



# Handbook

2023-2024

# Welcome to Westdale School!

## Westdale School

Welcome to Westdale School! As a staff, it is important to us that we continue to build strong, supportive relationships with families to best support our students' growth and learning.

Westdale school is a community of learners which includes students, teachers, parents/guardians, and support staff who grow and discover together.

## Mission Statement

Westdale School is committed to the development of personal, community and environmental stewardship through educational excellence.

## School Information and Hours

**School Phone:** 204-895-8205

**Email:** westdale@pembinatrails.ca

**Student Entry:** 8:40 am

**Nutrition Break:** 10:50 -11:00 am

**Lunch:** 12:20 -1:20 pm

**Dismissal:** 3:30 pm

## Student Entry and Exit Doors

Students will be welcomed in at their respective doors when the bell rings at 8:40am, and expected to leave the building by 3:40pm, unless involved in extra-curricular activities. Entrance and exit will be as follows:

**Grade 6:** East doors by the office

**Grade 7:** South doors by the field

**Grade 8:** West doors by the basketball courts

## **Office Hours**

Office hours are 8:00 am – 4:00pm. An answering machine is available to record calls beyond these times. Please note that the front doors of the school are locked at all times. If entering the school, please buzz the office and they will let you in.

## **Visitors**

We ask that all visitors report to the office upon entering the school. Visitors are required to sign in at the office and will receive a **Westdale Visitor** tag which is required to be worn while at the school.

## **Attendance**

We operate an automated call back system called SafeArrive to ensure the safety of our students. Please report any absences on Edsby, or by emailing the school at [westdale@peminatrails.ca](mailto:westdale@peminatrails.ca). You can also leave a message on the attendance line at (204) 895-8205 option 2 before classes begin in the morning or afternoon to inform us if your child will be absent.

Please note that it is important that students arrive as close to the bell as possible as there is no supervision outside the school in the morning.

Students are asked to report to the office when arriving late and families should report to the school office when picking up their child during regular school hours. Please contact the office prior to pick up, so we can make sure that your child is ready and waiting for you. When someone other than a parent/guardian is picking up a child, we ask to be informed prior to the pick-up, and photo ID will be required.

We appreciate families ensuring that students attend school regularly except in cases where illness or other similar cause makes absence unavoidable. Students arriving “on time” is important as valuable learning is lost with repetitive tardiness.

## **Communication with Families**

The primary mode of communication with our community is through electronic means (email). Please ensure we have your correct email address. All Field Trip permission forms are shared with families through Permission Click, a service which allows families to provide the school with electronic permission for their child to participate in field trips and special activities. Westdale School also uses this service for the collection of school, lunch and art fees.

The Westdale School webpage provides families and our community with detailed information regarding our school.

Teachers will also be using Edsby to communicate with families and students, as well for assigning homework. Families are encouraged to check Edsby frequently for a good ongoing understanding of how your child is managing their time. For families new to Westdale, we will send out Edsby registration reminders in August.

## Reporting Student Progress

In September, our teachers spend time getting to know their students as learners. This time helps teachers make clear decisions about how best to support growth and success. This time culminates in two Strong Beginning days near the end of September. Students will attend a one-hour appointment with their classroom teacher who continues to get to know students as learners through formal and informal assessments in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Learning Behaviors.

During the school year, there are two tri-conference times scheduled in October and February. This is an opportunity for families, students, and teachers to meet, set goals and discuss learning plans. Families are encouraged to sign up for these meetings. The relationship with the family is key to a strong learning partnership.

Formal report cards are distributed in December, March and June, and are accessed online. Families are encouraged to communicate directly with their child's teacher regarding any questions, concerns and/or suggestions to support their child's academic, social/emotional and behavioral growth. Together we do make wonderful things happen!

Families can see the report card electronically, and schedule appointments for Strong Beginnings and Tri-Conferences through Edsby. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

## Email Address Changes

The majority of school information is communicated through email. Please be sure to notify the office of any changes to your email address to ensure that important school information is communicated to you in a timely fashion. Please be sure to include [westdale@pembinatrails.ca](mailto:westdale@pembinatrails.ca) as a "safe" or "known" email address with your email provider.

## Student Drop Off/Pick Up and Parking Safety

**The parking lot is reserved for staff use only. We ask that you do not drive into the parking lot to drop off or pick up your child at the beginning and end of the day.** Student drop off and pick up is available on the west side of Cullen Dr., and south side of Betsworth Ave.

