

Witset Elementary School

Parent Handbook



The girl who became a frog

2025-2026

205 Beaver Road, Suite 2

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Kyah Wiget Education Society Vision and Purpose

We are respectable progressive Wet'suwet'en dedicated to the preservation and enchantment of our culture and territories through education, working as one for the betterment of all.

Mission Statement

To empower all Wet'suwet'en to realize their personal potential.

KWES Philosophy

In working towards the achievement of this mission, the Board of Directors of Kyah Wiget Education Society believes in:

Adopting the four cornerstones of honesty, empathy, trust and consistency as our guiding principles.

Maintaining, perpetuating and protecting Wet'suwet'en language and culture.

The education of the Wet'suwet'en of our community as the responsibility not just of the school but of the Wet'suwet'en as a whole.

Students having both rights and responsibilities within their educational program.

Providing a safe and suitable learning environment.

Wet'suwet'en participation and control over the education process to enhance the quality of education for our students.

Providing opportunities for collaboration and information exchange concerning education.

Securing and managing sufficient funds to achieve our goals.

Providing an environment where all cultures and people are respected equally.

Statement of Principle: Kyah Wiget Education Society is principally responsible for the quality education of the Wet'suwet'en of Witset.

Kyah Wiget Education Society Board of Directors

The Board consists of one (1) representative and one (1) alternate from each clan:

C'ilhts'ëkhyu Big Frog or Raven

Gidimt'en Bear or Wolf

Likhsilyu Small Frog

Likhts'amisyu Fireweed or Owl-Grouse

Tsayu Beaver

Introduction

We believe that Witset Elementary Secondary is an excellent school. Our students perform well in the many areas included in school life: academic, athletic and cultural. We hope that our students will wish to be involved in activities, enjoy all aspects of school life and strive to develop school spirit.

The maintenance of an effective educational program requires that the home and schoolwork together. To achieve this objective, parents and students are encouraged to make the best use of the services available at school.

This handbook for parents and students has been prepared to assist you in becoming familiar with school policies and procedures.

In addition, expectations of, and activities for, students are outlined. We hope that this will promote a better understanding of the school's objectives.

We hope that each of our students will contribute their best efforts in class work and school activities to make their school years enjoyable.

Again, welcome; we look forward to working with you.

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School Personnel:

Kindergarten/1	Chantel Michell
Grade 1/2	Amy Smethurst
Grade 2/3	Natasha Seymour
Grade 3/4	Audrey Sargent
Grade 5/6	Marsha Sebastian
Grade 6/7	Lillian Wilson
Language & Culture	Tracy Wilson
Learning Assistance Support Staff	Colleen Mitchell, SLA
	Edna Dennis, EA K/1
	Courtney Patrick EA 1/2
	Tamara Murrell EA 1/2
	Roberta Morris EA 3/4
	Sheila Mitchell EA 3/4
	Kaleigh George EA 4/5
	Gabby Holt EA Music/Bus
	Kyle Patterson EA
	Toni Michell EA Language
	Elvira Patrick EA
Bus Driver	Barry Duncan
Hot Lunch Co-ordinator	Thelma Cutler
Elder	Helen Mitchell
Administrative Assistant/Communications	Jessica Generoux
Principal	Cathleen Morin

School Schedule

8:55 am – warning bell

9:00 am – classes commence.

10:30 am – recess bell

10:45 am – classes resume.

12:15 pm – lunch dismissal

1:00 pm – classes resume.

2:55 pm – dismissal

Thursdays

2:00 pm – dismissal

School Calendar *see Appendix D/TBA*

Bus Schedule: See Appendix D/TBA

Parent / Teacher meetings for the 2025-2026 school year are scheduled for:

November 2025

March 2026

Please note that you can also arrange to talk to your child's teacher at other times if you have questions or if you want to discuss any aspects of your child's education.

School Goals and Objectives

Our commitment as staff this year is to create a positive learning environment where students can reach their goals to become positive future leaders in the Witset community. We will seek to help preserve the Witsuwit'en language and culture and our students will work within a safe environment to develop into lifelong learners. School-wide curricula for several subjects, the continued implementation of a special education policy and IEP's, a school-wide behaviour and social skills program, and a daily Witsuwit'en language and culture program are just some of the things which distinguish our school. We demonstrate positive interaction among staff members, practicing high respect of staff, one for another, with the goal of working toward the student's best interests. We work hard to provide a structured environment and consistency. We have a balance distribution of grade levels and model pride, respect and caring in our school.

Witset Elementary Secondary School recognizes that, as our world becomes more complex, the education of our students requires much more than simply instructing them to read and write. In cooperation with the BC Education Program, we desire our school to prepare our students to enter the society as successful employees and adults. Following closely the desired educational goals of the BC Education Program, and the increasing education emphasis on emotional quotient, we will work to ensure that our students attain the abilities and qualities, which will prepare them to successfully, enter society.

Another critical component of our school is the transmission and furtherance of Wet'suwet'en culture and language. Our Wet'suwet'en teacher carefully plans lessons appropriate for each grade level to instruct students in language and other aspects of their heritage. Regular classroom teachers are encouraged to incorporate aspects of the Wet'suwet'en culture into their regular lessons whenever appropriate.

