Horse Lake Elementary School
Family Handbook 2026-2027

Acting Principal – Mrs. Alina Cameron
Vice Principal – Ms. Ashley Posnikoff

Welcome to Horse Lake Elementary School

This handbook provides parents with information regarding the goals, procedures, guidelines, rules, safety, communications, programs and services found within our educational walls at Horse Lake Elementary School.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to review these pages thoroughly and to discuss the content with their children. We hope that through this handbook and the concepts presented here, we can work together to strengthen our Home/School partnership. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the school or come in for clarification. Communication is essential between parents and the school, and the office door is always open. Horse Lake also maintains a website, which can be viewed by entering through the School District #27 site or directly at hle.sd27.bc.ca

Throughout the year, all important information is communicated through the school website, our Facebook page and monthly newsletters (e.g., calendar updates, school and PAC news, school and PAC event information). To ensure you do not miss any important information, please provide the school office with your current email address.

Contact Us!

Acting Principal: Mrs. Alina Cameron
Vice Principal: Ms. Ashley Posnikoff
Secretary: Mrs. Cheryl Bird
Address: 6548 Ryall Road, Lone Butte, BC, V0K 1X3
Office Telephone: (250) 395-4572
Principal's email: alina.cameron@sd27.bc.ca
Vice Principal's email: ashley.posnikoff@sd27.bc.ca

School Hours

Supervision starts 7:55 am
Warning bell: 8:10
Class Begins: 8:15 am.
Recess: 9:50am - 10:05 am
Lunch: 11:20 am- 12:15 pm
Dismissal: 2:25 pm
Supervision ends: 2:35

Horse Lake Elementary Mission Statement

Together the Horse Lake School community will work to ensure a safe, respectful environment that promotes the development of individual potential and lifelong learning.

SUPERVISION AND SCHOOL SAFETY

School Arrival and Supervision Times

Pick Up:
To ensure the safety and security of all students, as well as to minimize disruptions to classroom learning, we ask families to follow these procedures when picking up their child/children during the school day:

- Please provide your child's classroom teacher with information about pick-up arrangements so your child can be prepared.
- All parents/guardians or approved emergency contacts must **report to the office** to pick up their child/children. Students will either be waiting at the office, or office staff will contact the classroom to have the student sent down.
- During the first week of school, forms will be sent home to establish legal guardians and approved emergency contacts for each student at Horse Lake Elementary.
- **Only legal guardians or approved emergency contacts will be allowed to pick up students.** No student will be released without consent.
- Please check in with the office prior to picking up your child during regular school hours.

*We kindly request that these procedures be followed **at all times** to help us maintain a safe, secure, and uninterrupted learning environment.*

If your child is being picked up after school, please meet outside their doors. No parents are to enter the school through the back doors. Please also ensure that pick up happens promptly after the bell. The playground is not an appropriate place for students to wait. Any student not picked up on time will wait at the office until their adult arrives.

Drop Off:
7:55 a.m. – 8:10 a.m. – Before School
Students enter the school, place backpacks in their classrooms, change into indoor shoes, and proceed to the gym for supervised Breakfast for Learning and morning supervision.

Dropping off in personal vehicles: If you drive your student to school and drop them off, please follow the signs and rules of the road.

Drop offs after the morning bell:
Kindly, bring your student in through the front door.

1. Tell our Secretary, Mrs. Bird, your student's name.
2. Your student will receive a slip of paper they will give to their teacher that indicates they have signed into the office.
3. Student will walk to their classroom.

Morning Arrival Procedures

Students arriving at school before the 8:10 a.m. bell should enter the school, go directly to their classroom to place their backpack and change into their indoor shoes. Once ready, students are to proceed to the gym for morning supervision and Breakfast for Learning. Breakfast for Learning is available daily to all students. Students should remain in the gym until the morning bell rings and classes begin.

If you would like to accompany your student to their classroom to drop them off, you must sign in and wear a Visitor's Lanyard. Thank you!

Supervision Times & Areas:

7:55am – 8:10 – Before School
(Bus Lane, Inside school circulation)
9:50am – 10:05am – Recess
(red toy, blue toy, field, forest)
11:20am – 11:35 am – Lunch
(inside duty circulating classrooms)
11:35 am-12:15pm
(outside playtime supervision)
2:25pm – 2:35pm – *Bus Lane*

***** All Supervisors will be wearing high-vis vests *****
***** There is no supervision in designated areas before 7:55 a.m. or after 3:35 p.m**. ***

Leaving the School Grounds

We **do not** allow students to leave school grounds during the day for any reason (aside from teacher-arranged field trips) unless we have received prior written notification or written consent from a parent/guardian that includes:

- the reason the child is needing to leave school/be away from school
- the date(s) and time(s) the student will be absent
- the name of the adult that is responsible for picking them up and returning them to school.

