



ARMSTRONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

3010 Pleasant Valley Road ○ Armstrong, B.C. ○ V0E 1B2

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Student Handbook

2017-2018

About Armstrong Elementary School

Armstrong Elementary School was initially known as the “Armstrong Spallumcheen Consolidated School”. When it was built in 1921, it was the first school in the Province to be constructed as a central school into which were consolidated approximately thirteen small country or one-room schools. In 2016 we celebrated our 95th Birthday with a community birthday party and open house.

In 1946, Armstrong-Spallumcheen School District No. 21 was formed. Armstrong Elementary continued to be the only elementary school in the District until the construction of Len Wood Elementary School in 1964. At that time A.E.S. became the primary school while Len Wood became the intermediate school. In 1990, it was decided to establish three full elementary schools and the school boundaries were redrawn.

From 1994 to 1996, A.E.S. was renovated extensively and made wheelchair accessible. In 1996, School District No. 21 was amalgamated with School District No. 89 to the north to form North Okanagan Shuswap School District No. 83 with its central office in Salmon Arm.

Armstrong Elementary School fills a special place in the City of Armstrong and Spallumcheen. Numerous present students have parents and grandparents and great grand parents who were students here. There are many community people who have a strong attachment to the school. This is evident from the numbers of people who attend the school at such times as Christmas concerts and Spring Festival. It is also a school which is often used in the evenings and on weekends by community groups.



Armstrong Elementary School Mission Statement

The mission of Armstrong Elementary School is to provide a positive and mutually respectful environment which encourages all learners to strive for personal excellence, responsible citizenship and lifelong learning.

Bell Schedule

8:03	Warning Bell
8:05	Start
10:00-10:15	Recess
11:35-12:20	
2:00	Dismissal

School Busses

Each fall a card with information on pick up/drop off times and exact pick up/drop off points is sent to each bus student or you can go online at sd83.bc.ca. Morning supervision commences when the first bus arrives. Information on bussing is also available from the Transportation Department at 546-1922 and on the school district website (www.sd83.bc.ca). All students must have a signed bus behavior form which is sent out in September.

Permission to Ride the School Bus: Notes from parents are required for those students who wish to ride a different bus or for those students who are not regular bus students. These notes are to be presented to the teacher and to the bus driver. The student will be granted permission at the discretion of the bus driver and only if adequate space is available.

Kindergarten Students: Kindergarten students must be met by an adult at their designated drop-off.

Indoor / Outdoor Policy

When students arrive at school in the morning they play outside until the bell rings. Supervision starts at 7:40. Students should not be at school before this time as we cannot guarantee their safety. At recess and lunch time all students are expected to go outside for some fresh air when the weather is deemed favorable by the supervisor. When weather conditions are too wet or cold to be outside, the library, gym, and computer labs will be inside options. "Inside days" will be announced or posted on the school doors. After school, students are expected to go directly home or outside to wait for their buses in the designated bus areas.

Picking Up Students: Please use extreme caution in the parking area. Thank you for observing the no parking zones around the school. ***The bus lane is reserved for buses before and after school. Please do not drive in the bus lane at those times.*** If you are walking, please use the crosswalk. Thank-you.

School Dress Code

Dress at Armstrong Elementary and at school functions is expected to meet generally accepted standards of suitability for the occasion. If a student's dress is found to be unsuitable, the student will need to change or be sent home. Revealing clothing, clothing advocating drug or alcohol use, or displaying inappropriate language may not be worn. AES is a place of business and the attire should match that atmosphere.

Armstrong Elementary continues to be a 'hat-free' zone; please remove hats upon entering the school building. Thank you for modeling this etiquette for our students and for your cooperation and understanding.

Cell Phones

Cell phones and other electronic gadgets are a distraction to student learning. They are easily damaged or stolen. It is strongly recommended that students leave their electronic devices at home. The school will not be responsible

for lost or stolen electronic devices. In addition, it is requested that, if calls must be taken within the building, they are out of range of classrooms. Thank-you.

Life - Threatening Allergies

Armstrong Elementary School has students who have a severe life-threatening allergy to peanuts and peanut products as well as wheat and milk products. Exposure to even a minute amount of the food substances could cause anaphylactic shock and, without immediate emergency medical assistance, loss of consciousness and death. With this in mind, we are an “allergy aware” school and we strive to provide a safe environment for all of our students, including those with severe allergies. Individual classes have safety plans in place for individual students and all students are expected to be respectful of our allergic students’ needs.