Policies and Procedures

Attendance

Witset Elementary Secondary School will seek to reach the goals as stated in the education philosophy of the Kyah Wiget Education Society. As we strive to create an educational environment conducive to academic progress, it is critical that school attendance be addressed.

Policy:

- Student attendance will be recorded twice daily. This will be reported on each formal report card.
- Parents are asked to notify the school in the morning if their child will be late or absent. If we do not receive a call, the school secretary will attempt to reach the parent by phone to verify the absence of their child.
- When planned absences are necessary, parents should notify the teacher the day prior so that the teacher can provide any necessary homework.
- Excessive absences are a problem for both students and the class as a whole. If absences become a problem, the Principal or Education Administrator will contact the parent to help correct the problem.
- Tardiness is also a problem in school. School begins each morning at 8:55 and teachers have a full schedule of lessons and work for the class to complete. Tardiness affects both the student and the class. Therefore, parents will be notified by the principal if tardiness becomes a problem with their child.
- For security reasons, students will not be allowed to leave school grounds during school hours. If a student becomes sick during the day, the school secretary will notify the parent (or designated emergency contact) by phone so that the parent can come and get their child. Students will need to sign out in the notebook by the receptionist desk.

Computer's

Witset Elementary Secondary School will strive to provide the students with properly maintained and up-to-date computer technology.

- 1) Witset Elementary Secondary School shall provide Internet access to the school.
- 2) Witset Elementary Secondary School shall practice computer security through the continuing usage of a software security system.
- 3) Witset Elementary Secondary School shall practice computer security with students by implementing the following computer guidelines:
 - a. Students will not be allowed unsupervised usage of the computer laboratory.
 - b. Students will not be allowed unsupervised usage of classroom computers.
 - c. Witset Elementary Secondary School will track all Internet activity through the security system.
- 4) Witset Elementary Secondary School expects that students practice wise computer usage. This includes the following:
 - a. Do not attempt access to sites that are unacceptable due to violence, graphic language, nudity, advertisement of restricted substances, or other inappropriate sites.
 - b. If the computer security does allow you to access something that would be deemed unacceptable, you will click off the site immediately.

Students of Witset Elementary Secondary School can expect to receive consequences if they are found to accessing an inappropriate site.

All students and parents must read/sign and submit the computer use agreement form attached in Appendix C.

Conflict Resolution Policy

Witset Elementary Secondary School will continue to practice healthy resolution within the school. We encourage both students and adults to deal with conflict in the following manner:

1. When conflict arises, speak directly with the individual involved. Every attempt should be made to correct the conflict between the affected individuals.
2. Should this not resolve the conflict, the individuals should then seek the help of an appropriate mediator. In the case of students, this would first involve the classroom teacher. In the case of parental concerns, these should first be directed to their child's classroom teacher.
3. If the conflict persists, then the principal will be asked to attempt conflict resolution with the affected parties.
4. Finally, if the conflict cannot be resolved by the principal, or the conflict involves the Principal, the Chair of the Kyah Wiget Education Society will seek to become involved by including the father clan in the hereditary system to resolve the conflict.

Curriculum

Witset Elementary Secondary School strives to provide our students with the best academic education possible. We adhere to the learning outcomes published by the British Columbia Ministry of Education. Students can be expected to receive a well-rounded education in all required coursework. Our students also benefit from an excellent Wet'suwet'en program. We are currently working on long-range goals and plans for the Wet'suwet'en program at Witset Elementary Secondary School.

Witset Elementary Secondary School also benefits from funding to address special needs within our student population. Students that have been identified as working below expected age or grade level are placed on individualized education plans. The purpose of this process is to identify the student's strengths and weaknesses, identify their present level of performance, and create a special plan to move them forward. The parents will be invited to be a team member of their child's education plan meeting. Some students will be placed on modified programs due to their needs, and this could alter their attendance within the regular school program.

Dress Code

It is our desire to provide all students with an appropriate learning environment at Witset Elementary Secondary School. Therefore, students will not be allowed to wear clothing that is distracting to the environment. As we strive to create a healthy climate at school, there will be no clothing allowed that advertises inappropriate substances, such as alcohol or drugs, or contains writing that is offensive. If a staff member determines that a student is wearing something inappropriate, then the parent will be requested to come to school and provide the student with other clothing for the day.

Parents must also remember that students are outside during recess and lunch, unless the temperature is -20. Students should bring appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear.

Students are required to participate in PE classes and must have non-marking gym shoes for these activities. Students will be required to keep inside shoes for the classroom.

Extra-Curricular Activity

Witset Elementary Secondary School will be responsible for organizing a number of activities for students to attend. Students will be required to have a signed permission slip in order to attend these special activities. Students on detention or in-school suspension will NOT be allowed to attend any extra-curricular activities. Students will be expected to follow all rules for the activity and will be asked to leave if their behaviour is inappropriate. It is our desire to create positive activities that will enhance and support the school learning environment and students should remember that attendance at extra-curricular activities is a privilege which can be removed for poor behaviour choices.

Note: Students will be dropped off at home for field trips arriving back at the school past 3:00 pm. Parents are expected to call if they will not be home and supply an alternate drop off location.

Field Trips

Witset Elementary Secondary School anticipates a number of fields trips this year with our students. Every effort will be made to provide trips that are both fun and educational for the students. Each time we take our students out on a trip, their behaviour reflects not only the entire school but also our entire community.

