

# Bedford South School 2023-2024 Parent Handbook

2 Oceanview Drive, Bedford NS, B4A 4J6

Phone: 902-832-5800 Fax: 902-832-8505

Website: [bsb.hrce.ca](http://bsb.hrce.ca) Email: [bedfords@hrce.ca](mailto:bedfords@hrce.ca)

**Safe Arrival: 1-833-582-6940**



Principal: Helen Healy ([hhealy@hrce.ca](mailto:hhealy@hrce.ca))

Vice Principal: Shauna Boudreau ([sboudreau@hrce.ca](mailto:sboudreau@hrce.ca))

Vice Principal: Jane Taylor ([taylorj@hrce.ca](mailto:taylorj@hrce.ca))

Administrative Assistant: Jennifer Ashton ([jennifer.ashton@hrce.ca](mailto:jennifer.ashton@hrce.ca))

Administrative Assistant: Stephanie Haines ([shaines@hrce.ca](mailto:shaines@hrce.ca))

Guidance: Erik Lang ([elang@hrce.ca](mailto:elang@hrce.ca))

Guidance: Holly Althouse ([halthouse@hrce.ca](mailto:halthouse@hrce.ca))

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friendly, kind, & peaceful  Kim Stairs-F



Photo: Bedford South School Library

## Welcome to Bedford South School

### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE:

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year. My name is Helen Healy and I am so happy and excited to be continuing with the BSS family once again. I look forward to getting to know all of you and helping to support your child's personal and academic growth.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new students as well as those returning to BSS and a very special welcome to our new primary students and their parents/guardians. This school is very much about family, positive and healthy relationships and taking care of one another. I am looking forward to the wonderful year ahead and feel very privileged to be Principal of this amazing school.

A number of factors contribute to student success, one of which is an ongoing working relationship between school staff and parents/guardians. We look forward to your involvement in your child's education in the weeks and months ahead.

# DAILY BELL SCHEDULE

- 8:25** Morning Supervision Begins
- 8:35** Entry Bell - Homeroom & Attendance
- 8:45** Morning Bell: Classes Begin Promptly
- 10:15** Recess #1 Begins
- 10:32** Recess#2 Begins
- 11:45-12:45** LUNCH
- 12:50** Afternoon Instruction Begins
- 2:50** Dismissal for all Grades

## Morning Supervision

Morning Supervision begins daily at 8:25 AM.

Students can begin to arrive at 8:25 AM and **go to their designated Play Area**.  
Students should not arrive at school before 8:25 AM.

Students should not line up at doors before 8:35 AM.

When the bell rings at 8:35 AM students can then go to their entry door and come inside. This time is for students to get ready for class to begin at 8:45.

If the weather is inclement; students will come in beginning at 8:25 AM.

## Student Late Drop off and Early Pick Up

### Elementary Grades Primary to Grade Five

Upon arriving to the school to drop off a child late or pick up a child early, please go to the main doors and speak with staff through the intercom.

Staff will sign in/sign out students electronically.

**Please follow school parking guidelines for late drop offs and early pick ups.**

# Parking Guidelines & Driveway Closure

Bedford South School was designed and built as a walking school and therefore there is very little visitor parking. The only areas to park are on the righthand side by the large rocks overlooking the basin, and on the righthand side of the driveway going down the hill. Parents are not permitted to enter the staff parking lot, if possible, due to child safety concerns. During the school day THE BUS LOOP is closed to public vehicles for drop off and pick up for students. It is also a fire lane and needs to be kept clear. There is No parking in the loop. **Please note that our driveway gate is closed from 8:15-9:15 AM and again 2:15-3:15 PM daily for the safety of our students.** We ask that these times are respected whether there is someone at the gate or not. Many parents, if driving, will park on Oceanview Drive and walk through the path by the school sign and pond. Alternatively, many parents park on Southgate Drive and walk in through the back HRM drop off loop to the school. Until recently this back HRM drop off loop has been closed due to safety concerns. It is now re-opened as a drop off loop and additional parking for parents and staff. There is no PARKING in the back HRM drop off loop.

## Buses

Some students live outside of the area to walk to school and therefore are eligible for the bus.

