



**SWAN HILLS
ELEMENTARY STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK
2016 – 2017**

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SWAN HILLS SCHOOL MOTTO

"TOGETHER WE CAN; TOGETHER WE WILL!"

SWAN HILLS MISSION STATEMENT

"Together, we will provide a diverse education to attain academic achievement, develop strong work ethic, and foster compassion."

SWAN HILLS SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The school's motto, "Together We Can; Together We Will" speaks to the program model that is in place at the school. We have committed ourselves to work as a team of staff, students and parents to provide the best opportunities for our students and children. We ensure a high standard of personalized instruction for all children. Swan Hills School provides excellent programs for students by providing differentiated instruction with a focus on the students' learning styles and abilities. The school has established an instructional support team of special education teachers, special needs aides, counsellors and an administration team that works closely with the parents, students, community and outside agencies so that all the needs of the students are met.

SWAN HILLS SCHOOL GOALS

1. To maximize individual student achievements and performance.
2. Focus on the development of the whole child.
3. To provide a safe and caring environment.
4. Achieve staff excellence and wellness.
5. Support and encourage parent and community involvement.
6. Foster respect for the global environment.

Our Expectations

1. **We will treat ourselves and each other with caring and respect.**
2. **We will respect the safety of others and ourselves.**
3. **We will respect the property of others and ourselves.**
4. **We will be on time, will be prepared and will give our best effort in all we do.**

GENERAL INFORMATION

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Supervision of students begins at 8:25 am. Please refrain from sending your children to school before that time, as there is no outside supervision. Supervision takes place during the morning, noon, and afternoon recesses as well as after school until 3:45 p.m.

Students who do not have after school commitments must leave the school or be picked up by 3:45 p.m., as there is no supervision after that time.

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

The school office is open from 8:15 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday. There is an answering machine for calls after hours.

PARKING



Students are to be picked up and dropped off in front of the school. **Do not enter or park in the staff parking lot** as the potential for injury to students or damage to vehicles is very high due to the limited space. Parking is also prohibited in the bus lane located at the front of the school.

VISITORS/PARENTS TO THE SCHOOL

Any visitors/parents to the school (including students who are not attending Swan Hills School) must report to the office upon their arrival to sign in and receive a Visitor Pass. Unauthorized visitors may be charged under the Petty Trespass Act. This is very important in case of emergency so that we may account for all people in the building and to ensure a safe and caring environment.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

School photographs will be taken on **Monday, October 17, 2016**. All students' pictures will be taken for school records. Order forms will be sent home before October 1st for any parents/guardians interested in purchasing photo packages. Retakes will be **Tuesday, November 22, 2016**.

ALLERGY CONCERNS

There are many students in our school who have a variety of allergies that range from mild to severe. Therefore, it is important that pets with fur are not brought into the school. Most importantly, our entire school is a **Peanut and Nut Free Zone**.

SCHOOL FEES

All texts and workbooks are supplied by the school and are included in the instructional fee. The following fees have been set by the Pembina Hills Regional Division

ECS	\$60.00
Grades 1-6	\$70.00
Grade 7-12	\$110.00
Family rate (4 or more children)	\$300.00

All School fees must be paid by October 15, 2016. The family rate plan must be paid by September 30, 2016. Payment plans and online payments are available. Please call the office for more details. All instructional fees are sent to Pembina Hills Regional Division Office in Barrhead the 15th of October. Pembina Hills will invoice you monthly. In April outstanding fees are sent to a collection agency. Doing this will affect your credit rating. Please be advised that your child's involvement in extra curricular activities may be affected if you have not paid your school fees. Students are expected to take good care of the textbooks given them at the beginning of the year. If books are lost or returned in an unacceptable condition, an assessment is made and parents are required to pay a portion of the cost of the book.

EXTENDED HOLIDAYS

Parents who wish to pull their children out of school for extended vacation (3 days or more), outside of our regularly scheduled holidays are responsible for the curriculum their child will miss. Teachers will provide parents with a list of the curriculum outcomes that will be covered while their child is away, but they are not required to provide extra work.

