

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL PARENT/ STUDENT HANDBOOK

2015/2016



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Principal - Ms. J. Rumer
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MESSAGE FROM OUR ADMINISTRATION TEAM

Welcome to Westminster Elementary School!

We love our school community and are glad you are part of Westminster School. We have amazing parents, students and staff. Our students benefit daily from the support of the greater community of Lethbridge supporting health, wellness and educational programs.

This handbook outlines policies, organization, procedures and expectations at Westminster School and Lethbridge School District No. 51. We hope this information will be useful to you. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us in person or by phone at (403) 327-4169.

Jessica Rumer
Principal

Teri Smith
Assistant Principal

MISSION, VISION & BELIEF STATEMENTS

WE ARE GUIDED BY:

Lethbridge School District Vision Statement
"Building Bridges to a High Level of Student Success"



Lethbridge School District Mission Statement

The mission of Lethbridge School District No. 51 is to empower students with the knowledge, skills and attributes to succeed as caring, responsible, and effective Canadian Citizens.

Westminster School Vision Statement

The purpose of education is to provide the necessary skills to develop productive Canadian Citizens. Our vision is to increase student, parent and community engagement to promote excellence in achievement.

Westminster School Mission Statement

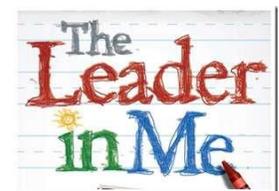
The mission of Westminster School is to provide excellence in student learning and personal development through quality leadership, exemplary instructional practice, and safe, caring, respectful and orderly school environments.

Westminster School Philosophy

At Westminster School we come together in a spirit of community to deepen our understanding of ourselves, others and the world. We celebrate learning and growth that comes from shared experiences and responsibilities between students, staff, parents and the community.



As a "Circle of Courage" School we embrace and practice the teachings of the Medicine Wheel by developing, promoting and teaching a healthy lifestyle. While focusing on belonging, mastery, independence and generosity we want our students to develop lifelong skills that promote physical, mental and emotional well-being. The Leader in Me is being introduced as an additional character education program to facilitate student leadership initiatives and personal responsibility.



Westminster creates an environment that allows students and teachers to access many services such as speech, language, occupational and physical therapy and mental health. We are committed to working with our Care Team and our Learning Team Model as a way of systematically coming together to provide all students with tools, environments and skills that will enhance learning within an inclusive environment. This capacity building approach is supported by Children's Allied Health, making specialist support more accessible to teachers and students.

We feel very fortunate to come to school every day to work with fabulous children and families. Our commitment to you is to be the best we can be by providing a rich, caring, learning environment.

Westminster Belief Statements

- We believe students and learning come first.
 - We are visibly committed to our students and their life-long learning; encompassing academic, physical, social and emotional goals.
 - We are dedicated to fostering the acceptance of diversity among students and celebrating the unique abilities of all students.

- We believe all of our students can learn.
 - We believe in ensuring our students know we believe they can all be successful learners.
 - We believe students can improve their achievement levels.

- We believe positive teacher-student and student-student relationships create learning environments that help students become respectful, caring and responsible citizens.
 - We model behaviour we wish to see in our students.
 - We listen to students and try to understand their point of view.
 - We are genuinely interested in our student's lives.

- We believe exemplary teaching is directly linked to excellence in learning.
 - We facilitate connections between curriculum outcomes and the daily lives of students.
 - We plan, differentiate and assess as student-centered, highly positive, confident and effective educators.
 - We promote safe and secure classrooms by establishing the cultural value of respect.

- We believe out-of-classroom contributions enhance our school and community.
 - We incorporate a morning breakfast program into our daily routine.
 - We value and welcome community support and interactions.

- We believe that our Dream School concept positively impacts and enhances student experiences.
 - We value the work of our committees: Student Engagement, Student Achievement and Community Engagement.