**It is helpful to arrange a pre-determined drop off/pick up spot with your child/ren on one of the above streets to limit traffic congestion on either street.**

**Thank you in advance for your collaboration in keeping our students safe!**

## Storm Days and Extreme Weather Conditions

On extreme cold and rainy days, we ask families to ensure that their child is appropriately dressed according to daily forecasts. Even if students get rides to and from school, there is always a possibility that we would need to evacuate the school. Our muster spot when this happens is Beaverlodge, which is a good distance way.

When the temperature including wind chill drops below -27 degrees Celsius, lunch recess will be held indoors. Weather readings used by Westdale School are obtained by Environment Canada (The Forks).

## **School Bus Transportation**

Families with students who are eligible for transportation can register online on the Pembina Trails website. All follow ups are to be done directly with the Transportation Department. Contact information is available at [www.pembinatrails.ca](http://www.pembinatrails.ca) under the Transportation tab.

School bus transportation may be cancelled due to inclement weather even though schools may still be in session. Bus cancellation decisions are made by the Superintendents of Metro School Divisions in the city. Families can tune in to CJOB Radio regarding potential bus cancellations during times of inclement weather. This information will also be on the divisional website. Decisions are usually made by 7:00 AM.

## **Bicycle/Scooter/Skateboard Safety**

- Please encourage your child to wear bicycle helmets at all times when riding.
- Students are to walk their bicycles/scooters/skateboards when on school grounds.
- Students are encouraged to lock their bike with a sturdy lock. The school assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.
- Students may store scooters and skateboards in the office.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Thanks to the dedication of our staff, Westdale School offers a full complement of extra- curricular activities before, after, and/or during the lunch recess. Some of these may include: musicals/theatrical productions, running club, volleyball, basketball, cross country running track and field, and more. Information regarding these activities will be sent home via a student permission slip and/or Permission Click.

We are also able to host a variety of clubs for our students such as GSA, beading, art, sewing, D&D, homework club etc throughout the year. Club schedules are listed online on the school calendar.

## **Student Support Services**

A continuum of supports is available to support student learning. The core educational team centers on the student including the teacher and the parents/guardians. The classroom teacher plays a critical role in determining the appropriate supports to support individual learning and when necessary will access the in-school support team.

This team includes the administrator, the resource teacher, the school counsellor and possibly an educational assistant. If additional support is required the team may access, with parent/guardian permission, the divisional clinical supports.

## **Lunch Program**

We offer the service of a Lunch Program operated by school administration. Application information, program expectations, and cost of this service will be sent out in a Permission Click at the beginning of the year. Students eat lunch in the courtyard under the supervision of the Lunch Program Supervisors from 12:20 pm – 12:50 pm and from 12:50 pm – 1:20 pm students go outside to enjoy 30 minutes of supervised play. If program expectations are not followed, the school reserves the right to revoke lunch time privileges.

A canteen is available for smaller items for purchase between 12:20pm-12:50pm.

## **Lunch Program Continued - Expectations**

- Bring your own food and utensils; no microwaves are available
- Listen to the supervising adults
- Sit while eating and during the seated time
- Talk quietly to the person next to or near you; no yelling across the room
- Get permission from the lunch supervisors before leaving the space
- Remain in the lunch area until instructed to leave
- Clean up after yourself
- Go outside or to a club during the second half of lunch
- Follow these expectations or stop participating in the lunch program (i.e.: go home for lunch)

During the second half of lunch, all students are expected to go outside. We offer many clubs throughout the year, but they often fill up. Your student can expect to be outside for the second half of lunch for most days of the year.

Students in grade 6 in the lunch program must remain on school grounds for the duration of the lunch hour. Students in grade 7 and 8 are encouraged to remain on campus, however may chose to leave campus. Lunch supervisors are not monitoring which of the 7's and 8's leave campus.

## **Lost and Found**

Students are discouraged from bringing valuables to school. Lost items are placed in the Lost and Found near the office. Students and families are encouraged to check frequently for missing items. Items will be bagged up regularly and donated to charity.

## **Medication**

If your child requires regular medication during the school day it will be administered through the office following the completion of a divisional form, complete with staff/guardian signatures. All medication must remain in the original prescription container.

## **School Safety**

Westdale School has established an Emergency Response Plan which aims to protect the health and safety of all students and staff. This includes the following safety plans: Fire, Lockdown, Emergency Evacuation and Natural Disaster. In case of an emergency all students will be evacuated to Beaverlodge. In the event of an emergency evacuation families would be contacted directly.