To find out if you are eligible for the bus visit:

<https://hrcetransportation.mybusplanner.ca/TransportationEligibility>



Families who are eligible for the bus can stay up to date with bus stops, times and bus numbers by using BUS PLANNER: [hrcetransportation.mybusplanner.ca](https://hrcetransportation.mybusplanner.ca)

Download **Bus Planner Delays** App to receive notifications when buses are running LATE for pick up and drop off.

Families are encouraged to discuss bus safety with their children. Students should always stay seated when they are on the bus and should not shout or yell. Students should **stay seated** until the bus is fully stopped before they stand up to get off the bus at their stop.

# SchoolMessenger: SafeArrival

## How to report Late Arrival's and Absences

### SchoolMessenger: Safe Arrival

Reporting absences and late arrivals for Primary- Grade 5.

**To report a student as absent choose- Absent with Notification for the FULL DAY**  
**To report a student who will arrive late choose- Absent with Notification for the FULL DAY**  
**and their attendance will be updated when they arrive at school.**

There are 3 Ways to do this:

#### ✓ PowerSchool Parent/Student Portal (Internet)

Parents/guardians can log in to <https://sishrsb.ednet.ns.ca/public/> to access the SchoolMessenger website to report future absences.

#### ✓ SchoolMessenger App

Parents/guardians can download the SchoolMessenger app for Android and iOS devices and use their username and password for the PowerSchool Portal.

#### ✓ Toll-Free Number- 1-833-582-6940

Parents/guardians can call 1-833-582-6940 to report future absences using an automated system.

*All three methods are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Absences can be reported at any time before the start of school on the day the student will be absent. Up to five consecutive absences can be recorded at once.*

**For more detailed information, Frequently Asked Questions and even a video tutorial, please visit <https://www.hrce.ca/SafeArrival>**

Please do not:

- ✗ Send notification to the teacher through email or Seesaw
- ✗ Leaving a voicemail on any school lines (main, principal, or VP)

**It is NOT guaranteed that these messages will be checked before attendance is submitted.**

## School Closures and Early/Emergency Dismissal

### ***Guidelines for School and/or Bus Cancellation Due to Inclement Weather***

Student safety is the first priority of the *Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)* when making school cancellation decisions. HRCE staff begins to gather information from various sources beginning at 4:30 am.

Staff consults with Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) staff on road conditions, local weather services, and Stock Transportation. By 5:30 am, staff makes a recommendation to the HRCE based on the information gathered. If it is safe to have students on the roads and sidewalks, then schools will be open. If not, all or some schools may be closed depending on the weather and road conditions in different areas of the board. Bedford South School is in the CP Allen High School family of schools.

Parents/guardians need to have a childcare plan in place in the event of a school closure. Bedford South School is in the CP Allen High School family.

Parents/ guardians always have the right to keep their child home from school if they believe that the travelling conditions are unsuitable.

For **full day closures** of all or some schools, the decision will be announced as close to 6:00 am as possible. Announcements will be:

- Posted on the HRCE's website ([www.hrce.ca](http://www.hrce.ca));
- Posted on the HRCE's Twitter account (@HRCE\_NS);
- Recorded on the HRCE's School Cancellation Information Line 464-INFO (4636);
- Shared with subscribers to the HRCE's email and text notification system; and
- Communicated to local media outlets.

**[Click Here to Subscribe to Cancellation Notifications](#)**



## School Closures and Early/Emergency Dismissal (con't)

If conditions deteriorate throughout the day, the Superintendent may **close schools early** when weather or road conditions are considered to be a threat to the safety of students. In the event of an **early school closure**, the announcement will be made by 11 am. School busses will be dispatched to schools **two hours** earlier than their normal regularly scheduled pick-up for the afternoon dismissal, **walking students** will be dismissed at the start of their regular lunch time.

On school days when weather conditions exist that it is not safe to open schools at the regularly scheduled time, but it is predicted that conditions will improve, a **2-hour delayed opening** may be considered. Delayed openings would be considered when a severe weather event has concluded but snow clearing, or other operations require additional time. Delayed opening may also be considered when the physical plant is experiencing an issue (power, water) and additional time is required to prepare the facility for opening.

In the event of a delayed opening the following will apply:

- School opening will be delayed 2 hours
- School bus pick up times will be delayed 2 hours
- Excel childcare will be cancelled for the morning only
- Pre-Primary opening will be delayed 2 hours
- Each school will alter morning schedules to best address their timetables.
- Lunch times will not change
- Afternoon class schedules will not change
- Dismissal time will not change.