Therefore, we will insist that the students behave appropriately on each field trip. Field trips are a privilege that students must earn. The staff will reserve the right to withhold a trip to students that have had behaviour problems and would put the school or other students in a difficult situation on a trip away from here. Students that are on detention or in-school suspensions will NOT be allowed to participate in any field trips during the time of their discipline.

As a school, we will seek to encourage parents and other responsible community members to assist with supervision at our field trips. In some instances, adults may be asked to drive their personal vehicles for field trips. In this case the volunteer drivers must submit the proper insurance information which will be placed on file in the principal's office. Parents will be asked to sign permission slips that also give permission for their child to ride with the specific individual. Overnight field trips, volunteers and parents are required by law to complete criminal record checks. We hope that the field trips this year will prove to be highlights for everyone concerned.

Parents are encouraged to participate (via fundraising and attendance) in field trips to enhance their child's experience.

Head Lice: The school will continue working with the Health Clinic staff to help eliminate the spread of head lice. The Clinic staff will be responsible for coming to the school and checking students. School staff will notify parents of children that require treatment and will provide the shampoo at the end of the school day. Parents will be responsible for treating their children. Students may be returned to school, after they have been treated at home. The Clinic staff will determine the frequency of the head checks at school. This policy is meant to ensure that students are not losing instruction time and are not caused embarrassment.

Homework: Each classroom teacher will set his or her individual policy for student homework. However, numerous studies have shown that students who complete homework on a regular basis will perform better in school and have higher grades. Parents should expect that older students would usually have homework to complete each night. This is an excellent way for parents to become involved in their child's education by helping with homework and encouraging them to complete the work each night. Homework is best accomplished by providing the children with a quiet location, free from distractions such as Television. **Feel free to contact your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns about their homework.**

Hot Lunch Program

Witset Band has, once again, secured funding for a meal program at the school. Breakfast and lunch will be served to the children five (5) times a week. The school will include in the monthly newsletter, the lunch menu for the month. Unless there are unexpected circumstances, students can expect the menu to be served as it is posted. (Meals may need to be changed due to late delivery of supplies or other circumstances beyond our control.) We have made every effort to create meals and snacks that are both nutritious and enjoyable for the students. We do understand, however, that it is impossible to please all students with every meal. Parents, please feel free to send a prepared lunch for your child if they do not like the meal which will be served that day. (Please---no noodles or other items which need to be prepared.)

Lunchroom Rules

Students will remain seated at the table or designated area until dismissed by the Noon Hour Supervisor.

All garbage is to be placed in garbage cans provided and lunch kits are to be returned to their place of storage before students leave.

Students are expected to leave the lunchroom tidy and to proceed in an orderly fashion when dismissed.

Inappropriate behaviour such as popping lunch bags, stomping cartons, yelling, running, etc. will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to remain on the premises.

Students who choose not to behave appropriately, will have their lunch in a different location.

Lost and Found

Please label clothing items and we will attempt to return them to your child. Unlabelled items are deposited in a box near the office. After time, unclaimed items are either thrown away or given to an outside agency for a needy family. Valuables such as rings, glasses, watches, etc. are kept in the office.

Newsletter

Witset Elementary Secondary School will continue to put out a newsletter each month. This newsletter is intended to give parents and community members a good idea of upcoming events, student accomplishments, and other pertinent information. We hope that you will enjoy reading the newsletters and that you find them both interesting and informative. Newsletters will be mailed home this year during the first week of the month.

Notes Home

We believe that it is important to communicate often with our parents and community. Be assured that if your child brings notes home, they are important! We will be putting all the school notes on coloured paper so that they can be easily identified by parents. As always, feel free to contact us if you have any questions about our communications.

Pictures

There are many times at our school when pictures will be taken in class or during school activities. These pictures may be used in classroom projects, school-wide projects, individual scrapbooks, or for publication in newspapers or web pages. Parents will be given the opportunity to sign a permission form, at the beginning of the school year, providing the school permission to photograph their child.

The school will also continue the tradition of taking professional-style photographs of students, classes, and the school.

SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY

Witset Elementary Secondary School will be open each regularly scheduled day. If the bus is unable to run, due to very cold weather or other inclement weather or circumstances, school will remain open. Teachers will be in school for that day, and it will be counted as a regular school day. Students not in attendance will be counted as absent.

Witset Elementary Secondary School may close for unusual circumstances such as power outages or unexpected problems with the facility. When an unusual circumstance arises, parents may phone the school for more information.

Information of changes in school schedules will be broadcast on the local radio station.

Power Outages:

- If the power goes out during the night and is still out in the morning, the children should NOT be sent to school and the bus will not be running.
- If the power is restored by 11:00 AM the children should be fed lunch at home. The bus will run and have the students at school by 12:30 PM for afternoon classes.

Funerals:

- According to Kyah Wiget Education Society Policy, the school closes for community funerals.

Special Help for Students

School-based Team:

Witset Elementary Secondary School has a “school-based team” that assists in planning programs for children who are experiencing difficulties (academically, socially or emotionally). It includes a group of professionals who are responsible for healthy students, as well as that child’s parents. Most referrals are made by the class teachers, but any staff member or parent may refer a child. Information about a child is shared and the expertise of all the professionals is used to plan help for the child. Help is usually provided by the Learning Assistance Teacher, childcare worker and other professionals. Often the team collects additional information from hearing tests, formal tests, home visits or the classroom. (Written consent from parents is obtained for hearing, speech and language tests and for tests of psycho/educational nature.) Each child’s program is reviewed and changed as necessary. Parents are informed if the team decides a child needs special help.

