



CAWSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

2025-2026 Family Handbook

517 School Road, Cawston, BC, V0X 1C1

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Our Mission

We provide a safe and supportive community where all children succeed.

Our Vision

A caring community growing life-long learners.

Our Values

Respect-Empathy-Passion-Community-Strive for your Best.



Welcome to Cawston Primary School!

The first school in Cawston was a one room building, built between 1916 and 1921. The Cawston Primary School was built on our present location in 1951, with classrooms being added as needed. In 1992, a large covered play area, computer lab, full-sized library, 3 new classrooms, a multi-purpose room, resource rooms and offices were added to our 'little' school. In 2009, a Strong Start Centre, now located in a portable beside the main building, was added, and in 2014, we opened our first Preschool in the same portable. This year we have 2 portable buildings for early learning programming.

We presently have 165 students attending our school from an area that reaches from west of Hedley, several miles east of Olalla, and to the U.S. border on both sides of the Similkameen River. With a catchment area as large as this, we are unique and have a school filled with cultural diversity. We celebrate this diversity as it enriches the education of us all.

At Cawston Primary School, we provide a variety of programs designed to meet the individual needs of all our students. We believe in providing our students a safe and positive environment where we strive to instill a love of learning and where differences are welcomed and respected.



Office Hours - 8:15-3:45

Bell Schedule

8:34	Welcome Bell
8:37	Classes Begin
10:30-10:45	Recess Break
12:45-1:30	Lunch
2:30	Dismissal

Every Monday at CPS is Sun-Day Monday! Wear our school colours (purple & yellow) or school spirit wear!





Cawston School Staff

Grade 4	Simardip (Sim) Vath
Grade 3/4	Karen Rivest
Grade 3/4	Tim Raposo
Grade 3	Sarah Bramley
Grade 1/2	Carmen Lucich
Grade 1/2	Mike Lucich
Grade 1/2	Kaytlin Drews
Kindergarten	Crystal Tonner
Kindergarten	Carol Lamb
Library/Arts Education	Tamara Nunes
Inclusion Support Teacher	Tanya Langer
Learner Support Teacher	Valerie Stride
Literacy Support Teacher	Maggie Fonteyne
ELL Teacher	Kelly Vesper
Indigenous Education Advocate	Delma Opikokew
Indigenous Education Advocate	Dyawen Louis
District Counsellor	Dagan Ducharme
Education Assistant	Vanessa Leduc
Education Assistant	Jacque Yamamoto
Education Assistant	Tara Maxted
Education Assistant	Kayla Gibson
Child Youth Care Worker	Meghan Garbett
Library Assistant	Rachael Dowden
Strong Start Facilitator	Lynda Alkestrup
Speech Language	Jenafor Lansel & Melissa Visser
Occupational Therapy	Andria Anderson
Healthy Schools	Jenny martin
One Sky Pre-School	Taylor Dupuis
Lunch Coordinator	Delanda Douangpanya
Custodian	Bounsy Douangpanya
Secretary	Tammy Sparkes
Principal	Amanda Palmer

ABCs!

Accidents

Every precaution is taken to prevent mishaps in which students are injured, but sometimes such occurrences are unavoidable. In the case of any type of injury, the student should report what happened to his/her teacher or the supervisors. If medical attention is needed, the teacher or supervisor will bring the student to the office and they will be taken care of. If medical attention is needed or the child has a head injury of any kind, parents will be contacted. In a serious accident situation, an ambulance will be called immediately.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential if your child is to receive the full potential from their educational program. Children who are frequently absent miss important instructional time when class discussions and pupil-teacher interactions take place. Please call the school if your child is sick or has an appointment and will not be at school.

B.C. Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Program

Cawston School participates in the BC Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Program. Fruit or vegetable snacks are available for all students most days. This program promotes healthy eating. Please contact the office if you do not want your child to participate in this program.

Breakfast Program

Cawston School offers muffins, cereal and fruit for any student who wants something to eat in the morning. Our Breakfast Club meets in our school kitchen before the morning bell.

Bus Transportation

Children who ride buses are expected to obey all rules. **Riding the school bus is a privilege and improper conduct on the bus will result in this privilege being denied.** This could mean for the afternoon ride home, the rest of the week, or longer.

All students must be registered to ride the bus. Please see [Student Transportation - Student Transportation - Okanagan Similkameen \(SD53\)](#) for registration forms.

