

BVCS
Elementary School
Parent/Student
Handbook



2010-2011

“ ... We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done.”

Psalm 78:4

Welcome to Bulkley Valley Christian Elementary School

Congratulations on your choice of Christian education for your child/children. Now that the interviews and registration are over, there are some details you should know about in order to make the entrance into our school as smooth as possible. **This Parent/Student Handbook** is designed to tell you about some of the details that are often overlooked. Please read carefully and if you have any questions, feel free to call the school office.

Introduction by the Principal

Bulkley Valley Christian Elementary School is located in the beautiful Bulkley Valley at the foot of Hudson Bay Mountain. The Lord has blessed us with a community that is able to provide Christian education from Pre-school through Grade 12. Pre-school-7 is located in the elementary campus, and 8-12 in the secondary campus.

Our student body is made up of children from many different Christian denominations. With this diversity, it is important that we are sensitive to the beliefs and traditions that these churches represent. We pray that the Lord will give us that kind of wisdom and sensitivity.

As I am working on planning for this school year, I realize that as a community we have been blessed in so many different ways:

We have a staff with a great sense of their job as a calling. They freely express a love of God and the children in their care. They also have a sound knowledge of curriculum, teaching methods, and most importantly, how to teach from a Christian perspective.

We are supported by a strong community of believers who freely give of their time and talents to continue to improve the school in the various areas in which they serve.

Together, you and I have the privilege of working out and living the vision mentioned below.

I pray that you and your child(ren) will soon feel at home at Bulkley Valley Christian School and that we will be found faithful as we nurture the children the Lord has entrusted to us.

Klaas Kort, Principal BVC Elementary Campus

Vision Statement

A number of years ago the board decided to capture in a brief statement what our school stands for. The following is the result of that effort. The shorter version is found on the report cards, and posted on the elementary school wall.

Longer Version

In joyful obedience to Christ, the Bulkley Valley Christian School community strives to provide a comprehensive program of quality instruction that is shaped by a Reformed understanding of the Scriptures.

We recognize our need to personally know God in Christ through His Spirit and Word. It is out of this relationship that we encourage and teach our students to develop a view of life and creation that is centered in God.

Students are led to appreciate, understand and evaluate the world so that, as they grow in faith and knowledge, they will take up the challenge to bring the healing power of Christ to all areas of life.

Shorter Version

Our goal is to prepare young people to live fully for God with the ability to understand, evaluate, and transform the world from the foundation of God's infallible word, the Bible.

Logo Version

Christ Centered
Student Oriented
Teacher Directed
Community Connected

General School Information

School Day Schedule

AM 8:30 students enter
8:35 classes begin
10:15 – 10:30 recess

PM 12:00 – 12:15 lunch
12:15 – 12:50 lunch recess
2:55 dismissal

Kindergarten is in session on Tuesdays and Thursdays only. In order to meet government requirements there will also be classes on the last Monday of the month. The Kindergarten teacher will inform parents of the exact date.

Parents are responsible for making sure their children arrive at school on time! Each school day begins with devotions as we feel this is an important start to each day. Students who come late disrupt this devotional time.

School Calendar

The August *Grapevine* will have a school calendar attached. This calendar will give information about professional development days, holidays and other special activities happening throughout the school year. Wherever possible, our professional development days and parent-teacher conference days are scheduled to coincide with the public school calendar to facilitate busing.

Report and Management of Child Abuse

The Christian School Society of Smithers and Telkwa board of directors adopted the most recent government policy regarding protocol with respect to the reporting and management of child abuse. A copy of the entire policy statement adopted is available for loan from the school office, while a summary is reproduced below.