School Attendance

At this school and in our district, we believe that student attendance is important. There is a strong correlation between attendance and success in school. Students who miss more than 10% of school days are considered to have chronic absenteeism, which results in approximately 18 days a year, or about two days every month. Under the School Act of the Province of BC, parents of students attending school are entitled to be informed of their child's attendance.

Parents are partners, and attendance is critical. We may ask you, "How can we help?" Should the student be late for, or absent from school, parents are asked to call or log their absence using the Safe Arrival Program. Parents need to provide notes to teachers regarding appointments or anything out of the ordinary routine. Check with your teacher about the best process for this.

Safe Arrival Program

Horse Lake Elementary has a **"Safe Arrival" program.** We will continue to use the School Messenger safe arrival program/app. It is a downloadable and free app in the Apple or Google Play store. If a child is going to be absent or late, families can also call: **1-833-582-6944** and follow the prompts. Or use the website go.schoolmessenger.ca.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Student Illness or Injury

Our policy is to get sick students home as soon as possible. Our practice is to call the parents and ask that students either be picked up or be given parental permission to go home or to another location to be cared for.

If a student has a minor injury (scrape, bump, etc.), a supervising grown up will provide very basic first aid to the injury (band-aide, ice pack, etc.). If an injury appears beyond our ability to treat, the office will contact a parent so that they can make the decision regarding treatment. In an emergency a student may be transported to the Emergency Room via private vehicle (Principal/Vice Principal) or an ambulance and parents will be notified to meet their child at the hospital. **Injuries will be reported to families within the same day.**

Medication for students at school

If your child is taking medication that needs to be administered during the school day, please contact the school office. We will give the parent a form that needs to be completed by their doctor giving detailed instructions on administration of medicines. This form must be returned to the office. Medication cannot be administered without this step. Teachers will be informed of any acute medical conditions (allergies, seizure disorders, asthma, diabetes, etc.) for their students.

Allergies

At our school, we have a number of students (and some staff and parents) who are allergic to some foods, peanuts, bee stings, and to other things such as cut grass, perfumes, pollen, etc. We request that parents inform us of any serious allergies, possible complications and treatments, so that we are aware and can take any necessary precautions in our classrooms and school. Student medical alerts are posted in the staff room for all staff.

Weather Policy

Students are expected to dress in appropriate clothing for the weather conditions. Specifically, children should wear warm winter jackets in the winter and water-resistant jackets on rainy days. Students are not allowed in the school during regular break times, before school, recess and during the noon hour (unless they are being directly supervised by a staff member.)

Inside days will be declared by the Principal or designate when it is very cold (we take wind chill into consideration) or is raining very hard. If the school buses aren't running, the cancellation will be determined by the transportation supervisor and will be broadcast on the local radio station and on

the School District Website. Parents must exercise discretion as to whether or not students should be sent to school when temperatures are low or conditions are hazardous. **Reminder that if the buses are not running in the morning, they also do not run in the afternoon regardless of changes in conditions throughout the day.**

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Personal Belongings and Valuables at School

On occasion, students may decide to bring items to school that hold significant value. The school and School District cannot accept any liability for personal belongings and valuables, inclusive of musical instruments, cell phones, technology or jewelry; if these items were to become lost, stolen, or broken. **As a result, we discourage students from bringing valuables to school.**

Personal Digital Devices

While at school, students are expected to learn, play and socialize away from the daily distraction of personal digital devices. From the time students arrive on school property until the time they leave school property at the end of the school day, personal digital devices are not to be used. The general expectation is that students will not use personal digital devices while at school to promote a safe, equitable, and positive learning environment throughout the day.

"Personal digital device" means any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or to access the internet, such as a cell phone, smartwatch, or a tablet and includes the use of wired or wireless headphones/AirPods.

At Horse Lake Elementary we value learning and growth. Personal digital devices can contribute to learning when used appropriately and can be a barrier to learning when used otherwise. As a result, personal digital devices are to be used in the following manner when attending Horse Lake.

- The staff of Horse Lake Elementary would like to suggest to parents that your student keeps all personal digital devices at home. The school takes no responsibility for lost or damaged devices.
- If a student brings a personal digital device to school, it must remain turned off or on silent mode and stored in the student's backpack from the time the student arrives on school property until the student leaves school property at the end of the school day. Students may not use personal digital devices before school, during recess or lunch, during instructional time, during transitions, or after dismissal.
- Use of personal digital devices at school will be restricted to not interfere with focused learning environments or compromise online safety. Personal digital devices are not to be used during instructional time unless specifically permitted by the school to provide access to online resources necessary to meeting learning objectives. Ideally, parents should not send their children to school with personal digital devices, however if they do, while at

school, personal digital devices should remain off or on silent mode, and in their backpacks away from their person.