## Winter

Winter can be a lot of fun if children are dressed properly. Children spend morning supervision, recess and part of their lunch outdoors unless the wind chill factor doesn't allow it or the weather is inclement. Dressing in layers is a good way to stay warm during winter months. Children will need winter outerwear: Winter jacket, snow pants, winter boots, hat, scarf and gloves or mittens.

**Mittens and socks** will get wet and do not dry quickly enough to be worn again at recess time or lunch hour. If you wish your child to have dry mittens, send along **an extra pair in their school bag each winter day**. You may wish to send an entire change of clothes in your child's bag daily.

Our lost and found is located near the front of the school and often fills up quickly with missing items during the winter months. Please label **ALL** your child's clothing and footwear.

### **Mabel's Labels Bedford South School Playground Fundraiser**

Our school has an ongoing Fundraiser with Mable's Labels:

<https://mabelslabels.ca/>

Search Bedford South School under "Support a Fundraiser"

**Every item** that a student wears to school that they remove during the day should be labeled. Students' lunchbox, all containers and water bottle should be labelled.

Whether you choose to use Mable's Labels or a different way to label your children's items we highly recommend Parents/Guardians label **EVERYTHING** they can! Each year our LOST and FOUND gets overfilled with items that are NOT labelled and it is very difficult to help young children find their items when items do not have their name on it. (We donate several garbage sized bags of unlabeled, unclaimed items three to four times a year to charity.)



## Volunteers

Parent volunteers can enrich our classroom programs by listening to children read, practicing number sense, helping children write, helping in the library, and going on class trips. If you have a free morning or afternoon and are willing to help the school, please let us know.

Child Abuse Registry and Police Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector checks need to be completed for all parents to volunteer in the school or chaperone class trips. Please email Jennifer Ashton or Stephanie Haines, our administrative assistants for more information. Once completed, these checks are valid for 3 years at this school and will be kept in a school database.

You can apply for your Child Abuse Registry Check here:

<https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-child-abuse-register-search>

For your Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector, you can apply in person at your local Police station.

Or online at: [www.mybackcheck.com](http://www.mybackcheck.com)

\*If using backcheck **please ensure** that you choose the **Vulnerable Sector option**\*

## Parent-Teacher Communication

Please be respectful of the fact that it is difficult for teachers to meet with parents during the school day. If you need to communicate with your child's teacher, please send a note in their message bag, communication folder or an email to share information or request a phone call or meeting. Teacher emails can be found on our school website. Communication between home and school is important.

**Calls and emails sent to staff members will be returned within two business days.**

## **EXCEL Before and After School**

EXCEL is a paid program for registered students.

Learn more about these programs below:



### **EXCEL Program**

The EXCEL program is a fee-for-service recreational program run by the Halifax Regional Centre for Education offered in some elementary schools and is an option to parents who are seeking before and after school care for their children. The EXCEL program runs here at Bedford South School. [Click Here for more information about EXCEL.](#)

### **School Recess Snacks & Lunches**

**We DO NOT have Cafeteria for this academic school year.  
Please pack your students a recess snack and lunch each day.**

### **The Lunch Lady Hot Lunch Program**

We have partnered with The Lunch Lady to have hot lunches delivered on Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays each week.

Lunches need to be ordered in advance at [thelunchlady.ca](http://thelunchlady.ca)

Please remember to either pack or purchase a spoon/fork. Students will still need a recess snack packed on days they order lunch.

## Bedford South School: Things to Know

### BSS is a Smoke Free, Vape Free, Scent Free, and Nut Free School

This means that children may not bring lunch or snacks that contain **ANY** nut products, including Nutella or Nutella products. We ask students and parents to NOT TO wear scents (perfume/ cologne) when coming to the school as some people have scent and environmental sensitivities. Smoking and Vaping **is not permitted on school property.**

### Administration of Medication

The primary responsibility for administering medication to students is the parent(s)/guardian(s). Only prescribed medication that is determined a necessity for the student to attend school may be administered by school personnel during school hours.

- 1) Students who use puffers may, with the parents' written permission and having completed the appropriate form in the office, self-administer in the office. Student puffers should be stored in the office.
- 2) Children who have any life-threatening allergies **must** contact the office to receive the appropriate forms and guidelines regarding parent/student and school responsibilities.

