

Parent Handbook

GW Carlson Elementary



2023 - 2024

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www.sd81.bc.ca/gwc

Table of Contents

Introduction	Page
Principal's Message	4
District Calendar	5
Bell Schedule	5
Framework for Enhancing Student Learning	
School Goals	6
District Vision Statement	6
School Vision Statement	6
General Student Information	
Code of Conduct, School District #81	7
Code of Conduct, G.W. Carlson	8
Student Discipline	9
Consequences	9
Out of School Suspensions	9
Attendance	9
Stay Home When Sick	10
Safe Arrival Program	10
Tardiness	10
Parent-Teacher Communication	10
Telephone Messages for Students	10
Telephone Messages for Staff	10
Bus Information	11
Supervision	12
Lunch-Time Procedures	12
Lost and Found	13
Electronic Devices	13
Items from Home	13
Student Transfer Within District	13
Student Health and Safety	
Life Threatening Allergies	14
Medication	14
First Aid and Medical Room	14
Head Injuries	14
Parking Lot Pick-Up and Drop-Off Zone	15
Access to the Building	15
Legal Custody, Visitation Rights, Legal Change of Name	15
Critical Incidents	15
Emergency Evacuation	16
Student Support Programs	
Student Services Resource Teachers	16
Counseling Services	17
Library Program	17

Parents as Partners

Classroom Volunteers	18
Parent Advisory Council	18
Social Media	18

Appendix A

	20
• Parental Concern Process	21
• School Closures, Policy 5510	23
• Financial Barrier, from Policy 6330	

Introduction

Principal's Message

September 2023



Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to G.W. Carlson Elementary. We pride ourselves in building a friendly, welcoming, positive learning environment and look forward to an exciting and successful school year.

This handbook was designed to provide answers to commonly asked questions regarding school policy and procedures.

At GWC we believe in the unlimited potential of our students by respecting and developing their unique learning styles and interests. We work to create a positive learning environment which will inspire children to achieve their goals and develop a healthy lifestyle. We are all learners, and as we learn and grow, so does our self-confidence. If we can encourage children to believe in themselves as individuals and, with their parents, teachers, and friends as part of a team, we can set students on the road to a successful and rewarding future.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Miss Shirley Kenney, Principal
G.W. Carlson Elementary

District Calendar

Please visit www.sd81.bc.ca for most up to date calendar.

School Bell Schedule

Bell Schedule 2023-2024

Kindergarten to Grade 4	
8:35 am	Student Supervision Begins
8:50 am	Welcoming Bell
8:55 am	Classes Begin
11:30– 12:00	Outside Lunch Recess
12:00 – 12:25	Lunch in classroom
12:30 pm	Classes Resume
2:00 – 2:15 pm	Recess
3:20 pm	Students dismissed

Framework for Enhancing Student Learning

G. W. Carlson's School Goals for 2023-2024

1. To increase the percentage of students meeting and exceeding grade level expectations in reading.
2. All students will demonstrate increased school connectedness.
3. All students will demonstrate career preparedness.

Each year our Framework is updated, after consultation with staff, students and parents. Our Framework is made available at the end of October each year. Visit a copy of our Framework at our school website: www.sd81.bc.ca/gwc

Vision Statement for School District #81

As a community of learners we embrace opportunities to build successful futures.

Vision Statement for GW Carlson

The whole GWC family is active in ensuring that the unique nature of individuals and their learning is recognized and respected. We are safe to make mistakes and learn from them. We focus on positive interactions and honour every person's contribution. We all have the role of learner and teacher at GWC.

General Student Information

Code of Conduct

School District 81 Code of Conduct

The purpose of our Code of Conduct is to provide a safe, caring and orderly school environment for our students. Students in School District #81 are expected to:

1. Treat others with dignity, respect, tolerance and courtesy.
2. Respect the rights of others to learn and work in an environment free from abuse, intimidation, harassment, bullying, disruption or discrimination (ie, discrimination on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation of that person or class of persons).
3. Act in a safe and responsible manner toward themselves, others and others' property.
4. Comply with classroom and school standards for attendance, promptness, language and behaviour.

