



# DEPARTURE BAY ELEMENTARY ECO-SCHOOL

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

3004 DEPARTURE BAY ROAD, NANAIMO, B.C V9T 1B4

PHONE: (250) 758-6541 FAX: (250) 751-1617

WEBSITE: [HTTP://SCHOOLSWEB.SD68.BC.CA/DEPBAY](http://schoolsweb.sd68.bc.ca/depbay)

### *Vision*

To become a school with an environmental focus that produces students who are environmentally literate by using a hands-on, interdisciplinary, place-based approach to provide students with meaningful and imaginative learning opportunities where students are constantly engaged in the natural world around our facility.

### *Mission*

Departure Bay Eco-School is committed to fostering in each child academic excellence, social responsibility, and the joy of life-long learning as a share responsibility of home, school, and community.

### *Goals*

To develop students' awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills and actions in regards to environmental content.

To inspire our families to develop an interest and become involved in science and sustainability (in our local community).

## SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The students, staff and parents at our school believe we can work together to provide a healthy, caring environment that will ensure the total growth of each child.

We believe everyone has

1. The right to be safe at all times.
2. The right to learn and work in a supportive environment.
3. The right to be respected.

### School Themes:

- **Interconnectedness:** I understand how ecological and social systems and processes are interdependent and influence personal and collective well-being.
- **Diversity:** I value the significance of biological and cultural diversity as well as diverse perspectives in developing social, cultural, global and environmental responsibility.
- **Responsibility and Citizenship:** I contribute positively in furthering a sustainable society by investigating and evaluating the need for change and designing, creating and implementing viable solutions that support our interconnected systems.

### School Hours:

**Monday to Friday: 8:45 am - 2:25 pm**

**Recesses: 11:45 - 12:20 pm and 1:30 - 1:45 pm**

## **Expectations of Participants in the Educational Process**

To achieve an effective learning environment for our students, the school community must function well together. For the educational process to be a successful and enjoyable one:

- The child must be prepared to learn.
- The climate of the school and classroom must be conducive to learning.
- The teacher must be prepared to help the child.

## **Expectations of Pupils**

- To always work and play safely and responsibly.
- To be courteous and to practice common manners.
- To respect the rights of others.
- To respect school property and the property of others.
- To come to school properly equipped and willing to work.
- Complete planners according to teachers

## **Expectations of Parents**

- To ensure that students attend regularly and punctually.
- To ensure that the child is prepared to work while at school.
- Responsible to ensure appropriate and recent legal documents regarding custody are provided to the school. Ensure that staff are aware of their existence.
- To inform the school of any medical conditions which require emergency response. These include allergies, asthma, seizures etc. This information is kept on file at school in case of emergency.
- To be prepared to work with the child and the teacher in planning and carrying out a suitable educational program.
- To work with the teacher to help the child develop responsibility, self-discipline, and respect for the rights of others.
- Support our planner program by reviewing the contents of the planner each evening with your children.
- Sign and return field trip permission slips on time.

## **Expectations of Teachers**

- To present to a group of individual students a planned basic program.
- To acknowledge the individual differences of pupils, and to make adjustments to the basic program, so that each pupil is challenged to reach his/her potential.
- To be courteous, practice common manners, and to enforce the expectations of the school and the classroom consistently and with impartiality.
- To work with pupils and parents in planning and implementing a suitable educational program for each child.

## **Expectations of the Educational Administrators**

To administer and supervise the school, including:

- Placement and programming of pupils in school.
- General conduct of pupils at school, going to and from school, and participating in extra-curricular activities.
- Provision of guidance, advice, support, and direction to pupils, parents, teacher, and support staff in all school matters.