The following checklist outlines the steps to be taken for reporting and management of child abuse:

- a. Determine whether or not the child is in need of protection. Consult with the principal or chief administrator, school medical officer, and, where the offender is anyone other than a parent or guardian, the parents or guardians of the child. Common sense and good judgment should be exercised. All relevant information should be carefully documented.
- b. If a person has reasonable grounds to believe a child is in need of protection, he should immediately report the matter to the principal or chief administrator. The duty to report is not discharged by reporting the matter to these persons. The report must ultimately be made to the superintendent or his delegate. Where the alleged offender is a person other than a parent or guardian, the school should contact the parents or guardians and consult with them. Again, this does not discharge the duty to report.
- c. The school should not investigate the matter.
- d. The complainant, school, or parents or guardians should immediately report the matter to a Ministry of Social Services worker and the local police or R.C.M.P.
- e. Except as indicated above, the school should not contact the parents or guardians of the child or the alleged offender until after the investigating police officer or social worker has completed the investigation of the matter. Once this is completed, the school may contact these persons to provide support and assistance.
- f. The school should cooperate with the authorities in any investigation of child abuse. Proper identification should however be required of the authorities. School personnel should ask to be present during any interviews of the child.
- g. The school should also cooperate with the authorities in any intervention. The school should make itself available to provide support and assistance to the child, parents or guardians or the alleged offender and to direct these persons to counseling or other services within the Christian community.
- h. Where the alleged offender is a school employee, the school should advise the Board of the circumstances. The Board shall then determine if suspension, discipline or dismissal of the employee is warranted. The alleged offender may immediately be suspended with pay, whether or not criminal charges are laid. The suspension will be in effect until the legal process is completed, at which time the alleged offender will either be reinstated or terminated.

It is expected that teachers, principals and other school personnel will provide all relevant information to the investigating social worker and police officer when reporting a matter. Aside from this, all information obtained by educators

or other school personnel about child abuse and neglect cases, oral and written, is confidential and should be disclosed only to those persons with a legal mandate to investigate the abuse, or to the parents or guardians, where they are not the alleged offender.

Newsletters/Bulletins

The elementary school publishes a weekly bulletin in order to keep everyone informed about future events. These are sent home on Fridays with the oldest child in the school, or will be e-mailed to you. This bulletin can also be viewed by going to the school web page at www.bvcs.ca. Most primary teachers send home a weekly newsletter giving information about classroom activities and themes of study. The intermediate children use agendas in which to keep track of assignments and tests. These go home daily and should be checked by parents on a regular basis. The society also publishes a monthly newsletter called *The Grapevine*. *The Grapevine* is also available on line or can be e-mailed. It keeps the members informed about the work of the board and its committees. These are also sent home with the oldest child in the school. The August issue is sent out mid-month (via mail or by way of the churches). It contains information pertinent to the start of the new school year.

Attendance

Teachers take attendance every morning. Please inform the school if your child will not be present and give the reason (we have an answering machine). **It is the parent's responsibility to call the school and report absences before 9:00 am.** We will phone you if you don't call us.

For Ministry funding purposes, a student's absence is recorded as either *excused* or *unexcused*. An excused absence is one for a medical or compassionate reason; any other absences must be considered unexcused for funding purposes. Homework will be given if appropriate and if deemed necessary by the teacher. **It is essential that both home and school are aware that the child is not present at school.**

Lates:

We encourage you to arrange for your children to be here by 8:30 am. A student arriving late or leaving early must **report to the school office located near the main entrance**. Students who arrive late must pick up a late slip which tells the teacher that they have gone through the office.

Leaving School Property

In order for children to be excused from school property, they must bring a signed note from home. The teacher still has the final say whether or not the child may leave. If he or she has an assignment to complete, permission will likely be denied.

Parent Visits/Volunteers

Parents are welcome to visit their children's classrooms at any time. However, it is a good idea to arrange a visit beforehand with the teacher. Please do not bring younger siblings, since that can be disruptive to the classroom atmosphere. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer their help for classroom activities. Teachers are happy to have an extra pair of hands around, especially for special activities. There is opportunity to sign up as a volunteer at the beginning of the year.

Report Cards/Parent Teacher Conferences

There are three reporting periods for which a report card is issued. The first one goes out in late November, the second one prior to Spring Break, and the final one at the end of June. If parents have a concern, they are invited to speak to the teacher at anytime by phone or by requesting a visit.

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled two times per year. Every parent is given a specific meeting time to discuss personal and academic progress with the teachers.

Testing and Placement of New Students at BVCS

All students entering the school at a grade level other than kindergarten will be tested to determine readiness for the grade level requested. This testing will be done in the later part of June (or the week before school starts in September in special cases). If the child scores below the level required for the requested grade, the special education coordinator and the principal will talk to the parents about the options most suitable for the child's needs and progress.