Each school will describe consequences for misbehaviour that reflect the maturity level of its students and allows for special considerations for exceptional students. When it is possible to do so, our schools will focus on consequences that are restorative in nature.

The school principal's authority to discipline students for violations of the Code of Conduct is not limited to behaviours which occur during the school day or on school grounds. Any student behaviour which negatively impacts the school environment could be subject to disciplinary action.

Finally, schools and the School District will take all reasonable steps to prevent retaliation against any student or individual who reports a breach of a school's or the School District's Codes of Conduct.

G.W. Carlson Code of Conduct

At G.W. Carlson we want all students to learn in a safe, caring and orderly environment. To that end, we expect our students to follow our Code of Conduct. It is our expectation students will:



Respectful



On Task



Cooperative



Kind



Safe

Behaving **respectfully** means that students must avoid doing things that can interfere with the learning environment or with other students' enjoyment of school. Comments or actions which can hurt other children's feelings are unacceptable. Behaviours which could be interpreted as discourteous must also be avoided.

Being **on task** means doing what is expected when expected.

Cooperating with school staff means that students will do what is asked of them in a respectful manner. Cooperating with other students means acting in ways which maximizes everyone's ability to learn, have fun, or work with others.

We recognize that it is important to be **kind** to everyone inside and outside of our school community. Small deeds, like drops of rain, can create rivers of kindness.

Playing **safely** means that students must think about the games and activities they engage in during break times. Play can happen with little likelihood of injury to students. If a student was to accidentally injure another student while playing, it could be determined that the child, or both children, were not playing safely enough.

In order to help our students learn appropriate behaviour and to develop social responsibility, teachers will frequently review and teach school expectations.

The school principal's authority to discipline students for violations of the Code of Conduct is not limited to behaviours which occur during the school day or on school grounds. Any student behaviour which negatively impacts the school environment could be subject to disciplinary action.

Student Discipline

When a student's behaviour is inconsistent with our behaviour guidelines, action is taken. Each classroom teacher develops rules designed to protect the learning atmosphere in their classroom. Consequences are developed and administered to encourage students to respect and follow these rules. Parents are involved if a child is frequently unable to behave appropriately. If parental involvement is unsuccessful in helping a child behave, the school principal becomes involved. Most discipline problems can be solved when teacher, parents, and principal work together to find solutions. However, if problems persist, counseling services may provide additional help for the student.

Because appropriate student discipline is very important to everyone involved, it is important that information be shared promptly if a discipline problem arises. Please do not hesitate to call your teacher or principal if you have questions or concerns.

Consequences

The purpose of all intervention is to reinforce appropriate behaviour and to discourage inappropriate behaviour. Appropriate interventions include:

- a. a student conference
- b. short-term removal from class to another supervised area
- c. in-school detention
- d. parent conference/contact
- e. in-school suspension *
- f. referral for school based student services *
- g. counseling for the student *
- h. course of program modification *
- i. referral to District staff for programs or services *

** parents notified for all consequences beyond "d"*

Out of School Suspensions

Home suspensions are used when other forms of intervention have been unsuccessful, or when a significant, major infraction has occurred.

Attendance

Research has shown that regular is a major factor contributing to student success. We want everyone to be aware of the importance of regular school attendance, and the importance of being rested and able to work productively throughout the day.

Stay Home When Sick

We urge parents to keep students at home if they are too ill to be able to participate in the full range of activities that constitute a day at school. Parents and caregivers are to assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious disease before sending them to school. Please call the office if you're keeping your child home from school.

Safe Arrival Program

Please call the school if your child will be late, has an illness, or will be away from school for any period of time. Each day after attendance has been taken our school secretary will be phoning your home, if your child's name turns up on the absentee report. If you have phoned in to report the absence of your child no phone call will be made.