## General Expectations

1. Pupils may use the school phone when their teacher has determined that the use is appropriate. The phone is not to be used to arrange for rides home or for permission to play at a friend's house. These arrangements need to be made in advance.
2. Participation in physical education classes is expected unless for medical reasons there is a written request from the parents. A note from a physician may be requested for non-participation for extended periods. Students need to have proper footwear at school for safe participation in our daily physical activities.
3. Students will walk inside the building and are expected to use assigned doors for entering or leaving the School.
4. Students will play in assigned areas. Out-of-bounds play areas are: parking lot, main entrance, on outside stairs and in washrooms.
5. Bikes and skateboards/scooters must be walked on the school grounds. Helmets are required. Students must not tamper with other students' bikes.
6. Students are not to leave the school grounds at lunch or recess, unless they have permission from a teacher, or written permission from a parent.
7. Students are permitted to participate in activities in the gym only when supervised by an adult.
8. Students should not arrive prior to 8:30 am as there is no supervision at this time.
9. Students are asked to go home immediately after school as supervision ends 15 minutes after dismissal time.
10. Students are encouraged to leave valuable items at home. We are unable to control the loss of valuable items. If students choose to bring valuable items to school, they do so at their own risk.
11. All playground equipment will be used in a safe and responsible manner.
12. Snowballs/Firecrackers/rock-throwing - The throwing or use of these objects at school creates an unsafe situation. There is "no snow throwing" on Departure Bay School grounds. Students are not to participate in activities that may injure or annoy other students - face washing, putting snow in clothing.

## Electronic Devices

**Cell phones:** If your child must bring a cell phone to school, we ask that it only be used outside after dismissal. It must be turned off during school hours and be stored in your child's backpack. If a student's cell phone causes disruption during school time, it will be removed from the student and it will be returned at the end of the day. Persistent misuse or disruption may result in a parent/administration meeting and/or the student not being allowed to bring it to school. We do have a phone available for emergencies. Parents can leave messages for their child.

We want to encourage our students to be active and practicing appropriate social interaction with each other during our recesses.

**Electronic Devices:** Digital recording devices and other hand held electronic devices are not permitted at school, unless the classroom teacher/supervising staff member has given permission for a specific purpose.

## Noon Hour Policy

Lunch recess at school should be considered a privilege, not a right. The consequence for children who are unable to demonstrate acceptable behaviour during lunch recess will be loss of this privilege. Students will be given warnings and parents will be informed before loss of noon-hour privileges occurs. If unacceptable behaviour persists, parents will be required to make alternate arrangements for their child at lunch recess.

From 11:45-12:20 p.m. students will be supervised on the playground. When heavy rainstorms occur, it will be declared an 'inside day' and supervisors will move inside. Pupils cannot leave the school grounds during the recess without permission from their teacher and written permission from their parent.

## Rainy Day and Inclement Weather:

Please ensure that your child comes to school prepared for the weather. Inside days are only called in cases of heavy rain and extreme weather.

### Pupils shall:

- At recesses, play on the playground or in the gymnasium (if participating in a supervised activity),
- Eat their lunch before or after the play period, between 12:20 p.m. and 12:40 p.m. At the discretion of the teacher, providing a student isn't wasting time, extra time could be allotted, if needed to complete lunch. This eating time is instructional time.

## Dropping off/Picking up Students

We recognize that there is minimal parking at DBES but we ask that parents, for the sake of student safety, respect the signs and requests of the teachers on duty. Please do not stop and park in the drop-off/pick-up area. It is necessary that you move in and out of this area quickly. We suggest that older students get picked up 10 minutes after our dismissal. Possibly older siblings can pick their younger siblings up from class and wait with them to get picked up a little later to help. **Please do not drive into the staff parking lot.** We appreciate everyone's attention to safety and your cooperation in regards to the parking lot.

## Early Detection System

Early Detection was initiated for the safety and protection of your children. The purpose of the program is to detect, as soon as possible, the whereabouts of each student not in class.

For the system to operate successfully, parents are requested to:

- Phone the school in the morning between 8:00 and 8:45 a.m., if your child is late or absent from school for any reason, or,
- Send a note with another child in the family, or
- Give advanced notice, preferably written, of dental/medical appointments or any changes from the usual routine.
- 

Students who arrive late for school are expected to check in at the office to advise staff of their arrival.

## **Attendance**

### **Attendance at school is important for two reasons:**

1. Students miss concepts taught and assignments when away.
2. Perhaps more importantly in the long run, if absence with parent permission is due to any other reason except illness or medical reasons, it places a lesser value on school education in the eye of the child.

### **Late Policy**

- It is a matter of common courtesy to arrive for classes at the proper time and students are encouraged to develop lifelong habits of promptness.
- Students who arrive late often disrupt the operation of the classroom by requiring the attention of their teachers or classmates to assist them in getting started on their assignments or to re-teach all or part of a lesson.
- Students may be asked to stay in at recess or lunch to make up for lost class time.
- For the chronic tardiness, a letter will be sent home to parents with a copy in the student's file.

