

Spirit of the North Community School



Vision Statement:

Spirit of the North and its community inspires, builds and celebrates successes.

Student/Parent Handbook

10801-102 St.
High Level, Alberta
T0H 1Z0
Telephone: (780) 841-7200
Fax: (780) 841-7203

Fort Vermilion School Division #52

NAME: _____

HOMEROOM: _____

TEACHER'S NAME: _____

My Contact List

Name	Relationship	Phone Numbers

Principal Message:

Education is not preparation for life;
education is life itself. - **John Dewey**



Each year we choose a theme book to inspire the hearts and minds of our students coming back to school. This year we have chosen two books, one for September and one for January. Our September book, *Be You!* by Peter H. Reynolds, focuses on our uniqueness and the power and strength that it should give us. Our January book, *What Do You Do With a Problem?* by Kobi Yamada, "helps us understand that problems challenge us, shape us, push us and help us to discover just how strong, brave and capable we really are".

At Spirit of the North, we celebrate the successes of all students. We work to build the skills, competencies and confidence in our students to achieve any task they wish. We build resiliency skills through character building activities throughout the year.

Our staff is committed to educating your child, not only in academic achievement, but also in producing students who work to be part of something bigger than themselves.

So what advice do I give the students of this school? *Get involved!* Join clubs and teams, raise money for charity and above all else . . . settle for nothing but your best!

I cannot wait to learn and celebrate our successes together.

Your Principal,
Mr. Shane Dempster

PARENT INFORMATION

School Goals

1. *Spirit of the North will foster connectivity and well-being amongst community, students, parents and staff*
2. *All students will improve literacy skills across the content areas.*
3. *All students will improve numeracy skills.*

Office Hours

Daily office hours are from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Doors open for students at 8:10 am. Please note that students should not be on the school grounds before 8:10 am as there is no adult supervision available before that time. If you need to leave a message for your child, please call before 3:00 whenever possible. **Our school doors are often open past 4:00 pm, so drop by if your child needs to pick up a forgotten assignment or an agenda.**

Bus Students

Transportation to and from school is available for all students. The Fort Vermilion School Division provides transportation for rural students at no charge. Urban students residing less than 2.4 kilometers from the school may obtain transportation on an existing bus route provided a fee is paid in advance to the school division. **Students who are accompanying a friend home and who do not regularly ride the bus must also be registered as a bus student and have made arrangements with the bus driver, or they cannot ride the bus. The school is not able to make these arrangements for you.**

To make arrangements for transportation, you are able to contact the High Level Bus Garage at (780)926-3966 or the Fort Vermilion School Division Bus Garage at (780)928-3860.

Parking

Parents dropping off or picking up students please use the student drop off lane parallel to 102 Street. If you are parking for an extended period of time, please use the staff parking lot only. We cannot have vehicles in the bus lanes at any time.

School Calendars and SNCS Newsletters

School event calendars and hot lunch menus (paper copies) are given at the end of each month. In addition, Weekend Updates (email) are sent every Sunday, which communicate the week's events to parents and students. All of this is posted on the schools website: www.fvsd.ab.ca/school/SNCS and on our Facebook page.

Attendance & Punctuality

Regular school attendance is a major factor contributing to student success. While the goal is to maximize student time in school, it does take into consideration that there will be times when students must be away.

- parents are requested to phone the school whenever absence or lateness is unavoidable. Call (780)841-7200 or email spirit@fvds.ab.ca
- attendance is taken in the morning and after lunch.
- absences from school should only occur for valid reasons.
- the parent/guardian of a student who is repeatedly absent may have to meet with administration to discuss an attendance plan.

Late Students

Students who are **late** for class are welcome to enter class; however, they must sign in at the office.

Unexcused absences will result in communication between the teacher and the parent/guardian or principal.

Leaving the School During the Day

Students leaving the school during the day must sign out at the Office. Students are not permitted to leave school grounds unless we have parental permission. Parents can either send a note with their child, call the office or send an email. Forms are sent home for parents to sign if they wish to give permission for their child to leave at lunch time for the entire year.

