

Ochre River School Handbook



**Family, school, community . . .
every child matters, every moment counts**

Principal's Message

On behalf of the Ochre River School staff and our Parent Advisory Council I am pleased to welcome you to Ochre River School! This handbook will serve as a resource of our school's services, operations and policies. Everyone involved in our school community is encouraged to be familiar with the school policies and procedures. The school staff looks forward to working with the parents and community to make this a successful year for your child/children. We invite parents to take an active role in their child's education.

Together, may we create many positive educational experiences for your child. Again welcome to our school where we strive to provide a caring, nurturing learning environment.

Nathan Thacker,
Principal

Mission Statement

"The mission of Ochre River School is to provide a positive, safe and caring learning environment which endeavours to meet the academic, physical, emotional and social needs of all students.

Ochre River School Believes That:

1. Every child is special and has unique qualities that he/she brings to the classroom.
2. Every child has the ability to learn.
3. Learning is a lifetime endeavor.
4. Children must take responsibility for their learning and strive to achieve success.
5. Children experience more success with the support of the family and community.
6. Students need to be adaptable, flexible, co-operative and problem solvers in order to be successful.

Time Schedule

Supervision begins	8:30 a.m.
Opening	8:50 - 8:55 a.m.
Period 1	8:55 - 9:30 a.m.
Period 2	9:30 - 10:00 a.m.
Period 3	10:00 - 10:30 a.m.
Recess	10:30 - 10:45 a.m.
Period 4	10:45 - 11:15 a.m.
Period 5	11:15 - 11:45 a.m.
Noon Hour	11:45 - 12:45 p.m.
Entry	12:40 - 12:45 p.m.
Period 6	12:45 - 1:15 noon
Period 7	1:15 - 1:45 p.m.
Period 8	1:45 - 2:15 p.m.
Recess	2:15 - 2:30 p.m.
Period 9	2:30 - 3:00 p.m.
Period 10	3:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Dismissal	3:30 p.m.

(*Note: Gr. 7 & 8's recess break is a 7 minute break inside the school)

K - Gr. 8

School Policies

Adverse Weather Conditions

We recognize that a windchill factor of -26 or over may affect the safety of students. Various precautions are required. Students may be kept indoors during recess and noon hour. Buses could be cancelled under extreme storm conditions.

Please consult the division website or listen to CKDM 730 after 7:00 a.m. for any weather or school announcements.

Note: We recommend that all parents ensure their children are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. Students are expected to go outside on a regular basis at recess and noon hour if weather conditions permit. If a student is well enough to attend school he/she should be able to play outside. Exceptions would be made to students with doctors' certificates, and those who are recovering from an operation or a serious injury.

Extreme weather conditions that warrant the cancellation of bus transportation in the division. In cases of cold weather, temperatures -40 Celsius or colder or wind chills -45 Celsius, or colder shall be considered hazardous. This decision will be made by the Transportation Administration and will be communicated to all bus drivers and principals by members of the transportation department. Parents and students will be advised of the cancellation by means of local radio stations not later than 7:00 a.m. If a weather pattern develops or persists during the day that prevents buses from running at their regular afternoon dismissal time, schools will have the option, in consultation with the Transportation Department Administration, to initiate an early dismissal or initiate their emergency response plan which may include the billeting of students. This decision will be made not later than 1:00 p.m. on the affected day. If a decision is made for an early dismissal, bus drivers will be responsible to initiate the storm tree procedure to contact and advise parents of the decision.

Bus scheduling after billeting.

If the afternoon (return to home) trip has been cancelled on any day when there is school the next day, the bus will not make its usual trip the next morning, but will make the usual afternoon trip on that day provided that weather conditions are such that further cancellation is not required.

If the afternoon (return to home) trip has been cancelled on any day when there is not school the next day, individual families will be responsible for arranging the return home of the students concerned.

Agenda Books

Ochre River School implements an agenda program in grades 1 - 6. Through this program we hope to teach students organizational skills for life.