## **Emergency Procedures**

Should your child have a serious injury during school hours, the following procedure is followed:

1. The nature and seriousness of the child's injury is determined.
2. If time is not an important consideration, the home is contacted and the parent is asked to come for the child.
3. If the home cannot be contacted the emergency number provided to the school is called.
4. If no contact is made, the school will take the necessary action to ensure the child gets medical attention. The school will continue in its attempt to contact parent/guardians.
5. If emergency care is required, the school will do so as quickly as possible. In such cases the parent may have to meet their child at the hospital.

## **School Closures in an Emergency /Emergency Dismissal / School Closures**

Unforeseen circumstances or conditions may result in a school closure.

### **What do parents need to know?**

1. Be informed. The local radio stations WAVE 102.3 FM or WOLF 106.9 FM will start broadcasting bulletins by 7:00 a.m. if circumstances are necessary for a school closure. These will be updated again by 1:00 p.m.
2. Prepare your child. If schools are closed during the school day due to some emergency situation, your child needs to know what to do. With approximately 300 students, we cannot contact all parents by phone. If your child's first option is to go home, be sure to instruct him/her on what to do (i.e., whom to phone if home alone.) You may, especially if both parents work outside the home, need to establish a plan for your child after an emergency release.

### **This plan could include:**

- Going to a friend, neighbour, or relative.
- Enlisting support services.

### **Keep this in mind:**

- You may not be able to get home quickly or easily, and, communication by telephone may be difficult.

## Homework for Vacations

Each year we are approached by an increasing number of parents who wish to take their child out of school for extended periods of time. Usually this is for reasons associated with family plans. We do not have a procedure for granting students a "leave of absence". Rather it is assumed that parents will make decisions in the best interests of their own child. We are respectful of the fact that many of our families have family members far away, and spending time with them is important. Difficulties arise, however, when parents wish to have some sort of reassurance that their child will not be "behind" in their work when they return. If your child misses school for extended periods of time, he or she will be "behind" in classroom work. Students may well have other cultural travel experiences that contribute to their overall development, but the many varied daily classroom activities they will miss cannot be duplicated through worksheets or a workbook.

We are not in the position to provide assignments for children who have extended absences due to family plans. Rather we are providing a list of suggested activities that are designed to assist parents with planning for their child's educational needs while traveling.

- Set aside a time each day for reading books
- Have your child keep a reading response journal in which he or she records this reading activity and thoughts about what has been read that day
- Keep a scrapbook of special places or sightseeing
- Have your child keep a "math journal" or ledger, dealing with changes in time and currency, distances traveled, cost of fuel and meals, etc.
- You may wish to purchase a math workbook that will help your child keep in daily practice with basic math skills.

We will be happy to see what your child has accomplished upon his or her return, but will not be evaluating or marking these activities. It is your right to take your child out of school due to family circumstances, but you must also accept the responsibility of your child's education during that absence.

## Student Planners

At many schools including Departure Bay, planners are used to help students keep track of homework assignments as well as act as a communication tool between home and school. Planners are an essential organizational tool for our students.

### The parents' role in the Student Planner Program:

- Ask to see the Student Planner daily. Provide encouragement and guidance to help the child use the Planner properly and fully.
- Communicate with the teacher or child through the Memos/Reminders section occasionally: e.g. "Won't be home till 4:00 Remember to get key from next door." Mrs. Jones - could we meet briefly Wednesday or Thursday of next week?"
- Help to keep track of important school activities and special events.
- Use the Planner to communicate with the teacher and student during reporting times.
- Initial daily

### The parents are encouraged to:

- Help the child set up at home an area conducive to quiet study.
- Encourage the child to develop good organizational habits by having him/her get the Planner, consent forms, homework, etc. packed and ready for return to school in the morning.
- Model successful behaviour by showing your child your planner and how you use it.
- Keep a planner/calendar by the phone where all family events and child activities are listed.
- Encourage your child when you see the Planner being used with homework.

## Care of School Property

Pupils borrow library books and use textbooks, school supplies and equipment. It is the pupil's responsibility to take care of any item that is on loan to him/her.