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GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS AND BELL TIMES



08:00 a.m.	School Office Opens
08:20 a.m.	Supervision begins
08:30 a.m.	Warning Bell Rings
08:32 a.m.	Classes begin for Kindergarten to Grade 5
10:15-10:30 a.m.	Recess for Grade 1-5 students
12:00 noon	Kindergarten to Grade 5 Lunch, We eat first and then go outside to play.
12:42 p.m.	Classes begin for Kindergarten to Grade 5
2:15-2:30pm	Recess for Grade 1-5 students
3:30 p.m.	Kindergarten to Grade 5 dismissal
4:00 p.m.	School office closes

Students are dismissed at 11:45 a.m. on Fridays, with the school office closing at 1:00 p.m. There are no Kindergarten classes on Friday.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

The Education Act states that all students are expected to attend school regularly and to be at school on time. If your child is going to be late or absent please phone the school at 403-327-4169. Attendance is taken once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Parents will be contacted regarding any unexcused absences. If your child arrives late, he/she must first go to the office for a late slip before going to class. If students leave school earlier than the regular dismissal time, parents must head into the office to sign them out.

Attendance reports will be run at the end of each reporting period. If a student has missed more than 20% of the reporting period, an attendance letter will be sent home and placed in the student file. In extreme cases, a letter will be forwarded to the District Attendance Officer. If there are attendance concerns throughout the reporting period, a phone call from a member of the learning team will be made to see how the school might assist in promoting better attendance.

Professional Learning Days provide school staff the opportunity to engage in professional dialogue, collective inquiry and continuous learning. Professional Learning Days are listed on our school website. Students do not attend school on district designated professional learning days.

SCHOOL FEES

There are no school fees for students in Grades 1-5 this year. Early Education Program fees are \$150/month for four days/week and \$75/month for two days/week. If this is too costly, please phone the school to inquire about possible subsidies. Kindergarten asks for a contribution of \$7.00 or what can be afforded to help with bussing costs for field trips.

CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Student progress is formally reported to parents three times per year. The elementary report card is designed to communicate the learner's achievement relative to his or her subject grade level; what a student needs to know and be able to do in order to proceed from one level of curriculum to another. Grade 3 students participate in Student Learner Assessments (SLA). Please see the website for more information on these assessments.

Parent teacher conferences provide communication with parents and help us to work with parents in setting learning goals. We would encourage all parents to attend parent- teacher conferences. Parents may contact their child's teacher anytime throughout the school year if they have questions or concerns. Please contact the teacher by phone before coming to the school to ensure she/he is available. **Parent Teacher Conference dates are listed on the website and are held in November and March.**

WHEN YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD

From time to time, parents may have questions or concerns about something that has happened at school. We ask parents to support us in our efforts to work together to resolve these concerns. The first step for parents in voicing a concern is to talk to their child's teacher. Teachers are most knowledgeable about what is occurring with the children in their classroom, and most issues can and should be dealt with at that level. Parents may also choose to consult with the school principal or assistant principal regarding an issue after first talking with their child's teacher. This kind of open, two-way communication between the school and parents is important. We will do our best to listen and work together with you in order to deal with your questions or concerns.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

At Westminster School we believe that it is important to acknowledge the uniqueness of each child. Through our recognition programs we highlight the many gifts and talents that students bring. Students are recognized for their contributions through our positive referral slips, daily announcements, in their classes and at performances and assemblies. Assembly dates are posted on our website. Special assemblies include Circle of Courage and Citizens of Tomorrow.

STUDENT PROGRAMS & CO-CURRICULAR

We are able to offer a variety of student programs at Westminster School. These programs range from our Roots of Empathy program to our Enrichment Fridays. In addition, students can participate in a variety of clubs such as Choir, Leadership, Boys and Girls Clubs, Intramurals and co-curricular team sports such as Grade 5 Basketball and the Running Westies Running Club. Students all belong to House Teams relating to our Circle of Courage and can participate in any activity of interest. Please see our website for more information on our school programs for students.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

We are able to serve a healthy breakfast to students in Grades 1-5 every morning, thanks to the generous donations from the community. A tray of food is set out each day including items such as fruit, granola bars, English muffins, milk or juice, yogurt or cheese and at times, cereal. We are also supported by the Sunrise Rotary who bring in egg sandwiches donated from A&W, as well as McDonald's once per month. Kindergarten students participate in a healthy snack program at mid-morning and have access to breakfast foods as needed. Please ensure the office is notified of any allergies.

