



Our School Community Handbook 2023 - 2024

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Jonathan Skinner: Principal

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Sparling School is located on Treaty 6 territory, and we respect the histories, languages, and culture of First Nations, Metis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada. We acknowledge they are the caretakers of the land, and all who share and contribute to the land, including the four-legged, two-legged, finned, feathered, crawlers, trees, plants, water, sun, and moon. This is an acknowledgement of the historical relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities on Turtle Island, and is a call to action to walk together towards reconciliation.

REAL Leaders Behaviour Matrix

Students, parents and staff of Sparling School are committed to being REAL Leaders by showing Respect, putting in their best Effort, having a positive Attitude, and demonstrating Leadership.

	SAFE	RESPONSIBLE	RESPECTFUL
Respect	<p>Hands and feet to self</p>  	<p>Make good choices</p> <p>Put things away and clean up</p>  	<p>Use kind and polite words</p> <p>Use a level 2 voice</p> 
Effort	<p>Take care of the school</p> <p>Get help when you need</p> 	<p>Do your job and let others do theirs</p> <p>Listen to adult instructions</p> <p>Dress for the weather</p> <p>Talk to an adult to help solve problems</p> 	<p>Listen</p> <p>Treat others well</p>  
Attitude	<p>Be aware of others</p> <p>Safe choices</p>   	<p>Be prepared and on time</p> <p>Be your best self</p> 	<p>Show good sportsmanship</p> <p>Celebrate success</p> 
Leadership	<p>Find a safe space to calm</p> <p>Use calming strategy</p> 	<p>Talk to each other to solve problems</p> <p>Honour everyone and their ideas</p> <p>Include others</p> 	<p>Take care of people, places and things</p> <p>Look for the best in others</p> 

Our Mission

Sparling Stars will grow and learn in an inclusive environment that is supported by community involvement, respectful relationships, early intervention, and collaboration to empower every child.

Our Philosophy

At Sparling School, we work to make every day a successful one for each student in our school. We strive to serve our community and meet not only the educational needs of our students, but also their emotional and social needs, while recognizing their unique individual characteristics.

Responsible members of society respect the rights of others without sacrificing their own rights. It is our goal to guide students to be responsible members of society in a manner that promotes each individual's feeling of positive self-worth.

Learning is a life-long process and in today's changing world a continuing desire to explore and discover could well be integral to an individual's success. For this reason, we strive to cultivate within each student an inquiring mind, tuned to a life-long positive attitude toward learning.

To support this goal, students at Sparling School are encouraged to be REAL leaders. REAL stands for Respect, Effort, Attitude, and Leadership. We do our best to be safe and responsible. We are respectful to other students, educators, bus drivers, community members, and our environment. Students are recognized when they portray these characteristics, as well as being encouraged to use them to resolve problems.

Student Code of Conduct

The purpose of our Code of Conduct is to outline for students, parents, and staff what are acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, and to outline possible consequences for unacceptable behaviours. All members of the Sparling School community can expect to be treated with dignity and fairness, free of discrimination.

At Sparling School we believe in the responsibility model of discipline. Effective discipline comes from the belief that teaching individuals to take responsibility for their behaviour is more motivating in creating behavioral changes than teaching them to be obedient in order to avoid punishment.

If a student engages in inappropriate behaviour, the consequence(s) will depend upon the severity of the infraction. It is our belief that most children of school age are capable of understanding the appropriateness of their actions and that they are able to learn how to prevent further infractions of a similar nature. By applying logical and consistent consequences, and by providing students with opportunities to become responsible and caring members of the community, students will learn to take responsibility for their behavior, while still maintaining their dignity.

Bullying and discrimination will not be tolerated within our school community. Students are encouraged to alert staff if they feel they are being bullied. Harassment is any repeated negative action against a person that causes worry or fear. School staff will follow through on reported incidents.

Procedures for Discipline:

- For minor infractions, it is the responsibility of the "adult in charge" (teacher, administrator, supervisor, etc.) to intervene and assign consequences. Administrators will be involved for recurring infractions.
- For major infractions, an administrator will be involved in the process.
- In many cases, contact with the home will also be made to describe the inappropriate behaviour(s) and the corrective action and/or consequences.
- Depending upon the nature of the behaviour, students may also be referred to the School Resource Officer.
- The principal or their designate may proceed to a more serious consequence by omitting intermediate steps in the discipline plan if the action is warranted in their opinion.
- Each incident will be treated on its own merit.