Cold Weather Policy

In all cases, the Superintendent in consultation with the Transportation Manager has the authority to suspend, cancel or reroute bus service if it is deemed that the safety of staff, students or the general public is in jeopardy

Temperature Factors

Bus service in a certain area is to be cancelled by 6:30 a.m. by the school administrator when the temperature reaches -40C without the wind or -48C with the wind as measured by Environment Canada Data. This communication must be posted on the school's website and Facebook page.

Emergency Plans

Spirit of the North has an Emergency Plan that contains procedures for the following:

- Disaster Preparedness
- Power outage/inclement weather
- School Lockdowns

Evacuation routes and Lockdown routines are posted on the walls of each classroom. In order to avoid any complications, students are requested to become familiar with the procedures and exits they would use for each classroom they occupy through the day. Evacuation and Lockdown drills are conducted at various times during the year.

Students are encouraged to wear indoor footwear at all times in the event of an evacuation.

Medical Information

Please inform the school of any medical conditions your son/daughter may have. It is necessary for us to know about the condition and the immediate treatment if we are to respond given any emergency situation. Parents/guardians of students who have been identified as having a medical or behavioral condition that may require monitoring or intervention, will complete a medical form providing a description of the condition, signs to watch for, interventions required in the event of an incident, medications taken and contact information for parents and/or emergency contacts. This form will be posted in the staff workroom with the child's photo.

Administration of Medication To Students

If your child requires medications, they must bring a supply from home.

A "Request for Administration of Medication to Students" Form must be completed by the parent/guardian of a student who is required to take medication at school. This includes prescription and over the counter medications. All medications are to be kept in the office and administered by the administrative staff unless otherwise indicated on the form. The person administering the medication will track it on the "Student Medication Schedule".

A copy of the form is sent to the central office and originals are kept in a binder in the office .

If a student is ill or involved in an accident, parents will be notified immediately. **Please note that we cannot provide proper facilities for students who are ill with flu or other contagious infections. It is important that we have all of your updated contact numbers. Every family needs an emergency contact home where the student can be sent if the parent/guardian cannot be reached.**

Infirmary

The infirmary is located in the main office. If students wish to use this facility, they must request permission from their teacher. The infirmary contains one bed and is designed to provide basic first aid. This room is only intended to be occupied by a student until arrangements can be made with a parent or guardian for the student to return home.

Nut Safe School

Please note we strive to be a nut safe facility. Several students within our building have severe allergies. We want to ensure a safe environment for them, so we do not permit these foods in our building.

Community Health Services

The Community Health Nurse visits the school on a regular basis. As long as parental consent has been granted, the following services will be provided:

- Immunizations - hepatitis B (Grade 5/6)
- Immunization updates as required

Families new to the school are encouraged to contact Community Health Services to advise where the immunization records for their sons/daughters can be obtained. Whenever immunizations take place, immunization cards are sent home with each student. Questions or concerns about these services can be directed to Community Health Services at (780)841-3230.

Personal Wellness

At times, students get upset and require extra attention. We ask that parents inform the teacher if there is a situation of critical illness, bereavement, family discord, or changes in the home. We have personnel within our school who can help families deal with these situations. Our Student Wellness Coach ensures all students are healthy and well at Spirit.

Connectivity Team

Student Wellness Project

Fort Vermillion School Division's pilot project "Mental Health Capacity Building for Children and Families" is sponsored by the Government of Alberta Health and Wellness. The aim of the Student Wellness Project is to increase the coping behaviors, knowledge, and skills of children to enable them to make better choices and adopt behaviors to protect their mental and physical health. Within a school-based setting, the student Wellness staff develop and implement prevention and intervention strategies to support, strengthen and increase wellness. Strategies include classroom-based universal programs for all children, small group programming for students and individual programming when required.