- All personal digital devices must remain away for the balance of class time, they do not come out for any reason other than necessary medical monitoring or as a specific support to an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Student Learning Plan (SLP). Parents are required to communicate and coordinate these circumstances with the school principal or vice-principal. For students with an IEP or SLP the school will provide electronic devices to support learning and to access required online learning resources when needed.
- Students who fail to comply with the school expectations on personal digital devices will face progressive discipline for breach of school rules.
- If parents or caregivers need to contact their children while at school for an emergent issue, they are requested to contact the office.

The staff of Horse Lake Elementary recognize that they will role model using personal digital devices during instructional times by not using devices, other than to communicate with the office or for urgent or emergent circumstances. Administration reserves the necessity to use cell phone communication for purposes of student and staff safety and organization.

Consequences for violation of personal digital devices

Students who fail to adhere to the school and classroom guidelines for digital devices may be subject to the following:

- Have their device taken away by a teacher or administrator
- Be prohibited from having a device on school property.
- Be suspended in accordance with AP 320—Student Suspensions

Lost and Found Items

Please make sure student belongings (particularly jackets, sweaters or 'hoodies', pencil boxes, binder, etc.) are labeled with the student's name so they can be returned to them if found lying around the school. Items found, if not clearly labeled to allow us to identify the owner, are placed in our "Lost and Found" area, just inside the main entrance. Please check this area regularly for missing belongs. Smaller items (watches, rings, etc.) are kept in the secretary's desk until identified by a student. While the school staff will make every effort to help students find lost items the school can be in no way responsible for any losses.

STUDENT LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION

Communication of Student Progress and Events

Communication between home and school is vital to your child's/children's education. Teachers communicate about classroom learning and events through email, portfolio options, letters home, newsletters and in your child's agenda. Informal conferences to discuss student progress are held twice a year. More information about these conferences will come home at a later date. Teachers may invite parents in for a conference at other points during the school year if they have information regarding a child's progress they feel would be best addressed in person. To make arrangements for a meeting with a teacher, contact the teacher by phoning the school office and leaving a message

for the teacher to call you, writing a note to the teacher, requesting a meeting time in person or via email communication.

Learning Updates (Report Cards)

Learning updates are written and posted at the end of each term (before winter break, before spring break, and at the end of the school year). They can be viewed online and printed using the MyEducation Parent Portal. If you would like a printed copy, please contact the school office.

Communication Protocol:

If you have concerns about anything having to do with your child's experiences at school:

- first: contact your child's teacher to share information, review the problem and discuss a resolution.
- second: if, after meeting with the teacher the problem is unresolved or you are dissatisfied with the resolution, contact the Principal or Vice-Principal.

Please feel free to call the school and make an appointment to address any concerns.

Media in the School

Parental permission must be granted for students to have their pictures taken. This will be done at the beginning of the school year as a Media Release form.

Care of School Property

Over the school year, students may work with workbooks, library books, supplies, team shirts, and equipment, which are borrowed and returned in good condition to be used by other students. It is the student's responsibility to take care of any item belonging to the school that is on loan to him/her. A student who carelessly loses, deliberately defaces, or destroys school property, may be required to replace the item or to pay part or all of the replacement cost. All students are urged to treat borrowed items with care and respect.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS AT HORSE LAKE ELEMENTARY

Parent Volunteers in School

Parents who volunteer regularly to work on a one-to-one basis with children, or volunteer for field trips to be with students outside of the classroom, must have a criminal record check as required by the School Board, and fill in a Volunteer Application form. Teachers, PAC or the Principal will often make specific requests for volunteer help in the regular school newsletters.

Parent Advisory Council – PAC

Horse Lake has an active and committed PAC group. This group is open to any parent/guardian of a student attending the school. Parents are strongly encouraged to become involved in our school through our PAC. We are aware, of course, that parents have different levels of interest and that some things will appeal to some parents and not to others. Therefore, the PAC invites parent involvement by providing many and varied opportunities. Being an interested,

participating parent will create a positive liaison between you, your child, and the school. Watch for meeting dates or specific needs in the regular school newsletters.

Our PAC supports our school food program throughout the year – watch the newsletter for more information on how parents can be involved as helpers this year.

We have a dynamic learning community at Horse Lake Elementary, eager to learn and grow together to instill a love of learning for all. We strive to ensure the success of every student in our school, in a safe and caring environment. If you have any questions/concerns, please know our doors are always open.

Yours in education,

Mrs. Alina Cameron
Acting Principal
Horse Lake Elementary