Resource personnel on the school-Based Team:

Principal

Public Health Nurse

Childcare Worker

Classroom Teachers (s) involved.

Learning Assistance Centre Teacher

Drug and Alcohol Worker

Band Social Worker

School Counsellor

Other professionals as needed (police liaison officer, community care team, social worker liaison).

Parents

Student Behaviour Policy

Witset Elementary Secondary School expects all students to behave in an acceptable manner that will enhance the learning environment. Recognizing that the school is obligated to protect and foster a positive education setting, we will provide the necessary structure through the use of a student code of conduct and rules. Each individual teacher will submit a Classroom Management Plan, to be filled with the principal.

Staff members will treat students with respect and dignity at all times when dealing with behaviour infractions. We will utilize the least restrictive method/consequence appropriate for each circumstance. Staff will utilize techniques such as the removal of privileges and natural consequences. Every effort will be made to ensure that the students learn responsibility and control for their own behaviour.

Minor Infractions will be dealt with in the context of the immediate environment and by the attending staff. Minor infractions involve such things as:

- *Yelling
- *Running in school
- *Throwing snowballs
- *Littering
- *Breaking of minor classroom rules

Minor infractions that recur repeatedly, despite consequences, will be referred to the principal. At this point the principal will write a Behaviour Report. A copy of this report will be sent to the student's parents or guardians. The student and Principal will work together on a Behaviour Plan that can be used to rectify the situation. If the situation improves, no further steps are necessary. If the situation is deemed serious enough the student may be placed on detention or in-school suspension.

Major infractions are immediately referred to the principal. These will be considered serious. The student will be placed on detention or in-school suspension. A Behaviour Report will be completed. Infractions which endanger the health, safety, or welfare of the student himself, other students or staff, as per School Act 109 (4) will be immediately referred to the suspension/expulsion policy.

Major infractions involve such things as:

- *Swearing-purposefully in anger
- *Graffiti or damage to school property
- *Refusal to participate in school
- *Inappropriate behaviour
- *Refusal to comply with request from staff member
- *Threatening another individual
- *Bullying
- *Physically harming anyone intentionally
- *Inappropriate touching, social contact, language
- *Possession of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products
- *Name calling

SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

The school's approach to discipline is an extension of the school's philosophy. It is based on a system of stating a clear set of behavioural expectations and consequences for actions and allowing the children choices of action within this framework. The school code of conduct annually is revised with students, staff and parents.

Progress in behaviour standard at the school can be attributed to implementation of school-wide instruction of social skills, Effective Behaviour Support Program, small group social skills/counselling and one-to-one counselling, the use of the cooperative learning model in classrooms and the consistent maintenance of high behavioural expectations of students by all staff.

Expectation for Student Safety

Students are expected to arrive to their classes on time unless they have a reasonable excuse from their parents. When students are to be late, absent, or must be dismissed early (for medical or dental appointments), parents are asked to notify the school so that all of our students are accounted for.

Everyone should always use crosswalks when crossing the highway. Students are expected to remain within the school boundaries until dismissed or unless they are supervised. The wooded area near the school is out of bounds for students.

We play cooperatively at Witset Elementary Secondary School. Games such as play fighting, King of the Hill, throwing snowballs at each other and such can be hurtful. Games that can be hurtful are not allowed.

Winter sliding on our hills can be fun but we must wait until others are out of our way before we slide.

Students are asked to leave personal items such as electronic devices, and toys at home.

Bicycles may be ridden to school. They must be parked and locked. For safety reasons, students may not play on or near the bicycles.

Detentions or In-School Suspension Policy and Procedure

When in-school suspensions occur, parents will be notified and requested to come and supervise their child during the consequence. No in-school suspension shall be for longer than 3 days. Classroom teachers will be responsible for providing suitable assignments for students to complete during the time.

Appeals:

The students, parents, or guardians have the right to appeal the decision. An appeal must be made in writing to the principal.

Suspension/Expulsion Policy and Procedure

As indicated by Section 109 (4) of the School Act, Witset Elementary Secondary School is obligated to provide a safe learning environment for the students and staff. The school administration and staff will implement the following policy when the health, safety, or welfare of school members becomes threatened.

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal any suspension or expulsion. They must submit the appeal in writing to the principal within a timely matter. The principal will then arrange an appeal hearing with the appropriate members.

To do: Insert father clan*

Policy:

When the health, safety, or welfare of students or employees becomes threatened by the physical, mental, or emotional condition of another student, the principal with authorization from the governing authority will implement the following steps.

(Witset Elementary Secondary School will immediately contact the proper authority for the following behaviours:

- Being under the influence or in possession of illegal substances
- Verbal threats and/or abuse of a students or staff member
- Physical assault of a student or staff member
- Wanton destruction of school property
- Possession of a prohibited weapon

The cost to repair damaged school property will be the responsibility of the student and his/her parent or guardian.)