LOCKERS

Each student is assigned a locker for use during the year. Students from grades 4 to 6 are required to use locks. Students may make a one-time purchase of a combination lock from the school for \$5. Students may also purchase their own combination locks but they must register the combination with their homeroom teacher. Keyed locks are **not permitted, unless approved by administration**. The school will not assume responsibility for lost articles. Students should have their names on their textbooks and school supplies; and these items should be locked in their lockers along with valuables when not in use. In order to protect valuables, it is advisable for the student to keep his/her locker locked at all times and not to share the lock combination with anyone. No investigations will take place if articles go missing from unlocked lockers. Grades 3 students should have locks issued to them, and they are required to return them at the end of the year. Grade 3 students will be charged for lost locks.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

In early September, students will be given accident insurance forms to take home for possible purchase. Such purchase is optional and completed forms should be sent to the Insurance Broker as early as possible.

MEDICATION



If your child is required to take a prescription drug, the medication needs to be stored in the office in its original packaging to be dispensed by the office staff. Before office staff may administer any drug; a form must be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian. As a safety precaution, students may not store prescription or over-the-counter drugs in their lockers.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Students will receive 2 progress reports throughout the year as well as a year-end report card. Parent, teacher and student goal-setting meetings will occur in both the fall and spring. This gives parents and students the opportunity to make adjustments and/or improvements prior to the progress report being issued. Parent/teacher communication is crucial to the success of your child so regular conversations and meetings are encouraged throughout the year.

TECHNOLOGY USAGE

1. Students must have a signed Internet/Computer Usage form in the office to be allowed to use the Internet.
2. Students straying into inappropriate sites will lose their Internet privileges.
3. Students may not use the Internet without a teacher being present in the room. (They must have given the student permission to be on the Internet)
4. Hackers will lose all technology privileges, not just the Internet.
5. Students who misuse technology equipment will also lose his/her privileges and will have to pay to replace damaged equipment.

LIBRARY

All classes from ECS to Grade 6 are scheduled for one library class per 4 day cycle. The number of books students are allowed to borrow will increase by grade, depending on their return record. All books must be returned after two weeks. No daily fines are charged for overdue books, but if a book is lost or ruined, students will be charged a replacement cost. Students must pay the cost of lost or ruined books, after the third notice, in order to borrow any more books. Parents are welcome in the library at any time, after checking in at the office, for joining their child's library class, volunteering or browsing our collection.

INSIDE SHOES

Students must have two pairs of school-appropriate shoes. Their outside pair is to be left on the boot rack upon entering the school. **Running shoes** with a non-marking sole are required for indoor wear. Students are required to wear shoes at all times while in school.

VOLUNTEERS

We enjoy and appreciate having parents come in and help us out. If you have an interest in volunteering at the school, please contact your child's teacher. If a parent is volunteering, they must complete the PHRD Volunteer Registration package. Parents must also have a Vulnerable Sector Check (Criminal Record Check) and an Intervention Record Check (Child Welfare Check). Child Welfare is required for overnight trips.

LABELING PERSONAL ITEMS

Please make sure all personal items including boots, shoes, coats, school supplies, lunch kits, etc. are labeled with your child's name and grade. It is very common for many children to have identical belongings.

In Division II, we strongly encourage students to keep personal items like phones/ipads and other expensive equipment at home. If they do bring these items to school, we ask that all students please keep any personal possessions in a locked locker. The school cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen items from lockers, classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, or the gym.

ELECTRONICS

NO personal electronic devices are allowed in Division I and II. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones. Technology devices will not be used during class time. On the first offence, a student will pick up their phone from the office at the end of the day. A parent or guardian will be responsible for retrieving the phone on the second and subsequent offences. Please note that electronic devices are not permitted on the playground.

