

# 2023 – 2024 Forest Green School Parent Handbook



**FOREST GREEN  
DRAGONS**

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## Introduction

Parkland School Division, and all of our schools, are committed to acting on our new vision, mission and ultimate goal. These new statements, which emphasize student success and well-being, reflect the future-focused and innovative organization that we are today.

### *Our Vision*

#### WHERE WE ARE GOING

- Our students possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact the world.

### *Our Mission*

#### HOW WE WILL GET THERE

- We assure supportive learning environments, meaningful experiences and healthy relationships that create opportunities to develop resilience, to gain diversity in perspectives and to achieve enduring success.

### *Our Ultimate Goal*

#### THE REWARD FOR GETTING THERE

- Student Success and Well-being

### *Our Values*

#### WHAT GUIDES US

- Learning opportunities that are purposeful, essential, relevant, authentic and responsive;
- Excellence in achievement;
- Trustworthy, respectful relationships; and,
- resilience with self-awareness.

### *Our Priorities*

#### Student & Staff Wellness

Both student wellness and workplace wellness are priorities for us.

PSD's Ultimate Goal: Student Success and Well-being highlights how important student wellness is. A healthy school approach is one that supports the health and well-being of students and the entire school community. EVERYONE plays a role in supporting student wellness.

Healthy organizations and workplaces are at their best when they are made up of people who are healthy. Wellness is a very personal concept that can mean many things to different people,

but workplace wellness is about how you feel about your work, the workplace environment, and the climate and culture within it.

### Identity, Community and Belonging

Although PSDs tagline is 'Where the World Opens up', the world doesn't open up to all members of our communities until our minds open up to all members of our communities. A continual progression toward equity, and the promotion of anti-racism, are essential components of a caring, respectful and safe school division. All members of the PSD community are expected to demonstrate, and ensure, that a sense of belonging, for all staff, students and community members, exists in all places.

### Indigenous Perspectives and Ways of Knowing

PSD is building relationships with Indigenous communities that increase understanding of their experiences, and therefore increase attendance rates, academic completion, and a sense of belonging for Indigenous students. In addition, we need to learn the history of our continent that predates colonialism - we have a responsibility to listen to the stories of the Elders and to increase our understanding beyond what we were taught in school, and to bring those perspectives into our day-to-day work and learning.

### Programming and Pedagogy

Student programming and continual improvement of teaching practices continues to be a priority for PSD. The Division is proud to offer diverse programs to students because that's how learning comes alive for them. Programs showcase the breadth of the work. The depth of our work gets recognized in our attention to pedagogy.

## **Communication**

It is our aim to partner with the home to see every student succeed in a safe and caring environment. To accomplish this, communication between home and school is vital. Do not hesitate to contact school staff with any questions, concerns or feedback you may have.

Parents are encouraged to visit the Forest Green website for information on upcoming events. Please note the school calendar is also available on the website to check out upcoming events.

Additionally we encourage you to follow our social media accounts which can be found on the school website as well.

Sundays, prior to a school week, the "Dragon's Dish" memo will be emailed to families via School Messenger. This memo contains school news, important dates, and information for the upcoming week. To receive these memos please ensure you have enabled School Messenger. They will also be posted to our website.

### *PowerSchool Parent Portal*

PowerSchool is a secure web-based student management system designed to strengthen communication between the school and home. It provides parents and legal guardians online access to their children's progress in school. Additionally, online payments for school fees are available through the Rycor Online Payment module. This convenient tool is accessible through the PowerSchool parent portal and provides parents with the ability to view and print student statements and receipts, transaction history, outstanding fees and make payments online. Methods of payment include Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Interac Online Debit.

Parents are able to create a PowerSchool account and link it to each of their children's accounts by using the access codes supplied by the school. We encourage all families to create their account. More information can be obtained on the Parkland School Division website or by contacting the school office.

### *Social Media*

The school website is the primary place to check for accurate information; however, we strive to make information as transparent and accessible as possible. We often share information, reminders and school happenings via social media. You can search for Forest Green School on Facebook, Instagram, and the PSC & Fundraising Society uses Facebook. Links to social media are also on the Forest Green School website.