Buses and Busing

Children riding the public school bus will be dropped off at Walnut Park School in the morning. From there they can walk across the playground to BVCES. Students will also catch the bus at Walnut Park in the afternoon; a staff member will be on duty to supervise. Children who ride the Christian school bus will be dropped off and picked up directly in front of our school. Rules for behaviour on the buses are the same as for on the playground. Each family will be given a copy of the bus rules. Discipline notes will be given by the bus driver for any infractions.

BUS PASSES: Students making alternate busing arrangements such as visiting a friend or attending a sleepover, must have a note from home giving permission to ride the bus and informing the office of the student's destination. A pass will then be made out by the secretary and given to the student. This pass, in turn, is given to the bus driver when boarding the bus. Permission for alternative busing arrangements will not be given if no bus pass has been issued.

**If you are having a birthday party, please contact the office for information regarding the buses and passes.

In order to find out which bus your child would ride on, you must contact the office. **Do not call the Public School Maintenance Office!**

Parking Lot Rules

The parking area between the fence and the school is reserved for school staff. The parking spots on the street side of the fence or in the side parking lot are available for parents and visitors.

Please do not use the bus corridor to drop off your children or visit the school. Buses may be moving through at anytime. Please respect the signs put up in the parking area.

Equipment Use and Rental Policy

Gym rental or the use of other school facilities is arranged through the rental person named in the School Telephone Directory. The use of AV equipment, laminator, or photocopier is arranged by the secretary in the office.

Assemblies

Weekly assemblies are held on a designated time for K-3 and 4-7. Whole school assemblies happen approximately 6 times per year, and are usually announced in advance via the weekly school bulletin.

School Photos

School photos are taken annually. Individual and class photos are taken. The photographer offers a family plan that usually covers both campuses, and the class photos are free.

Yearbook

A yearbook is published yearly in conjunction with the high school. Every effort is made to have all the elementary children and a variety of activities represented in it. You will be invited to place an order in the fall. The finished product will arrive the following September.

Volunteer Drivers

Because of child safety restraint laws the school cannot use volunteer drivers for students, except for those in grades 5-7. Parents who volunteer to drive students on field trips must have a driver's abstract on file with the school. This abstract can be picked up at the Access Centre

School Closure

Should school closure be necessary due to inclement weather or an emergency, the message will be communicated by 7:00 a.m. through the local radio station which is The PEAK (870 AM or 106.5 FM)

Hot Lunches

A hot lunch is available to the students several times during the course of the school year. These are offered at a reasonable price, and the profits are for a designated cause. A hot lunch coordinator and several volunteers are required for the hot lunch program to occur.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

General Regulations

- There is to be no throwing of snowballs before or after school, during recess, or at lunch time. The only time it may happen is when students are under direct teacher supervision.
- Students may not play in the gym unless supervised by a staff member.
- Rough language, swearing and fighting are not permitted and must be dealt with immediately.
- There is to be no playing in the parking lot, on the fences or off school property.
- Students use only their assigned doors to enter and exit the building.
- Students are not allowed to wear the same shoes indoors as they do outdoors.
- Students are not allowed in any classroom but their own without teacher permission.
- Students may only use the telephone with permission from the teacher and the secretary. Legitimate reasons for telephone use are things such as forgotten lunches or sickness. Organizing parties or overnight visits DO NOT qualify.
- Students may not bring electronic devices such as mp3 players, ipods, remote control cars or cell phones etc. to school. If a student requests to bring such an item for show and tell, special permission may be granted, but the item should be kept in the classroom for the day and taken home that same evening.
- If required, certain parts of the playground will be reserved for certain grades on certain days. (e.g. Grade 7 uses the basketball courts on Thursdays.)

Dress Code

Students are expected to come to school neatly and appropriately dressed. Examples of unacceptable clothing are t-shirts that portray rock groups, beer advertisements etc. If a teacher thinks a student's dress is unacceptable, he/she will check with a colleague or the principal. In such a case a student could be told not to wear such clothing again, or may even be sent home to change.

Administration of Medication to Students

The school is only able to administer prescribed and over the counter medication after the appropriate forms have been completed by the office.

