

# Windsong Heights School

Dear Families, Guardians and Students,

Please take a few minutes to read this handbook, it is also in the agenda, with your child. We have tried to include as many details about Windsong Heights School. It is our hope to provide as much clarity as possible for our students and their families.

We know that our best results come when we have a strong connection with students, families and our staff. By working together with open communication, we strive to provide the best educational experience possible for your child.

Please feel free to contact your child's teacher directly if you have any questions or feedback about your child's program or progress. Our school website has a link to each teacher's web page which contains specific information from your child's teacher including their email, class activities and other school information (<http://windsong.rockyview.ab.ca/>).

Homeroom and core subject teachers (Math, Science, ELA, Social Studies) will share information about curriculum in regular messages to parents.

We also encourage you to contact your child's teacher or an administrator to discuss concerns or celebrations that you would like to share.

Sincerely,  
Penny Beaudry (Principal)  
Jason Hill (Assistant Principal)  
Susan Long (Acting Assistant Principal)

## **Bell Times**

### **KINDERGARTEN**

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#### **Morning Program**

#### **Afternoon Program**

<b>Monday - Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Monday - Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
8:10 am - 11:30 am	No school	12:10 pm - 2:45 pm	8:10 am - 11:05 am

### **Grades 1 - 8**

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<b>Monday - Thursday</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Time</b>
Student Entry	7:55 am	Student Entry	7:55 am
School Begins	8:10 am	School Begins	8:10 am
Morning Break	10:26 am - 10:39 am	Morning Break	9:50 am - 10:05 am
Lunch	11:59 am - 12:40 pm	Lunch	11:30 am - 12:13 pm
Dismissal	2:45 pm	Dismissal	1:00 pm

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Research indicates that students who attend school regularly are generally more successful. While the impact of poor attendance is often academic, there is also a significant social impact. Students who are frequently absent often feel less connected to the school, even at times feeling like they do not belong. When your child is absent from school, please contact the school 24-hour attendance line at:

**403-945-4149**

Please leave the following information: Your child's name, teacher's name and the reason for the absence. Please contact us prior to the morning bell if your child is away. Your cooperation with this procedure saves us a great deal of time and concern and helps to ensure the safety and well-being of your child. If your child's absence has not been reported, our automated system will attempt to contact you for verification.

We are able to enter absences in advance and we encourage you to phone as soon as you become aware of upcoming absence. For appointments, whenever possible, please book outside of school hours so that minimal class time is missed (ie. first thing in the morning, near lunch break, or near the end of the school day).

While family vacations are wonderful and often great experiences, we do not encourage extended vacations **during scheduled class time**. If, at all possible, we encourage your family to take vacations during scheduled days off throughout the school year.

## Partnership with Families

Families are an essential part of a child's learning. We encourage our parents/guardians to be actively involved in the education of their children. Parents are the first and most important educators in their child's life. Parent participation in their children's school education is a major factor in student achievement. As such, parents are very influential in their children's experience of school and can support the student's success in a number of ways. This includes:

1. Maintaining healthy routines at home so that children can do their best at school...
  - a. Read at home and have lots of books available for your children to access – membership at the Airdrie Public Library is FREE
  - b. Ensure your child attends school regularly and communicate absence to school on the day of the absence. For attendance guidelines:  
<https://blogs.rockyview.ab.ca/2016/09/22/when-is-too-sick-for-school/>
  - c. Establish early, regular bedtimes (recommended 10-12 hours of sleep/night).
  - d. Encourage active play time outside and limit the amount of screen time.
  - e. Create tech-free time zones in your home for all, including meal-time and sleep time (no screens – TVs or devices - in bedrooms overnight).
  - f. Ensure your child eats a balanced, healthy breakfast and provide them with nutritious snacks and lunch.
  - g. Set a regular home routine