References:	<i>School Act</i> , Sections 12, 45(8) and 60	
	B.R.S.D. #31 - Procedures:	350 (Student Behaviour and Conduct)
		356 (Suspension and Expulsion of Students)
		160 (Safe and Caring Schools)
		551 (Transportation Student Conduct)

Policies and Procedures

REGISTRATION

At the beginning of each year, parents are asked to fill out a verification form for their child. The school office requires a photocopy of your child's birth certificate to be kept on file as mandated by the Province. If your phone number, address or emergency contact information changes from that which is provided on your child's registration form, please contact the school immediately.

It is critical that we have up-to-date contact numbers.

In the event that a child becomes ill or injured at school, we need to be able to get in touch with you or your emergency contact.

STUDENT ENTRY

As supervision begins twenty minutes before the entry bell, students may arrive at school no earlier than supervision is available. Grades one through five meet on the east side of the school in designated classroom lines. The side door off the parking lot will be used by our Kindergarten students. Pre-Kindergarten students enter through the front doors of the school.

Students are expected to go home or to OSCAR at the end of the day. There is only outside supervision for students after school for approximately 10 minutes.

STUDENT PICK UP

Parents picking up their children may park along 53rd St. and 53rd Ave.

Please do not park in the marked bus-loading zones at the front of the school.

At no time is the riding of bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc. permitted in the bus loading/unloading zone or on the sidewalks in front of the school.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

For the safety of our students and staff, we request that all visitors to the school report to the General Office upon arrival. Parents or others who are dropping off items for students will generally be asked to leave the item at the office and the student will be called down at break time to retrieve it.

Visitors who are staying for a longer period of time are asked to sign in at the general office. They will be given a visitor pass that they must wear while in the school.

At the end of the day, parents of Grade K-5 students are asked to wait outside the school for their child to join them after the final bell goes.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND LATE ARRIVAL POLICY

Regular school attendance contributes significantly to academic success and requires cooperation between students, parents, teachers and the school administrators.

Parents are requested to notify the school regarding each child's absence by phoning the school at any time and leaving a message on the answering machine. Where absences are unexplained, parents will be notified by an automatic calling system that their child is absent from school.

Punctuality is also important for the smooth operation of the school. **Students are expected to be at school and in their classrooms by the first bell.** Students who arrive late or leave early are asked to check in at the office.



REPORTING ILLNESS

The school **strongly urges** parents to keep ill or symptomatic children at home where they can be cared for properly. Families are urged to call in when students are going to be absent.

COMMUNICATION

The school website is an important source of information between the school and home. It is updated regularly. Also, important messages will be sent home through School Messenger. Families may subscribe to receive these messages by email or text.

Some students in grades 1-5 have individual agendas to help them become well-organized students. The agendas are an excellent tool for communication between the school and home, and we ask that you check it daily for messages from the teacher. Other classrooms use tools such as See Saw, phone calls, messenger, or email to communicate with parents.

STUDENT HEALTH INFORMATION

An anaphylactic reaction is an allergic reaction so severe that it is life threatening. We recognize the dangers faced by students and staff with severe or anaphylactic reactions (allergies) to foods. While we cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment, we will take reasonable steps to ensure a safe environment for children or staff with life-threatening allergies. We rely on parents to communicate information about children with severe or anaphylactic reactions, and administration will work with these families to complete a Severe Allergy Alert Form/Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan.

If parents identify their child to have severe or anaphylactic reactions to specific foods, we will ask other parents in that student's class to refrain from sending those foods to school. The homeroom teacher will communicate with parents if it is necessary to declare their classroom an "allergen-free" area. The purpose of this policy is to be educational in nature, and all learners are expected to treat others with consideration and respect by adhering to this policy.