### *Telephone*

780-963-7366

### *Address*

5210 – 45 Street  
Stony Plain, AB  
T7Z 1R5

### *Email*

forestgreen@psd.ca

### *Website*

www.forestgreen.psd.ca

### *2023-2024 Office Staff*

Principal – Mrs. Leah Andrews

Assistant Principal – Ms. Miranda Niebergall

Secretary – Mrs. Donna Buchaski

leah.andrews@psd.ca

miranda.niebergall@psd.ca

donna.buchaski@psd.ca

## School Hours

Supervision Begins	8:15
Doors Open	8:25
Welcoming Bell	8:30
O'Canada/Announcements	8:35
Recess	9:51 – 10:06
Noon Recess	11:54 – 12:24
Lunch Break	12:24 – 12:44
Dismissal	3:04
After School Supervision	3:15 or until all busses have left

- Students should not arrive at school prior to 8:15 when supervision begins.
- Students are expected to go outside during recess unless otherwise directed by a staff member.

## Bussing

If your children require bussing, online registration is required. Please call Transportation at 780-963-8452 or check the website <https://www.psd.ca/transportation> for more information.

## School Fees

Please use this link, [Fee List](#) to access our fees.

## Progress Reporting

Students/parents will receive feedback on student learning regularly throughout the year. This communicates progress that is being made in all subject areas, Alberta Cross-Curricular competencies as well as citizenship and social responsibility and work habits. We also believe strongly in students taking ownership of their learning.

Parent – Teacher Conference	October 25 and 26, 2023
Progress Report	January 30, 2024
Student Led Conference	March 19 and 20, 2024
Progress Report	June 27, 2024

To increase timely access to progress, updates for parents can be found in the gradebook on the Parent Portal.

## Student Medication

Please be aware that school staff cannot administer any medication to any student except in compliance with Parkland School Division Administrative Procedure 782: Medical – Administering Prescribed Medications. The **Request for Assistance to Administer Medication** form must be completed by the parent or guardian, the prescribing physician, and school administration. The school reserves the right to refuse to administer medication. These forms

are available from the school office. The medication must come to school with a parent in a container labelled by the pharmacy and is to be stored in a locked cupboard in the school office.

A new form must be completed each year, or if the student changes schools, or when the student's condition or medication changes.

## Code of Conduct

Our Student Code of Conduct exists to ensure that each student and staff member has access to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

### Expectations for Students

Forest Green Students are expected to demonstrate:

- Respect for Themselves
- Respect for Others
- Respect for the Space

These expectations apply to and from the school, during the school day, as well as by electronic means. These also include both on-campus and off-campus activities (including, but not limited to, field trips and sporting events).

The Division Code of Conduct helps individuals learn how to resolve issues peacefully, develop empathy, and contribute to a welcome, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that fosters diversity and nurtures a sense of belonging with a positive sense of self.

In keeping with a commitment to the Alberta Human Rights Act, in Parkland School Division everyone is accepted and experiences a sense of belonging. Every person, no matter their ability, disability, language, cultural background, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity, has meaningful contributions to make. The Division supports the endeavors of staff, students, parents and the community to promote positive student behaviour and conduct throughout our community of schools.

All stakeholders in the success and well-being of students, and especially the students themselves, are expected to recognize their responsibilities in developing student self-discipline and a culture of wellness.

In the Division, all members of our school community are expected to adhere to the Division code of conduct and relevant school codes of conduct, and to promote and demonstrate respect, civility, and responsible citizenship.

### With these goals in mind, and in full consideration of grounds of discrimination set out in the Alberta Human Rights Act, every person shall:

- Demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- Respect differences in people, their ideas and their opinions;
- Acknowledge the right of everyone to be treated with dignity, at all times;
- Take appropriate measures to help those in need;

- Use non-violent means to resolve conflict;
- Honour the role(s) of persons in positions of authority;
- Show care and regard for school property and the property of others;
- Comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws;
- Refrain from, report and refuse to tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour, even if it happens outside of the school or school hours or electronically.

In the Division, we are all models for the kinds of citizens we desire to be. We teach and learn by example, maintain proper decorum and demonstrate professionalism in all of our interactions.

## Peer Conflict, Mean Behaviour or Bullying?: What's the Difference?

When a child is having a problem with his or her peers, it can be hard for parents to know what is really happening - is it bullying? Or is it something else?

Each type of behaviour must be handled differently, to keep children safe and help them learn how to get along with others.

### Peer Conflict

Conflict between and among peers is a natural part of growing up. Children will have times when they disagree and can't solve their own problems. They may even become so frustrated that they say mean things or act out physically by hitting, kicking or trying to hurt.