As the school has only limited resources for replacement of materials, any pupil who carelessly or willfully loses, defaces, or destroys books and other school property will be required to pay the replacement costs. Every pupil is encouraged to carry books to and from school in a suitable bag.

## Lost and Found

Parents are reminded to clearly label all items students bring to school, as we cannot accept responsibility for lost or misplaced articles. Found items are kept at school and may be claimed by students and parents. Parents are invited to check the Lost and Found regularly as remaining items are periodically taken to the Salvation Army.

## Fire, Earthquake and Lockdown Drills

All schools conduct fire drills several times throughout the year. Any continuous ringing of the fire bell must be treated as a real emergency (as it well could be). Pupils evacuate the school in an orderly fashion and gather on the lower field at a safe distance from the building. The deliberate activation of a false alarm is a very serious offence and will result in up to a five-day suspension.

Earthquake drills are conducted on a regular basis. In the event of an earthquake, when shaking stops, the school is evacuated in an orderly fashion. Teachers and students will move to the lower field, away from building and power lines.

Lockdown drills are conducted twice per school year. Drills are supervised activities involving all members of the school community to provide the opportunity to practice skills in the response procedure. Students are directed to the closest secure area where they remain until the lockdown is over.

## Departure Bay is "NUT AWARE"

- **Peanuts, Peanut Butter, almonds, ground nuts and products which have peanut butter or peanuts or other nuts in them can be fatal for some of our students who have nut allergies.**
- We ask that you consider not sending or bringing any of these products to school.
- If these products are to be brought to school, they must be consumed in the homeroom classroom only - ie. not in public areas such as playgrounds, hallways, washrooms or other rooms. Adults or students using such products must take responsibility for washing their hands, desks, books and equipment, as necessary, to ensure that we limit the chance that allergic students will come into contact with the dangerous products.
- Our "nut aware" approach offers no absolute guarantees of safety but is our sincere attempt to do everything possible to ensure the safety of all of our student.
- Your cooperation, understanding and compassion are very much appreciated. Thank you!



## **Administering Medication in Schools**

Teachers are not required to administer medical procedures nor are they required to administer medications on a regular or predictable basis. The administration of medication is the responsibility of appropriate health personnel or an individual capable and trained in self-administration. Some students must, of necessity, take medication while attending school. Parents need to fill out a Request for Administration of Physician Prescribed Medication. All medication must be locked up in the office area and administered by the staff member that has signed the request form. If you have to send medication to school with your child, please note the District Policy regarding medication. Administration of (or supervision of the self-administration of) medications to pupils occur only if the following conditions are met:

- The medication is required while the child is attending school.
- A parent has requested the school's assistance and has completed the Parent Request Form concerning the administration of medication.

Please note: For children who have serious medical problems that require medication and/or ambulance attendance or hospitalization (such as severe allergic reactions to bee stings or certain foods) it is the parent's responsibility to provide the school with the medication and information on what to do. This must be updated by the parent on a yearly basis or as required.

## **Visitors to the School**

All the school doors are locked before and after school except for the main entrance to ensure that all visitors to the school check in at the front office to pick up a Visitor's Pass.

## **Nutrition Policy**

Departure Bay Elementary School will continue to promote a positive and informed attitude toward healthy eating and active living through nutrition education and physical education. We will ensure that all decisions involving food and drink at Departure Bay Elementary will be carried out in the best interests of our school community's needs. Our continuing education will incorporate Canada's Food Guide for Healthy Eating and will focus on nutritional foods during classroom and school functions.

### **Departure Bay Elementary School Food Guidelines**

- a) All food and beverage items being sold to students (ie. hot lunch, recess sales, concessions, etc.) will be selected from the Choose Most and Choose Sometimes categories of the Nutrition Guidelines for Sales of Food and Beverages in B.C. Schools.
- b) School community members (students, staff, and parents) are encouraged to refer to *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* when making snacks and lunches for school. Bringing soft drinks, candy and potato chips are strongly discouraged.
- c) It is recognized that there are 'special celebrations' occasionally throughout the school year (ie. Valentine's Day, Christmas, etc.). Staff will work to create a balanced approach to these celebrations while recognizing that 'treats on occasion' are part of a balanced approach to a healthy lifestyle.