STUDENT APPAREL AND DRESS CODE

Students at Sparling School are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate for a school setting and that reflects the changes in weather that we experience throughout the year. Some guidelines for parents and students:

- Headwear such as caps and toques may be worn in the school but each teacher has expectations regarding wearing headwear in their classroom.
- Students will have a pair of shoes to wear inside the school, and are expected to take off their outdoor footwear when they enter the school.
- Students will have a pair of non-marking runners to wear in the gym.
- Clothing with pictures or slogans must be school appropriate and not contain profanity or inappropriate messages or images.
- Parents are asked to label clothing when possible, especially shoes, boots, and coats.



STUDENT LOCKERS

At the beginning of the year, each student is assigned a locker to use for the school year. Students are expected to keep their lockers closed throughout the day, and to keep them clean and tidy. Students are not permitted to use a padlock of any kind on their locker.

Only items that are necessary and appropriate for school should be kept in the locker. The school administration reserves the right to search any locker at any time.

Programs and Services

TOYS, ELECTRONIC DEVICES and CELLPHONES

Students are discouraged from bringing toys to school, and if they do so, they do so at their own risk as the school assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.

Students who have other electronic devices or a cell phone are asked to keep them in their lockers on silent during the day, including at recess. Some teachers may decide to allow students to use their electronic devices in class for educational purposes, but this decision is left up to teacher discretion. If parents need to contact their child during the day, they should call the office and leave a message which will be passed on to their child.



INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

Individual bus drivers will make an early determination about weather and road conditions in the areas they travel. Should road and weather conditions make it unsafe for buses to travel, drivers will initiate the phone fan-out for their route. They will contact the school, and a notice will be posted on the Battle River School Division website.

By region practice, the school building will remain open, even in extreme conditions. **Parents can ultimately decide not to send students to school if they believe conditions are extreme or unsafe. This decision can be made regardless of the buses running or the school being open.**

Should weather conditions change during the day, forcing buses to depart early, parents will be notified by phone fan-out before the buses leave.



BUSSING

Bussing to Sparling School for students is available to students who reside in the Sparling School attendance area. Parents of students who do not reside in the attendance area noted above should contact the Transportation department at BRSD for details about the eligibility requirements for transportation.

EARLY LEARNING PRE-K PROGRAM

BRSD operates Early Learning programs in all of our elementary schools within the city of Camrose. Here at Sparling School, we offer a program on the mornings of Monday to Thursday. The program offers a great start to your child's education in a holistic play-based environment where students are encouraged to, "seek, participate, persist and care". (*The Alberta Early Learning Framework*).

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

Kindergarten programs are full-day classes that are held on Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday, along with occasional Fridays. Sparling also offers a Nature Kindergarten program.

Nutrition Program

At this time, Sparling school has an extensive nutrition program available to **all students** in their classrooms. Nutritious food is provided daily at the start of school for those students who are in need of it; hot sandwiches and other food items are available at lunch; and a snack table with yogurts, fruit, and granola bars (among other items) is available throughout the day.



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Some of the specialized programming at Sparling School includes the following:

- Early Literacy Program
- Specialized Learning Supports
- Referrals to Alberta Health Services, including:
 - Speech-Language Pathology
 - Physical Therapy
 - Occupational Therapy



WELLNESS PROGRAMMING

At Sparling School, we work to develop and promote the mental and physical health needs of our students and their families. We can facilitate referrals and help coordinate access to services that allow children and youth to protect their mental and physical health at as early an age as possible. At the school, working with administration and other BRSD members, the following staff and programs help with these services:

- FSLW – Family-School Liaison Worker Program
- Mental Health Capacity Building

SCHOOL COUNCIL

School Councils are associations of parents, staff and community representatives who work together to promote the well-being and effectiveness of the school community. Sparling has traditionally enjoyed a very supportive school council that meets once a month. The school council is an effective way of providing input to the school and district administration.

The Sparling School Council provides a variety of services and fundraisers throughout the year. All parents are encouraged and welcomed to become involved in the School Council!

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Students benefit greatly by seeing their parents involved in school activities and we invite parents to become involved in the school program on a voluntary basis. Parental involvement may include listening to children read, assisting students with projects or demonstrations, coaching or coordinating special activities or events. We ask that parents plan volunteer visits with the classroom teacher. Parents who wish to volunteer in the classroom/school need to have a criminal record check and intervention check done prior to working with students.

