficult.
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Early Detection System

Early detection was initiated for the safety and protection of your children. The purpose of the program is to detect as soon as possible the whereabouts of each student not in class. For the system to operate successfully, parents are requested to:

1. Phone the school, in the morning between 8:00 and 8:45 and in the afternoon between 12:30 and 1:00, if your child is late or absent from school for any reason, or, call outside of school hours and leave a message, or
2. Send a note with another child in the family, or
3. Give advance notice, preferably written, of dental/medical appointments, or any changes from the usual routine.

A Note of Caution: The Early Detection System is just that – detection – detection of a child's whereabouts if absent from school without reason. The Early Detection System does not replace the safety precautions students must exercise to prevent harm.

Students should

- walk/bike to and from school with friends
- be cautious of strangers
- report suspicious events and people to parents or teachers
- know the homes of block parents where they can seek help
- follow a safe route to and from school established with their parents
- inform parents of participation in any after-school activities (including detentions of more than 15 minutes)

Your co-operation in reinforcing these guidelines with your child is appreciated.

Emergency Procedures

Should your child have a serious injury during school hours, the following procedure is followed:

1. The nature and seriousness of the child's injury is determined.
2. If time is not an important consideration, the home is contacted and the parent is asked to come for the child.
3. If the home cannot be contacted the emergency number provided to the school is called.
4. If no contact is made, the school will take the necessary action to ensure the child gets medical attention. The school will continue in its attempt to contact parent/guardians.
5. If emergency care is required, the school will do so as quickly as possible. In such cases the parent may have to meet their child at the hospital.

Student Medication

1. Teachers shall not be required to administer medical procedures. Nor shall teachers be required to administer medications on a regular or predictable basis.
2. The administration of medication and/or other medical procedures shall be the responsibility of appropriate health personnel except for those mature students capable and trained in self-administration.
3. The Board shall ensure that schools establish systems for administering medication and other medical procedures.
4. If isolation or other exceptional circumstances prevent the foregoing from being applicable and teachers are required to administer medication or other medical procedures, the following conditions constitute prerequisites.
 - Teachers volunteer to provide the service
 - Teachers receive training appropriate to the required duties.
5. Teachers have a duty to render assistance in an emergency.

Fire Drill

All schools conduct fire drills several times throughout the year. Any continuous ringing of the fire bell must be treated as a real emergency (as it well could be). Pupils evacuate the school in an orderly fashion and gather at a designated place at a safe distance from the building. The deliberate activation of a false fire alarm is a very serious offence and will result in a five-day suspension.

Earthquake Drill

Earthquake drills are conducted on a regular basis. Students stay indoors (usually under desks). In an event of an earthquake, when shaking stops, the school is evacuated in an orderly fashion. Teachers and students move to a predetermined open space away from buildings and overhead power lines.

Bicycle Safety

If your child brings a bicycle to school, please ensure that he/she can handle it safely and is familiar with the rules of the road. The common rules are:

1. Ride on the right-hand edge of the paved surface.
2. Stop completely at stop signs.
3. Ride in single file.
4. Do not ride on the sidewalk or on school grounds.
5. Always lock your bike.

Your child needs to wear a safety helmet and bright clothing. The school cannot take responsibility for lost, stolen, or vandalized bicycles. (Students who do not observe these basic rules will lose the privilege of bringing a bicycle to school.

Traffic Safety

Traffic safety is an ongoing priority at the school. You can help us by reminding your child(ren) to:

1. Cross the road at the intersection
2. Look both ways before crossing
3. Walk across the crosswalk

Parking

Since we have limited parking available at the school, extra caution is required by drivers. You can assist in the safety of dropping off or picking up your child(ren) by watching them closely. The lower parking lot should not be used during the school day as we need to leave room for buses to come in and out. Parents driving for after school teams are encouraged to use the back parking lot.

DISTRICT POLICIES

Field Trips and Insurance

Our students may be on many field trips throughout the year. There is nothing better than experiencing something first hand, and a great deal of learning in many associated areas happens on field trips. All of our students are required to have a signed permission slip before they can partake in these activities.

Often, parents are called upon to drive a class to the field trip. Board Policy provides a special insurance rider that includes additional coverage; over and above the driver's own policy, to protect volunteer drivers. Parents will need to complete a Volunteer Driver's Application.