DAILY PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTHY LIVING

In order to enhance student learning and as part of the Healthy Nutritional Choices Policy (Policy 504.11) Westminster School is committed to helping students understand the importance of daily physical activity and their role in choosing healthy food choices. We promote nutrition education and fitness goals while creating an environment where healthy food is promoted as the best choice.

CARE TEAM/STUDENT SERVICES

THE LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM

The Learning Support Team is an in-school system of support to students, teachers and parents. The team is comprised of the classroom teacher, learning support teacher, administration, parents, and other members including the teacher counsellor, school district psychologist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, a Making Connections Worker, a First Nation Metis Inuit Liaison counsellor, nurses, School Resource Officers, consultants, etc... Learning team meetings are scheduled approximately once or twice per month to discuss concerns and issues which may be affecting student learning and/or behaviour. To access any of these support services for your child, please contact your child's teacher or administration.

COUNSELLING

At Westminster School, our guidance and counselling program is based on the philosophy that guidance and counseling is available to all students. The program reflects and supports the transition from a traditional, reactive counselling approach to a more comprehensive approach involving all the school staff, the home and the community. The scope of the programming includes responsive services and individual student planning but also includes developmental guidance instruction and school/community support. It recognizes and supports opportunities for proactive and preventative programs and approaches. It is based on the belief that each individual is unique, that programs must focus on the developmental needs

of students, teachers, staff, parents and the larger school community. The program must be flexible enough to respond to changing needs. Please contact Katherine Coleman for counselling services.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

The goal of Making Connections is to provide early intervention, prevention and health promotion to the children and families in all elementary schools. We believe that by building capacity of staff, students and families, by supporting children and families in making meaningful connections to school, and by assisting parents in accessing support, we can ensure that all students have the opportunity to achieve success. Making Connections Workers are committed to collaboration to ensure that appropriate assistance is provided for children and families. Please contact Maya Ichikawa for support through Making Connections.

FIRST NATIONS METIS AND INUIT

The FNMI Program provides ongoing support for aboriginal students attending Westminster School. Our FNMI Home/School Liaison, Sasha Wells, provides services to students and staff in an effort to develop positive relationships with children and assist them in understanding their cultural heritage. She will support students and teachers in the regular classroom setting and communicate with parents as needed. Together we will explore what it means to be a Circle of Courage School and share the cultures as well as other First Nations, Métis and Inuit traditions. We focus on self-awareness, a sense of belonging and family togetherness. With these cultural teachings we feel that students are more accepting of others, confident about who they are and where they want to go in life, while giving them the skills to be successful.

HEALTH SERVICES

The Chinook Health Region supports our school community by providing nursing services on an as needed basis. These services include the following:

- Acting as a support and resource for students and families.
- Providing health information to students, teachers and parents.
- Providing health screening (such as hearing and vision).
- Providing immunization.
- Acting as a resource about the common diseases of children.

All records relating to the students' health are maintained separately by the Chinook Health. Any questions regarding these services can be answered by calling the CHR at (403) 388-6655.

CHILDREN'S ALLIED HEALTH

Audiology & Children's Allied Health Services works in partnership with families to support children with developmental challenges, by identifying their needs and building on their strengths and abilities. Services are provided in homes, schools, preschools and community health sites throughout Southwest Alberta. Our Westminster team includes Paige Wood, Speech Language Pathologist, Melany Duffin, Occupational Therapist and Alison Pavan, Physiotherapist.

