



Merritt Bench Elementary School

Code of Conduct

2026-2027

At Merritt Bench Elementary, we strive to foster a caring and inclusive learning community where students, staff, families, and community members work together to ensure every learner feels valued, connected, and inspired to achieve their personal best. Through meaningful learning experiences and the development of strong character, we strive to empower all learners to succeed today and lead with purpose tomorrow.

Bylaw Appeals Process – Bylaw 5.23.502.1 can be accessed on the school district website at https://www.nssd.ca/sites/default/files/documents/2025-10/5-23%20Appeal%20Bylaw%20_Dec.11.2024.pdf

Purpose

- Promote a safe, caring, orderly, and inclusive school community for students, staff, families, volunteers, and visitors.
- Encourage respectful relationships and positive citizenship through responsible decision-making, empathy, and consideration for others
- Communicate clear expectations for behaviour that support learning, well-being, and the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community.
- Foster a culture where diversity is valued and all individuals are treated with dignity, free from discrimination, bullying, harassment, intimidation, or violence.
- Support students in developing the character, social responsibility, and citizenship skills needed to contribute positively to their school, community, and future.

BC Human Rights Code

Merritt Bench Elementary School is committed to providing a safe, caring, inclusive, and respectful learning environment for all. In accordance with the **BC Human Rights Code**, discrimination, harassment, and intimidation will not be tolerated. All members of our school community have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of Indigenous identity, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age.



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Student Expectations

The expectations apply to students while at school, while travelling to and from school and while attending any school function or activities at any location.

Students are expected to:

- Treat themselves and others with respect, kindness, truth and honesty
- Make strong choices and respect the choices of others
- Follow safety guidelines
- Take responsibility for their actions, decisions and personal belongings

Acceptable Conduct:

Some examples of acceptable conduct are listed below.

- Demonstrate respect by being on time, participating, cooperating/ including others and being honest.
- Report damage to property.
- Help others by being safe, thinking before you act and using equipment appropriately.
- Remember that everyone has the right to learn in a positive and safe environment.
- Inform an adult if you think someone might need help.
- Take pride in yourself, goals and accomplishments by doing your best.
- Celebrate in the choices and accomplishments of your peers.
- Avoid situations where you may be 'guilty by association' (Walk away).
- Clean up after yourself and take responsibility for messes that may need a group effort.

Unacceptable Conduct:

Please note this is not an all-inclusive list and only includes some examples. Some examples of unacceptable conduct:

- Interfering with the learning of self or others (ex. Disrupting events, classes or assemblies)
- Using Language that is abusive or obscene (ex. Swearing)
- Stealing or damaging property



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- Create unsafe spaces/environments for students, staff or others
- Bullying (cyber, physical, verbal, social) harassment, defamation)
- Demeaning racial, religious, ethnic or sexual comments
- Direct disobedience of a lawful request from staff members
- Violence (including threats and intimidation)
- Retaliation against others who reported incidents
- Having or using things that are not permitted (drugs, weapons or things that hurt others)

Incidents will be investigated and appropriate consequences will follow.

Consequences

The meaning of discipline is 'to teach'. At school, discipline will be like that of a kind, firm and judicious parent. Disciplinary measure taken by the staff will take into consideration the severity and frequency of the unacceptable behaviours, the circumstances which led to it, age, maturity, diverse abilities of students and past behavior of the students involved. Restitution is a key factor in bringing about resolutions to conflicts that may arise. We strive to ensure that disciplinary action is preventative and restorative and that responses are thoughtful, consistent and fair.

Consequences are as immediate as possible. Consequences can include but are not limited to: loss of privileges, time in/time out, removal from the classroom/playground, office referrals and some form of restitution/repair. In cases of severe infractions, parents/caregivers will be asked to meet with staff and/or suspensions may result.

Supports

Staff at Merritt Bench Elementary work hard to encourage learning what positive behaviour looks, sounds and feels like. We encourage students to use their "WITS" (W= Walk Away, I= Ignore, T= Talk it Out, S= Seek Help). As students learn, we do expect increasing responsibility and understanding, self-regulation and self-disciplinary behaviour, which accounts for how consequences are decided. We do expect students to fix mistakes and use strategies they have learned. Other supports may include counselling, safety plans, and conferences with the principal or teacher. Special considerations may apply to



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students with diverse abilities who are unable to comply with the code of conduct due to a disability of intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural in nature.

Notification

Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, parents or guardians of both the student involved and any affected students may be notified. The school may also contact other agencies as required. For example, the RCMP may be contacted in cases involving illegal activity, and the Ministry of Children and Family Development may be notified when there are concerns about a child's safety or well-being.

Should parent follow-up be required, it is important to note that families will only be notified about consequences/incidence of their own child and not the plans or consequences of others.