

Student/Parent Handbook 2025/2026



JS Clark Elementary School

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www.sd81.bc.ca/jsc

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Principal's Message **September 2025**

Welcome to J.S. Clark Elementary School!

J.S. Clark extends a warm welcome to all the new and returning students and their families. We look forward to getting to know you and sharing a rewarding and successful year with you.

Our community school is committed to providing a safe learning environment that fosters and supports each student's ability to achieve their full potential academically, creatively and physically.

Parent and community involvement is both welcomed and appreciated as we, teachers, support staff, students and parents, work together with a common vision: "As a community of learners we embrace opportunities to build successful futures."

At J.S. Clark we promote and follow the BUDDY rules to enhance a positive learning environment. These rules include, **B**eing prepared, **U**sing good manners, **D**oing kind deeds, **D**iscussing problems, and **Y**ou always respect other people and their things.

The Parent Handbook contains important information about our school, policies and procedures. We ask that parents please take the time to read the handbook with their child and familiarize themselves with its contents. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to stop by the office at any time and discuss them with us.

We look forward to an exciting year!

- Mrs. Melissa Murrin
Principal, J.S. Clark

School Staff 2025-2026

Instructional Staff:

Principal
Administrative Assistant
Kindergarten/Grade 1
Grade 1/2 /3
Grade 3/4
Teacher Librarian/SSRT

Mrs. Melissa Murrin
Mrs. Kristin Sluggett
Mrs. Shelley Emmelkamp
Mrs. Gloria Woodcock
Mr. Steve Smith
Mrs. Lori Woodworth

Non-Instructional Staff

Library Technician
Aboriginal Educ. Asst.
Educational Assistant
Educational Assistant
Educational Assistant
Personal Attendant
Personal Attendant
Personal Attendant

Ms. Vickey Clark
Mrs. Connie Giddings
Mrs. Glenda Bennett
Ms. Ashley Brake
Mrs. Debbie Thompson
Ms. Cristy Arychuk
Mrs. Amanda Britt
Mrs. Ashley Osmond

District Staff

Mr. Mark Theobald
Mrs. Sarah-Jane Attrill
Mrs. Darlene Osmond
Ms. Gabrielle Johnson
Counsellor
Strong Start

Superintendent of Schools
District Principal
Secretary Treasurer
Speech Language Pathologist
Mr. John Donald
Mrs. Jamie Smith

District Calendar

Please visit www.sd81.bc.ca for the most up to date calendar.

School Bell Schedule

Kindergarten to Grade 4	
8:25	Supervision Begins
8:45	Warning Bell
8:50	Classes Begin
11:25-11:52	Outside Play Time
11:52-12:20	Inside Lunch Time
12:20	Classes Resume
1:50-2:05	Afternoon Recess
2:05	Classes Resume
3:04	School Dismissal

Framework for Enhancing Student Learning

J.S Clark's School Goals for 2025-2026

1. To increase the percentage of students meeting and exceeding grade level expectations in reading and numeracy.
2. All students will demonstrate increased school connectedness and feel safe and welcomed at school.
3. All students will demonstrate career preparedness.

Each year our Framework is updated, after consultation with staff, students, and parents. Our Framework is made available at the end of October each year. You can view a copy our Framework at our school website: www.sd81.bc.ca/jsc

Vision Statement for J.S Clark

Together, we continue to grow as a learning community—strong in relationships, rooted in equity, and committed to the success of every learner at JS Clark Elementary School.

At J.S. Clark we provide a safe and nurturing environment. We believe that our school is successful when our students have the opportunities to:

- Develop individual and intellectual potential.
- Develop emotional stability and positive social relationships.
- Aspire to become lifelong learners.
- Value the uniqueness of each other.

