

Belfast Consolidated School Parent/Student Handbook

This handbook has been prepared to assist you, the parent/guardian, in understanding the operation, policies, and programs offered at Belfast Consolidated School. Please read it and use it as a reference throughout the year. Our goal is to improve parent-school communication. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the school at 659-7200.

The foundation of our school success is the cooperation between students, staff, parents and community. The students of Belfast are encouraged to be respectful, to take responsibility for their learning, and to have pride in their school.

Dedicated teachers take advantage of professional development opportunities and work collaboratively to bring innovative instructional practices to the classroom. Teachers also volunteer time to bring a variety of extra-curricular activities in athletics, drama, technology, environment, and music.

Parents are very much a part of the Belfast School community. We are grateful for their invaluable contributions to our school through volunteer time and support of school activities. We have an active Home & School Association with parents who are very involved with their children's education. As with many rural communities, we are grateful for the support we receive from our local businesses and community members.

The future is bright as we face new challenges and rewards in working together to create a caring, safe and respectful environment that fosters personal and academic growth.

Mission Statement

The staff at Belfast Consolidated School will celebrate, respect, and encourage the individual. Each student will have equal opportunity to grow academically, aesthetically, physically, socially, and emotionally. We will nurture students to become independent learners and producers of quality work. We will develop, with parents, student, and community, a partnership and a communication system that serve the goals of Belfast Consolidated School.

General Information: School Hours:

The school day begins at 8:40 a.m. with dismissal at 2:30 p.m.

8:30 a.m. - busses unload and students go to home rooms

8:40 a.m. - O Canada, announcements, morning classes begin

10:00 - 10:15 a.m. - recess for Grades 1- 6

12:00 - 12:20 a.m. - outdoor recess for all students

12:20 - 12:40 - lunch

2:00 - 2:30 - Academic period

2:35 p.m. - Grade 1-9 dismissal and bus loading

2:35 p.m. - Bus dismissal

Newsletter:

A school newsletter is usually sent home on the first and third Tuesdays of the month.

Six-Day Cycle:

Belfast Consolidated School operates on a six-day cycle. This means that each day is numbered from 1 to 6. The first full day of school in September is Day 1 and this rotation continues throughout the year. Thus, when students return after a holiday or storm day, the number of the school day will continue from the last day that there was school.

Contacting Teachers:

Teachers appreciate hearing from parents about their concerns. If you need to get in touch with a teacher, the best time is before school starts or after school. If you would like to call during the day, the secretary will take your name and number and the teacher will return your call. If you have any questions or concerns, please call your child's teacher.

School Supplies:

In order for students to complete their school assignments, it is necessary for all students to come to school properly equipped.

At the Grade 1-3 level, parents are asked to send \$35.00 to the teacher and they will purchase the necessary supplies.

A detailed supply list for the next year will be provided at the conclusion of the school year by home room teachers for the remaining grade levels.

School Agendas are part of the classroom teaching methodology and may be bought for \$7.

Indoor, non-marking sneakers are required of all students and may be left in the school.

Lunchroom Program:

A variety of healthy snack alternatives and lunches are available daily. These range in price from one to three tickets. Tickets can be purchased every Monday and cost fifty cents each.

Milk tokens can be purchased every Monday at a cost of fifty cents. Chocolate milk is one red ticket, and one green ticket 75 cents. Details of the lunch menu will be provided at the beginning of the school year.

Parents' Committees:

The Home and School meets on the last Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the library. This is the link between parents and school through consultation on school programs and policies. All parents are invited to participate at the monthly meetings.

Transportation:

Bus transportation to and from school is a service provided by the School Board. The School Board has outlined in its policy, conditions under which transportation privileges may be removed.

The bus driver is in charge of the bus and must have the cooperation of all students in the course of the daily run. The driver will assign seats to students where it is deemed necessary. Students traveling on the bus are expected to board and leave in an orderly manner.