Policy 4410 – Volunteer Vehicles

- a) *The B.C. minimum third party liability insurance required on each vehicle is \$200,000.*
- b) *Volunteer vehicles are not to carry in excess of the number of passengers prescribed by law. Volunteer vehicles are to carry a maximum of nine passengers.*
- c) *The principal or delegate shall inform in writing the volunteer driver/owner that the vehicle must meet all safety requirements, including a seat belt for each passenger.*
- d) *Children under 5'5" or less than 12 years old must not be transported in the front seat if the vehicle is equipped with a passenger side air bag which is not disabled.*
- e) *Children at least 18 kg (40 lbs) to age nine or 145 cm tall (4'9"), whichever comes first must be secured in a booster seat, in a seated position equipped with a shoulder harness.*

Multicultural Education

The Board recognizes the multicultural diversity of Canada and the contributions made by the various cultural groups in our community. Consequently, the Board is committed to educational practices that encourage respect for the cultural traditions of all pupils. The Board recognizes the important role played by the school in promoting an awareness of the multicultural nature of our community.

Rock City School Code of Conduct

A. Statement of Purpose

- To assist in the growth and development of the whole child – one who attains academic proficiency and physical skills based upon appropriate developmental expectations; one who is socially aware and cooperative and who displays emotion and feelings in an acceptable manner.
- To articulate and publish expectations for student behaviour while at school, going to and from school and while representing the school in the community.
- Rock City school promotes the values expressed in the BC Human Rights Code respecting the rights of all individuals in accordance with the law—prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation—in respect of discriminatory publication and discrimination in accommodation, service and facility in the school environment.

B. Conduct Expectations

- All students are expected to take personal responsibility for their behaviour. As students grow, mature and move through successive grades, the expectations for them to assume more responsibility will increase.

Acceptable Behaviours

- Rock City School students are expected to be RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE and to demonstrate GOOD MANNERS at all times.
- They are expected to conduct themselves in such a way that SAFETY is ensured and that the RIGHTS OF OTHERS are respected.
- Students are expected to act in a manner that brings credit to the school.
- These expectations apply to behaviour at school, during school—organized or sponsored activities, and behaviour beyond these times (including on-line behaviour) that negatively impacts the safe, caring or orderly environment of the school, and/or student learning.

Unacceptable Behaviours

- Behaviour that jeopardizes the safety of others or interferes with teaching or learning is unacceptable.
- Acts of bullying, physical violence or harassment are not acceptable.
- Illegal acts such as theft, damage to property, or possession of illegal substances are not acceptable.
- The school will treat seriously behaviour or communication that discriminates based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation (prohibited grounds set out in the BC Human Rights Code).

C. Consequences

- Students unable to meet the school's stated expectations or abide by the school's rules will be subject to consistent and logical consequences.
- Disciplinary actions, wherever possible, is preventative or restorative rather than punitive. These consequences can include the loss of privileges, removal from class, detentions, home-school conference, a shortened day or suspension from school. In every instance, behaviour that is unacceptable will be brought to the student's attention immediately. In the event that the behaviour is serious or has become chronic, parents will be notified.

Step 1 : Dealt with by staff members. There may be a referral to the Triad Classroom if appropriate.

Step 2 : Discussion between principal/student/teacher

Step 3 : Parents informed

Step 4 : Meeting with parents/student/teacher and principal

D. Notification

- In cases of serious breaches of the Code of Conduct, the school will advise other parties, including:

- i. Parents of student offender (s)
- ii. Parents of victim (s)
- iii. School District Officials as required by School District Policy
- iv. Police and or other agencies as required by law
- v. All parents - when deemed to be important to reassure members of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation or incident and are taking appropriate action to address it.

School Planning Council

Each school has a council composed of three parents, and the principal. During the course of a school year, this council will be involved in important school decisions.

SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER 2009

School Hours for Grades 1 to 7

8:48 Morning begins
10:30 – 10:45 Recess
12:00 – 12:45 Lunch
2:45 Dismissal Mon- Thurs
On Fridays we dismiss at 1:45

Kindergarten - 8:48 - 11:09
12:09 - 2:45 (Friday dismissal at 1:45)

Rock City Non-Instructional Days 2009-2010

September 28, 2009	School Based Pro-D Day
October 23, 2009	District Based Pro-D Day
February 22, 2010	District Based Pro-D Day
February 23, 2010	School Based Pro-D Day
April 26, 2010	Implementation Day
June 29, 2010	School Based Pro-D Day

Province Wide School Calendar

Schools Open	September 8, 2009
Thanksgiving Day	October 12, 2009
Remembrance Day	November 11, 2009
Schools Close for Winter Vacation	December 18, 2009
Schools Re-open	January 4, 2010
Schools Close for Spring Vacation	March 5, 2010
Schools Re-open	March 15, 2010
Good Friday	April 2, 2010
Easter Monday	April 5, 2010
Victoria Day	May 24, 2010
Last day of classes	June 28, 2010