### Verifying Registration Information

Please ensure that we have current and up to date student information. Including keeping your phone numbers and emails up to date, MSI number and expiration date and medical information. There are several things you can update yourself by logging into PowerSchool Parent Portal and going to the HRCE Demographics Updates on the menu on the left side of the screen.

**If you are having difficulty updating information please contact the schools Administrative Assistants who can update this information for you.**

### YMCA

YMCA School Settlement program is working in partnership with HRCE schools to provide support to new immigrants who are settling in our communities. **Ms. Julia Lagin-Nasse** is a YMCA staff member who works full time at our school. She provides practical assistance to immigrant children/youth and their families. These services include home liaison, academic support, referrals, advocacy school staff support, bridging, asset building, solution focused counseling, orientation to the school and community and cultural support. She is part of our staff and an extension of the school support available to new immigrant children and families. Ms. Hassan can be reached [julie.laginnasse@halifax.ymca.ca](mailto:julie.laginnasse@halifax.ymca.ca) or by phone at **902-830-0736**.

# **Bedford South School: Things to Know**

## **Healthy Food Policy**

HRCE has a Healthy Food Policy in place to support healthy food choices. This policy allows a pre determined number of times a school can distribute treats to students. Here at Bedford South we use those allotments for our H.S.A. Popcorn Days and Freeze Day. Therefore there are no other times that treats can be distributed either school wide or in individual classrooms. During the school year we often are contacted by parents/guardians requesting permission to send in things like cupcakes, candy or other treats to their child's classroom. Due to the Healthy Food Policy these requests will not be accommodated. Thank you for your cooperation.

## **Birthday Celebrations**

Students look forward celebrating their birthdays with friends they have made at school. We would like to remind families that these social events are separate from the school and are to be coordinated outside of school time. We ask that parents/guardians plan to distribute invitations outside of school time and NOT to send them to school for children to distribute. Additionally we do not allow the distribution of treat bags or party favors here at school.

## **Caring Schools Community**

At Bedford South School, we pride ourselves in working together, and being part of a caring community. Our students are an important part of our community, and we believe in teaching peacemaking skills.

1. Find out what the problem is by talking to each other.
2. Listen to each other with an open mind.
3. Treat a person's feelings with respect, the same way you would like to be treated.
4. Take responsibility for what you do and say.

## **Code of Conduct**

<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/docs/provincialschoolcodeofconduct.pdf>

## **Steps to Contacting us with a Concern**

- 1) Contact your child's teacher
- 2) Contact the school's principal
- 3) Reach out to Parent Navigators for assistance [Click Here](#)
- 4) Parent Concern Protocol: [Click Here](#)

# PowerSchool for Parents

Parents/Guardians can log into PowerSchool to access some student information such as: student number, teacher and attendance.

You can set up your account at: <https://sishrsb.ednet.ns.ca/public/home.html>

If it is your first time logging in follow the instructions on the main screen.

**PowerSchool SIS**

## Student and Parent Sign In

Username

Password

[Forgot Username or Password?](#)

**Sign In**

### Parents

Your **username** is your **email address**. Here is a tutorial highlighting important features of the Parent Portal. [Parent Tutorial](#). If you know your username and password, proceed with sign in.

#### First time signing in?

- Click **Forgot Username or Password?**
- Click the **Parents** tab
- In the **Forgot Password?** section enter *your email address* for **Parent Username** and **Parent Email Address**
- Click **Reset Password**

### Navigation

- In-Progress Achievement and Attendance
- Academic Achievement
- Provincial Assessments
- Attendance History
- School Bulletin
- Class Registration
- My Schedule
- E-mail Teachers
- School Information
- Account Preferences
- View Grad Progress
- SchoolMessenger

### Main Menu

- Attendance
- Messages 6
- Preferences
- Contacts
- Join Groups
- Log out

Language

English

Download Mobile App

- Apple iTunes
- Google Play

From the main page menu Parents/Guardians can go to the SchoolMessenger tab to report student absences. From the SchoolMessenger tab you can both report student absences and see all Messages that have been sent from the school.

Additionally there is also a SchoolMessenger App you can download to your mobile device to use. For more information about Safe Arrival, please refer to the SchoolMessenger Safe Arrival instructions section of this handbook.