The School District Transportation Policy states that buses cannot be used for courtesy rides; that is, buses cannot be used to transport children to play dates or birthday parties. Students will be picked up and delivered only to their regular bus stop.

Parents and StrongStart students are not permitted to ride school buses, including field trips.

Please inform your child's teacher if you are picking up your child at lunch or after school. **If a child brings a note to say their parents will pick them up and if that parent is not here by the time their bus leaves, the child will be put on the bus.** If you have questions about the bus schedule, please contact the Keremeos Bus Garage at 250-499-2311.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Students may not use cell phones, hand-held electronic games, etc., at school during school hours, including recess and lunchtime, unless used in the classroom for educational or medical purposes - approved by the teacher. If students are found using these devices for any other purposes, they will be asked to put the device away and it may be stored at the office until the end of the school day for repeat offences. Further offences may require calling parents to collect the device from the office. Teaching digital citizenship, when it is appropriate to use phones and devices is ultimately our goal at school.

Changes in Personal Information

During the year, if you change your address, home telephone number or work number, or emergency contact, please notify our school secretary at once. In the event of emergency or illness, it is essential we have up-to-date information. If you are moving, please let the school know so that transfer forms for your new school can be prepared.

Communication

Please follow our process when concerns arise: Begin by making an appointment to speak with your child's teacher, and if more follow-up is needed, contact the school administration. Additional information can be found in Board Policy F-10 Dispute Resolution Policy.

Use respectful language in all communication, whether in person, on the phone, or through email. Please understand that responses may not always be immediate. Staff will do their best to communicate with you as soon as possible.

Clarify your child's perspective with staff to better understand the full picture, and work toward calm, reasonable solutions. Avoid using social media to air complaints. It does not resolve concerns and often makes situations harder for everyone involved.

Communication of Learning (SPACES)

Through our school district, all students have a digital portfolio to share progress of learning through the school year. Teachers will send families an invite in the fall to connect to "Spaces". It is parent responsibility to ensure you have access to the portfolio in order to stay informed of your child's progress. Family Conferences are held in October and April, but there are no report cards throughout the year or at the end of year in June. All progress is reported on SPACES.

Discipline

Regular communication between family and teachers is key to supporting our students in good times and especially in difficult times. Teachers will contact you regarding behaviour concerns. Administration (Principal) will be involved when a situation needs further support.

Our school district follows a progressive discipline model to support behaviour. Each situation involving our students has a distinctive set of circumstances. Situations are investigated thoroughly before outcomes are determined.

Field Trips

All field trips are unique. As a school team, we always plan for a safe, successful experience for our learners. This may include inviting a parent to attend, differentiating the activity to be more suitable for a student, or an alternate activity plan for the day. This will be communicated to the family prior to the event.

How to Handle a Concern

Teachers value open and respectful communication between home and school, and this is essential for your child's success. Children's perspectives are important but may not always reflect the full context of a situation. If your child shares something concerning, we encourage you to reach out for clarification before drawing conclusions.

Please try to avoid sending long and detailed emails, especially after school hours. Making an appointment to have a conversation with teachers is the most constructive way to address concerns, and it's often best to give yourself time before reaching out if you're upset. This helps to ensure we may all focus on what is best for your child. When school and families act as partners in our kids' educational journey, we know they will be successful.

Lost & Found

If you think your child is missing a personal item, please come in to the school and have a look in our Lost & Found. We have 2 bins, located in the front foyer of our school. Items will be removed and donated to charity near the end of each month.

Lunch Program

Hot lunch is available every day for students at a cost of \$4.50/meal. The monthly menu and payment envelope are sent home at the beginning of each month. Payment can be made by e-transfer, cheque or cash. Change is not returned so please use a cheque or exact change. Through limited funding, we are able to help families most in need with a subsidy to our lunch program. Families should contact the office to discuss options.

Medication and Student Illness

If a student requires medication of any kind, parents must submit to the office a "Request to Administer Medication" form (available at the office), signed by the doctor and by the parent. Medication will be kept in the office and will only be administered by authorized school personnel. No medications such as Tylenol or cold medication will be distributed by the school and, for safety reasons, children must not bring any medication to school.