Supplies

The students receive most of their school supplies from the school. The last bulletin in June and the August Grapevine (school newsletter) contain a list of the supplies which the students are responsible to bring for themselves. All students in Grade 3 are given a Bible by the school that they will use until the end of their Grade 7 school year.

If a student loses or causes damage to a school item such as a textbook or a library book, an appropriate fee will be charged depending on the age and condition the item was in. Students are also responsible to pay overdue fees for library books.

Cold Weather/Rainy Day

If it is excessively cold or rainy, students are permitted to enter the school before the 8:30 bell rings, or they might have a shortened noon hour. This decision will be made by the administration.

Homework

There are no provincial standards for homework. Research indicates that homework in the elementary school has no academic value but develops character traits such as self-discipline and good work habits, when there is good parental support.

Homework in the elementary school will be an extension of class assignments. K-3 students should be able to finish all assignments in class. Spelling lists and memory work may be reviewed at home. For the Grade 4-7 students all homework should be recorded in the student's agenda. Class math assignments may have to be finished at home on a regular basis. Students should be encouraged to do memory work, review spelling lists, study for tests, and enjoy some leisure reading time. The student who utilizes class time well should not have an excessive amount of homework per school night. Modified assignments might have to be developed for some students.

The teacher considers the following points when assigning extended class work as homework:

- Homework should not be given as punishment or busy work.
- Homework should be carefully planned and designed.

- Homework should be discussed before and after assigning.
- Homework should be evaluated or marked.

Parents are encouraged to work *with* the child on an assignment or project, but not to do it *for* him/her.

Discipline Policy

Introduction

The word “discipline” is derived from a Latin word meaning “to teach. As such, its core meaning is not to punish or to exercise control, but to instruct.

1. The task of teacher as model

Teachers are called to disciple their students; that is, they teach by showing the way. A teacher’s disciplinary procedure starts with his own example, and in this way a teacher models learning to his students. A teacher needs to read if he expects his students to do so; to write, to cipher, to appreciate art, to enjoy music, to work for justice, to care for the earth, oneself, and others. A Teacher disciple’s students when he or she exhibits hard study, playful curiosity, amazement, and perseverance when encountering difficult problems. Only secondarily does the word “discipline” refer to matters like crowd control, seating plans, or detentions.

2. The task of student as disciple

In school, students are called to serve God by following the guidance of their master as any good apprentice does. Students need to give a good effort in accepting and integrating good work habits and attitudes. Behavior which impedes learning for self or others constitutes a disciplinary matter.

3. Putting matters into perspective

Teachers do students a disservice when they act as if the proper form for doing seat work, the correct clothing, or having the right colour pen are important moral principles. These picky things are relatively unimportant in themselves.

Students help their own education when they follow organizational expectations and procedures in the school, just as they would in their soccer club, church youth group, or 4-H club. This means that being prepared for class, being on time, organizing materials, dressing appropriately for the activity, and so on, are not teachers’ rules, but simple procedures that one would encounter in virtually any group activity. By insisting on these sorts of reasonable expectations, teachers help students to live fruitful, God-honouring lives in our real world, now and in the years that may follow.

Student choices: Attending school and participating in its varied activities is a privilege. Viewing misbehaviour as a student choice allows the teacher to opt out of power struggles; it encourages student ownership of a problem.

Consequences: Consequences result when a student has *chosen* to do, or not do, something. Teachers and parents should take time to help students understand the relationship between choices and natural consequences. Additional consequences should relate to the misdeed and may be discussed with the student.

Restitution: Making all things right again is an essential part of any disciplinary action; it is the Zacchaeus principle. Broken, stolen, or lost items, for example, need to be repaired, returned, or replaced.

Reconciliation: Helping a student formulate a good response gives the student opportunity to express remorse, to demonstrate a change in attitude and behaviour. Restored, good relations should result.

4. Summary

Our goal is to instill in students a sense of responsible, joyful obedience, enabling them to join with us in serving God and humankind. By modeling, encouraging, and insisting on appropriate behavior and proper acknowledgment when sin prevails, we teach children the importance and joy of making good choices and sincere amends.

Handling Disciplinary Matters - Key points

- Disciplinary matters are often best handled by the teacher on hand. For example, a teacher on supervision should deal with an incident, if possible. Teachers should avoid simply referring matters to the homeroom teacher or administration.