Our Objectives:

- * increase homework completion
- * strengthen home-school communication
- * help our students achieve higher grades

Our Expectations:

- * students will carry agendas to every class
- * students will record assigned work in their agendas
- * teachers will check agendas on a regular basis

The Rewards:

- * each student's agenda will be assigned a number and weekly prizes awarded to the owners of randomly picked agenda numbers for appropriate use
- * a family reward of pool & pizza (gift certificate) will be awarded to a randomly picked student whose agenda is up to date and signed by the parent/guardian. The draw will be made at the end of each school term prior to report cards.

We ask that the agendas be initialed each day and parents may also add comments to the agenda book.

Attendance

School attendance will be taken twice daily at 8:55 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. If your child will be unable to attend, we ask that you inform the school prior to the start of the day. If the school is uncertain as to the absence of any students, a call home shall be made to confirm the child's absence. If any student is absent for five consecutive days without explanation, the youth support worker will be informed.

Awards

At the end of the year the school will hold an awards evening. Here we recognize academic excellence. Students in grades K-6 receive a certificate of achievement. Students in grades 7 and 8 can strive to receive any of the following awards:

1. Top Student
Here the student must exhibit the highest marks.
2. All Round Student
Goes to the student who not only achieved academic success but also displayed positive leadership qualities in and out of the classroom.
3. Most Improved
The most improved student is the student who has made the greatest overall gains within the current year or between years.
4. Citizenship Award
Recognizes the student who displays exceptional leadership qualities and becomes an integral part of many school activities.
5. Top Female / Top Male Athlete
Top athletes are selected on the following criteria: leadership, sportsmanship and physical ability.
6. Drama Award
Student who demonstrates leadership and commitment throughout the production.
7. Band Award
Dedication and commitment to band during practices and performance.
7. McLennan Award
\$100 towards extra curricular activities at DRCSS

Honor Medals

Students in grades 7&8 will receive an honor medal if they receive 80% or better in all subjects.

Principal's List

Students in grades 7&8 will be placed on the principal's list if they receive 90% or better in all subjects except one where they may have an 80% or better.

Graduating students receive a graduation certificate.

Bicycle Use

If a child chooses to bring a bike to school, the school accepts no responsibility for damage/loss of the bike. We recommend that the bikes be locked and that students wear a helmet. Please use bike racks where available. At 3:30 dismissal, students with bikes will wait for the buses to leave first, then students with bikes will be dismissed.

Bus Regulations

During dismissal all students will exit from the west doors of the building. All students will line up in the appropriate bus line or town line and be dismissed by the supervising teacher. Town students and bus students with permission to remain in town, will be dismissed after the buses leave. A supervisor will accompany the kindergarten students to the bus lines and assist them in loading.

If a student wishes to ride on another bus, the parents must contact the school to confirm space and the student should have a note for both the driver and the teacher. Parents should notify both teacher and bus driver when picking up children who ride the bus. All school rules apply to students while travelling on the school bus. Refer to "School Bus Safety Guidelines" for more information.

Canteen

The Ochre River School has a canteen daily where children can buy the following: juice boxes, canned juice, cheese strings, yogurt tubes, pretzels, pickles and cheerios. Healthy snack alternatives will also be offered.

"Catch-A-Kid" Program

Teachers hand out tickets for good behavior - anytime, anywhere. Students place these in a box and draws are made for prizes during every weekly morning assembly. This is to provide rewards for "good" behavior.

Cell Phones

Cell phones must remain in backpacks during the school day or they will be confiscated. If a student's cell phone is confiscated they will get it back at 3:25 p.m. If it is confiscated a second time, a parent will need to pick up the cell phone at the school.

Community Use of School

The school is available for community use. All requests are channeled through the division office.

Discipline

Mountain View School Division has adopted a discipline policy. It is our intent to provide a positive, safe caring environment for all students, staff, parents and volunteers working in our school. In following these rules and guidelines for responsible behaviour, we have simplified them to the following expectations.

1. In the school, each person will walk in a quiet and safe manner.
2. Each person will keep hands and feet to him or herself.
3. Each person will treat school property and the belongings of others with care and respect.
4. Each person will show respect by speaking, writing and gesturing politely.
5. Students and parents should not bring any items to school that may be used as a weapon or anything that may cause injury or harm to another person. (Note: If any such articles are found or requested for educational reasons, they must be turned into or reported to the principal's office.)