School District 81 Strategic Plan

The district has created a comprehensive plan for student achievement. To access a copy go to:

<https://www.sd81.bc.ca/board-of-education/strategic-planning/>

General Student Information

School District 81 Code of Conduct

The purpose of our Code of Conduct is to provide a safe, caring and orderly school environment for our students. Students in School District #81 are expected to:

1. Treat others with dignity, respect, tolerance and courtesy.
2. Respect the rights of others to learn and work in an environment free from abuse, intimidation, harassment, bullying, disruption or discrimination (ie, discrimination on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation of that person or class of persons, gender identity or expression, and age).
3. Act in a safe and responsible manner toward themselves, others and others' property.
4. Comply with classroom and school standards for attendance, promptness, language and behaviour.

Each school will describe consequences for misbehavior that reflect the maturity level of its students and allows for special considerations for exceptional students. When it is possible to do so, our schools will focus on consequences that are restorative in nature.

The school principal's authority to discipline students for violations of the Code of Conduct is not limited to behaviors which occur during the school day or on school grounds. Any student behavior which negatively impacts the school environment could be subject to disciplinary action.

Finally, schools and the School District will take all reasonable steps to prevent retaliation against any student or individual who reports a breach of a School or the School District's Code of Conduct.

J.S. Clark Buddy Rules

At J.S. Clark, we want every student to feel safe and cared for whether at school or attending a school function. The establishment and maintenance of a safe, caring and orderly school allows focused and

successful learning for all students. Therefore, we expect our students to follow the District Code of Conduct and the J.S. Clark Buddy rules.

- B-** Be prepared. This means having all school supplies, homework, planners and materials at school.
- U-** Use good manners. This is especially important during assemblies, presentations, and emergency procedures.
- D-** Do kind deeds. Take time to invite a friend to play, pick up someone else's litter, let an adult know if you see or find something that you know is wrong.
- D-** Discuss problems. Remember that we cannot help you if we don't know there is a problem. We need to know about the problem before we can solve it.
- Y-** You always respect other people and their things.

Student Discipline

When a student's behaviour is inconsistent with our behaviour guidelines, action is taken. Each classroom teacher develops rules designed to protect the learning atmosphere in their classroom. Consequences are developed and administered to encourage students to respect and follow these rules. Parents are involved if a child is frequently unable to behave appropriately. If parental involvement is unsuccessful in helping a child behave, the school principal becomes involved. Most discipline problems can be solved when teacher, parents, and principal work together to find solutions. However, if problems persist, counseling services may provide additional help for the student.

Because appropriate student discipline is very important to everyone involved, it is important that information be shared promptly if a discipline problem arises. Please do not hesitate to call your teacher or principal if you have questions or concerns.

Consequences

The purpose of all intervention is to reinforce appropriate behaviour and to discourage inappropriate behaviour. Appropriate interventions include:

- a. a student conference
- b. short-term removal from class to another supervised area
- c. in-school detention
- d. parent conference/contact
- e. in-school suspension *

- f. referral for school based student services *
- g. counseling for the student *
- h. course of program modification *
- i. referral to District staff for programs or services *

* *parents notified for all consequences beyond "d"*

Out of School Suspensions

Home suspensions are only used when other forms of intervention have been unsuccessful, or when a significant/major infraction has occurred.

Attendance

Research has shown that regular attendance is a major factor contributing to student success. We want everyone to be aware of the importance of regular school attendance, and the importance of being rested and able to work productively throughout the day.

Stay Home When Sick

We urge parents to keep students at home if they are too ill to be able to participate in the full range of activities that constitute a day at school. Parents and caregivers are to assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious disease before sending them to school. Please call the office if you're keeping your child home from school.

Safe Arrival Program

Please call the school if your child will be late, has an illness, or will be away from school for any period of time. Each day after attendance has been taken our school secretary will be phoning your home, if your child's name turns up on the absentee report. If you have phoned in to report the absence of your child no phone call will be made.

Tardiness

Teachers strive to protect instructional time for our children; frequent tardiness greatly impacts student learning. Missing lesson instruction, or concept development, as lessons begin in the morning or after lunch leads to confusion and less productivity during independent student work. Please be respectful of our school's schedule.

Dressing for Success and Comfort

We ask that students come to school wearing comfortable, age-appropriate clothing that lets them move, play, and learn with ease. Clothes should cover private body parts and be suitable for all the fun and active things we do throughout the day—both indoors and outside.