FAIR NOTICE OF RISK/THREAT ASSESSMENT

Our School District believes in creating safe and caring environments for students and staff. Any incident where a student engages in behaviour which threatens or appears to threaten the safety of others will be investigated. Administrators can implement a Risk Assessment for behaviours that are worrisome including writing or drawings with violent themes; references to or involvement in violent activity at school; or an increased interest in activities that are deemed as dangerous to the safety of others. A Threat Assessment is implemented when a student threatens to kill or injure others, brings a weapon to school, or makes direct verbal or written violent threats to others.

CHILD ABUSE AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION EDUCATION

These units of the Elementary Health Program were developed in response to pressing social needs. These units are taught formally at grades 2 and 5. The goals of the units are to enable all children to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to help protect them from abuse and to assist those children who are being abused to seek help. The main focus of this program is prevention.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

DISCIPLINE

Our staff is committed to the establishment and maintenance of a safe, caring and effective learning environment. As a student in Lethbridge School District No. 51 you have the right

- to a quality education
- to learn
- to be safe (physically, emotionally, socially) and secure in the school environment
- to be treated with dignity and respect
- to be treated fairly and be heard by school personnel

All procedures at Westminster School will be consistent with the School Act and District policies as follows: 502.1 Code of Conduct; 502.2 Student Discipline; 502.3 Student Suspension and Expulsion; 502.4 Discrimination, 502.6 Student conduct on School Authorized Busses; 502.7 Student Vandalism of School Property; 502.8 Alcohol and Drugs; 502.10 Weapons, 502.11 Student Searches; and 503.5 Student Activities.

Student Code of Conduct:

Section 31 of the Alberta Education Act states: A student shall conduct himself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- Attend school regularly and punctually,
- Be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education,
- Ensure that the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,
- Respect the rights of others in the school,
- Refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means,
- Comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the board,
- Co-operate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services,
- Be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct, and
- Positively contribute to the student's school and community.

Parent Responsibilities:

Section 32 of the Alberta Education Act states: A parent has the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be provided to the parent's child, and as a partner in education, has the responsibility to:

- Act as the primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child's education,
- Take an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with Section 31,
- Ensure that the child attends school regularly,
- Ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment,
- Co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of specialized supports and services to the child,
- Encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school, and,
- Engage in the child's school community.

The Board believes that students should behave in a manner that is consistent with the customary rules and accepted standards of the community. The Board also believes it is important for students to know and understand what is expected of them and the consequences associated with unacceptable behavior.

The Board therefore authorizes and encourages the development of school rules, consistent with the following regulations, designed to enforce the appropriate behavior of students in school, on school grounds, at school sponsored/authorized activities and on school buses or other approved transport.

School Rules:

1. Show respect to the adult in charge.
2. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
3. Take care of yourself.
4. Take care of others.
5. Take care of our school.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to:

- Complete assignments and follow school and classroom routines.
- Attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- Enter and exit the school in a quiet and orderly manner,
- Remove muddy or wet shoes when entering the building.
- Remove hats.
- Walk bicycles across school property and lock them up in bike racks. We do not take responsibility for stolen or damaged property.
- Not bring any item to school that could be used as a threat or a weapon.
- Obtain permission from a staff member to enter the school before bell times.
- Not chew gum in school.
- Go directly home once dismissed.
- Leave hazardous play equipment at home. (i.e. hee-lies, skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, baseballs and bats)

CONSEQUENCES FOR UNACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

Our goal is to help children take responsibility for unacceptable behaviour. We work to help children identify their feelings and triggers, and help them find ways to change behaviours that are affecting their learning and the learning of others. The focus of all interventions with students is helping them to solve their problems and be accountable for the choices they make.

Minor Offenses:

Staff members will handle minor offenses on the spot. Students will know what poor judgment on their part was and what is expected from them.

Major Offenses:

Major offenses are those behaviours which threaten the orderly function of the school or are deemed unsafe to self or others. These may include repeated defiance of authority, physical conflict, and/or continuous disruptive behaviour. The consequences for major offenses will be decided for each individual case. Continuous major misbehaviour will result in a progression of agreed upon consequences which may include in-school suspension, at home suspension, or assistance through out-of-school agencies.