Tardiness

Teachers strive to protect instructional time for our children, frequent tardiness greatly impacts student learning. Missing lesson instruction, or concept development, as lessons begin in the morning or after lunch leads to confusion and less productivity during independent student work. Please be respectful of our school's schedule.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Your child will receive three Learning Updates during the year in December, March and June. As well two formal Parent-Teacher Interviews will occur in October and April. Please remember, parents may arrange a meeting with the teacher, simply by phoning the school.

Telephone Messages for Students

It is the school's expectation that students know where they are to go after school. If these plans change during the day, parents may phone the school to have a message delivered to their child. Please note that you should call the school **before 3:00 p.m.** Messages will be given to children just prior to school dismissal, or as needed.

Telephone Messages for Staff

Teachers may not be interrupted during instructional time to take a phone call.

- Please leave a message at the office to have the teacher return your call, or send a written note with your child to have the teacher call you.
- Teachers may be called between 8:30 am and 8:45 am, and 3:20 pm and 3:30 pm when they are free from student supervision.

We are committed to protecting instructional time.

Bus Students

Questions regarding bus schedules and bus stops can be directed to Pansy Anderson at the School Board Office, 250-774-2591. Current Bus Schedules can be found at www.sd81.bc.ca

Winter Bussing

There may be times when our school busses will not be running, particularly in very cold weather. Please be aware of the following:

1. Schools will be open for instruction throughout the prescribed days/hours of the school year as outlined on the School District #81 School Calendar.
2. A first temperature reading will be taken at 7:00 a.m. Bus runs will be cancelled at a temperature of -40 degrees C or below, with a windchill. A second temperature reading will be taken at 8:00 a.m. and if the temperature is then above -40 degrees C the busses will begin their bus schedules resulting in a one hour change to the normal pick up time.
3. The School District will use the information from the Environment Canada Weather internet site at <http://www.weatheroffice.gc.ca> for temperature readings.
4. The School District announces bus run cancellations to parents through the local radio station and CBC North radio.

Please Note: If a school closure is necessary during the school day, parents/guardians will be contacted. For this and other safety reasons it is imperative that you provide G.W. Carlson with up-to-date contact information including current telephone numbers, emergency contacts, and email addresses. If these change during the school year, please be sure to advise your school's administrative assistant.

For further information, please contact the Secretary-Treasurer at 250 774-2591.

Supervision

In order to provide a healthy, safe, and responsible atmosphere at G.W. Carlson, we believe in a supervision process that promotes self-discipline and self regulation. We ask that students be polite and caring towards staff members and to their fellow students.

Supervision begins each morning at 8:35 am. Do not send children to school before 8:35 and we ask that they arrive as close to 8:50 am as possible.

Please ensure that your child dresses warmly enough to play outdoors as they could go out at lunch or recess.



Teachers and supervisors provide supervision duty during the following times:

Before School	8:35 am	-	8:55 am
Lunch	11:30 am	-	12:30 pm
Recess	2:00 pm	-	2:15 pm
After School	3:20 pm	-	until all busses leave

Lunch Time Procedures

Students go outside to play from 11:30 to 12:00 and then eat lunch in their classroom from 12:00 to 12:25.

- After dismissal, at 11:30, students are expected to go outdoors unless there is a medical reason that they stay inside. A note will be required.
- At 12:00 students must sit quietly while they eat. Failure to do so could result in a loss of the privilege of eating lunch at school.
- Each child is responsible to clean up before 12:25 pm and return lunch kits to shelves. Classrooms must be ready for the afternoon instructional requirements.
- Students who regularly eat lunch at school are expected to remain on the school grounds throughout the lunch break.
Please notify the school, in writing, if your child has your permission to leave the school playground at lunch break.

Lost and Found

Ensure that runners, boots, mitts, coats, caps, etc., are CLEARLY marked with your CHILD'S NAME. The Lost and Found boxes are located in school boot rooms.