HEALTHY SNACKS

Healthy eating choices are important to our student mental and physical well-being. Please provide healthy eating choices for your child. Students in grades 1-6 are **not allowed to bring pop or energy drinks to school.**

LUNCHROOM RULES

Staying at school for lunch is a privilege. A student who is consistently misbehaving may be asked to leave the school premises during lunch time. Horseplay, messiness, and wandering the halls will result in loss of lunch privileges for periods of time ranging from one week to the entire school year.

1. Students must sit in their desk when eating their lunch.
2. Students must clean up their mess.
3. Students must ask permission to leave the room at any time.
4. All other school rules apply.

FIRE DRILL/LOCK DOWN

Fire drill exiting procedures are posted in each classroom. Teachers will ensure that students are familiar with these procedures. Students must have "inside shoes" on at all times. Students must walk to the nearest exit with their class and go to their meeting spot. In the case of a real fire all students will proceed to the United Church.

Lock down procedures will be reviewed and practiced so that children know what to do in case of a lock down.

SCHOOL TELEPHONES



Our school is equipped with telephones in each classroom. Students may use these phones only with the permission of school staff.



WHEELS

Students are **prohibited** to ride skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, "Heelys" and bikes on school property during the school day including before and after school. All items must be kept in a locked locker.



PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL AND GRIZZLY CUBS

Parents are strongly encouraged to get involved with the Parent Advisory Council and Grizzly Cubs fundraising group to provide input, to volunteer for fund-raising events, and to gain knowledge about the events and happenings at the school. Meetings are usually held monthly every third Wednesday at 7:00 pm in the ADLC room. Any concerns or questions may be addressed to the Parent Advisory Council President.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress in a way that does not distract/offend others. Wearing clothing that promotes alcohol, smoking, drugs, profanity or other inappropriate behaviours are prohibited. Tank tops with spaghetti straps or bare midriffs are unacceptable. Dresses, skirts, and shorts must be of an acceptable length. If there is any dispute, administration will make the final call. Underwear must not be visible. Appropriate footwear is essential at all times. We are a “**hat free school.**” Students are required to leave their hats in their lockers during the school day. Students will be asked to change into gym gear or phone home for a change of clothes.

SWAN HILLS SCHOOL - ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

Attendance Procedures

Records are kept in the school office. All students must be punctual for classes. Teachers record attendance in the morning and afternoon. All students who are late for school or class must report to the school office to register. The office staff will call home daily to inquire about students absent from school. During the day, all students are required to sign out at the office before leaving the school; parents/guardians must be reached before a student leaves.

STUDENT ABSENCES

Policy

All students between the ages of six (as of opening date of the school term) and 17 must attend school unless excused under appropriate sections of The School Act. Regular attendance is primarily the responsibility of the student and his/her parents or guardians. Students who are habitually absent for inexcusable reasons shall be reported to the Principal. Excessive absences not only affect the student; they also interfere with the flow of the teaching and learning in the classroom. 20% or more inexcusable absences may result in a referral to the Attendance Board.

Responsibility of Students

1. To attend all classes,
2. to advise their teachers when they know in advance that they will be absent from classes, and
3. to complete all work that was assigned during the absences.

Responsibility of Parents

1. To encourage their child to attend all scheduled classes and be aware of the school's attendance policy, and
2. to inform the school by phone call or note on the day their child is absent.

STUDENT PROGRAMMING - PROBLEMS/CONCERNS

It is important to use the following procedure when parents have a concern related to student programming:

1. Contact the teacher first.
2. If the problem is not resolved, contact the school administration.
3. If that does not meet your needs, contact Central Office.

School administration will not deal with any issues that have not first been addressed with the classroom teacher involved.

SWAN HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DAILY PROCEDURE

***THERE IS NO SUPERVISION UNTIL 8:25 a.m. STUDENTS WILL REMAIN OUTSIDE UNTIL THE BELL RINGS UNLESS IT IS A VERY COLD DAY. STUDENTS WILL ENTER AND LEAVE AT THE ASSIGNED ENTRANCES ONLY.**

8:25-8:40 a.m.