Winter Clothing. We learn and play outside until (-20 C). Please ensure your child is prepared to go outside every day, and has full gear: boots, snowsuit (or pants and coat), gloves, and warm cap.

Hats are great for outdoor play, but we ask that they be taken off while inside the classroom, unless it's a special theme day or for cultural or medical reasons.

Inside Shoes

Please have a pair of 'inside' shoes for our child. They must be worn at all times inside the school in case of an emergency. Due to safety reasons, 'heelies' will not be acceptable for indoor or outdoor shoes at school.

Any visitors to the school are asked to remove their wet, muddy, or snowy boots in the foyer.

Assessment - Parent-Teacher Communication

Assessment is an integral part of a student's education and an important piece of an educator's responsibility and instructional process. Assessment has many purposes including

- a celebration of student success
- a tool to plan intervention strategies for students requiring additional or special assistance with learning
- a tool to drive instruction

Assessment takes many forms ranging from informal reports to formal testing. It is an educator's obligation and a school's responsibility to ensure valid assessment occurs throughout the year. Teachers/SSRT/Administrator are responsible for the following assessments.

- Kindergarten Yopp Singer Phonemic Awareness
- Reading Inventories
- Teacher created assessments on units of curriculum
- FSAs (Foundation Skills Assessment Gr.4.)

Formal reporting of student's progress is completed three times a year. These are done in November, March and June. The formal report includes,

- what a child is able to do
- next steps to support learning
- how parents can support the child's learning at home

Informal reporting is completed at two additional times throughout the year. There are two scheduled parent teacher meeting times in the year. The first meetings are scheduled for October and the second set in April.

Reading Inventories are collected each reporting term to all grades except kindergarten. Kindergarten students complete their first Reading Inventory in March. Results from this inventory are forwarded to the principal and placed in the students' permanent file.

Parental Concerns Process

If there is a concern regarding your child, please:

1. Talk to the classroom teacher, if comfortable, in situations where the concern involves the classroom or the teacher.
2. If not comfortable speaking with the teacher or if the incident involves a broader school or playground issue, take concerns directly to the Principal.
3. The Principal will address the issue. If a parent is not satisfied that their concern has been resolved, concerns should be taken to the Superintendent of Schools, who is the next level of appeal.

Telephone Messages for Students

It is the school's expectation that students know where they are to go after school. If these plans change during the day, parents may phone the school to have a message delivered to their child. Please note that you should call the school **before 2:50 p.m.** Messages will be given to children just prior to school dismissal, or as needed.

Telephone Messages for Staff

Teachers may not be interrupted during instructional time to take a phone call unless it is an emergency.

- If you need to contact a teacher, please leave a message at the office to have the teacher return your call or send a written note with your child to have the teacher call you.
- Teachers may be called before and after school or during lunch, when they are free from student supervision.

We are committed to protecting instructional time and appreciate your support with this.

Bus Information

Questions regarding bus schedules and bus stops can be directed to Pansy Anderson at the School Board Office, 774-2591. Current bus schedules can be found at www.sd81.bc.ca

Winter Bussing

There may be times when our school busses will not be running, particularly in very cold weather. Please be aware of the following:

1. Schools will be open for instruction throughout the prescribed days/hours of the school year as outlined on the School District #81 School Calendar.
2. A first temperature reading will be taken at 7:00 a.m. Bus runs will be cancelled at a temperature of -40 degrees C or -40 degrees C, with a windchill. A second temperature reading will be taken at 8:00 a.m. and if the temperature is then above -40 degrees C the busses will begin their bus schedules resulting in a one-hour change to the normal pick-up time.
3. The School District will use the information from the Environment Canada Weather internet site at <http://www.weatheroffice.gc.ca> for temperature readings.
4. The School District announces bus run cancellations to parents through School Messenger, the local radio station, as well as post it on the district Facebook site.
5. Budget permitting, winter in town bussing will start on November 1 and will continue until Spring Break.

Please Note: If a school closure is necessary during the school day, parents/guardians will be contacted. For this and other safety reasons it is imperative that you provide your child's school with up-to-date contact information including current telephone numbers, emergency contacts, and email addresses. If these change during the school year, please be sure to advise your administrative assistant.