1. The principal shall file a Behaviour or Incident Report and inform the KWES Board of the intent to suspend the student and all circumstances leading up to the suspension.
2. The principal shall phone the parents or guardians immediately upon action and notify the parents or guardians, in writing as well, that the student has been suspended. This letter will be copied to the KWES Board.
3. The Resource Room Instructor shall act as Case Manager and inform the parent, in writing, of any professional assessments which need to be performed prior to a return to school setting.
- 4.

5. A planning team, consisting of parents, teachers, Resource Room Instructor, counselor, Principal, student, and other personnel as appropriate, will convene to discuss assessment results and plan possible re-entry into school.
6. Students under the age of 16 shall receive an educational program (home instruction in the form of assignments) until such a time as they can return to school or withdraw from the school.
7. Upon re-entry in the school the Resource Room Instructor will continue to act as case manager to provide periodic review of the student's well-being.

Student Assessment

Students at Witset Elementary Secondary School are assessed throughout the year. The major portion of this assessment is handled through:

- ✓ Observations by the teacher of students' daily work and patterns of learning.
- ✓ Tests and assessments made by the teacher.
- ✓ Project work.

The purpose of assessment and evaluation is to:

- ✓ Gather evidence of what a child can do, focusing upon individual strengths.
- ✓ Determine the child's growth and development.
- ✓ Determine areas that require further attention and development.
- ✓ Assist the teacher in making instructional decisions, setting learning goals, and shaping a curriculum based on the strengths and needs of the child.
- ✓ Help the child to develop and value the practice of assessing and evaluating his or her own learning.
- ✓ Communicate progress to parents.
- ✓ Suggest ways the child can be supported in his/her learning needs.

In addition, formal testing is used to evaluate student and class performance against established norms.

All testing and evaluation results are used when planning specific help for individual children.

The school invites all parents to learn about the goals the teacher has for your child, what your child is learning and how your child represents or demonstrated his/her learning. At certain times of the year student progress reports are sent home.

Formal assessment and evaluation reports are issued in November, March and June. Conferences may be held as part of the formal report in November and March. These conferences allow parents, teachers and students to exchange information and to plan strategies that support learning.

Parents, as well as teachers (and other staff), may request conferences at other times during the school year. (A phone call or note is answered promptly.)

Student Record Policy

Student files are kept current and are locked in the school office. The student files are maintained according to standard school procedure and contain such items as:

- *Report cards
- *Previous school records
- *Notice of any individualized education plans
- *Record of any documented concerns regarding the student
- *Records of behaviour problems, behaviour/incident reports, and other action such as suspensions.
- *All forms signed by the parents (permission slips, etc.)
- *Medical information

Parents have the authority to view their child's records at any time. If you are interested in reading through your child's file, please come to school and ask to be shown the file.

Supervision

There is a staff member on supervision from 8:30-8:55 a.m. and supervision is provided at recess and at lunchtime. We request that parents do not send students to school before 8:30 a.m. as there is no formal supervision before this time.

To do: after school supervision.

Telephone Usage

NEW – CELLPHONE/DEVICE POLICY

No personal use of cell phones or devices during class time for all students. The Provincial Government banned cellphone use during class time for 2024-2025 school year.

Students will not be allowed to use the telephones during school times for calls home, unless the classroom teacher determines that there is good reason to contact the parent. Students will not be allowed to phone home at the end of the day to request permission to visit a friend. All such arrangements should be made prior to coming to school for the day. Students will not be allowed to receive phone calls during the day unless they are of an urgent nature from the parent.

TIPS to help with the NEW POLICY transition: 1. Have your child go for prolonged periods without a cell phone. 2. DO NOT allow the child to sleep with the cell phone by their bed. 3. Have the child leave their phone at home during the day. 4. Provide your child with a flip phone for emergency calls. 5. **READ/LISTEN/WATCH:** *The Anxious Generation – How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness* by Jonathan Haidt.

Transportation Policy

Witset Elementary Secondary School is fortunate to have a transportation program for our students. We will work to make this a positive service to all concerned members. The students are responsible to exhibit appropriate behaviour when riding the bus. Following are the rules for students when riding the bus.

STUDENT BUS CONDUCT

1. The driver oversees the students on the bus.
2. Students must obey the driver promptly.
3. Assigned seats will be given if necessary.
4. Ordinary conversation in acceptable language is permitted. (No tough talk, threats, inappropriate language, yelling, swearing, or name-calling.)
5. Students must remain properly seated while the bus is in motion.
6. Students will keep the bus neat. (No littering or damaging the bus)
7. Students will remain inside the bus whenever it is in motion.
8. Food and beverages may be eaten at home, not on the bus.

It is the school policy that the bus may transport students from their home to school, and back home again. Students are not allowed to exit the bus at the home of a friend. If there is an alternate arrangement the student can be picked up at the school or at their usual bus stop. If a

child has two regular residences, please contact the school so we can arrange a pick-up and drop-off schedule. The bus will not be stopping at the local store for any students.

WITSET ELEMENTARY SECONDARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

WHEN THE RULES ARE BROKEN:

1. There may be bus monitors placed on the bus.
2. Each student will be given three strikes.
 - a. First incident reported to the Principal, an Incident Report will be sent to the parents.
 - b. Second incident, same procedure.
 - c. Third incident, the student is off the bus for a week. Parents will be responsible for their child's transportation during this time and there will be no travel allowance provided.
3. Students that are repeat offenders will be removed from the bus for a period of one month. Parents will be responsible for transportation during this time. No travel allowance provided.