Emphasis will be on the implementation and monitoring of a problem solving process. Other actions may include:

- Parent contact as required.
- Written documentation.
- Assignment of an alternate activity.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Temporary removal of a student from class to an alternate location in the school.
- Student suspension for serious misconduct (temporarily prohibit a student from attending a class, course or program, a school activity, or from riding a school bus. Policy 502.3).

APPEAL PROCEDURES

If a parent or guardian disagrees with a school-based decision which significantly affects the education of his or her child, the School Act makes provisions for appealing that decision. As per policy 505.9, the first appeal of an employee decision shall be made to the employee who made the decision. From there, the appeal may be made through the school principal, the Associate Superintendents, the Superintendent of Schools, and lastly to the Board of Trustees. Please refer to the policy on the district website, www.lethsd.ab.ca for full details.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Prescription medication may be administered by or under the supervision of staff under special circumstances only. The parent must complete the appropriate medication authorization forms, which are available from the office.

SEVERE ALLERGIES

Parents of students with severe allergies are required to advise the principal and classroom teacher at the beginning of each school year. We must have emergency contact information, a recent photograph, and any other relevant information to ensure the school has an appropriate emergency procedure. Parents, please do not pack peanut butter sandwiches in bag lunches. If a child brings peanut butter we ask them to let us know immediately so we can seat them away from students who have allergies. All staff are trained by the health nurse at the first staff meeting with respect to severe allergies and epi-pen use.

DISTRACTIONS

In order to keep distractions to a minimum, toys, trading cards and electronic devices are not permitted at school. These items will be taken from the students and must be picked up by the parents at the end of the day.

We understand that some parents choose to provide a cell phone for their child. The following procedures are in place regarding the usage of cell phones at school:

1. Cell phones are not to be turned on or used during the school day.
2. No pictures or videos may be taken using a cell phone or other electronic device.
3. Texting is not permitted at school.
4. Students must keep cell phones in their backpacks.
5. Failure to comply with these rules will result in the phone being taken and returned to the parent or guardian.
6. The school will not be responsible for loss or damage.

TECHNOLOGY AND COMPUTER INFORMATION

Alberta Education has mandated that communication technology be an integral part of education. With this in mind, we have created an environment at Westminster School to facilitate this mandate. We have placed four computers in every classroom to be used at the teachers' discretion. Our computer lab, as well as, a laptop cart, are fully networked, allowing students to access the Local Area Network and the World Wide Web. Lethbridge School District #51 has a filtering system in place and the school staff have additional safety lessons for all students on proper Internet use.

Below is a copy of our school's Acceptable Use Policy for computers in the school. We ask that parents go through this with their children to inform them of appropriate and inappropriate use of technology and of the consequences that may result if this policy is not followed.

Rules for Appropriate Use of Technology:

1. Do not use a computer to harass other people or harm their work.
2. Do not type in a URL address or surf the Internet. Use only the search engine links located on the school's web page or those provided by teachers to research information on the WWW.
3. Do not damage the computer or the network in any way.
4. Do not alter the settings on the computer or the network in any way.
5. Do not install unauthorized software, shareware or freeware. Downloading is not permitted.
6. Do not copy any electronic material and claim it as your own.
7. Do not view, send or display offensive messages or pictures. Notify an adult immediately if you encounter materials that violate the rules of appropriate use.
8. Do not print material without authorization from a teacher.
9. Do not trespass in another's folders, work or files.
10. Do not reveal personal information about yourself or others over the Internet.
11. Do not use computers unless permission is granted and supervision is present in the room.

Students are expected to be careful and responsible when using technology equipment available in the school. Students who purposefully harm or destroy technology equipment belonging to the school will be

required to pay full replacement cost of the item(s) and will be suspended from using the equipment for a given period of time.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE OF SCHOOL OR STUDENT PROPERTY

As per policy 502.11, Lethbridge School District No. 51 Board believes that enforcement of the Board and/or school rules may, from time to time, require that school administration conduct a search of property and/or seizure of prohibited or missing items. The Board authorizes school Principals, in connection with the enforcement of district or school rules, to carry out searches of student desks, lockers, clothing, and personal property such as knapsacks, book bags, or purses.