Use of Electronics at School

We do allow students to bring electronics such as phones, laptops, I-Pods and hand held video games. Students must use them at the appropriate times, be good digital citizens, and keep them secured in their lockers. If your child has a cell phone, courteous use is

expected. We understand that cell phones are necessary for some families, but any messages or contact should come through the Office. Students will be given any messages in a prompt manner. Misuse of cell phones will be considered on a case by case basis.

School Council

In keeping with School Board policy, a School Council is established early in the school year. The purpose of this council is to advise school administration and the Board of Trustees. School Council is comprised of at least seven elected parents, one elected teacher representative and at least one school administrator. All parents of students at SNCS are encouraged to attend the monthly School Council meetings. During mid-September we will be forming a school council. Dates and times will be advertised.

Homework Guideline

At Spirit of the North, we strive to ensure all activities positively contribute to student learning. Any homework given to students will be purposeful and based on the student's skill building needs, therefore students may not all receive the same homework. The intention is that homework be at a level which the student could complete independently. We value family time and see the importance of extracurricular activities therefore homework will be kept to a minimum.

Students and the Internet

SNCS feels it essential that students understand and become proficient in using technology as a tool. We will require parental/guardian permission for students to have access to Internet and E-mail. A parent/guardian may at their request (by not signing the consent form) prevent their child from having access to: Internet, e-mail or both. Please note that the school jurisdiction does block unacceptable sites through software as well as through student, teacher and parent identified sites. It is, however, not a perfect system and occasionally unacceptable material does slip through our preventative systems. Students are taught digital citizenship skills prior to receiving their Chromebooks.

Students at Spirit have access to a restricted YouTube. This means that YouTube does not have comments or a preview pane on the side.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Daily Announcements

Opening activities will begin with our National Anthem, information sharing, and student recognition. Announcements are broadcast at 8:40 am, lunch time and prior to the school ending.

Daily Schedule

8:40 am - Morning Bell	11:58 am - Lunch 1 (Eat in classrooms)
8:42 am - O Canada & Daily Announcements	12:15 pm - Lunch 2
8:45 am - Period 1	12:45 pm - Period 7
9:10 am - Period 2	1:15 pm - Period 8
9:40 am - Period 3	1:45 pm - Afternoon Recess
10:10 am - Morning Recess	2:00 pm - Period 9
10:25 am - Period 4	2:30 pm - Period 10
10:55 am - Period 5	3:00 pm - Period 11
11:25 am -Period 6	3:30 pm - Dismissal

Telephones

Two telephones are provided in the school for student use. The office secretary will take messages for students in the event of a family matter. Students are to use the phones for necessary calls, with teacher permission.

Lockers

All students will be provided with a locker and lock. Students should note that although lockers are the property of the school, any damage to them may be charged to the occupant of the locker.

Conditions for locker use are as follows:

- Lockers are to be secured with a lock supplied by the school.
- The principal reserves the right of entry at any time without the student's permission.
- Students are responsible for the safe storage of their possessions including clothing and footwear.
- If you bring items of value to school, please ensure that they are locked in your locker or given to your teacher for safekeeping.

Library

The library is the heart of our school community. Students are free to visit our library during the day and during assigned lunch hours. We strive to offer many different genres of writing. Our goal is to create lifelong readers and our collection is designed with the needs of kids in mind. Our Accelerated Reader Store is housed in the library.

Dress Code and Expectations

The clothing that students wear to school should be appropriate for school and for the weather. Students need:

- Outside footwear (shoes, boots, sandals depending on the season)
- Inside shoes (to be worn only inside the school and the gym)

Gym Strip - students should have an extra t-shirt and running shoes for PE classes.

Hats & Hoods - Hoods are not to be worn inside the school. Hats can be worn but must be removed during the National Anthem and at lunch.