Visitors

Adult visitors are always invited to school. All visitors will be asked to register with the receptionist when they arrive at school.

Visitors of school age are not allowed on school property during school hours, unless they are accompanied or supervised by an adult or have previous permission from a staff member. School-age visitors that come to school will be politely asked to leave. This policy is intended to help maintain our learning climate at school and prevent distractions. Students that have legitimate reasons for visiting school must make arrangements with the classroom teacher or Principal.

Students are not allowed to bring younger siblings to supervise during school hours because of the disruption to the education process.

Volunteers

We believe that our school can be strengthened even further through the utilization of all abilities and gifts of community members. We openly welcome parents and community member volunteers. We will be seeking to contact volunteers for a member of programs but are always open to your suggestions. If you feel that you have something to offer our students or would like to just come and listen to a student read, please contact the classroom teacher or Principal. We look forward to greater adult involvement in our school.

To ensure the safety and well-being of our students, volunteers will always be placed in environments and settings that protect all members. Volunteers will not be asked to take the place of regular staff members but will be used to enhance and assist in the education process.

You can contact your child's school and ask about how you can volunteer. Some of the things you can do include those outlined below.

- ✓ Join the Parent's Advisory Committee to help make decisions for the school.
- ✓ Read with the children in the classroom.
- ✓ Share our special skills with students, including your skills in crafts, sewing, cooking, storytelling, dancing, singing, carpentry, fishing, language, art etc.
- ✓ Supervise a school field trip.
- ✓ Do one-on-one tutoring with a child.
- ✓ Exchange babysitting with another parent who wants to volunteer or attend a school meeting.
- ✓ Help the school contact other parents about upcoming activities.
- ✓ Help to maintain or fix broken equipment.
- ✓ Assist in the library.
- ✓ Help with coaching a sports team.
- ✓ Join school committees.
- ✓ Attend all school performances and dinners.
- ✓ Take photos at school events.
- ✓ Help with a meal program.
- ✓ Help keep a bulletin board neat and updated.
- ✓ Assist language students with one-on-one conversation.
- ✓ Help in the office, answering phones or operating equipment.
- ✓ Assist students with extra math drills.

How to Be a Super Volunteer

- ✓ *Let the teacher or school staff know if you can't do what you had planned to do. They are counting on you to be there.*
- ✓ *Read the school handbook so you are familiar with school rules.*
- ✓ *Attend any orientation sessions.*
- ✓ *If you see something that you do not understand, ask the teacher about it after class.*

- ✓ *Keep everything you see and hear confidential.*
- ✓ *Do not make negative comments about anyone in front of children.*

Possession of Weapons, Dangerous Objects, or Personal Items

Students are discouraged from bringing their personal toys or other possessions to school. Many times, these are simply distractions from the learning environment and can become problems if they are misplaced or lost. It will be up to the individual classroom teacher to set policy regarding these items.

Students are not allowed weapons or dangerous objects in school. If a student is found with such an item, depending upon the circumstances, the object will be removed from their possession and held until the parent can pick them up. If the object is deemed serious enough, the proper authorities must be notified. Dangerous objects and weapons include items such as:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| * Pocketknives | *Guns |
| * Sling shots | *Fireworks, firecrackers. |
| * Lighters | *Matches |
| * Knives | |

Procedure for Voicing Your Concerns

Establishing good communication with your child's teachers and Principal can usually prevent concerns from arising, many problems that do arise result from misunderstandings. The staff at Witset Elementary Secondary School pride itself on its open-door policy and asks that you contact the school immediately when a problem arises. If you do have a concern, it is best to begin by trying to address it at the school level first.

Some general suggestions if a concern arises include:

- ✓ Listen carefully to your child. Try to understand all points of view. Try to be logical and set aside strong feelings for the time being.
- ✓ Decide if your child can handle an issue or if your support is needed.
- ✓ Keep a record of phone calls you make, letters you send, and meetings that take place. Note the date of each.
- ✓ Think carefully about your concern. Keep an open mind about the reasons for the actions and response of others.

If you decide that you should act upon your concern, it may be useful to take the following steps.

1. Meet With Your Child's Teacher

- ✓ Set up a meeting time that is convenient for you both.
- ✓ Present your reasons for the meeting.
- ✓ Listen carefully. Take notes.
- ✓ Follow the tips for meetings.

After the meeting, think about whether you are satisfied. Is another meeting necessary? Is progress being made?

If you do not feel that you are getting anywhere with the teacher, let the teacher know that. Offer to invite the principal, another teacher, or a counsellor to meet with you both.

If you are still not satisfied...

2. Meet with the Principal

- ✓ Bring a support person if you want to.
- ✓ State your concerns.
- ✓ List the steps you have already taken.
- ✓ State the action you would like to happen.
- ✓ Listen carefully and take notes.
- ✓ Note any agreed upon course of action.
- ✓ Send a letter to confirm what you think is going to happen next.
- ✓ Discuss your concerns with a friend or support person.
- ✓ Decide what actions are best. Make sure you gather as much information as you can to make an informed decision.

Appendix A: Student Rights and Responsibilities

1. I have a RIGHT to learn and grow.

It is my RESPONSIBILITY to listen to instructions, work quietly, raise my hand if I have a question or concern, and to complete assignments. I will cooperate, participate and do the best that I can do.