For further information, please contact the Secretary-Treasurer at 250 774-2591.

Supervision

In order to provide a healthy, safe and responsible atmosphere at J.S. Clark, we establish a supervision process that promotes self-discipline. We ask that students and parents be polite and caring towards staff members, fellow students and community members.

Supervision begins at 8:25 a.m. Please do not send your child to school before 8:25 a.m. If the weather is favourable, students are expected to place their belongings on the boot racks and return outside to play. Inside days will be declared when

- the temperature is below -20 Celsius (including wind chill)
- extreme wet or muddy conditions
- extreme smoke/ unhealthy air conditions

Please ensure your child is dressed for the weather. On inside days, children may enter their classrooms at 8:25 a.m. when supervision begins.

Teachers and supervisors provide supervision during the following times:

Before School 8:25 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.

Recess 11:25 a.m. - 11:52 a.m.

Lunch 11:52 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.

Recess 1:50 p.m. – 2:05 p.m.

After school 3:04 – until all students leave

Lunch Time Procedures

Students go outside to play from 11:25 a.m. - 11:52 a.m. and then eat their lunch in their classroom from 11:52 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.

- after dismissal at 11:25 a.m., students are expected to go outdoors unless there is a medical reason that they stay inside. A note will be required. We urge parents to keep students at home if they are too ill to be able to participate in the full range of activities that constitute a day at school.
- At 11:52 a.m., students are expected to sit and eat quietly. Failure to do so could result in a loss of the privilege of eating lunch at school.
- Each child is responsible to clean up their eating area before 12:15 p.m. and return lunch kits to shelves. Classrooms must be ready for afternoon instruction.
- Students who regularly eat lunch at school are expected to remain on the school grounds throughout the lunch break.

Lost and Found

Ensure that runners, boots, mitts, coats, caps etc. are CLEARLY marked with your CHILD'S NAME. The lost and found box is located by the main entrance. Please check it for lost articles.

Electronic Devices

It is policy at G.W. Carlson that no student will be permitted to play or listen to any personal electronic devices while at school. Such devices do not promote social growth as per the Human and Social Development criterion outlined in the Ministry of Education's Primary Program Guideline. We do not encourage students to bring electronics to school as they are easily lost and or broken.

Items from Home

We encourage students not to bring toys or electronic items from home. The school will not be responsible for loss or damage for items. It is best if these items stay home.

Student Transfer Within District

If you are planning on transferring your son or daughter to G.W Carlson Elementary school for the 2026/2027 school year while continuing to live in the J.S. Clark catchment area, it is very important that you do so before April 30, 2026 to secure a space for your child. Later registrations will be put on a waiting list and transfers will only occur if space and facilities are available.

If you plan on moving into the G.W. Carlson catchment area and transferring your son or daughter to G.W. Carlson, the second Friday in June is the last day to register and secure a space for your child. Later registrations will be placed on a wait list. Registration is dependent on space availability.

Student Health and Safety

Medication

The school needs to be kept aware of medical conditions that may impact a child's learning at school. If there are any short or long-term medical conditions that are important for us to know about, please stop at the office. If the condition is serious the school and parent can then write up an emergency action plan for the child.

Medicine will not be administered to a child unless prescribed by a doctor. All medicine must be in the original container with the prescription label. Medication cannot be sent to and from school by the child.

A *Medication Administration Form* must be signed by the doctor and kept on file in the office before any medication can be given. Please stop by the office to get the necessary forms before going to the doctor in order to save yourself two trips. All medication will be kept in the office and will be administered by designated personnel.

First Aid and Medical Room

Our school's medical room is beside the office and is supervised by office staff and designated first aid attendants. Students who become ill during the school day, or have an injury, may stay in the Medical Room until their parents pick them up. (If parents cannot be reached by phone, your 'emergency contact' or under serious conditions, ambulance will be phoned).

Staff do not administer medication to students, except in special or emergency situations with the written authorization from both parent and physician. Medication will be stored in the office and must be in the original container with the instructions clearly labeled.