The school has established an emergency plan for anaphylactic students. Our objectives are to establish and maintain, to the extent possible:

- Classrooms attended by the students are free of any substance that places the student at risk of anaphylactic shock.
- School practices which reduce the possibility of exposure to substances which cause anaphylactic shock (e.g. hand washing routines)

Please inform the school immediately if you have a child who is anaphylactic.

There are forms at the office which need to be filled in by your physician so that we can establish an emergency plan for your child.

Student Guidelines

Bicycles: “Walk your wheels” Students who bring bicycles and scooters to school must place them in the bike stands immediately upon entering the school grounds. Bicycles and scooters should be locked for safe keeping and should not be ridden on the school grounds. ALL students must wear a helmet and our very young students who ride, should be accompanied by an adult.

Leaving the School Grounds: Students are only permitted to leave the school grounds during school hours if they are going home for lunch, have written parental consent, or they are on a school supervised activity.

Indoor Footwear: In order to keep our school clean and reduce the damage to flooring, students are asked to have a pair of indoor shoes available to wear inside the building. Running shoes for P.E. are suitable for this use. For safety and health reasons, stocking feet are not advisable.

Gym Strip: Most intermediate students are required to wear shorts or sweats, t-shirt and running shoes for Physical Education. It is recommended that these items be kept in a small gym bag and the student’s name be written clearly on all belongings.

Communications

Safe Arrival Program

To enhance the safety of your children, the school operates a safe arrival program. We rely on parent volunteers to provide this service.

If your child is late or absent, please call the school before 8:00 a.m. The answering machine is left on at all times to record your message.

Those students who are absent and whose parents have not called in to report their child’s absence will be phoned at home by a parent volunteer. Please ensure that the school has your work or an emergency number in case you are unable to be contacted at home.

Change in Student Information

Parents are requested to advise the school office of any changes for student's home address, telephone number or other basic student information. It is important that the school be able to contact students' homes in case of illness or other situations which may arise.

Office Telephone

There is a telephone in the office for use by our students. Students are asked to get permission from their teacher and office personnel before using the phone.

Change in Routines

If your child is not following his/her regular routine after school (i.e. going to a birthday party, to a friend's house) please send a note to the classroom teacher so she/he is aware of this change. **These arrangements are to be made at home the previous day.**

Newsletters which provide important information including upcoming events and students' achievements, come out at the end of each month throughout the year. An updated calendar will be attached to each newsletter and newsletters will be posted online on the school website. A reminder is emailed to advise that the latest newsletter is on the school website.

District Student Code of Ethics

Students are expected to become responsible citizens as they learn the connection between their rights and their responsibilities.

(1) Students are to be given the opportunity to learn and teachers are to be given the opportunity to teach without disruption.

Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis and to participate constructively in the learning process and in appropriate decision making procedures.

(2) Students have the right to feel safe and to be treated with respect and courtesy.

Students are expected to treat self, others and property with respect, demonstrating positive standards of attitude and behaviour.

School Expectations

We believe in a proactive approach at A.E.S. Students are encouraged to demonstrate the following expectations:

Respect Others, Respect Yourself, Respect Property and Respect Learning

Armstrong Elementary School Code of Conduct

Purpose: Armstrong Elementary School staff will treat seriously behavior or communication that discriminates based on race, color, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation and gender identity or expression (prohibited grounds set out in the B.C. Human Rights Code). These expectations apply to behavior at school, during school organized or sponsored activities, and behavior beyond these times (including on-line behavior) that negatively impacts the safe, caring or orderly environment of the school, and/or student learning.

Discipline Procedures: Armstrong Elementary School's discipline approach is based on respecting self, others, property and learning. Students are encouraged to be aware of their rights and responsibilities and the District's Student Code of Ethics. Accepting responsibility for the behavior, complying with the consequences, and making a commitment to improve the behavior are steps for encouraging students to make responsible choices. Recognizing that all behavior is motivated by a need, the school, working with the child and parent, will endeavor to find an appropriate way for the child to meet his/her need. The goal of this collaboration will be to help the child to succeed while supporting the expectations of the school.

Minor offenses: Are handled by staff in a proactive manner in the class, halls, and other general areas of the school. With our kindergarten students, who are adjusting to new school expectations, offenses are often dealt with individually and utilized as learning opportunities.