GUIDELINES FOR SUITABLE DRESS

We believe that the following items of clothing are not appropriate for school:

- Clothing or jewellery with rude or inappropriate symbols or words.
- Clothing that reveals the midriff/navel.
- Extremely short shorts or skirts.
- Tube tops or strapless tops.

Staff will use their discretion as to the appropriateness of student dress, and may ask a student to remove or change an item of clothing or jewellery that is inappropriate.

FIRE DRILLS AND LOCKDOWNS

The Lethbridge School District No. 51 regulations require schools to have a minimum of 6 fire drills and two lockdown drills a year in which all children are required to participate. It is important that your child have shoes on their feet at all times while in the school as we are required to exit the building immediately when the fire alarm rings.

As a reflection of the changes in our society we are required to add variations to our safety drills. The safety of all students and staff of Westminster School is of great importance. To that end, we will from time to time, practice a drill known as a "silent lock down". This kind of drill might be used in the event of an emergency where their teachers give the children instructions while the building is secured. Teachers will ensure all children are in classrooms, classrooms are locked and attendance is taken. Parents or other visitors will be expected to evacuate to safety areas as instructed by teachers during this kind of drill.

DOCUMENTATION OF LEGAL CUSTODY

If you have legal custody of your child(ren), please make sure the school has the appropriate documentation on file. This is required to clearly identify individuals who have legal access. This will consequently allow us to name persons who have entitlement to review the student record.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The registration form must be completed and checked for accuracy each year. Please make necessary changes and return one to the school for each child. This information is vital to ensure the proper care and safety of your child during an illness or emergency. When giving the name and phone number of an alternate contact we would ask that you please ensure the person is someone who is able to pick up the child at school if necessary. Please notify the office immediately of any changes so we are able to keep accurate records.

EMERGENCY CLOSURE PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency closure (e.g. fire, power failure) students will be taken to Westminster Community Centre. Parents would be contacted, if necessary, from there. All parents should arrange a place your child(ren) can go to in the middle of the day in the event of such a situation.

SCHOOL SECURITY

The main door of the school is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For security reasons all other doors remain locked during the day with the exception of recess time. This enables us to monitor all visitors to our school. We ask all visitors sign in at the office.

Safety and security of our students is of utmost importance. Please help us ensure the safety of our students by following our established safety and security guidelines, which include:

- Assign a meeting spot outside where your child can meet you each day after the bell rings.
- During school hours all visitors (including former students) must enter the school through the front doors and report to the office.
- Students arriving late need to enter through the front doors and report to the office for a late slip.
- Students who need to leave the school early for appointments will be called to the office to meet their parents. Parents are required to “sign out” students at the office.
- We do not have before and after school care. The Boys and Girls Club offers services to families requiring care.

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, TOBACCO AND ELECTRONIC SMOKING PRODUCTS

The following are prohibited on school property and at authorized student activities:

- possession and/or use of alcohol;
- possession and/or use of illicit drugs;
- use of tobacco and/or electronic smoking products; and
- inappropriate use of prescription and non-prescription medication.

Persons under the influence of alcohol or drugs are prohibited from being on school property or participating in authorized student activities.

PARKING AND DRIVING SAFETY

Parking in the staff lot is reserved for school employees. Students are not allowed in the parking lot and this area should not be a drop off area.

The safety of our students is a shared responsibility. We will help the children become aware of safety rules and we ask you to do the same. Please model safety over convenience.

- Teach your children to cross with care.
- If you park across the street, please instruct your child to get out of the car on the side that is closest to the sidewalk.
- Do not make U-turns in the school zone.
- Do not stop or park in the bus zone or at the crosswalk.
- Adhere to the speed limit of 30 km/hr.