Stuff with Wheels - Heelys (or wheeled shoes) are not to be worn inside the school. These can be worn outside during recesses or lunch breaks. Bikes are not to be used during recesses. Scooters can be used at recesses providing a helmet is worn

Extra-Curricular Programs

Students are invited to participate in both intramural sports programs as well as a variety of clubs and groups. Our goal is to build skills and interests in students. We offer both noon hour and after school activities. In all activities and programs the school's focus will be on building skills and teamwork.

Exploratories

Exploratories are options courses for students. They incorporate many different areas from fine arts, to physical education to science to whatever is reasonable. Exploratories occur Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during teacher planning time.

House Teams

Students are involved in House Teams at SNCS. These teacher led, multi-grade teams compete together all year for the coveted House Team Cup. The activities vary from sporting events, to fundraising, to art and reading.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Experience and research clearly show that students make appropriate and meaningful decisions when three things occur.

- 1) They understand clearly what is expected.
- 2) They know the consequences of their decisions.
- 3) The consequence is carried out consistently.

During the first week of school our students along with staff, will identify the expectations and define clearly the consequences.

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

1. Students will act in a respectful and responsible manner
2. Students will use extra effort to include others and help make the school a safe, caring place.
3. Students will help others by saying "no" to bullying and by standing up to those who do bully. Victims and Bullies are included in groups to build skills needed.
4. Students will follow the directions of school staff in a co-operative and respectful manner. Student behavior must not disrupt or interfere with the learning environment or safety of others.

S - Safe and Caring

T - Teamwork

A - Accountability

R - Respect

S - Success

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

We work on the positive behavior model by rewarding students for good behavior. In addition to academic and social growth, schools guide students in developing positive decision-making skills. Being a life-long process, decision-making has one characteristic that is important to keep in mind: **A decision often affects more than the decision-maker.**

SNCS views student behavior as having two levels:

Level 1 - student decisions that affect only the student

Level 2 - student decisions that affect others in school

Level 1

These decisions are ones which directly impact the decision-maker. Examples include skipping school, tardiness and refusing to do academic studies. Though there is a possible long-term societal impact, the personal impact on the individual is clear. In

these situations, the school will work with parents/guardians, child circle worker, social agencies and of course the student, to foster better decision-making in the future

Level 2

When students make decisions that negatively affect the safety, self-esteem, comfort level or education of another individual at school, those decisions are deemed unacceptable. Each year our students are taught the rules of the school and the consequences of breaking them. Though we focus heavily on the positive behavior model in our school, students sometimes choose to make decisions that negatively affect others or their schooling. In these cases, the school may choose one or more of the following:

- 1) Teacher/Staff will speak with the student
- 2) Administration speaks with student
- 3) Parents/guardians will be informed of the incident(s)
- 4) A loss of privileges and freedoms.

Loss of privileges may include but is not limited to:

- 1) Noon hour/recess loss of privileges
- 2) In-school suspensions
- 3) Out-of-school suspensions
- 4) Expulsion from school
- 5) Other consequences as determined by the administration and/or parent/guardian

Inappropriate or unacceptable conduct includes behaviors that:

- Interfere with the learning of others
- Interfere with a respectful, orderly environment
- Create unsafe conditions
- Bully, harass, intimidate students or staff

We maintain a "Hands Off" policy at SNCS (i.e. no inappropriate or aggressive physical contact, play fighting or tackle games).

Students are encouraged to build people up and make their days better.

As a school we have a song which reminds us to be the best we can be:

I am proud like a mountain.

Big as the sea

I will stand up

For all that I believe

And if I don't succeed

On the first or even tenth try

I will pick myself up

And try, try again.

Written by Peter Puffin

Student Evaluation

Students will have three written reports throughout the year. These usually take place in November, March, and June.

The final term will also include year-end tests for students in all grades. The value of these tests will not exceed 10% of the student's final mark.

In Closing

We appreciate you taking the time to learn more about Spirit of the North Community School. If you have any further questions, comments or concerns please feel free to contact our office at 841-7200. You can find out more about Spirit on our website: www.fvsd.ab.ca/school/SNCS



S - Successful

T - Teamwork

A - Accountability

R - Responsibility