Electronic Devices

It is policy at G.W. Carlson that no student will be permitted to play or listen to any electronic devices during the lunch and break periods. Such devices do not promote social growth as per the Human and Social Development criterion outlined in the Ministry of Education's Primary Program Guideline. We do not encourage students to bring electronics to school as they are easily lost and or broken.

Items from Home

The school will not be responsible for loss or damage to toys brought to school from home. iPads, Gameboys, CDs, etc. brought to school have been known to go missing or become damaged. It is best if these items stay home.

Student Transfer Within District

If you are planning on transferring your son or daughter to J.S. Clark Elementary school for the 2023/2024 school year while continuing to live in the G.W. Carlson catchment area, it is very important that you do so before **April 30, 2024** to secure a space for your child. Later registrations will be put on a waiting list and transfers will only occur if space and facilities are available.

If you plan on moving into the J.S. Clark catchment area (anywhere southeast of Airport Drive and northeast of the Alaska Highway) and transferring your son or daughter to J.S. Clark, the second Friday in June is the last day to register and secure a space for your child. Later registrations will be placed on a wait list.



Life Threatening Allergies

G.W. Carlson **has a number of students enrolled with a varying degree of allergies. We ask parents to not send lunches and snacks containing nuts to school.** Regardless of the content of a student's lunch, we request that children remember to clean their hands after eating and not share lunch items.

**Medication**

The school needs to be kept aware of medical conditions that may impact a child's learning at school. If there are any short or long-term medical conditions that are important for us to know about, please stop at the office. If the condition is serious the school and parent can then write up an emergency action plan for the child.

Medicine will not be administered to a child unless prescribed by a doctor. All medicine must be in the original container with the prescription label. Medication can not be sent to and from school by the child.

A *Medication Administration Form* must be signed by the doctor and kept on file in the office before any medication can be given. Please stop by the office to get the necessary forms before going to the doctor in order to save yourself two trips. All medication will be kept in the office and will be administered by designated personnel.

First Aid and Medical Room

Our school's medical room is beside the office and is supervised by office staff and designated first aid attendants. Students who become ill during the school day, or have an injury, may stay in the Medical Room until a parent picks them up. (If a parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, or under serious conditions, a doctor will be phoned).

Staff do not administer medication to students, except in special or emergency situations with the written authorization from parents. Medication will be stored in the office and must be in the original container with the instructions clearly labeled.

Head Injuries

We take ALL head injuries very seriously and will contact the parent or guardian right away. We strongly recommend the child be taken to the doctor for a professional assessment.

Parking Lot (Pick Up and Drop Off Areas)

We ask that parents pick up and drop off students in the “drop-off zone” along the North end of our school (the road behind the church), at the front of the school in the designated parking lot by the crosswalk or at the South side of our school (gym end)

- If you need to park, please do so further along the road by the playing field where the road is wider.
- We are attempting to stop children from walking or running through our busy parking lot.
- Additionally, we are striving to keep our front school parking lot free so that our *Sunshine Bus* can keep on schedule when picking up our Special Needs children during peak times.
- We ask that students stay on sidewalks and use the cross walk at the front of the school if they need to cross the road.
- ***PARENTS: For the safety of the students, please obey the street signs and speed limits.***

Parents are asked to arrange for outside pick up and drop off.

Access to the building

During instructional time our doors are locked. Access is through the front of the school where there is a doorbell.

Adults that are proceeding past the office area will be required to sign in at the office and then sign out at the end of their visit.

Legal Custody, Visitation Rights, Legal Change of Name

Please contact the office if there is any information you wish to share regarding these legal issues. The school must have legal documentation on file prior to denying access to any parent. Both parents have equal rights of access unless otherwise stated.

Critical Incidents

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of ensuring a compassionate and timely response to critical incidents of a traumatic nature that affect the normal functioning of the school. A critical incident may involve, but is not limited to, a death of a student or staff member by accident, illness, injury, or suicide, school fires, natural disasters, disturbing or threatening behaviour, or criminal investigations.