Major offenses include the following:

- hitting, roughing, physical abuse, fighting
- defiance of authority
- disrespectful /abusive language
- damaging or stealing property
- bullying

Procedure for Major Offenses: First Time:

The staff member completes an Office Referral Notice which defines the problem. The supervising teacher, principal or vice-principal discusses the problem with the student. Parents/guardians will be notified by phone and/or the Office Referral Notice. Parents receiving the notice are required to sign and return it as soon as possible. Some form of restitution or consequence will be given if deemed appropriate. A record of the incident is kept in the office and is recorded.

Second Time:

In addition to the first time procedures, the student may be required to serve a recess and/or lunch and/or half-day in-school suspension. Parents are notified by phone call.

Third Time:

Depending on the severity of the problem, the student may serve a full-day or more in-school suspension. Parents are notified by letter and phone call. Further consultation is required at this stage and the child's parents may be called in to discuss concerns and develop a plan and/or contract. If the unexpected behavior persists, suspension from school will be considered. If a serious violation occurs at any time, an immediate in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension may be assigned.

Our discipline process recognizes that students can and do make choices. Our students are expected to accept responsibility for their behavior, comply with the consequences of their behavior, and make a commitment to improve their behavior. We recognize each child's home contributes to the teaching of expected behavior and look forward to working with you as partners in your child's education.

Resolving Issues: Steps to Follow When Resolving Issues at School (A Check List for Parents)

- ✓ act as soon as possible, do not let the problem remain unresolved
- ✓ listen carefully to what your child is saying, try to understand all view points on the issue and do your best to look at this issue logically, leaving your emotions out of the picture for the time being; this can be challenging at times
- ✓ determine clearly in your mind what the issue is, establish what the facts are and what information may be missing
- ✓ decide if your child needs your support or if he/she can resolve the issue by themselves
- ✓ if you act on your child's behalf, when possible and appropriate, bring the concerns to the teacher or staff member directly involved
- ✓ clearly identify the purpose of your contact, including your understanding of the issue; listen carefully to what the other person has to say
- ✓ if a resolution is not reached, the concern should be brought to the immediate supervisor (e.g. Principal)
- ✓ if the problems cannot be resolved at the school level, you may wish to contact the Director of Instruction at the School District Office

- ✓ if you are unable to resolve the issue at this level, the school district has policies and procedures for dealing with complaints and appealing decisions
- ✓ should you have any questions regarding this process, help is available through the school principal or a parent of the P.A.C.

Student Fees for 2017 - 2018

Listed below are the permissible school fees in compliance with provincial legislation. A **financial hardship policy** is in place at AES for families unable to afford school fees. Please contact Ms. Brown, principal, for further information.

Permissible Fees –due by September 30, 2017 :

- Student agenda \$6.00
- Recorders may be purchased or rented (privately or through the school district)

Provincial legislation does not allow schools to charge a mandatory activity fee. Our PAC and staff believe these programs and activities are important for our students and are requesting parents continue to pay these fees so that these programs and activities can continue. Our ability to provide these programs will be dependent on the response from parents. **No student will be denied access to a school sponsored program/activity for financial reasons. If circumstances do not permit payment at this point, please contact Ms. Brown.**

Requested Fees:

- Kindergarten (to cover food) \$15.00
- Cultural performances (the number of performances booked is contingent upon the amount collected) \$7.00
- Field trips (as determined by teachers; fees are often requested to cover bussing, entry fees, food, activities)

COMBINED TOTAL OF PERMISSIBLE AND REQUESTED FEES

(for grades 1-5) \$ 13.00

(for kindergarten only) \$ 28.00

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding school fees, please contact the school.

Leadership Club

Armstrong Elementary School has a long history of student leadership involvement. The main purpose of the club is to give the student body an opportunity to plan and organize various activities throughout the year. Through their participation, it is hoped that students will develop a greater sense of ownership in their school. Students in Grades 4 and 5 are encouraged to apply through written application.

Parents

Parents are welcome in our school. Staff appreciates parent help and participation in classrooms, school programs/services and on our Parent Advisory Committee. Please check with your child's teacher about volunteer opportunities in your child's class.

Parents know their children better than anyone and with regular communication between home and school, parents can take an active role in their children's education.

If parents have a question or concern regarding their child's learning, talking to the child's teacher is always the first step.

Parent Advisory Committee The Armstrong Elementary Parent Advisory is composed of parents of the students of our school. The input of all parents is welcomed at P.A.C. meetings. The parent group meets regularly at Armstrong Elementary School with the School Principal and interested teachers. Free babysitting is available during meetings.