**If it's peer conflict you will be aware that these children:**

- Usually choose to play or hang out together;
- Have equal power (similar age, size, social status, etc.);
- Are equally upset;
- Are both interested in the outcome; and
- Will be able to work things out with adult help (after calming down).

Adults can respond by helping the children talk it out, and see each other's perspective. This is often referred to as "conflict resolution".

### Mean Behaviour

Children may try out behaviours to assert themselves - sometimes saying or doing mean things - such as making fun of others, using a hurtful name, taking something without permission, leaving a child out, or "budging" in line.

**If it is mean behaviour, usually:**

- It is not planned and seems to happen spontaneously or by chance;
- It may be aimed at any child nearby;
- The child being mean may feel badly when an adult points out the harm they've caused.



When adults see mean behaviour they should not ignore it. Adults should respond quickly, firmly and respectfully to stop the behaviour, to let kids know that their actions are hurtful and re-direct children to more positive behaviour.

This quick response stops children from developing a pattern of mean behaviour as their way of interacting with peers, and prevents mean behaviour from escalating into bullying. It is a lot easier to correct a child for one nasty comment than to change a pattern of cruelty that grows over time.

## Bullying Behaviour

Bullying is serious and has three key features - all three must be present for the situation to be considered bullying:

- **Power imbalance** - One child clearly has power over the other(s), which may be due to age, size, social status, and so on.
- **Intention to harm** - The purpose of bullying behaviour is to harm or hurt other(s) - it's intended to be mean and is clearly not accidental.
- **Repeated over time** - bullying behaviour continues over time, and gets worse with repetition. There is a real or implied threat that the behaviour will not stop, and in fact will become even more serious.

The effect on the child who is being bullied is increased fear, apprehension, and distress. Often by the time adults find out about what is happening, the child has tried many times to stop the bullying and cannot do so on their own.

Adults must address the bullying behaviour and ensure the safety of the student who has been targeted. They also need to reassure the children who may have witnessed the behaviour that adults are taking care of it.

When schools respond to bullying, staff will also help the child who has been bullying others to take responsibility for their actions, and change their behaviour. They will monitor the situation to ensure the bullying stops, and support the child who has been bullied to regain confidence and a sense of safety. Staff may follow-up with the students who observed the behavior to help them learn what to do when they see bullying.

The "conflict resolution" style of bringing the children together is not recommended in bullying situations, until considerable time has gone by and all children are feeling safe enough to talk about what happened so that relationships can be healed.

## Student Attendance

The Alberta Education Act requires that students between the ages of 6 and 16 years attend school on a regular and punctual basis. At Forest Green School we have an expectation for regular school attendance in order to achieve student success. Illness and medical appointments are generally considered as acceptable reasons for absence.

If your child is NOT going to be at school, please notify your child's teacher ahead of time or contact the school by phone at 780-963-7366 or email to either [dbuchaski@psd.ca](mailto:dbuchaski@psd.ca) or [forestgreen@psd.ca](mailto:forestgreen@psd.ca). Students not accounted for in the morning or afternoon are noted and parents are called. This program is designed to increase the safety of our students. It is very important that the contact information for students is current. Parents can update/verify student contact information through the Parent Portal.

If a student's attendance falls below 85% of days attended, and there is no documented explanation to support excusable absences, the school will make contact with the parents/guardians informing them of the situation either by a phone call or a letter sent home. If attendance does not improve, strategies to support regular attendance will be discussed with the parent. If attendance continues to be low, the situation and all documentation will be forwarded to Parkland School Division for further review and action.

## **Bicycles and Other Wheeled Devices**

Bikes and wheeled devices need to be locked up at the appropriate racks outside the school. All bikes and other wheeled devices must be walked on school grounds for the safety of other kids. The above items will not be used during school hours.

## **Electronic Devices**

Please see Admin Procedure 670, [AP 670](#) Electronic Devices. Students are not permitted to have cell phones in the classroom unless there is an identified need that is documented. Students with such accommodation must follow the teacher's direction as to when it is appropriate to use their phone during the day. Students must keep their cell phones in their backpacks or if they prefer they can give them to the teacher or the office for safekeeping.

## **Confiscated Items**

From time to time items may be confiscated from students by staff. The following guidelines outline the acceptable procedures:

- The student is informed of the reason for confiscation.
- The student is informed of how and when the item may be retrieved. In some cases, the item may be returned the same day, in others it may be longer. Depending upon the item, parents may have to come to pick up the item.
- The item is kept securely by the staff member.