Details of specific critical responses, such as bomb threats, hold and secure, and lockdowns are clearly defined in the school-based Critical Response Plan, which is updated each September.

Emergency Evacuation

Evacuation in winter is especially critical in the North. In the event of an emergency evacuation of the building, the following procedures are in place:

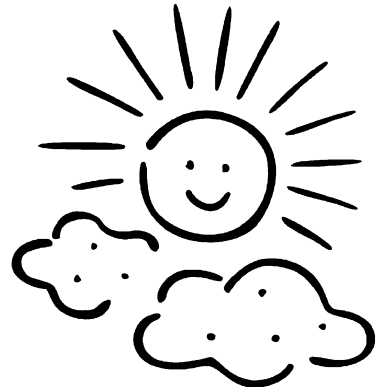
1. At the Alarm, staff and students follow regular fire procedures so that we are aware as quickly as possible of any unaccounted for students. Then at the Principal's signal, proceed to Hillcrest United Church, or as directed.
2. Immediately upon arrival staff will take the regular head count and inform the Staff Member designated In Charge.
3. Stay in the church until the All Clear is received.
4. If it is safe to return to the school students will walk back to the school.
5. If it is unsafe to return to the school, arrangements will be made to have parents pick up children.

Student Support Programs

Student Services Resource Teachers

Our Student Services Resource Teachers:

- Act as case managers, serving students who have high and low incidence special needs, those who have mild learning disabilities, those who speak English as a second language (ESL), are gifted and talented, or have special behavioural needs.
- Collaborate with the classroom teacher, parents, and other appropriate personnel, to develop and maintain Individual Educational Plans.
- Act as a consultant and resource person to teachers regarding: integration, learning disabilities, ESL, general remediation and individual special programs.
- Cooperatively plan with teachers effective program and/or methodology changes:
 - to assist the regular classroom teacher in altering instructional and assessment strategies related to individual students,
 - to assist in altering, adapting, modifying curriculum to meet the needs of students
- Communicate with parents as necessary.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues, school principals, and district office personnel in establishing and implementing policies which pertain to special education.



Counseling Services

Our students have access to counseling services. If you believe that your child may need help dealing with problems of a non-academic nature, please contact your child's teacher or the Principal.

Library Programs

Sign Out Materials:

There are regular, weekly class sign-outs where the children are helped by the teacher and library staff. Also, whenever children finish their books they may come to the library to sign-out new items, with their teacher's permission. To ensure all children have reading material, each teacher has a class collection of library materials.

Overdues:

A book is overdue when it is not returned within seven days. At this time, the child will be given a verbal reminder. At the end of a month, a letter will be sent home. If a book is not returned, or not paid for, the child will not be allowed to take books out until the account is cleared, or the book is returned. These children will still have reading material in their classroom.

Parents as Partners

Classroom Volunteers

Parents are welcome to volunteer in the school. Individual classroom teachers must be contacted to set up a suitable schedule. There are liability issues with parents conducting volunteer duties out of view of the teacher, therefore we ask that volunteer work be done in the class with the teacher. Our Parent Advisory Council also organizes a number of other ways to volunteer in the school. We ask that if you are volunteering in the classroom, you make babysitting arrangements for any pre-school children. The learning environment of our students needs to be protected.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

Our school has an active and committed PAC. We encourage parents to get involved with the Parent Advisory Council and their many worthwhile initiatives.

Election of officers, and regular meeting dates, will be determined at the first meeting of the year. Our school newsletter will provide details of upcoming PAC meetings.

Follow PAC on Facebook at GW Carlson PAC.

Social Media

Our school maintains a Facebook page where there are weekly updates, notices and reminders. Like us at G.W. Carlson School.

Our school also maintains a web site at: www.sd81.bc.ca/gwc Here you will find the most up-to-date newsletters and notices. Weekly updates and a calendar with yearly events and dates highlighted.