2. I have a RIGHT to hear and be heard.

It is my RESPONSIBILITY not to talk, shout or make noise when others are speaking.

3. I have a RIGHT to be respected as an individual.

It is my RESPONSIBILITY not to tease or bother other people, or to hurt their feelings, but to show respect and considerate for others and their ideas.

4. I have a RIGHT to be safe.

It is my RESPONSIBILITY not to threaten, kick, punch or physically harm anyone else, and to adhere to the rules of this school.

5. I have a RIGHT to privacy and my own personal space.

I have a RESPONSIBILITY to respect personal property of others, and to accept their right to privacy.

6. I have a RIGHT to enjoy school.

I have a RESPONSIBILITY to have a good attitude and to participate in a way which helps make our school a place where others can enjoy school too.

As a student at this school, I am responsible for my own learning and my own actions.

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The principal

The principal has the responsibility for managing the school.

The principal's duties include:

- ✓ Maintaining the school's philosophy.
- ✓ Providing leadership for staff, parents, and students.
- ✓ Monitoring the educational programs of the school.
- ✓ Communicating with the Administrator or Board of Directors; and
- ✓ Managing the placement and general conduct of the students.

You can contact the school Principal if you have questions about the school's programs or about your child's situation specifically.

The principal can help you to understand the school's goals, and day-to-day operations of the school.

Teachers

Classroom teachers are responsible for individual children's progress. The teacher's duties include:

- ✓ Planning instructions for the class and for individual students.
- ✓ Evaluating and reporting on each child's progress.
- ✓ Communicating with parents regarding their children's education.
- ✓ Supervising and coordinating the work of teaching assistants.
- ✓ Modifying and adapting their teaching style and activities to help each student achieve success.
- ✓ Implementing the goals and objectives of the IEP.

Classroom teachers are key to the education of your child. They spend most of the time with students when they are at school. You should be able to talk to your child's teacher when you have concerns.

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Learning Assistance Team – Learning Assistance Teacher

Witset Elementary Secondary School is fortunate to have a well-established Learning Assistance Team. The Learning Assistant Teacher is responsible to.

- ✓ Provide support to students with special needs.
- ✓ Co-ordinate the L.A team by scheduling, planning and supervising individualized learning programs for students.
- ✓ Co-ordinate team meeting regarding students.
- ✓ Assist classroom teachers by providing resources and professional development.
- ✓ Co-ordinate IEPs; and
- ✓ Implementing individualized learning programs

Wet'suwet'en Language & Culture

Witset Elementary Secondary School proudly offers Wet'suwet'en Language and Culture on a daily basis.

The Wet'suwet'en Language & Culture Teacher's duties include:

- ✓ Creating and implementing age-appropriate resources and materials for students in each grade.
- ✓ Promoting language and culture by inviting special guest into the classroom.
- ✓ Organizing mini-feasts and the All-Clans Feast.
- ✓ Assist all teachers implementing Wet'suwet'en in daily instruction.

Parents

Parents play a key role in their children's education. Parents are entitled to:

- ✓ Be informed of their child's attendance, behaviour, and progress in school.
- ✓ Receive annual reports respecting the general effectiveness of educational programs for the school.
- ✓ Examine all records kept by the school board pertaining to their child.
- ✓ Be consulted regarding the placement of a child with special needs.
- ✓ Be involved in the planning, development and implementation of their child's education program; and
- ✓ Belong to a parent advisory committee.

In addition to these rights....

Parents should also feel justified in asking:

- ✓ To be informed and involved in education decisions that affect their children, including changes in the courses they are taking.
- ✓ To be consulted, and to give consent, regarding the type and nature of assessments for their child, and to be informed with the results.
- ✓ To have concerns listened to, and responded to, promptly and respectfully.
- ✓ To have access to personnel, such as teacher, teaching assistants, principals board administrators, and clan representative for information and help.
- ✓ To have concerns treated with confidentiality.
- ✓ To receive understandable progress reports; and
- ✓ To be involved in the planning process and review their child's Individual Education Plans (IEP), including signing the IEP agreement before it is used.

Parents have a Responsibility:

- ✓ To be aware of school policies, programs, rules and routines.
- ✓ To share concerns openly and immediately with the appropriate person:
- ✓ To respond to notes, memos and requests.
- ✓ To tell their child's teacher when things are going well, and when they are not.
- ✓ To describe concerns clearly; and
- ✓ To be reasonable patient and respectful with the people responsible for educating their child.

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Appendix B: Tips for Parents- Preparation for Meetings with School Personnel

Meetings may be called by parents, school staff, or other professionals. Meetings may be called for many reasons, including:

- ✓ To allow teachers and parents to meet and get to know one another,
- ✓ To discuss a child's progress in school.
- ✓ To plan a child's education program.
- ✓ To prepare for a transition to a new class or school.
- ✓ To resolve an important issue about a child.

Meetings can be intimidating for any parent. Many people feel nervous when they are going to meet with professionals about their child's education. But remember - some meetings may be to talk about positive aspects of your child's education and progress.

If the meeting is being held to discuss a particular challenge, the focus should still be what is best for your child. Everyone should have your child's best interest in mind. Some of the following suggestions may help to make meetings between parents and school staff more successful.