When the bus is in motion, all students must be seated. Only when the bus comes to a complete stop should students be standing and then only those who are departing.

Students whose behavior is deemed detrimental to the safety of the other passengers will lose their transportation privileges in accordance with the Eastern School Board policy on transportation.

Students will be allowed to travel on a different bus if they are going to a babysitter. Except for emergencies, please do not ask that your child be transported on a different bus. Any student wishing to travel on another bus or to be dropped in a place other than the regular stop, must have written permission from a parent or guardian in the morning. If plans change during the day, a phone call to the school will be sufficient. A note will be issued to the student to be presented to the bus driver. The office then knows where the student is going and the bus driver knows that parents and staff have given permission.

Bicycles:

Students taking bicycles to school do so at their own risk. Bicycles taken to school are for transportation purposes and are not to be driven around the school yard. When not in use, bicycles are to be parked in the bike racks.

School Cancellations Due To Storms:

If schools are to be canceled due to weather, parents should listen for radio announcements made by local radio stations by 7:00 a.m. In some situations where it is difficult to make a decision by 7:00 a.m., a one-hour delay will be announced. If this occurs, all school busses will operate one hour behind their regular pick-up time. A further announcement will be made by 8:00 a.m. Belfast Consolidated School is in the Montague family of schools within the Eastern School District. Parents should not drop their children off at the school unless they are certain that school is in operation that day.

School Closure During the Day:

There have been occasions where schools have been forced to close during the school day in order to get students home before the weather becomes too severe. **Therefore, it is essential that each family has made arrangements for their children in advance so that the latter will be cared for if the bus drops them off before the end of the school day.** It is often impossible for students to use the phone during an early cancellation because of the number of calls which must be made by the school. Please make sure your children understand the arrangements for your family in the event of school closing early.

School Programs:

Physical Education:

Belfast Consolidated continues to offer a daily Physical Education program for all students in grades 1 through 9. The program is taught by our physical education specialist.

Proper gym attire is mandatory at the intermediate level and is recommended at the elementary level. A pair of shorts and a T-shirt are preferable for gym wear. For safety reasons, indoor sneakers (with non-marring soles) with laces/velcro are required. Students without sneakers will be required to sit out. Junior High PE will be assessed as a percentage mark.

Music:

Students from grades one to six participate in daily music classes. Classes are taught by our music specialist. Emphasis is on enjoyment, the development of a life-long leisure activity, and the growth of each child's musical and aesthetic abilities. The curriculum is decided by the P.E.I. Dept. of Education and based on the Kodaly principals of music education.

French:

The French program starts at grade four and continues through to grade nine. The four main skills of language acquisition, reading, writing, speaking, and listening are integrated with the strongest emphasis being on speaking and listening, since they are the most natural ways to communicate. The large oral component is also integrated at each level which will help students recognize and appreciate the lifestyles of different ethnic groups.

Extracurricular Sports:

Belfast offers a varied after-school sports program including cross-country running, soccer, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, track and field, badminton, and golf. Open to different age groups, students are required to keep up with their studies in order to remain on these teams. Midget athletes are required to sign a contract to participate on varsity teams.

Library:

The teacher-librarian is responsible for the management and development of the school's library / resource centre. In partnership with classroom teachers, the teacher-librarian provides opportunities for students to develop their information-gathering skills and acquire an appreciation for reading and learning.

The library has computers available to students for information and research. To guard against viruses, students are not to bring disks from home to be used on any school computer! Students are encouraged to use the library for recreational reading and projects.

Computer Lab:

Our computer lab has a LAN (Local Area Network) equipped with 16 stations. Many programs are available for student use in all grades; the grade-level and curriculum being the determining factors as to which programs are available to individuals. Students have access to the computer lab during the day with their class. Any student wishing to use the computers before or after school must have the permission of a teacher. Due to the danger of computer viruses, students may not bring in any computer software from home for use on school computers. We are pleased to offer a technology and art program for our junior high students. This will be assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Guidance and Counseling:

The main task of guidance is to work with students, teachers, support staff, and parents to assist students with their personal, social, emotional, behavioral, and intellectual development. The primary focus is directed at intervention and prevention. This may include individual counseling, group counseling, or classroom guidance.