BICYCLES

Children who ride their bikes to school need to be aware of the rules for bicycle safety. They are to walk their bikes on the school grounds. Locks must be provided for each bike and bikes must be kept locked to the bike rack. The bike racks are out of bounds during school hours. The school cannot take responsibility for the security of bicycles.

SCHOOL TELEPHONES

Please ensure that your child(ren) have arranged after school plans with you before coming to school. Telephones are for school business only. Students may use the phone only in case of emergency or to inform parents that they have been asked by a teacher to stay at school.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

On days that are extremely cold or wet students will be supervised inside the school rather than on the playground. On these days it is best if the students do not arrive at school too early. It is important that your child is appropriately dressed for the weather. We take recess breaks each day, weather permitting. The fresh air and exercise at recess are important to your child’s learning.

FOOTWEAR

We take great pride in our school and we work together to help keep our school clean. Wet floors are unsafe; therefore children will be asked to remove wet footwear upon entering the building. It is helpful for students to have a pair of indoor shoes suitable for wearing in physical education classes. For safety reasons, we cannot allow students to participate in our daily physical education classes in bare feet or in platform soles, hiking boots or sandals.

OTHER

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Westminster School Council is an active association of parents and professional staff who work together to promote the well-being and effectiveness of the entire school community. It is a means to facilitate cooperation within our school community, as well as, advise and consult with the principal. Please feel welcome to attend the meetings, which are usually held on a Tuesday evening, once a month. Dates are listed on our website.

Annual General Meeting: Although the School Council meetings are open to all parents/guardians of children enrolled in Westminster School, only those who attend the Annual General Meeting and let their name stand for membership will have a vote at the monthly School Council meetings. If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting, you may send a letter indicating your wish to become a member of School Council for the year 2015-2016.

Mission Statement: In the spirit of partnership, Westminster School Council fosters communication between the school staff and families of the students. It offers the school community a forum to exchange ideas, to raise concerns, and an opportunity to facilitate activities that broaden the educational experience within the school. Westminster School Council will proactively represent our school community in educational and political arenas extending beyond our school.

Vision Statement: As a community, we are committed to support and enhance our children's academic and personal experiences, so that our children will achieve their potential, as they become community minded citizens.

SCHOOL COUNCIL GOVERNANCE MODEL

The Westminster School Council shall follow the Representative Model. Membership consists of the following: minimum of five parents, principal, one teacher, a community member and a recommendation of a parent representative from each team. The executive council shall consist of a chair, a vice chair, a secretary, a treasurer and a District School Council representative. Please refer to the Westminster School Bylaws for more detailed information.

VOLUNTEERS

The staff at Westminster School encourages parents to volunteer. Parents and community members are invited to volunteer by helping out in a variety of ways, on a regular basis or for a single activity. Volunteer and confidentiality forms are required to be signed and turned in to the office. All visitors and volunteers must sign the visitor/volunteer binder, located on the office counter, before proceeding to a classroom. If you are planning on visiting a class, it is considerate to make arrangements with the teacher prior to your arrival. This advanced notice is appreciated as the teacher can then have special plans and projects to best utilize your support.

NEWSLETTER

Newsletters are available at the beginning of each month. They can be found on the school website and the link is sent home via the parent email list. Please contact the office should you wish to receive a hard copy. Each newsletter contains a calendar of events to keep you informed of important dates. Other information may be sent home between newsletters. Our newsletter is available by email upon request and on our website @ <http://west.lethsd.ab.ca/>

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Student supply lists are available at the school and on our website. Walmart and Staples have copies of our school supply lists in August and September of each year.