## **Dress Code**

Forest Green School recognizes that students should be able to express themselves in age-appropriate ways, which includes their clothing choices. In an effort to support an appropriate learning environment for all and to help our students learn to make good, independent decisions about their clothing, Forest Green uses a dress code. The following are meant to help identify and guide consistent expectations for how our students dress;

- Dress appropriately for the weather;
- All undergarments must be covered;

- Individuals may not wear clothing that shows or promotes alcohol, drugs, inappropriate language, racism, violence or hate towards other groups;
- Clothing and related apparel cannot be intimidating to others.

It is expected that these guidelines will evolve with time and changes in fashion. Should staff feel that a student is dressed in a way that does not meet these expectations, the student may be asked to change, cover or alter how they are dressed by staff. It is expected that a student will be coached by staff as to why they are not meeting the dress code and that parents will also be notified of the concern.

## School Telephone

The school phone is a business phone. Students will be given permission to use the phone in cases of emergency. Approval from the homeroom teacher is required in order for students to use the phone. After-school arrangements should be organized in advance.

## Extra-Curricular Activities

Forest Green is proud to offer a variety of extra-curricular activities for our students. Each year the opportunities change a bit depending on staff and community volunteer availability. Some activities are school based like the recycling club. Others have a community component like sports teams. Parents should be aware that the activities are offered on a cost recovery basis so there may be fees involved to cover the expenses related to the activities. For community based extra-curricular activities, there may be transportation needed which parents would provide. Parents are encouraged to check out these details before giving permission for their children to participate.

Participation in extra-curricular activities is optional for students. Joining clubs or activities is a privilege and students are expected to be ambassadors for Forest Green demonstrating positive behaviour at all times. Students are also responsible to listen to announcements and check in with the activity advisor/coach to ensure they are aware of the details of group activities.

## School Council

All parents at Forest Green are invited to join the School Council. The School Council meets monthly to advise the Principal on matters pertaining to the school. In addition to the School Council, the Forest Green Fundraising Society also meets monthly to organize activities/events to raise funds to financially support student activities and school resources and programs. Please contact the Principal for further information.

## Volunteers

We appreciate volunteers and lots of them! Volunteers are an important key to a successful year. We need volunteers to assist in the classroom, with the hot lunch program, other special events, in-school mentors and in many other areas. We are always looking for new School Council members, as well. If you are able to volunteer some of your time, please contact the school. Volunteers need to complete the Volunteer forms and must have a Vulnerable Sector Check completed by the RCMP and provide the document to the school office. Forms are available at the school office to waive the record check fee. Please be aware that these checks must be

completed annually. All volunteers must sign in at the office as they come into the school, and must sign out upon leaving. This is necessary for accounting for all persons in case of an emergency.

## Norm Usiskin Student Award

In memory of long-time Forest Green teacher, Norm Usiskin, this award has been established to give to student/students annually to “support students demonstrating extra-curricular leadership and resiliency with a preference for students who demonstrate an aptitude for music, drama and/or theatre arts”. At this time there are two awards that will be distributed by a school committee at a year-end celebration.

## Inclement Weather

When the safety of transporting bus students is at risk because of severe weather conditions, our Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with the Director of Transportation Services, may choose to suspend school bus services and/or close schools. Procedures used in this process can be found in [Administrative Procedure 750: Severe Weather](#).

Please note: Except in very special circumstances, **PSD schools always remain open on school days.**

Official notifications regarding suspension of bus services or closure of schools will be posted on our [home page](#).

## Suspension of School Bus Services

**Cold Weather Indicators that factor into the decision to suspend bus services include:**

- Temperature, experienced with or without wind-chill, of  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ ;
  - For the Athabasca Delta School, temperatures at or below  $-45^{\circ}\text{C}$  will apply for school bus cancellation.
- Snowfall accumulation greater than 10 cm overnight; and
- Snowfall removal plans for primary and/or secondary roads.

The final decision to send a child to the bus stop or to school rests with parents, even though buses may be operational.

Note: Outdoor activities greater than 10 minutes at any temperature at or below  $-23^{\circ}\text{C}$  will be cancelled and replaced with alternate indoor activities.

Parents should ensure that students are dressed appropriately while travelling to and from school during inclement weather conditions. The temperatures on a school bus can drop dramatically in the event of mechanical problems.