Consequences for such behaviors would follow these general steps to correct the inappropriate behaviour.

- 1) Immediate warning to students about the inappropriate action.
- 2) A "Problem Report" will be filled out by the student and sent to parents informing them of inappropriate behaviour. The Problem Report will be signed by the parent and returned to school. Parents can request a copy of the report if they wish to keep one.
- 3) If necessary a conference will be arranged with parents, teachers, and principal to discuss the behavior and what can be done to correct the situation.
- 4) Initiate more serious consequences e.g. counselling assistance, restitution, in school suspension, out of school suspension.

The above procedures may be superseded depending upon the seriousness of the violation and where warranted other rules and expectations will be developed by the classroom teachers, supervisors or instructors to facilitate a warm and friendly work and play atmosphere for all students.

PROBLEM REPORT

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Supervising Teacher: _____ Time: _____

Others involved? _____ Place: _____

What did you do? _____

Why was this not acceptable? _____

How could you have solved the problem in a different way?

Consequences: _____

Parent Comments: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Supervising Teacher: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Principal's Signature: _____

* This is the _____ problem report this year. Date: _____

***** Please note: Students who continue to display inappropriate behavior in the school may have field trip privileges or other school privileges taken away.**

Dress Code

Students must learn to exercise good judgement in regards to their appearance and dress in public. Hence, the school requires that student dress must be appropriate and conducive to a learning environment. Clothing and jewellery must be such that it reflects the values of a positive life style and is free from words or pictures which may be regarded as offensive to others. For example: tops must cover mid-section and shorts and skirts must be of appropriate length. In addition, students are not permitted to wear hats or head gear in the building. Students dressed in clothing considered to be inappropriate for school shall be required to change or may be sent home and parents will be notified.

Emergency Procedures

School Staff will implement a lockdown and call police if/and when there is any reason to believe that imminent danger to students and staff may exist. At this stage, everyone in the school will move to a secure location, safe from harm. Police will respond to the school and no one will enter or leave, until the situation is resolved.

The first instinct of parents/guardians is to either phone the school directly or your child, or to attend directly to the school. You are asked not to do any of these, but instead to understand and follow the procedures as outlined.

If you hear that a lockdown is occurring do not attend the school; roadways need to be kept clear for responding emergency vehicles and other emergency responders need to get to and secure the areas as quickly as possible. Instead you may attend to our designated Student Pick-Up Location/Emergency Shelter Facility (Ochre River Community Centre or Grace Baptist Church) to receive information which will be provided by police and school representatives.

Every effort will be made to keep you informed as to what is happening during the event. Turn on your radio to CKDM 730 or 94.7 FM Brandon. Some situations may require that some information be withheld until the situation is resolved. In lockdown situations you may contact the school division by calling 204-638-3001. After the lockdown you may be asked to go to the school or to wait where you are until your child is brought to your location.

We ask that you not attempt to phone your child. In a lockdown, everyone must remain quiet, and a ringing cell phone may draw undue attention to the secure location where your child and his/her classmates are.

A precautionary "Hold & Secure" may also be implemented as a precaution if there is an unrelated emergency situation occurring outside the building or in the neighbourhood that could potentially present a danger to the school. In this situation all doors to the school are locked and monitored to allow any students from outside entry into the school. Classes will generally continue but no one will be allowed to enter or leave the building until the situation is resolved. We also ask that you do NOT attend to the school unless asked to do so by school board staff.

Electronic Devices

Children are encouraged to leave Ipods, MP3s, game boys, discman, cell phones and electronic games at home. Please do not send the above mentioned items to school. The use of these items on the bus is at the discretion of the bus driver.

Field Trips

Field trips are a valued and integral part of a school's programming. Generally, the aim of a field trip is to enhance instructional goals through providing experiences off school premises that reinforce student learning. In addition, the social experiences occurring within the realm of a field trip help the students develop social skills, attitudes and an understanding of others.

All field trips must have the approval of the principal. In addition, a waiver form is sent to the parents for their signature prior to an out of division trip or a trip that extends past the regular school hours. Students unable to participate in a field trip will be provided with alternate learning activities at the school.