- Many disciplinary matters are best handled with a simple and immediate response: a reminder, a word of reprimand or warning, removal from an activity, loss of a privilege. No infraction card is warranted, and it is not necessary to inform the homeroom teacher
- Maintaining a paper trail is important. Detailed and dated records are useful for parent-teacher conferences, for completing progress reports, for planning academic programs, for considering counseling intervention, and possibly for legal purposes. All major infractions should be documented.
- The homeroom teacher should be made aware of all *major* disciplinary matters. Use infraction cards as a simple and effective means of passing this information on to the homeroom teacher. The homeroom teacher should maintain a file of disciplinary actions for at least the duration of the school year.
- Discipline is every staff member's responsibility. Support staff must report major concerns to a teacher. Teachers should inform administration of major infractions.
- For the more major discipline matters, there are two discipline cycles.

(a) **Minor Matters:** Persistent misbehavior, or misdeeds of considerable consequence, should be documented and kept on file by the homeroom teacher. In some instances, parents and administration may be notified, but the particulars are handled by the teacher.

(b) **Major Matters:** Major infractions *require* the involvement of administration. The following are examples of major infractions:

- open opposition to authority; willful disobedience and flagrant disrespect
- habitual neglect of duty
- habitual use of improper or profane language or gestures
- fighting or any physical abuse
- verbal abuse of other students; severe put-downs; bullying
- willful and significant destruction of property
- theft of a serious nature
- persistent lying
- conduct considered injurious to the moral tone or well-being of the school

Procedures:

- The primary responsibility rests with administration.
- Homeroom teachers should be notified. They may be involved.
- Such infractions will result in some measure of in-school suspension.
- The principal may give an out of school suspension.
- The Board (Education Committee) may also become involved.
- In all instances, parents will be notified, by the principal or the homeroom teacher.

INFORMATION ABOUT CURRICULUM
Format Code for the Elementary Campus

1. Use page headings showing - from left to right the following:
2. **DATE** **Title and/or Textbook Page No. or Reference** **NAME**
3. Leave margins for numbering and dates.
4. Use both sides of pages in exercise books.
5. Use only blue or black pen for your work when pens are used.
6. Use complete sentences for answering questions when instructed to do so.

7. Correct mistakes as follows;
 - mistakes in ink: draw a line through mistake with a single line and write corrections immediately following the lined-through error, or if room allows, immediately above lined-through error.
 - Mistakes in pencil: erase completely and rewrite.
8. Use cursive writing for assignments other than labeling maps and diagrams.
9. Fasten all paper and handouts directly into duo tangs (report covers) or binders.
10. Keep exercise books free from drawing and doodling. That includes the covers.
11. At the intermediate level the date should be shown with year/month/date (2010.09.12)

Handwriting Policy

In order to develop the best printing/handwriting, students need to be taught and reminded consistently about how to hold a pen/pencil, the proper slant of the book or paper, keeping one's desks clear, and the importance of proper posture. Correct formation of letters such as left to right and top to bottom must be stressed and the style rules followed as outlined in our handwriting program.

Memory Work Policy

Memory work is a regular part of the Bible program at BVCS. It generally follows the passages recommended in our Bible series, **Walking With God and his People** and **The Story of God's People**, published by Christian Schools International.

Music/Band

A trained music teacher teaches music to all students from grade K - 7. Students in Grades 4 through 5 will be required to purchase a recorder and recorder music book from the school. These will be sold at the beginning of the school year. The band program begins in Gr. 6. Most students will be responsible for the rental or purchase of their own instrument. Some of the larger or more expensive instruments are provided by the school (e.g. drums). The selection of instruments occurs at the conclusion of the grade 5 school year. This makes it possible for families to search for the required instrument during the summer. The music teacher also organizes an optional school choir for students in grades 4 – 7.

French

All Grade 4-7 students receive French instruction for 90 minutes per week. Only a student who is on an IEP (Individual Education Plan) or who has special permission may be excused from French class, after discussion has occurred between home and school and the French teacher.

Physical Education

All students have at least three PE periods per week. In addition, there is a swimming unit in place for the grade 5 students. All students will also have the opportunity to participate in a skating program at the arena. If possible, some of the grades will complete a gymnastics unit at the local gymnastics club.