Head Injuries

We take ALL head injuries VERY seriously and will contact the parent or guardian right away. We strongly recommend the child be taken to the doctor for a professional assessment of the injury.

Head Lice

Lice is a common problem in any school environment. They are tiny insects that live on the scalp and lay eggs, called nits, which stick to the hair and very close to the head. Head lice DO NOT spread disease, nor do they mean a child is unclean. In fact, the opposite is true. Lice love clean hair! Once a case has been identified in your child's classroom, you may

want to tie his/her hair with an elastic or keep it short. If there is an occurrence of lice in a classroom, the office will send a note home informing parents of students in that room. Naturally, the student will not be identified. There are several treatment options available for lice at the drugstore. Please follow directions carefully.

Parking Lot

Please follow the posted speed limit for our parking lot – 10km/hour and be extra cautious when dropping off or picking up your child. Please pull up slowly to the curb and do not leave your car idling. Do not leave your car unattended in the bus zone which is located in the front of our building where the yellow barriers are along the sidewalk. If you need to come inside the school, please park on the side of the school and leave the front available for drop offs.

After school, do not park in the bus zone. Parents must stop and wait for the child to come to the car along the drop off/pick up zone. Please ensure your child has proper supervision when crossing the parking lot due to the dangers involved in high traffic times, **i.e** parents dropping off and picking up before and after school.

Bicycles, Rollerblades, Skateboards and Scooters

We want every student at J.S. Clark to be safe. Bikes, rollerblades, skateboards or scooters can be ridden to school but must be walked once on the school grounds before, and after school, and during recess and lunch breaks. (Roller blades can be rode to the entrance and changed into runners inside the building). Those students who rollerblade to school must bring a pair of shoes to wear at school. Students are reminded to wear bicycle helmets and bring bike locks to lock their bikes at the bike racks.

Off Road Vehicles

In British Columbia, you cannot legally drive a motorized off-road-vehicle on a public road or in a school parking lot unless you have a valid driver's license, and the vehicle is properly registered. In general, this means students cannot drive or park off-road vehicles on any school district property. If a student rides an off-road vehicle to school and parks it on school property, their parent will be contacted and asked to remove the vehicle in a safe and legal manner. If refused, the RCMP will be contacted.

Access to the building

During instructional time our doors are locked. Access is through the front of the school where there is a doorbell. Adults that are proceeding past

the office area may be required to sign in at the office and then sign out at the end of their visit.

Legal Custody, Visitation Rights, Legal Change of Name

Please contact the office if there is any information you wish to share regarding these legal issues. The school must have legal documentation on file prior to denying access to any parent. Both parents have equal rights of access unless otherwise stated.

Critical Incidents

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of ensuring a compassionate and timely response to critical incidents of a traumatic nature that affect the normal functioning of the school. A critical incident may involve, but is not limited to, a death of a student or staff member by accident, illness, injury, or suicide, school fires, natural disasters, disturbing or threatening behaviour, or criminal investigations.

Details on specific critical responses, such as bomb threats, hold and secure, and lockdowns are clearly defined in the school-based Critical Response Plan, which is updated each September.

Emergency School Closure

There are rare cases, such as lack of heat or power, that a school needs to close. When an emergency situation occurs after school has begun, you will be contacted from the office to come pick up your child(ren) immediately. The office has the students separated into family groupings and has divided up the calling for quick and efficient dismissal.

It is IMPERATIVE that you keep the office up to date with your phone number and those of your 'emergency' contacts.

Emergency Evacuation for Winter Only

Evacuation in winter is especially critical in the North. In the event of an emergency evacuation of the building, the following procedures are in place:

- At the sound of the alarm, staff and students follow regular fire procedures so that we are aware of any students unaccounted for as quickly as possible.
- Administration will take key to Trapper apartments and proceed with classes to the apartments across the road.
- Immediately upon arrival, staff will again take attendance and report back to school secretary.
- Administrator, or staff member designated, will telephone the School Board Office of any missing children and/or staff.