“School buses are not running” means buses are not running for the entire day but the school is open to students for parents who wish to bring their child(ren) to school.

### *Severe Weather Protocol at School*

The Principal may cancel outdoor activities at any time when considered prudent to do so. Students shall remain inside due to the automatic cancellation of outdoor activities and/or recess activities:

- At any temperature below -23° Celsius.
- During rainfall that is occurring to the point of impacting students' well-being or ability to play.

## **Parking**

As Forest Green is located at the end of a cul-de-sac, parking is limited. Please adhere to the following expectations when coming to the school.

- Parents are asked to park by the skating rink.
- Do not park behind vehicles that are already parked in the skating rink lot.
- When buses are dropping off students (8:15-8:45) or picking up students (2:55-3:15), please do not stop in the areas marked by yellow sidewalk lines or pylons.
- Do not park in the staff parking lot. We are even short on spaces for the staff.

Parents and guests are reminded to be extremely cautious when driving up to the school. Traffic can be congested and children can be unpredictable. Patience and alertness are required to keep our children safe.

## **Parkland School Division Emergency Response Plan**

Parkland School Division's first priority is the safety, security, and well-being of our students and staff. While we hope our schools are never faced with an emergency situation, we are prepared to respond to an incident if one should occur.

We have taken steps to prepare our schools and school jurisdiction to deal effectively with emergency situations that may occur in or around a school during the school day. Our comprehensive Division Emergency Response Plan is complemented by individual plans tailored for each school. These plans are reviewed regularly.

In order for our Emergency Response Plan to be effective, we depend on the cooperation and assistance of many people, such as the police and the fire departments, and parents.

Your cooperation is vital to helping us protect the safety and welfare of all children and school employees. Please observe the procedures explained below.

### **In The Event Of An Emergency:**

*Do not call the school or your child's cell phone.*

We understand and respect your concern, but it is essential that the phone systems be available for emergency communications. If you call the school you will tie up lines and systems required

for communicating with emergency responders and may inhibit our ability to send or receive critical information.

By calling your child's cell phone, you could potentially put them in harm's way, depending on the nature of the crisis. Please do not call; we will ensure that you get the information you need by contacting you.

*Note: It is imperative that the information on your child's Emergency Information Card is current.*

### ***The quickest way to receive emergency information.***

There are many ways for you to quickly and accurately receive emergency announcements and status reports without having to call your child's school.

- Visit school websites for updated notifications. The latest news will be posted on the front page, usually on a ticker at the top of the homepage.
- Follow the Division social media channels on X([Twitter](#)) and [Facebook](#).
- Call the Centre for Education at 780-963-4010.
- Tune into a local radio or television station.

Parents of those students involved will be contacted with information as it becomes available on our emergency communication system via automated voice messages and emails.

### ***What happens during a Lock-Down or Shelter-in-Place?***

In the event of a lock-down or shelter-in-place, the school will be locked with NO arrivals or departures of anyone, including staff, students or parents. You will not be allowed to pick-up your child until after an "all-clear" is given and established student release procedures are in order. This procedure will be strictly adhered to under all circumstances. Please do not go to the school until instructed to do so.

### ***What if the school is evacuated?***

It may be necessary to keep the streets and parking lot clear for emergency vehicles.

If it's necessary to evacuate the school, students will gather at a primary assembly location, predetermined by each school, to ensure their safety. Students will remain at the assembly location until they are returned to the school or released to their parent/guardian.

Depending on the severity of the situation, students may be transported to a secondary assembly location away from the school. You will be notified of this via the Division website and the media.

### ***How do I reunite with or pick up my child during or after an emergency?***

Should circumstances merit, the school may activate a student release procedure. This allows the school to do a controlled release of students to their parent/guardian. Should it be necessary to activate the student release procedure, instructions on where and when to pick up your child will be posted on the Division website. Students will remain at either

the primary or secondary assembly location until they return to the school or are released to their parent/guardian.

Instructions on where, how and when you are able to pick up your child will be posted on the front page of this website. Please also read the [Procedures for Parent-Child Reunion](#).

Carefully read all information you receive from the school regarding emergency procedures, as assembly locations are different at each school. Talk to your children and emphasize how important it is for them to follow instructions from their teachers and school officials during any emergency.

**For more information, contact:**

The Centre for Education  
Phone: 780-963-4010