- h. Check assignments for quality and provide feedback.
  - i. Set routines in your home that encourage good behavior and provide structure to help your child build self-control, decision making and critical thinking skills.
  - j. Ensure your child arrives at school in time to make a relaxed transition to the classroom before the start of the school day at 8:10 AM (doors open at 7:55 AM).
  - k. Read progress reports with your child and assist them in setting goals for next steps
2. Support and be involved in the life of the school...
- a. Actively participate in the School Council and Friends of Windsong Heights activities.
  - b. Read email updates and other school communications.
  - c. Communicate regularly with your child's teachers.
  - d. Support the work of the teachers and administration.
    - i. chaperone field studies
    - ii. share as a classroom expert
    - iii. volunteer as a classroom helper
    - iv. Set goals with your child, and follow their progress
    - v. Join "Helping Hands" on Fridays
    - vi. Let us know how we are doing
    - vii. Share your skills. We often need interpreters, readers, etc.
  - e. Address any concerns respectfully and in a timely manner
  - f. Promote positive, purposeful, and relaxed conversation about school with your children.
  - g. Model active listening and engagement.

We welcome volunteers at Windsong Heights School. All volunteers must have a Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Check prior to the start of volunteer activities. In Airdrie, the RCMP will complete this at a minimal cost. The application, with the principal's letter, is available on our website.

## **School Council**

The partnership between parents/guardians and the school is demonstrated in the School Council. (All parents with children at Windsong Heights are members of the Windsong Heights School Council.) Other members include administration, teachers, students, trustees and interested members of our community. This group, led by elected parents/guardians and supported by school administration, meet several times a year to improve communication, build a sense of community, share input and plan events which provide support for the school's operations and special projects. All parents/guardians are encouraged to be actively involved in the School Council, offering their time as they are able. Together, we make our school a great place to be a student.

## **The Friends of Windsong Heights School Society**

This non-profit society is made up of parents/guardians and community friends who work to raise funds to support the learning community of our school. We are ALL friends of our school!

## **Our School Community**

Windsong Heights is a kindergarten to grade 8 school. The name of our school represents the neighborhood community of Windsong, where our school is built. The word “Windsong” also speaks to the winds that are common throughout the year in our foothills, prairie locale. “Heights” brings to mind vistas of both prairie and mountain view as well as the high elevation of the Windsong neighborhood and Airdrie itself.

September 2019 will see us open our doors and welcome about 900 students coming from the neighbourhoods of Windsong and Prairie Springs and some of our older students from Hillcrest, Southwinds, Osbourne Park Coopers and Morningside.. We will also welcome a staff of about 60 who are returning and others new to Windsong Heights School.

## **Building Community Through Character, Skills to Thrive and Leadership**

We work hard to provide a caring, safe community for all of our students. This happens naturally as we interact together in classrooms and hallways, on field trips and on the playground. We also deliberately teach skills which equip all students to be positive citizens in our school community. This includes intentional focus on character, social/emotional and leadership skills through the lens of our creed. It is in community that our students learn to live out lives of leadership and strong character, and discover how to become engaged, positive members of their families, school, community and world.

## **Rocky View School Division**

Windsong Heights School is proud to be a school of Rocky View Schools, a strong educational community that serves the students to the west, north and east of Calgary. The jurisdiction provides educational services to about 24,000 students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 through 50+ schools. Rocky View School Division is the fifth-largest school Jurisdiction in Alberta, employing over 2,300 staff. Rocky View Schools inspires a love of learning and community, by engaging all learners through meaningful and challenging experiences, preparing them to understand, adapt and successfully contribute to the changing global community. Our goal is to offer stimulating, flexible programming that makes learning relevant and meaningful to today’s learner. For more information about Rocky View Schools, go to [www.rockyview.ab.ca](http://www.rockyview.ab.ca).

## Emergency Response Plan

The safety of our students and staff is a priority. In order to provide an effective response in the event of an emergency, Rocky View Schools has developed an Emergency Response Plan. Throughout the year we will conduct training and drills to rehearse emergency procedures. We prepare students and staff to act quickly and help to minimize fear during a real emergency. Some of the drills we practice include:

**Evacuation** - students and staff leave the school and meet at a designated spot. This protocol is used during fires or times when we need to vacate the school building.

**Lock-Down** - students and staff get into a safe location. This protocol is used when there is a threat of violence directly impacting the school.

**Hold and Secure** - all entrances are locked and no one permitted in or out of the school. This protocol is used when something is going on outside.

**Shelter-in-Place** - students and staff retreat to safe zones to seek shelter. This protocol is used during environmental emergencies such as a storm.