If you have any concerns about your child's progress at home or at school, please feel free to contact the school. The guidance counselor is at our school every Day 1 and Day 4. We are pleased to offer a life skills course for our grade nine students. This will be assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Definitions:

Promoted - Student will move to the next grade level having met the requirements for present grade level.

Placement - Student will be moved into the next grade level although he/she has not yet met completely the requirements for present grade level.

Retained - Student will be held in the same grade having not met the requirements for that grade level.

1. Grades 1-6, promotion will be based on an overall performance in the areas of Language Arts and Math.
2. Administration and teachers will meet to review recommendations on promotion, placement or retention of students. Parents' involvement in decision making is essential.
3. The student's academic needs will be considered based on the child's age, maturity, and self-concept. In some situations a child will be placed in the next grade, even though that child may not have completed all of the grade requirements. This will be noted on the Report Card and file.
4. At the Intermediate level, a 60% overall average is required for promotion.

Honour Roll:

In a further effort to promote academic excellence, an honour roll is displayed in the school lobby listing the names of students from Grades 7-8-9 who have achieved an over all average of 85% (Health must be over 80%) or 80% or above in all subject areas.

School Regulations:

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend school regularly. Students who are absent from school will be responsible for completing any work that was missed. In the case of absence, a written excuse signed by the parent or guardian should be given to the classroom teacher upon the student's return. This will ensure that the student will not be credited with an unexplained absence. In the case of an unexplained absence, the parents will be contacted.

Student Use of Telephones:

Telephones at the school are there for school business. Students are allowed to use the office telephone when they are sick or there is an emergency. Students in Grades 1- 9 must have their teacher's permission to use any in-school telephone at any time.

Gum:

Students are not allowed to chew gum from the time they get on the bus in the morning until they get off in the afternoon.

Headgear:

In an attempt to teach students that it is considered impolite to wear anything on the head once inside a building, all students are asked to remove their hat/bonnet/etc. on entering the school.

Weapons:

Any item resembling a weapon, whether real or an imitation, will not be allowed on school property.

Textbooks:

When textbooks are given out, each student is assigned a numbered set of texts and their condition is recorded. It is expected that a normal year's wear will take place. If a book is damaged in excess of this norm, the student will be assessed a charge which will be determined by the cost of the book and its condition upon return. It is the responsibility of the student to cover his / her books and take whatever other action is required to assure that books are maintained in good condition. Examples of actual costs of texts in the Grades Six level are; Math - \$22.82, Language Arts - \$ 37.69, Social Studies - \$26.77. Textbooks at the Intermediate level are even more expensive.

Visitors to the School:

We welcome parents and visitors to our school. When you do visit our school, it would be appreciated that you inform the office of your presence.

School Policies:

Homework:

Studies have shown that the regular completion of homework assignments has a positive effect on a student's success. With a view to reinforcing skills taught in the classroom, homework is judged to be an important element of the curriculum. If parents notice that their son or daughter is consistently struggling with homework, they should contact their child's teacher. The following is our policy on work assigned as homework:

1. Homework assigned should arise out of lessons taught and be a meaningful extension of classroom activities.
2. Homework completion will be monitored on a daily basis.
3. Teachers will record each student's homework performance and may make use of this record when evaluating the student's term work.
4. Students are responsible for completion of homework. A student may be sent to work club if homework is not completed for that day.
5. Parents will be notified whenever students frequently fail to do assigned homework.