- All children and staff will stay in the apartment complex until the All Clear is received.
- If it is safe to return to the school, children and staff will walk back.
- If it unsafe to return to school, arrangements will be made to have parents pick up children at the apartment building.

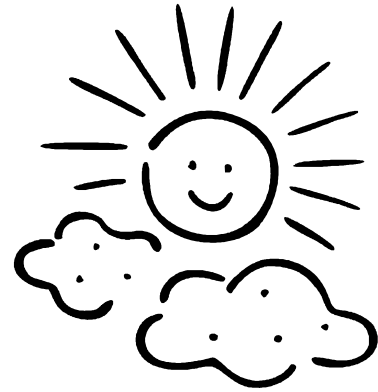
Non-winter evacuation protocol follows our Fire Emergency drill. Each teacher takes out the class in attendance, goes to the predetermined spot outside, takes attendance and reports to the school secretary. Children are not allowed back in the school until the All Clear signal is given from the fire department or other emergency personnel.

Student Support Programs

Student Services Resource Teachers

Our Student Services Resource Teachers:

- act as case managers serving students who have high and low incidence special needs, those who have mild learning disabilities, those who speak English as a second language, are gifted and talented, or have special behavioural needs
- collaborate with the classroom teacher, parents and other community personnel to develop and maintain Individual Education Plans.
- act as a consultant and resource person to teachers in the areas of integration, learning disabilities, ELL, remediation and individual programs
- cooperatively plan effective program and/or methodology changes with classroom teachers with
 - ▶ to assist the regular classroom teacher in altering instructional and assessment strategies related to individual students,
 - ▶ to assist in altering, adapting, modifying curriculum to meet the needs of students
- communicate with parents as necessary
- work collaboratively with colleagues, school principal and district office personnel in establishing and implementing policies that pertain to special education.



Counseling Services

Students at J.S. Clark have access to counseling services. If you believe your child may need help dealing with problems of a non-academic nature, please contact your child's teacher or the principal.

Speech and Language Services

Our students have access to speech and language services, either in-person or online. Our school Speech Pathologist assesses students to determine individual needs. Both teachers and parents can refer students for assessment.

Library Programs

Sign Out Materials

Our library is open from 9:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. There are regular weekly sign out times when the students are helped by their teacher and library staff. Also, whenever children finish their books they may come to the library to sign-out new items, which their teacher's permission. Parents are welcome and encouraged to sing out materials as well from our library.

Overdues

A book is overdue when it is not returned within seven days. At this time, the child will be given a verbal reminder. At the end of a month, a letter will be sent home. If a book is not returned, or paid for, the child will not be allowed to take out any more books to bring home until the account is cleared, or the book returned. These children will still have access to the reading materials in their classroom. We invite you to stop in and see our beautiful library and sign out some books to read with your child at home.

Parents as Partners

Classroom Volunteers

Parents are welcome to volunteer in the school, however, please allow the teachers until the end of September to get their classroom routines going first. Individual teachers can be contacted to set up a suitable schedule that meets yours, and the teacher's needs. Because there are liability concerns with parents conducting volunteer duties out of view of the teacher, we ask that volunteer work be done right in the classroom with the teacher present. Our Parent Advisory Council organizes many ways to volunteer in the school as well. We ask that if you are volunteering in the classroom, that you make child care arrangements for any pre-school children. The learning environment of our students needs to be protected.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

Our school has an active and committed PAC. We encourage parents to get involved with the Parent Advisory Council and their many worthwhile initiatives.

Election of officers, and regular meeting dates, will be determined at the first meeting of the year. Our school newsletter will provide details of upcoming PAC meetings.

Social Media

Our school maintains a Facebook page where pictures, notices, newsletters, reminders all get posted. Please join JS Clark Elementary Page.

School Messenger System

The School Messenger application is a system School District 81 uses to increase communication. It provides the district, in the case of an emergency, the ability to communicate with all families through multiple modes of communication in a matter of minutes. Parents can "opt in" to receive a text message, but all primary contacts will receive a phone call and email (as provided to the school district) when there is a district-wide alert. The system is also used to alert families to bussing cancellations or lates.