Some of the aims of the Parent Advisory are to: provide input and support, when required, to decisions and policies of the school

- present speakers in various areas of interest to parents to familiarize them with their children's educational programs
- provide support for the students and parents and a liaison between home and school
- provide a forum for raising questions and concerns
- fundraise to complement and enhance the funds provided by the Ministry of Education to enrich their children's learning environment
- the P.A.C. also sends a representative to monthly District P.A.C. meetings and District Advocacy meetings
- Funds raised by the P.A.C. enable them to support field trips, art, playground, and P.E. equipment, staff funds, and technology.

Accident and Medical

- Essential first aid will be administered by the classroom teacher or supervisory personnel available. In the event of a serious injury, the child will be referred to the staff member with first aid training.
- It is very important that changes in home phone numbers, emergency numbers or family doctor's numbers be reported immediately to the school secretary. If the child requires emergency medical treatment, parents or guardians will be contacted.
- In the event of an illness, if necessary, the parents or alternates will be contacted immediately and asked to escort the child home.
- Please do not send your child to school when they are ill.

Professional Development

Why do teachers need professional development? Change is affecting all of us, in our families, our work and our communities. Teachers use PRO-D days to keep on top of changes that affect their work with students (new technology, new ideas about teaching and learning, and different community needs). Skilled, enthusiastic teachers are key to maintaining the quality of education.

What do teachers do on PRO-D days? Teachers attend workshops and conferences; they consult experts; they teach one another.

Why can't teachers do their PRO-D on their own time? They can and they do. Teachers spend many hours attending university, taking evening classes and weekend workshops, reading professional journals and going to summer school. PRO-D days allow teams of teachers, or a whole school staff to work together on common problems. Whole staff involvement is often cited as the most effective method of school improvement.

How does my child benefit? We all want the best programs, the most up-to-date teaching methods and the best informed, inspired teachers for our children. PRO-D days help keep teachers current.

Student Placement

The placement of each child is carefully discussed by a group comprised of the child's present teacher, other teachers who have been involved in the student's learning, along with the administrative staff. The resulting placement will take into account the whole child. The following factors are considered when grouping students:

- diversity in development (academic ability)
- family relationships (brothers and sisters)

- parent information
- unique learning needs
- personality
- teaching and learning styles
- gender balance
- social dynamics

Parents with specific educational concerns that may require a special placement for their child, should forward the relevant information, in writing, to the principal before placement meetings in the spring. Notice of placement meetings will be published in the school newsletter annually with a due date for requests. Late requests will not be considered. The written request will be reviewed by staff in the placement meetings. Unfortunately, we are not able to satisfy all individual requests due to the factors that are noted above. We appreciate your positive support of our student placement decisions. Your response will certainly have an effect on your children's approach to his or her new classroom.

Significant changes in enrolment during the summer and the first week of school may require adjustments to staffing. This may require changes to class organization. Although these changes can be disruptive for everyone involved, it has been our experience that students adapt quickly to their new classrooms and the long term benefits are certainly evident.

Taking a Vacation?

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 or family business. We do not have a procedure for granting students a "leave of absence" from school. 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 students have family members who live far away and that spending time with them is important. However sometimes difficulties arise when parents wish to have some sort of reassurance that their child will not get "behind" in classroom work. Although cultural and travel experiences certainly contribute to a child's overall development, absent students do inevitably miss many classroom based instructional activities that cannot be duplicated through worksheets and workbooks. Although we are not in a position to provide assignments for children who have extended absences due to family plans, we are able to provide the following list of suggested activities. We hope they will be of assistance to parents who need to assume responsibility for their child's educational program while traveling.

- Set aside time each day for reading books.
- Have your child keep a reading response journal in which he or she records their reading activity and thoughts about what they have read.
- Keep a scrapbook of special places or sightseeing. This can include postcards, pamphlets, drawings, etc. with some student writing and labeling. Maps with routes marked on them and short paragraphs about the historical significance of certain landmarks would be useful additions.
- Have your child keep a "math journal" or ledger, dealing with changes in time and currency, distances traveled, cost of fuel and meals. These activities can provide a lot of real life practice with numbers. You may also wish to purchase a math workbook that will help your child to review basic math skills and learn new concepts.

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. If you remove your child from school for a family vacation, business reasons, or other similar family circumstances, we will assume that you are attending to your child's educational program during their absence from school.