Pre-Meeting Preparation

- ✓ Be clear about the purpose of the meeting. If you call a meeting, inform the people you are meeting with why you are asking to speak to them. If someone else has organized the meeting, ask for an agenda. Also clarify what, if any, decisions are to make.
- ✓ Prepare any questions you might have. Write those questions down if that will help you. Remember to stay focused on key issues.
- ✓ Ask who will be attending the meeting, and what role they will play.
- ✓ Invite a person or a few people who can help you in the meeting. Let them know the purpose of the meeting.
- ✓ If possible, have both parents attend the meeting. This may mean asking the school staff to meet at a time that is convenient for both parents.
- ✓ Take careful notes or ask someone to come with you to take notes.

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Following the Meeting

- ✓ Think about whether you are satisfied with the information you received, and any decisions made.
- ✓ Check how you are feeling. If feelings have arisen after the meeting, make note of them.
- ✓ Check how you are feeling. If feelings have arisen after the meeting, make note of them.
- ✓ Talk to a support person about how you are feeling.
- ✓ Review your notes of the meeting. Are they complete?
- ✓ Compare your notes with any other minutes taken.
- ✓ Make sure you are clear about next steps. If you are not sure, call the meeting participants and ask for clarification.
- ✓ Send a letter to the people at the meeting, outlining your understanding of the major points and next steps. Indicate what decisions you think were made. Indicate whether or not you agree. Outline who you think is responsible for follow-up. Keep a copy of the letter.

Most importantly – **ask questions** before, during, and after the meeting. Make sure you have enough information to feel informed. Only agree to decisions when you feel you fully understand the issues. If you're not comfortable with how the meeting went, talk about it with someone you trust.

If you have a concern, talk to the school staff. They won't know you have a concern if you don't tell them.

WITSET ELEMENTARY SECONDARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026
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Appendix C: Witsset Computer Acceptable Use Agreement Form

STUDENT OR COMMUNITY MEMBER:

I have read the School's COMPUTER USE POLICY and I agree to follow the guidelines. I understand my responsibilities while using the computers and the Internet in the school. I understand that any violation of the guidelines and rules may result in the loss of computer privileges and/or any other consequences deemed necessary.

Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

PARENT OR GAURDIAN (If under 18 years old):

As the parent or legal guardian of the minor students signing above, I grant permission for the student to access networked computer services such as electronic mail and the Internet. I understand that this Internet access is intended for educational purposes, and that the school is unable to guarantee that the above minor will not gain access to inappropriate or controversial material. In consideration of the school allowing this minor access to the Internet, I release the school from any responsibility for this minor acquiring access to inappropriate or controversial material on the Internet.

Date: _____

Parent or Guardians Name: _____

Parents or Guardians Signature: _____

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Witset Elementary Secondary School Expectation Form

Our Witset Elementary Secondary School staff, in conjunction with the Community Human Service Workers, have been working together, and will continue to work together to implement our discipline policy.

Please read and review this information with your child(ren).

School rules that apply to all students in Witset Elementary Secondary School

1. Respect yourself.
 - Put your best effort into becoming successful.
 - Be prepared for class.
 - Complete assigned work with your best effort.
 - Talk in a friendly tone.
 - Respond with respect.
 - Show friendship Avoid the use of foul language and profanity.
 - Avoid the use of drugs and alcohol.
 - Avoid using offensive gestures.
 - Wear clothing that is not too revealing.
2. Respect others.
 - Speak in a respectful tone.
 - Raise hand in class, before you speak.
 - Listen to what they have to say.
 - Show that you have listened by changing certain behaviours.
 - Help out where you can.
 - Model good behaviour to the younger students.
 - Giving put ups (complements always feels good).
3. Respect property.
 - If it's not yours, don't touch it.
 - If you borrowed something, return it in good shape.
 - Avoid damaging our school property.
 - Use garbage cans.
 - Keep the school neat and tidy.

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The following behaviours will not be tolerated and will result in an in school-suspension.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Physical fights | (jeopardizing the safety of other students) |
| Bullying | (intimidation, teasing, threatening, ostracizing) |
| Vandalism | (damaging school property) |

The staff will follow the Discipline Policy as laid out in the Parent Handbook. Parents will be notified for the following behaviours:

- lack of respect
- swearing
- work refusal

I _____ have read this documentation to my child and we
(Parents/Guardian’s name)

Both agree that is important to adhere to these rules. _____
(Signature)

(Date)

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Appendix D: Witset Elementary Secondary School Calendar

Witset Elementary/Secondary School | 2025-2026 CALENDAR

4-Civic Day
25/26-staff planning days
27-students start half day

August 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	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/ 31	25	26	27	28	29	30

February 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	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

16-Family Day
13-non instructional day

1-Labour Day
29-Pro-D
30-Truth and Reconciliation Day

September 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	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				

March 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	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				

spring break

13-Thanksgiving
24-Pro D

October 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	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	

April 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	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		

3-Good Friday
6-Easter Monday
7-return from spring break.
10,11-Pro D...FNSEA conference

11-Remembrance Day
10-Pro D

November 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	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/ 30	24	25	26	27	28	29

May 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	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/ 31	25	26	27	28	29	30

15-Pro D
18-Victoria Day

Dec 22-Jan 2 - Winter break

December 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	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			

June 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	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				

21- National Indigenous Day,
22 STAT observed
18-last day students
19-Administrative Day

5 -return from holiday

January 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	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

July 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	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	

1-Canada Day