Discipline:

School discipline should protect and nurture the physical mental and emotional growth of its students. Regulations are made to protect persons and property and to protect the right to participate in every facet of the educational program. Belfast Consolidated School follows the guidelines of the Eastern School District's Caring Places to Learn Policy Discipline which reflects an understanding of human maturation. This Policy specifically limits the opportunity of any individual to interrupt his/her own educational growth or that of another student.

The aim of this Policy is not to punish but to teach proper behavior and action. It is recognized that the role of adults (school staff and parents) is to guide young individuals to do what is proper in a learning continuum. In the implementation of this policy a student is afforded a number of chances to correct improper behavior. It is only after many reminders of impropriety that the student is faced with administrative action.

The following principles and goals guide school personnel in helping Belfast Consolidated School students grow toward self-direction and fulfillment.

1. All students have worth and dignity.
2. Students have the capacity to learn cooperation and respect for others.
3. Students should have the opportunity to understand the policies which affect them.
4. Students with special needs should be referred to those specifically trained to help them.
5. Parents must accept a participating role with that of the school and its staff in preparing

children for productive and fulfilling lives. The school will make recommendations and work for the benefit of the student when the home is not fulfilling its role.

6. Parents play a vital role in developing student behavior and conduct. It is our expectation that parents:

- be aware of the school's code of conduct.
- work with the school to resolve student behaviour issues when they affect their children.
- cooperate with the school's or district's recommended course of action for the student.
- model appropriate behavior and language for their children.

7. All parents/guardians are reminded that they are subject to the school's code of conduct, as are all students and staff.

When a student's conduct is violent or abusive, the principal will immediately notify parents and take disciplinary action appropriate to the situation. This may include suspension.

Other Considerations:

1. Homework Not Completed - If a student does not complete assigned school work, the teacher may require the student to complete the work in work club. If the student does not comply, a call home will ensue.

2. Refusal To Do Assigned Work and Persistent Disobedience - Parents will be notified. Repeated offences may result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension.

3. Fights - Fighting on school property will not be tolerated for any reason, be it as the aggressor or the retaliator. Cases of fighting could result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension. Parents will be notified.

4. Smoking - Smoking is prohibited on all school property (busses and school trips are considered as school property). Students are not to bring cigarettes to school. Cigarettes will be confiscated and parents will be notified. Any student caught smoking on school grounds will automatically receive a 3-day suspension and parents will be contacted.

5. Field Trips, School Travel & Extracurricular Activities - To take part in a school excursion, field trip, or sports activity, it is expected that pupils will have all work up-to-date before the scheduled activity. If work has not been completed or if behavior is questionable, a pupil could be asked to remain at school.

6. Playground - If a pupil is sent inside for misconduct on the playground, the pupil may lose the right to go outside during break for a period of time, depending on the misconduct.

7. Misconduct on the School busses - For misbehavior on the school bus, the student will first receive a warning from the bus driver. The second offence will result in the Principal talking to the student. A third offence will be met with a letter home. Any subsequent offences could result in loss of his/her right to travel on the bus for a period of time. Serious misconduct could result in loss of travel rights immediately.

8. Breach of School Discipline Policy - Any serious breach of the school's discipline policy will

result in the student's immediate removal from school. (As per Section 74 of the PEI School Act).

Dress Code:

The purpose of a School Dress Code is to promote a respect for self and others and to encourage a positive and professional learning environment which focuses on a proper work attitude in the classroom, reducing distractions and improving performance.

An acceptable standard of dress is required of all students. Students shall not wear clothing that is considered inappropriate or revealing. This includes any clothing that portrays a message whether visual and/or written that is profane, demeaning or promotes the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, violence or discrimination in any form.

The school administration and staff reserve the right to further define the term "inappropriate" or "revealing" as circumstances require. Students failing to comply with the Dress Code will be required to change into appropriate dress. If suitable attire is not available, parents will be notified and ask to bring more acceptable clothing.

We look forward to an excellent year - "Working together, we are strong."

**BELFAST CONSOLIDATED
SCHOOL
HANDBOOK**