# Specialty Classes At Bedford South School

## **Physical Education**

Children participate in Physical Education two or three times a week. Please ensure that your child wears shorts or pants with no zippers. A short sleeve T-shirt is best. Sneakers are required for each gym period. Shorts, if worn, should be worn under street clothes to facilitate ease of changing at gym time.

Sneakers with Velcro closures are wonderful for small children; they are independent when putting sneakers on and there is no fear of tripping over laces.

Please be sure that your child's clothing is comfortable and easy to run and jump in everyday, not just physical education days. There is a large portion of school time devoted to active learning, which demands lots of movement.

## **Music**

Formal music education is provided for elementary students twice a week by the music teacher.

The children enjoy having many singing games, which help introduce important concepts such as beat, rhythm, slow, fast, and high and low. Musical instruments are often used to reinforce these concepts. Movement and dance are also integral to this program.

Our main goal is for children to enjoy all musical experiences and have fun while learning.

## **Library**

Once a week the children go to library. They borrow and return books during this time. Please try to read stories brought home by your child. Sharing books with your child creates a love of literature in your child as well as a desire to learn and read.

Parents can help children learn to care for books, to turn the pages properly (upper right-hand corner), and to be responsible for their library books by having a special place at home for the library book. Children also need their parents' help in remembering to return the library books each week.

The library is staffed by a Library Technician who is supported by volunteer parents who read to the children, help them find books, and do other jobs needed in the library. You may wish to volunteer a morning a week once your child begins school.



## First Day of School

**The first day of school is often a very anxious day for the children and for parents/guardians.** You can help the day run smoothly by talking with your child about the expectations and by having personal items well organized and ready.

### **On the first day your child should have:**

- indoor shoes-**non scuffing/non-marking soles**, appropriate for gym (to be kept at school)
- a **large** backpack
- a small healthy recess snack in an environmentally friendly container
- a healthy lunch (containing no peanuts, nuts, or Nutella)
- a water bottle (there are refill stations on both floors)
- appropriate clothing for the weather

While all students are encouraged to walk to school each day, we respect the fact that you may wish to drive your child on the first day.

If the latter is your choice, please refer to the schools **Parking Guidelines** and take your child to the appropriate, pre-arranged door/meeting spot and wait for staff to receive your child. Primary parents/students will receive a letter in late August from their teacher with specific information for primary students.

We understand that the first day of school for students can be difficult for both parents and students, but please leave quickly at bell time. If your child is upset, please leave anyway. It is easier to settle students when parents are not present. Thank you for your support in this matter.

During the school year, no students are permitted on school property, except for registered EXCEL students, before 8:25 am when supervision begins. Students are supervised in their designated area between 8:25-8:35 am daily. (Supervision will be inside if weather is inclement). At 8:35 am the bell rings for students to enter the building, school begins at 8:45 am.

### **Clothing:**

Children who are beginning school should have outdoor clothing and footwear they can get on and off easily. Children like to be independent when getting ready for recess, lunch and ready for home. Primary teachers are unable to button, snap, tie and zip each child's clothing.

## Helping Your Child Learn

Learning begins when a child is born. Children vary greatly in all phases of development. Not all children learn to walk or talk at the same age. To learn to appreciate the unique worth of oneself and others will be a very important aspect of your child's growth. This goal is best reached by accepting the child and praising the child for every effort.

Since your child is a unique individual, it is important to you and those in education that we work together to assist your child.

Happy children feel secure and confident about themselves.

### **BEFORE YOUR CHILD ENTERS SCHOOL, YOU CAN HELP BY:**

- seeing that your child has a physical examination at least once a year
- making certain your child has three well-balanced meals a day
- setting a regular bedtime and ensuring that it will be followed
- encouraging outdoor play
- dressing your child appropriately for the weather
- showing how to dress oneself and hang up one's clothes
- allowing your child to help at home and put toys away
- encouraging clear speech and good listening
- teaching rules to good safety – how to walk to school or bus stop, where to cross the road, and warning of the dangers such as accepting rides with strangers
- providing books and experiences using paper, crayons, paint, glue, and scissors
- reading stories to your child daily
- encouraging play with a small group of other children
- talking to your child about sharing the teacher's time and attention
- explain that there will be many children in the teacher's care