Fire Drill

Fire drills are held monthly to ensure that all children: a) know the proper procedure regarding evacuation and b) to differentiate sound between routine bell and fire alarm bell. "Fire Exit" and procedures are posted in each classroom. Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times for health and safety reasons. (Fire exits shown on floor plan on inside cover) Other safety drills (bus evacuation, lockdown drill) will also be practiced throughout the year.

Food Sales

Hot Dog days are scheduled on the monthly school calendars. Other food sales will be announced in the newsletters. Volunteers are needed to help with food preparation.

Hearing/Vision Screening

Hearing and vision screening is done with grades K, 1, 3, 5 & 7 (new students and referrals). Letters are sent to parent/guardians of the students that will be screened and also if referrals to Optometrists and Audiologists are necessary.

Homework

Homework shall consist mainly of unfinished work and special assignments. Students should be encouraged to have a definite time set aside for unfinished projects, test preparation, leisure reading or research.

The amount of homework may vary as to grade level and student interest or participation. Grade 1 - 8 students will maintain a student agenda planner. If parents have any concerns as to individual student needs with regard to homework, please do not hesitate to contact the homeroom teacher to work out a suitable study arrangement. Students know that if their academic and social behaviors have not been acceptable, participation in school activities is at the discretion of staff.

Intramural Activities

Intramural activities are a viable and integral part of the Phys. Ed. program. The students in grades 5-8 will participate in intramural activities during the noon hour commencing at 12:25 p.m. Students are divided into equal teams. New teams are chosen for each activity. Officiating is provided by the older students. Competitions will be held in the following activities: flag football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton, floorball and softball. All sports are played in a round robin fashion followed by an appropriate playoff. At the end of the school year a top female and a top male athlete are selected on the following criteria: 1) leadership, 2) sportsmanship, and 3) physical ability.

Kindergarten

According to Division Policy, any child whose fifth birthday falls before December 31st may enter kindergarten in the fall of that year. Registration is held in the spring of that year.

Library

Our school library is open every school day. We encourage children to make use of the resources there. Children also take advantage of the Ochre River branch of the Parkland Regional Library. Children are responsible for lost books. They are required to cover the cost of any lost books.

Lost and Found

A box is maintained in the school. Students and parents are welcome to look through the items in it. If personal items are labelled they are more likely to be returned. At the end of each school year all clothing will be washed and donated to charity. Mittens will be washed and placed in a mitten tree to be used by students who have lost or forgotten theirs. Donations to the mitten tree would be appreciated at any time.

Lunch Hour

The noon hour is a time for students to enjoy their lunches and recharge their batteries outside. Children who stay at school over the lunch hour are expected to eat, read, or work quietly at their desks until 12:10 p.m.

All students are welcome to be at school during the noon hour. Remaining at school during lunch is a privilege and if inappropriate behavior occurs the following consequences may take place:

Town Students

1. verbal warning
2. a written warning in the student's agenda or a letter
3. one week - loss of privileges at lunch time (11:45-12:40)
4. two week - loss of privileges lunch time (11:45-12:40,

Bus Students

1. verbal warning
2. a written warning
3. one week - eating lunch in the hallway and walking with supervisors outside
4. two week - eating lunch in the hallway and walking with supervisors outside
5. two weeks of alternate arrangements - off school grounds from 12:00-12:55, or parent staying at school with them for the same period.

Bus students must have permission to leave the school at noon hour from their parents/guardians either by phone, written note or in person.

Note: Under no circumstances should students leave the school grounds without permission. Parents coming to the school to pick up the children or who wish to give them permission to leave the school must do so by notifying the supervising teacher or principal in person, by phone or written note. This should be limited to emergencies only.

Medical Emergencies

Parents will be contacted immediately in all cases when injury is deemed serious. Students requiring immediate medical attention will have it provided by staff or ambulance as the situation dictates.

Medication

Mountain View School Division acknowledges the fact that certain students may require prescribed medication during the school day in order to function as near to their potential as possible. The School Division also realizes that the administration of prescribed medication by the parent, legal guardian of the child, or by appropriate medical authorities is not always possible at the prescribed time during the school day. In this regard, the School Division will attend to the administering of prescribed medication provided that, and only if, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the pupil meet all the prerequisites as identified below in Section A.