School Messenger System

The School Messenger application is a system School District 81 uses to increase communication. It provides the district, in the case of an emergency, the ability to communicate with all families through multiple modes of communication in a matter of minutes. Parents can "opt in" to receive a text message, but all primary contacts will receive a phone call and email (as provided to the school district) when there is a district-wide alert. The system is also used to alert families to bussing cancellations or lates.

Appendix A

- Parental Concern Process
- School Closures, Policy 5510
- Regulation of Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic on School District Property (Guidelines from Bylaw #1)

Parental Concern Process
Regarding incident involving their child
(Guidelines from Policy 2230)

1. Talk to the classroom teacher, if comfortable, in situations where the concern involves the classroom or the teacher.
2. If not comfortable speaking with the teacher or if the incident involves a broader school or playground issue, take concerns directly to the Principal.
3. The Principal will address the issue. If a parent is not satisfied that their concern has been resolved, concerns should be taken to the Superintendent of Schools, who is the next level of appeal.
4. If a parent is not satisfied that their concern has been resolved at the Superintendent's level, they may appeal to the Board of School Trustees by phoning the Secretary-Treasurer at 250-774-2591, who will ask them for a letter describing the incident to be placed in the next Closed Board Meeting package. The parent will be asked to present their concern at the Closed Board Meeting. The Superintendent will contact parents to let them know the Board of School Trustees recommendations or decision.

Please note: the Principal, Superintendent or Board of School Trustees will not disclose confidential information regarding employee discipline or consequences applied to other students.

School District #81 Policy Manual

School Closures**Policy 5510****May 4, 2004**

The Board of School Trustees has a responsibility to students to ensure their safety in a school setting. This responsibility extends to travel to and from school.

There may be occasions when it is necessary to close schools. School closures may be due to inclement weather or other emergencies.

Guidelines

1. Schools will remain open for instruction throughout the prescribed hours of the school year.
2. A weather criteria of 2500 watts per square metre or -40 C is defined as critical. Examples include:
 - a. A temperature of -45 C combined with a 10 km wind generates a wind chill cooling rate of approximately 2200.
 - b. A temperature of -40 C combined with a 20 km wind generates a wind chill cooling rate of approximately 2400.
 - c. A temperature of -45 C combined with a 20 km wind generates a wind chill cooling rate of 2550.
3. A wind chill factor in excess of this figure or a temperature of -40C will trigger a cancellation of bus runs. A second temperature reading will be taken at 8:00 am and if the temperature is above -40 C busses will commence their regular bus schedules, with a one hour change to the normal pick up time.
4. The Administrative Assistant will monitor the criteria through the use of the Environment Canada Weather Site on the internet <http://weatheroffice.gc.ca>

Announcements will be made on the local radio station and CBC North

5. Budget permitting, winter in town bussing will start on November 1 and will continue until Spring Break.

Guidelines for School Closures Due to Unforeseen Emergencies

1. If unforeseen circumstances warrant closure of a school, radio announcements will be made on the local radio and CBC North.
2. Bus drivers will be notified immediately of such a decision. Bus runs will continue. If bus drivers find students at bus stops they will drive them to their regular school or a designated marshalling area, and parents/guardians will be notified. A bus run returning students to their regular drop off sites will take place, if necessary, once all parents have been notified.

Regulation of Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic on School District Property (Guidelines from Bylaw #1)

The School Board has the right and responsibility to control access and safety on school property. The Board Bylaw #1, Regulation of Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic on School District Property restricts vehicle access on school property to roadways and parking lots, and states that students must have permission from the school principal to drive or park their vehicles on school property.

In British Columbia, you cannot legally drive a motorized off-road-vehicle on a public road or in a school parking lot unless you have a valid driver's license, and the vehicle is properly registered. In general, this means students cannot drive or park off-road vehicles on any school district property.

If a student rides an off-road vehicle to school and parks it on school property, their parent will be contacted and asked to remove the vehicle in a safe and legal manner. If refused, the RCMP will be contacted.