## Medication, Allergies & Medical Conditions

We will NOT issue any medication or provide medical attention beyond that of first aid treatment. Parents, emergency contacts, or an ambulance will be contacted. Students who require Epi-pens should carry them at all times. Please consider that Windsong Heights is allergy aware with a focus on nut allergies and scent sensitivity. Parents should **not** assume that the school is allergen free. We have requested people refrain from wearing fragrances and that nuts not be brought to school, but we **cannot guarantee** that everyone will comply with our request.

Parents of children with severe allergies are strongly encouraged to:

- Secure a medic-alert bracelet for your child
- Educate your child as to safe and unsafe foods and symptoms as well as how to self-administer the (auto-inject) Epi-pen if age appropriate
- Ensure you have discussed the matter with the classroom teacher
- Provide a second Epi-pen to be housed in the school office, as well, parents are asked to complete the "request for Administration of Medication" form if your child has medical conditions of which the school must be aware.

## **Assessment Practices at Windsong Heights School**

Students are assessed on both formative and summative tasks appropriate for their grade. Formative and summative assessments can be major and minor assignments, performance tasks (where students need to do something), quizzes, tests, essays, conversation, labs, exit passes, practice sheets, verbal answers, skill demonstration, homework assignments, projects, videos, recordings etc.

Formative assignments are much like practice sessions for a sports team. They do not count towards the students' achievement grade or indicator; however, completion of these tasks is necessary as they form the practice opportunities for your child's learning and inform the teacher of progress. Summative assignments assess or determine the existence of a new skill or knowledge, much like a game between two teams, for example. They count towards the students' achievement. The grades are indicated as: MAS = Mastering, ADV = Advancing, PRG = Progressing, EMG = Emerging, BEG = Beginning, LIM= Limited).

At Windsong Heights School, we endeavor to share both assessments with parents and students. Achievement will be posted on the PowerSchool Parent Portal. The portal will be updated every three to four weeks for core subjects. In many instances, the portal will be updated more frequently. To access the parent portal please follow this link: <https://ps.rockyview.ab.ca/public/home.html>

Optional courses may be updated less frequently because students only have options courses twice per week. We strongly encourage our parents to check the portal every two to three weeks. Parents may also contact the teacher throughout the year regarding their child's assessments and progress.

Should you encounter difficulties in signing onto the parent portal, please use the reference guide on our website or contact the school office for help.

During our Family/Student/Teacher Conferences, (also called 3-way conferences), we will be able to support parents with the log in process. At an appropriate age, we encourage students to check their progress on the portal regularly.

## **Windsong Heights Student Conduct**

As educators and as a school, we believe that our primary purpose is **learning** – intellectual, physical, social, and emotional learning. Our emphasis is on kindness, belonging and understanding. The foundation of this learning is **respect** for self and others and wellness. We know children will make mistakes. When they do, we encourage them to:

- Be honest and take ownership for their words and actions
- Apologize for any wrong doing.
- Make amends and/or restitution as best they can.
- Ensure sure it does not happen again.

On occasion, students need our guidance and it may be necessary to take specific actions to teach more appropriate conduct. We understand that the application of the processes outlined is highly contextual and that we will make decisions based on the variables of each situation.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

Any phone brought to school will be expected to be stored in students' lockers during class time. If a phone is brought out in class for ANY reason outside of these times, the student's phone will be left at the office. Students will be permitted to pick the phone up at the end of the school day. Repeat offenses will be considered defiance.

Other technology is still permitted at school, provided it is used for appropriate purposes. If other technology is interpreted by a teacher to be used inappropriately, it will also be confiscated and subject to the same procedures as cell phones. Finally, if a phone is required for an in-class activity or project (such as connecting with parents for updates or sharing), it will be clearly communicated to students when they can retrieve their phones from their lockers.

## **Patriotic Exercises and Opening Daily Procedures**

The Principal is responsible for the design of the opening exercises held at the school and approves all matters included in the exercises.

- Opening Exercises do not include the recitation of any religious prayer.
- Opening Exercises may include a "quiet time." At Windsong Heights this is our literacy time each morning.
- A statement advising parents of the practice and the general format of school opening exercises is included in the School Handbook annually.
- Parents may request to have their child(ren) opt out of patriotic exercises for cultural and/or religious beliefs.
- Students are to be allowed to leave the classroom or to remain silent in the classroom during the patriotic exercise.
- Students are expected to display appropriate behaviour in their alternative activities.