- A) Parents shall provide the school with an "Administration of Prescribed Medication" form which shall include:
 1. A copy of the prescription and recommended dosage.
 2. The physician's requirements specifying frequency and method.
 3. Physician's description of anticipated reactions of the child to the prescribed medication.
 4. Physician's signature.
 5. Parental permission and signature approving the administration of the prescribed medication.
 6. An outline of the method for delivering medication to the school upon request from the school authority.

- B) Parents shall notify the school immediately if medication is no longer required.

- C) Parents shall complete a new "Administration of Prescribed Medication" form each year and whenever the physician changes the prescription.

Microwave Use

Each class has a microwave. The students may bring food in microwavable containers to be heated for lunch. Items to be microwaved must be placed in a clearly identified container suitable for use in a microwave. Unidentified plastic wrap etc. leads to all kinds of confusion.

Newsletters

A monthly newsletter is provided for each family attending Ochre River School. This is our main instrument of communication with parents. Newsletters are sent home with students and it is the responsibility of the student to make sure that the newsletter is delivered to the parent or guardian. This newsletter highlights upcoming school events and includes the next monthly calendar. In addition, the newsletter may summarize classroom happenings, alert parents to policy changes, and bring attention to special school programs. The newsletter is also available on the school's homepage <http://ochre.mvsd.org>.

Parent Advisory Council

The Parent Advisory Council is made up of parent members, the school principal and representatives of the school staff. The council recognizes the students as the most important component of the educational system and all parents are encouraged to become active members of the council.

The council generally meets on a monthly basis with meetings open to all parents and guardians of the students. The Parent Advisory Council is an avenue for all members of the school community to openly discuss educational matters, communicate re: school related issues and support the school through their involvement in daily activities, special events and fund-raising efforts. Our Parent Council provides a free hot lunch program throughout the school year.

Personal Belongings

Personal belongings are the responsibility of the students. The school is not responsible for damage or loss of personal belongings.

Playground Procedure

The playground equipment is for K-4 students use. Students are expected to use the playground equipment appropriately. If a student chooses not to use the equipment appropriately, they will be removed from the area. Children are not allowed to hang upside down from the equipment. At the start of every school year the physical education teacher conducts a safety tour of the playground equipment. Students playing intramurals, team games or using other equipment shall play in their designated areas.

Preschool Program

Parents and preschoolers (ages 3 and up) are invited to take part in the MVSD Preschool Program at Ochre River School held once a month from 10:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m. Please call the school for dates.

Recycling Program

Our school has a recycling program. A Green Team has been formed to help collect and process the recyclable products. Our recycling program is set up for school generated waste.

Reporting to Parents

Parents are contacted throughout the school year. An initial contact is made in September through a phone call to parents and/or an informal meeting on Welcome Back Night.

In November, parents are invited to a conference with the teacher after the report card is sent home.

A second report card and interview day occurs in March. The final report is sent at the end of June and indicates placement for September of the following school year.

Agenda books will be used in grades 1-6 for regular contact between school and home. We also encourage parents to please call the school at anytime during the year if they wish more information about their child's progress.

Student Council

The Student Council is made up of representatives from grades 5 through 8. Meetings are held once a cycle with a teacher facilitator. The council's main function is to plan and organize student activities. The council is composed of all students who are interested in helping with events.

Supervision

Children are under supervision from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. on the playground and in the school. Town students are encouraged to arrive at school after 8:30 a.m. Students sent before 8:30 a.m. will have no supervision.

Telephone Use

The school telephones are for administrative use. Students are asked to refrain from using the phone unless given permission by the teacher or principal. Parents should not call to speak to their children unnecessarily during school hours.

Visitors

We welcome all parents and visitors to our school. However, we wish to avoid unnecessary interruptions to classes or students. Therefore, we ask all visitors to the school to please sign in and report to the office.

Volunteers

We appreciate the support and wide variety of talents brought to the children of our school through the volunteer program. The use of volunteers allows our school the scope to provide many opportunities for our children. If you have any time you could spare or have a special talent you could share, please phone the school and leave your name.

Division policy now requests to have all volunteers who work with children unsupervised must have a Criminal Record Search and a Child Abuse Registry check completed.