



**Dunsmuir Middle School  
Student Handbook 2023-2024**

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Property of: \_\_\_\_\_

Student #: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

# **WELCOME TO DUNSMUIR**

## **The Administrator's Message**

We are very excited about the 2023-2024 school year at Dunsmuir. Our vision stands strong on our three pillars—honesty, kindness and respect.

The Dunsmuir School Community offers a rich variety of academic and curricular, combined with extra-curricular opportunities. We urge all students, to strive toward their best in the classroom; as well as become involved in other activities such as academies, music, sports, fine arts, drama and leadership.

Only you can make your Dunsmuir experience the best it can be. – *Catch the Fire*

**Mr. Mark Kaercher**  
**Ms. Alexis McKean**  
**Mr. Chris Smyth**

## **DUNSMUIR MISSION STATEMENT**

The Dunsmuir School Community works together to foster:  
a sense of belonging,  
personal and social responsibility,  
and quality in learning.

## **2023-24 SCHOOL GOAL**

To build a strong, student-centered and supportive learning community. Our school community will create a shared sense of academic & social responsibility.

Dunsmuir Middle School will foster a sense of place and belonging through the shared and common language based on our pillars of honesty, kindness, and respect.

# DUNSMUIR MIDDLE SCHOOL

## CODE OF CONDUCT

A “Code of Conduct” is a statement about how we work together. It outlines both our rights and our responsibilities as members of Dunsmuir Middle School. A committee of students, parents, and school staff developed our “Code” in accordance with School District 62 Policy and the B.C. Human Rights Code. Information was collected from all groups and put together to make the Code of Conduct.

### A SAFE AND CARING COMMUNITY

Dunsmuir Middle School is a safe and caring school. As members of this school community we have a responsibility to act in ways that are free of:

- Bullying, harassment, threat and intimidation;
- Physical violence and/or violence of any form;
- Verbal, physical or sexual abuse;
- Discrimination, especially based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age (**BC Human Rights Code**);
- Theft and vandalism.

Our safe and caring school environment does not tolerate the presence of:

- Intoxicating substances;
- Weapons and explosives, regardless of whether real or replica;
- Intruders or trespassers;
- Tobacco and/or smoking (including e-cigarettes).

### ACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

- The school expects that students will actively participate through effort and punctual, regular attendance, in their assigned education program.
- Students are expected to respect the rights and property of all Dunsmuir staff and students.

- Students are expected to comply with classroom expectations set by individual teachers in order to ensure that all students' rights to effective and efficient learning environments are respected.
- Students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate for an educational environment.
- Students are expected to respect all school and school related events and ensure they are free from use of restricted substances, weapons and of intimidation.
- Students are expected to respect the appropriate use of school computers, internet access and cell phone use while in class.

## **UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT**

- Students will not interfere with the learning or learning environment of others.
- Students will not display behaviour that includes bullying, harassment, intimidation, or be racially, ethnically, or sexually prejudiced.
- Students will not steal, smoke or be in possession of, or under the influence of, drugs or alcohol while on the school property or in attendance of any school events.
- Students will not plagiarize (copy) electronic or print media or other students' work or display any academic dishonesty.
- Students will not be involved in any acts of verbal or cyber-hate messaging/cyber-hate websites.
- Students will not be involved in any illegal acts such as assault, theft/vandalism or damage to property.

# **DUNSMUIR MIDDLE SCHOOL**

## **HANDBOOK**

### **ASSEMBLIES**

- School assemblies are a regular part of the school program and attendance is mandatory.
- Assemblies are often planned by teacher or student groups and are intended to celebrate student achievement, teach or inform students about issues.
- It is expected that while at assemblies or large meetings in the multipurpose room or gymnasium, students will act in an appropriate manner and cooperate with those directing the program.

### **ATHLETICS**

- Dunsmuir has a large number of teams that compete at the city, island, and provincial level.
- All students are eligible to try out for teams; a schedule is also provided on the school website.
- Watch the athletics bulletin board and listen for team try outs advertised throughout the year
- Check the daily announcements and website or contact the teacher sponsor for more information.

### **ATTENDANCE**

- Regular and punctual attendance is mandatory for academic success.
- The responsibility for attendance lies with the student and his or her parent or guardian.
- Absences due to illness or other extenuating circumstances must be confirmed by the parent or guardian by telephone or in writing, prior to or upon the student's return.
- It is expected that, where possible, personal appointments will be made outside school hours.
- A student requiring an early dismissal due to illness or due to exceptional circumstances for appointments during school hours must provide written or telephone approval by their parent or guardian to the office.
- When an extended period of absence is anticipated, the school administration or counsellor should be advised. It is recommended that homework be requested by group email to your child's teachers. Please note that time is needed to collect homework.
- Family vacations are not considered "excused absences". It is not recommended for students to miss days in session for the purpose of vacations or attendance at non-school events. Missed work, quizzes, and exams due to family vacations during the school year may or may not be exempt. This will be decided by individual teacher's discretion. Please note that teachers may not be able to provide the homework in advance. Students may have to make up the missed work upon return.

## COUNSELLING SERVICES

- School Counsellors are available daily to work with students, teachers, and other support staff, and parents in areas relating to social, emotional, behavioral, and intellectual development.
- A Counsellor can help a child understand his or her feelings and fears and assist with the developmental learning necessary as she or he matures and grows toward adulthood.
- Counsellors provide referrals and make connections with outside agencies.
- Counsellors are available Monday to Friday. Counsellors deal with problem solving and conflict resolution. Please phone the school for an appointment to address any concern or issue.