No Child Without

Our school is involved in the Canadian MedicAlert Foundation's *No Child Without* program. There is no cost for students who attend our school and are between the ages of 4 up to their 14th birthday to join MedicAlert through this program. A child's MedicAlert identification can alert school staff, friends, coaches and others about your child's medical condition should an emergency occur. For further information come to the office for a brochure or go to www.nochildwithout.ca. To register your child, you will need a *No Child Without* brochure which is available at the office.

Noon-hour Procedure

Students eat in their own classrooms beginning at 12:45 and then go outside at 1:05 for free play. Please dress your child appropriately for outside activities. During inclement weather (ie. extreme cold), students will be able to stay inside as necessary.

Parent Advisory Council - PAC

Cawston Primary School has a Parent Advisory Council. Parents are the most valuable resource the child and school have. Where parents are consulted and act in an advisory capacity, schools experience better student achievement, greater support, good morale and an increase in public confidence in the educational system. The school also gives information to the parents through the PAC meetings that are held monthly. All parents of students at Cawston Primary are invited and encouraged to attend the PAC meetings. Parents will be notified of dates and times of these meetings in school newsletters or email updates.

Peanut Allergies

If we have students with peanut allergies, classes with these students in will be notified that they cannot bring peanuts to school. We ask that all students seek out peanut free food options, wash their hands after eating and learn about allergy safety.

Pick-Up

All students gather in a supervised location at the end bell (2:30). Bus students line up in their assigned bus lane. We ask that this area remain clear of parents and caregivers for safety reasons. If you are picking up your child, please park away from our bus lane (lines are marked). Students may be picked-up at the front entrance of our building or the gate on the corner of our field, at the intersection of Main Street and School Avenue. Whenever possible, please call the office if you are planning an early pick-up or any other changes to the routine pick-up.

Safety

Our school has regular fire, intruder, and earthquake drills. The teacher will be in charge of the class and will instruct the students in the appropriate manner to exit the building safely. Your child will bring home an Emergency Preparedness letter at the beginning of the year. We rely on your help to keep our records up to date

regarding the names of people who could pick up your child in the event of an emergency. Please keep our office informed of any changes to home information.

Scent Free and Smoke Free Environment

Cawston School is a smoke free environment. Please do not vape or smoke in the school or on the school grounds at any time. We also ask that you refrain from wearing strong perfumes at school, in accordance with the District's scent-free policy.

School News

A calendar-style newsletter, "Country Road", is emailed at the beginning of each month. This calendar outlines all upcoming events. There are also periodic issues of "The Sunflower Seed" which includes highlights of the last couple weeks as well as upcoming events and special activities in the coming week. We also send home reminder emails to families (from Principal or Secretary) as needed.

Our newsletters are published on our school website at www.cps.sd53.bc.ca. The News section of our school website has the most up to date information on things happening in our school community.

Supervision

Supervision begins each morning at 8:15 a.m. Outside afternoon supervision concludes at 2:40 p.m. with the departure of the school buses. Please do not drop off your children or have them on the playground before 8:15 or after 2:40, unless you are with them. Unsupervised children on the playground are a serious safety concern for us all.

TIM Time

On the last Wednesday of the month (Sept, Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb, Apr, May), school is dismissed at 12:00 and our school staff meets for our Team Inquiry Model (TIM) time. At Cawston School, we are studying and learning how we can work better to support all of our learners.

Toys, Etc.

Sometimes teachers may give opportunity for toys or other items to be brought to school for show & tell. Unless it is for a specific classroom activity, toys should not be brought to school. Toys should be left at home. We are not responsible for damage to items or missing/lost items. Also, often toys will cause conflict on school grounds.

Visitors to the Building

All visitors to Cawston School must enter through the front door and report to the main office, and if remaining at our site for volunteer purposes, sign-in at the office. While family is welcome and may visit any time, to meet with a staff member, you'll typically need to make an appointment in advance. Students from other schools or friends of our pupils are

not normally allowed to visit during the school day.

Please do not wander through the halls or school grounds, or arrive at classroom doors. We value our instructional time and always need to know who is on-site for emergency purposes. Thank you for being a part of our community and supporting our Safe Schools policy.

Volunteers

Cawston School welcomes parents and community members to participate as classroom volunteers. We often need help on field trips (though you must be able to provide your own transportation), with reading, and with other classroom activities. Some volunteer opportunities require completion of a Criminal Record Check (CRC). Please talk with your child's teacher if you would like to help, and please remember to sign in and out at the school office.