LEARNING COMMONS

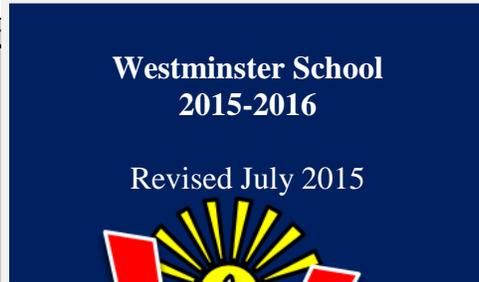
Students are encouraged to use our school library for school projects and independent reading. The loan period at Westminster School is one week. Any lost or damaged books are the responsibility of the student to replace. If your child takes books home from our library please encourage them to be responsible for the care of them and for returning them on time.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Please refer to the most up-to-date information of activities on the school website at www.west.lethsd.ab.ca. The calendar link can be found at the top of the home page. Upcoming Events are listed under the scrolling pictures next to the Teacher Pages. A link to the full calendar can also be found below the Upcoming Events. A monthly calendar is also sent home with the newsletter. Newsletters are also posted on the school website under Quicklinks in the bottom right corner of the homepage.

SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

August 2015						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					3
24 Office Opens 27 Teacher's start up/meeting 28 Teacher Planning Day 31 Welcome Back Breakfast Staff Meeting EA Back Care Workshop Staff Social 1 Staff working day						
October 2015						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
						21
1 Orange Shirt Day 5 No School (Assessment Day) 7 Bus Evacuation Drill, Skating 12 Thanksgiving Holiday 13 Picture Day 14 Skating 20 School Council Meeting at 6:30pm 22 No Kindergarten, Noon Dismissal 23 No School, Professional Learning 28 Rotary Breakfast, Skating 30 Halloween Dress-up and Assembly						
January 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						20
4 School resumes 6 Minder's Basketball Begins 8 Staff Meeting 19 School Council Meeting at 6:30pm 27 Rotary Breakfast 29 No School, Professional Learning Day						



November 2015						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					
						20
2 District PD Day, No School 6 Staff Meeting 9 Report Card #1 Goes Home 10 Remembrance Day Assembly 10:30am 10 Kindergarten Interviews, No School 11 Remembrance Day Holiday 12/13 Parent/Teacher Interviews 17 School Council Meeting at 6:30pm 18 Picture Retakes 20 Enrichment Friday Round 2 Begins 25 Rotary Breakfast						

February 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29					
						18
2 Town Hall Meeting 5 Staff meeting 5 Enrichment Friday Round 3 Begins 15-19 Family Day, Teachers' Convention 23 School Council Meeting at 6:30pm 24 Rotary Breakfast, Pink Shirt Day 26 Gr. 5 Basketball Tourney 12-5 pm						

September 2015						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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27	28	29	30			
						21
2 Student's First Day! 2 School Wide Assembly at 11am 4 Cargill Pancake Breakfast 10 Meet the Teacher Night 7pm 7 Labour Day Holiday 15 School Council Meeting at 6:30pm 18 Enrichment Friday Round 1 Begins 25 Circle of Courage Assembly, Staff Meeting 30 Rotary Breakfast, Terry Fox School Run						

December 2015						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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						14
4 Staff meeting 8 School Council Meeting at 6:30pm 19-Jan 2 Winter break						

March 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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27	28	29	30	31		
						18
4 Staff Meeting 7 Report Card #2 Goes Home 10 Kindergarten Interviews, no school 10 Celebration of Learning at 5:30pm 11 Parent/Teacher Interviews, no school 15 School Council Meeting at 6:30pm 23 Rotary Breakfast 25 Good Friday/Easter break						

April 2016							May 2016							June 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30		
						20														22
4 School resumes 8 Staff meeting 15 No School - District Learning Day 19 School Council Meeting at 6:30pm 21 Admin Spring Retreat 27 Rotary Breakfast 29 Gr. 5 Orientation at WMS 10-11:30							6 Staff meeting 6 Enrichment Friday Round 4 Begins 13 No School Staff Learning Day 17 School Council Meeting at 6:30pm 20 No school 23 Victoria Day Holiday 25 Rotary Breakfast 26 Welcome to Kindergarten							3 Staff Meeting 14 School Council Meeting at 6:30 p.m. 22 Rotary Breakfast, Swimming 23 Kindergarten VIP Night 28 Kindergarten Last Day 29 Student's Last Day (am only), Report Cards 30 Last day for staff						