## CELLPHONE EXPECTATIONS

**Students may use personal mobile devices during instructional time for educational purposes as directed by the teacher, for health or medical purposes or as assistive technology for the purpose of inclusive education as informed by the Inclusive Education Teacher. At all other times, personal mobile devices, inclusive of laptops and chrome books shall remain in student lockers for the duration of the school day- this includes recess and lunch. This policy applies to ear buds/headphones as well.**

If a student contravenes these expectations:

- Step 1: Phone returned to the student to put in locker with warning by teacher.
- Step 2: Phone sent to office for student to pick up at end of day. Teacher phones parent.
- Step 3: Phone sent to office. Admin contacts family to discuss. Parent to pick up.

Dunsmuir Middle School recognizes the importance of communication, collaboration, and digital citizenship. To keep the focus on learning and to reduce unnecessary distractions, the school will expect the following:

- Unless requested by a teacher, as per above, cell phones and other mobile devices shall be **TURNED OFF** and stored in your locker from 8:55 am until the final bell at the end of the day.
- Cell phones and all mobile devices are not allowed to be used in the school, **unless directed by a teacher and can only be used for the purposes of learning**. The devices must be returned to the student's locker once the specific learning task is complete.
- Cell phones and all mobile devices can be turned back on at the end of the school day and used to communicate directly with parents/friends who are assisting in transportation.

## EMERGENCIES

- **Fire Alarm in class** – Students must exit the building with their teacher and line up in an orderly fashion on the backfield in front of their advisory room number sign.
- **Fire Alarm not in a class** – Students must exit the building, move to the field and meet in front of their advisory room number sign.
- **Earthquake** – Inside the classroom, students must Stop what they are doing, Duck under a desk,

Cover and once the shaking stops, count aloud to 60 prior to exiting the building (as safely as possible). Students report to the field and meet in front of their advisory room number sign.

- Lockdown – Students are to remain “locked in classroom” until an “all clear” is announced (if not in a class, the student will join the nearest class).
- Hold & Secure – Students will remain in classrooms and classes can resume as normal. The only exception to leaving classes is for supervised bathroom breaks.

## **FINE ARTS PERFORMANCES AND EXHIBITIONS**

- Dunsmuir has a very successful Fine Arts program.
- There are performing groups in dance, choral music, vocal jazz, beginning band, concert band, jazz band, and theatre.

## **FOOD**

- All food sold at Dunsmuir meets the standards outlined in the “Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools” creating a healthier eating environment.
- Healthy Choice Vending machines are in the front foyer and are accessible during morning recess and lunch recess.
- In many instances, there are snack foods available either from counsellors or at noon as clubs and other groups often sell food as a fundraiser.
- All waste materials must be placed in the recycling bins, compost bins or garbage cans.

## **CROMPTON LEARNING COMMONS (CLC)**

- The Crompton Learning Commons (CLC) is generally open before and after school. It is also open at lunch on select days.
- There are reference materials including materials online, as well as the library link on the school website.
- There is a great selection of fiction and non-fiction titles available to sign out. Students must simply provide their student number and name at the front desk.
- A class set of computers are available throughout the day and it is expected that the computer use policy is signed, understood and respected.

## **LOST & FOUND**

- The school will not be responsible or liable for lost, stolen, or missing personal electronics.
- Lockers should be used to store valuable items (watches, electronics, and money) and should never be left in P.E. change rooms or unsupervised.
- Lost and Found items are located in the front foyer.

## **NURSE (PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE)**

- A Public Health Nurse is assigned to the school and available mainly for annual immunization.
- Students can access services by calling the Westshore Health Unit at 250-519-3490.

## **PARKING**

- Parking spots inside the gates are reserved for staff. We ask that parents avoid blocking fire access driveways or garbage bins at any time during a school event. Free parking is also available on the side streets.
- Parents can drop-off and pick up students on Benhomer, near the entrance to the bus loop.



## **SMOKING**

- Students, staff, and visitors may not smoke or vape at Dunsmuir Middle School or on the property of the school; smoking **is prohibited** and illegal on the premises of all Sooke S.D. #62 schools at all times of the day. As per Capital Regional District Bylaw No. 2401, smoking is not permitted on any part of the school grounds: "No person shall carry or have in his possession a burning cigarette or cigar or pipe containing burning tobacco, or burn tobacco in any other manner in any school yard or inside any {school} building." Additional products such as e-cigarettes and vapes are also not permitted.

## **VISITORS**

- Visitors at Dunsmuir, on legitimate school business, are required to report to the main office upon arrival. They must sign in and receive a visitor pass. For safety reasons, they are required to return to the office to sign out.
- No other visitors (intruders or trespassers) are permitted at the school between the normal operating hours 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- School grounds are considered private property and Dunsmuir students should not visit other schools during the regular school day. Dunsmuir students found at other schools, unless involved in official school activities, are subject to disciplinary action.

## **WHEELS ON CAMPUS**

- Skateboards, longboards, roller blades, scooters, and bicycles are not to be used on school grounds.
- Skateboards, longboards, roller blades and scooters can be kept in lockers during school hours. There is a skateboard/longboard stand in the office as well.
- Bicycles may be brought to school but should be locked to the bike rack during the day.

## **DUNSMUIR MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### **VALUES**

### **HONESTY, KINDNESS AND RESPECT**