- At 8:25 a.m. -Students go directly to lockers and then to their classroom.
- 8:40 a.m. - O'Canada, attendance taken

10:00-10:15 a.m.

- When students are dismissed for recess they need to remove their shoes quickly to go outside.
- When the second bell rings, students need to hurry in, put their outside footwear on the boot rack and return to class.

11:45-12:00 p.m.

- Students have this time to eat their lunch in their classroom. When the bell rings, they are to make sure their lunch is cleaned up and shoes are removed. Students must be outside by 12:10.

12:00-12:25 p.m.

- Students must go to their designated area of the playground. If they need to re-enter the building, they must have teacher permission. See playground rules for specifics.

12:25-12:30 p.m.

- When the bell rings, students will reenter the school, remove their outside shoes, put them on the boot rack and go to their classroom.

1:50-2:05 p.m.

- Same procedure as morning break

3:33 p.m.

- Students are dismissed.

*Any upper elementary students who are changing classrooms at any point in the day need to make sure that they get all the supplies they need for their classes at the recess and lunch breaks.



Swan Hills School Anti-Bullying Policy

Swan Hills School does not tolerate bullying in any form. All members of the school community are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all.

1. What is bullying?

Bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain, or discomfort to another:

- * it can take a number of forms: physical, verbal, gesture, extortion, and exclusion
- * it is an abuse of power
- * it is planned and organized
- * it is a repetitive behaviour/action
- * individuals or groups may be involved

2. Some examples of bullying include:

- * any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing, or spitting on others
- * interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging, or destroying it
- * using offensive names, teasing, or spreading rumors about others or their families
- * using put-downs, belittling others' abilities and achievements
- * writing offensive notes or graffiti about others
- * making degrading comments about another's culture, religious, or social background
- * hurtfully excluding others from a group
- * making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse
- * ridiculing another's appearance
- * forcing others to act against their will

3. If we are bullied:

- * we may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry, or unfairly treated
- * our work, sleep, and ability to concentrate may suffer
- * our relationships with our family and friends may deteriorate
- * we may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem

4. What do we do to prevent bullying at Swan Hills School?

As a school community, we will not allow cases of bullying to go unreported; we will speak up, even at risk to ourselves.

a) This requires **staff** to:

- i) be role models in word and action at all times
- ii) be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- iii) make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling during supervision days
- iv) arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons
- v) take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk
- vi) report suspected incidents to the appropriate staff member such as homeroom teacher, counselor, administrator who will follow the designated procedures.

- b) This requires **students** to:
- i) refuse to be involved in any bullying situations. If you are present when bullying occurs:
 - a) if appropriate, take some form of preventative action;
 - b) report the incident or suspected incident and help break down the code of secrecy.

If students who are being bullied have the courage to speak out, they may help to reduce pain for themselves and other potential victims.

- c) The school recommends that **parents**:
- * watch for signs of distress in their child, eg. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising;
 - * take an active interest in you child's social life and acquaintances;
 - * advise you child to tell a staff member about the incident. If possible allow him to report and deal with the problem himself. He can gain much respect through taking the initiative and dealing with the problem without parental involvement.
 - * inform the school if bullying is suspected;
 - * keep a written record (who, what, when, where, why, how);
 - * do not encourage your child to retaliate;
 - * communicate to your son that parental involvement, if necessary, will be appropriate for the situation;
 - * be willing to attend interviews at the school if your child is involved in any bullying incident;
 - * be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying even if your own child is not directly affected.

When staff, students, and parents work together, we create a more positive environment at Swan Hills School.