## Dress Code Policy

Please clearly mark your child's clothing, shoes, boots, backpack, books etc. with their name and homeroom. In order to assist the caretaking staff to keep our school clean, students must have two pairs of shoes (indoor and outdoor). Inside shoes should be runners with non-marking soles that can be used for physical education.

We have **Lost and Found** bins in the school which we encourage students to check when they notice items missing. **Gym strip is highly encouraged for students in grade five and up.** All students may purchase Windsong Heights shorts and t-shirts on schoolcash online.

Windsong Heights dress policy promotes conditions most conducive to learning so students can work comfortably without distracting or disturbing others. As well, it is important that our students represent themselves respectfully in both their behaviour and in their clothing, much like in a workplace. Dress should be clean, neat and modest. If there is a question as to the appropriateness of the student's attire, the teacher will refer them to the office for administration to decide. Students dressed inappropriately will be asked to cover the inappropriate clothing, change into their gym strip, or contact a parent/guardian to bring them suitable clothing.

Inappropriate clothing may include but is not limited to:

- Slippers
- Spaghetti straps, tube tops, tank tops and halter tops
- Shirts or dresses with straps less than 1 ½ - 2 inches wide
- Low cut tops that expose the chest/sides or short tops that expose the midriff
- Muscle shirts with thin straps or underarms that hang low exposing the chest/sides
- Transparent or see through fabrics that show under garments
- Shorts, and skirts with hems shorter than the fingertips when standing
- Clothing that contains text or graphics that may be offensive to others
- Clothing that contains logos or advertisements for drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Clothing that contains logos or implied messages with sexual innuendo
- Clothing that appears to promote racism, discrimination, hate or illegal activities
- Hats and headgear unless for medical and religious purposes.(bandannas, skull caps, hoods, etc)
- Sunglasses, masks, or things that cover the eyes/face
- Clothing designated as under garments must be kept undercover

Students are permitted to wear hats in the hallways. Hats **should not** be worn during the playing and singing of O Canada. Students will also be asked to remove hats during assemblies.

This dress code policy applies to ALL school activities, including off site field trips, extra-curricular activities & practices, and dances. Students can dress in theme related attire on designated days, but the dress code still must be followed.

## **Windsong Heights follows the principles of:**

- All students, staff and members of our community have worth and dignity.
- All students are capable of learning, cooperation and respect for others.
- Enforcement of school expectations should be consistent, predictable, equitable, caring and compassionate.
- Seek to understand.
- Strategies/consequences are appropriate for the behavior and for the individual student, their stage of development, and teach responsible attitudes, whenever possible.
- Restitution, where possible, builds understanding and forgiveness. It can also restore relationships and promote a positive school culture. The goal of restitution is to foster self-reflection and repair the mistake.

## **Our problem-solving structure includes the following:**

- Taking time to clarify the incident and the problem
- Brain-storming solutions with students/parents/staff when appropriate
- Choosing an appropriate solution
- Scheduling a time to follow up on how things are going
- Mediation, when needed, through our teacher, CDA and/or administration

## **As a school community, the following behaviors that are unacceptable:**

- violence and/or physical aggression
- offensive language
- direct defiance of a staff member
- threatening, demeaning or intimidating conduct
- theft or intentional damage of property
- possession, or use of drugs and/or alcohol
- possession or use of weapons
- Possession or use of vapes

If a student is referred to the office for one or more of these behaviours, they will be helped to understand why their behavior was unacceptable and guided in solving the problems they have created. Depending on the nature, severity and frequency of the problem, as well as the age and understanding of the child, response by administration will, and must, vary. Additionally, others such as counsellors, parents, administrators, psychologist, Family Liaison Workers or the RCMP may be called to work with the student, parents and/or the school. An appropriate plan of action to improve the student's behavior will be made.

Expectations are regularly shared with students over the course of the year, particularly during our first weeks at school. We know that everyone makes mistakes and that most mistakes can be resolved and represent opportunities for growth and learning. There is great capacity amongst us all for