Library

All classes are scheduled to use the school library for at least one period per week. The librarian determines how many books a student may take out at a time. If overdue books are not being returned, teachers may restrict a student's library privileges. Children are also encouraged to make use of the public library.

Audio-Visual Use Guidelines

The use of Audio-Visual materials to support material being taught is encouraged. If this material promotes something we disagree with (i.e. evolution in a science video), it may still be used, but the area of disagreement will be addressed with the students.

As a general rule, we will not show DVD's for entertainment purposes at school. The grounds for this are as follows:

- Most entertainment DVD's, whether rented or purchased for home use, are illegal for commercial use (which includes schools).

- Families disagree about what kinds of DVD's (if any) they would want their children to see for entertainment purposes.
- Many children already have too much screen time, and a special occasion at school could better be celebrated in a more active way.
- We feel it is very important at home and school that children are given much guidance in the TV programs and DVD's they watch, and in the computer games they play.

Computers

Each classroom has a computer, for teacher use. A teacher may allow students to use these units as well. We also have a computer lab in our school. Here students are taught basic computer skills. Computers may also be used for remedial and enrichment activities, for research, and for word processing. In the library are several workstations where students can access the catalogue and the internet. All computers are networked and access privileges are carefully defined.

Learning Assistance/Special Education Program

The school has a part-time Learning Assistance/Special Education coordinator. The coordinator is assisted by a number of educational assistants and specialized educational assistants who are in the employ of BVCS. If a teacher feels a student needs learning assistance, he/she should bring this to the attention of the coordinator. If the student is to receive assistance, the classroom teacher must communicate that to the parents. If a teacher wants a student tested, the same process should be followed.

The Special Education program is for special needs students. The specialist teacher will develop an IEP (Individual Education Plan) for such a student and share that with the parents and the classroom teacher. It is important that the classroom teacher stay in regular contact with the specialist. The LA coordinator is considered a resource person to whom other teachers are encouraged to go for help and advice.

Family Life/Child Abuse Program

Our present program was adopted by the Education Committee in the early 90's. Additional content is derived from the Healthy Living Series that is supplied to our school by Christian Schools International. All teachers are expected to teach the program the way it is laid out in the curriculum. Before the unit is taught, a letter is sent home to the parents saying when it will be taught, what topics will be covered and what vocabulary will be used. This letter should go home approximately a week prior to the start of the unit.

Extra Curricular Activities

The school has a noon hour intramural program for Grades 4-7. Every second year, the school prepares a major production, such as a play or a musical. Most of the practices for this production occur during class time, recess, or noon hour.

Promotion/Retention

Students who do not complete the grade level program requirements may be required to repeat a year. Parents will be notified of this well in advance. Students who are on a modified program may be placed in the next grade level without promotion. The school will also recommend social promotion if it feels that repeating would not be beneficial to a particular student. All these decisions are made in conjunction with the parents.

IN SUMMARY

BVCS is a parentally-run school through the directives of an elected Board and the Education Committee. Further, parents and teachers work together for what is best for the children. The school is always open to comments, suggestions, and yes, even criticism if it will make our school one which does all things "to the glory of God".

Smithers, June 2010.

BULKLEY VALLEY CHRISTIAN ELEMENTARY CAMPUS

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

We will speak to each other in respectful ways.

We will encourage a close relationship with God as well as ourselves through Bible reading, prayer, sharing, etc.
We will attempt to follow God's calling as students by showing interest and doing our best to complete our work to the best of our abilities.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THOSE IN AUTHORITY

We will be respectful in our speech and conduct.

We will be obedient to those in authority over us.

We will not condone the disrespect displayed by others to those in authority.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

We will be respectful of others, and encourage everyone to feel included.

We will address each other properly and not resort to name calling, swearing or dirty language towards each other.

We will respect each other's property and belongings.

We will respect each other's person and remember "no touching except for *helping*".

We will learn to apologize, seek forgiveness and make restitution when we fail and seek God's strength to continue to try live in fellowship.

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL PROPERTY

We will respect school property. This includes furniture, books, equipment and building.

We will report any damage done and volunteer to pay for damages if we are responsible.

We will accept responsibility for the cleanliness of the school and grounds.