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. There is to be **no** eating outside.
2. Throw only equipment that is meant to be thrown. No throwing rocks, sticks, garbage, snow or snowballs.
3. No contact in all games. No roughhousing, pushing, tackling or Red Rover. We enforce a strict “**no hands-on**” policy. Students who are hands-on with other students will be required to spend 10 minutes at the wall and a behavior form will be filled out. Students who receive 3 hands-on incidents in a week or 5 in a month will receive an office referral.
4. Playground equipment must be used properly and safely.
5. No playing near or on fences.
6. Bikes, skateboards, scooters and roller blades are to be used only to and from school and not on the school grounds during the school day.
7. No Heely shoes.
8. No electronic devices.



SPECIFIC EQUIPMENT RULES:

1. SLIDES
 - students must take turns sliding down one at a time feet first
 - no crawling up the slides
 - slide must be clear before the next student goes down
 - no throwing any objects up or down slides
2. SWINGS
 - students are not allowed to stand on the swings
 - no twisting on the swings only to go back and forth
3. GENERAL EQUIPMENT RULES
 - students are to hang by hands only
 - can't sit and no crawling on top of equipment
 - must have head above feet



WINTER RULES:

1. Students must wear proper clothing when playing in the snow (eg. snow pants, mitts, winter boots and hats)
2. Students must stay off the ice and out of the water.
3. Students must wait for path to clear before sledding.
4. In K-3 areas, students can only slide on the bottom hill behind the tennis courts.

WHAT OUR SCHOOL DOES IN AN EMERGENCY

How we respond to emergencies at school?

Our first priority is the safety, security and well-being of our students and staff. Guided by our division's Emergency Response Plan, we have developed a plan which outlines our school's response to various emergencies.

What should parents do in an emergency?

1. Check the PHRD website

We will post information on the PHRD website www.phrd.ab.ca and on Twitter@PHRD_Schools. Phone the PHRD Regional Services Office at 780-674-8500.

2. Do not come to the school

You could put yourself in danger and get in the way of emergency personnel. In several instances, our exterior doors will be locked and you will not be able to get in to the building.

3. Do not call or e-mail the school

We need to keep our phone lines open to communicate with emergency services.

4. Do not call, text or e-mail your child's cell phone

Depending on the threat, contacting your child's cell phone could endanger your child.

What happens during the specific emergencies?

As directed by local emergency personnel we will do the following:

1. If an incident or threat occurs inside or is directly related to our school, RCMP will instruct us to **Lockdown** our school which means we will lock all exterior doors. Staff and students will be directed to classrooms which will be locked. (e.g. dangerous intruder)
2. If an incident or threat occurs outside and is unrelated to our school, RCMP will instruct us to **Hold and Secure** which means we will lock all exterior doors. Students and staff may move freely in the school. (e.g. a bank near our school is robbed)
3. In some environmental or weather-related situations, authorities may direct us to **Shelter in Place**, which means, we will keep students and staff in school until it is safe for them to leave. (e.g. chemical spill, blackouts, extreme weather conditions)
4. In some instances, we may have to **evacuate** the school. Students and staff will move to our primary evacuation site The United Church. Students will stay at the evacuation site until it is safe to return to school or they are released to a parent/guardian.

Note: If our primary evacuation site is comprised, we will move students to a secondary evacuation site. If this is the case, we will post this information on the PHRD website www.phrd.ab.ca and on Twitter@PHRD_Schools.

Before an emergency happens

1. Ensure the school has current Emergency Contact information for your child.
2. Talk to your child about the importance of following their teachers' instructions during an emergency.

DIRECTORY

Board of Trustees:

Swan Hills – Sheri Watson	780-333-2874
Barrhead Town – Judy Lefebvre	780-674-3805
Barrhead Rural – Jennifer Tunninga	780-647-6579
Barrhead Rural - Kim Webster	780-801-0886
Westlock Rural – Annette Bokenfohr	780-349-8538
Westlock Rural – Jackie Comeau	780-954-3784
Westlock Town – Jan Hoffart	780-349-5353

School District Personnel:

Superintendent – Colleen Symyrozum-Watt	1-780-674-8500
Assoc. Supt. of Operations – Wendy Scinski	1-780-674-8500
Assoc. Supt. of Student Services – Rob McGarva	1-780-674-8500