

# James Mowat School Family Handbook 2019-2020



**A Community of Excellence**  
James Mowat School

# WELCOME

Welcome to James Mowat School, “A Caring School”. Our mandate is to look after the academic, social, emotional and physical needs of our students during the school day.

The intent of this handbook is to provide you as parents/guardians with information about our school. If any questions arise, please call us as soon as possible. Our school phone number is **780-992-1272**. In addition, we always welcome your suggestions as to how we can improve this handbook.

James Mowat is an elementary school serving students from ECS to grade 6. The school day is broken into 30 minute periods. We offer a regular elementary program with French as a Second Language starting in grade 4.

A wide variety of extra-curricular activities are available for students who choose to participate (examples include choir, safety patrols, school council, track team, intramurals, hand chimes, badminton club, SYNC, adopt-a-shelf, basketball team, and chess club). Information on these activities and events can be found in the monthly newsletters which are posted on our school website.

A school counsellor is actively involved with our staff and students to help develop programming and coordinate services that reflect the unique needs of our school community.

# JAMES MOWAT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## MOTTO

“A Caring School”

## VALUES

Integrity

Inspiration

Acceptance

Learning

## OUR MISSION

Our mission as a learning community is to provide our students with the tools that will enable them to be **successful.**

We do this by recognizing individual learning styles and equipping students with the best strategies to **learn.**

We do this so that all our students achieve the skills and knowledge necessary to be **life-long learners.**

## OUR VISION

A Community of Excellence

## 2019-2020 School Year

For the most up-to-date information on important school dates please visit [www.jamesmowat.ca](http://www.jamesmowat.ca) and click on the calendar link on the right side of the page. If you are already using a digital calendar, you can add the school calendar to your personal calendar by clicking on the appropriate link at the bottom of the calendar. If you have any problems viewing or adding the calendar, please call the school and we can assist you.

### Accident Policy

If a student is injured the supervisor or the classroom teacher will check to determine the extent of the injury. Minor injuries are treated in the school. If the injury appears more serious, parents or the emergency contact person will be notified if possible. Emergency services may be called if the individual needs to be transported to a medical facility.

### Allergies

Several students and staff at the school suffer from allergies. The most prominent allergy is one to nuts and nut products. Elk Island Public Schools has a “Nut Aware” strategy. **We would appreciate your help by keeping all nuts and nut products out of the school.** When sending snacks to school, check with the teacher to see if there are any further dietary restrictions in the class. Thank you for your support and cooperation as we strive to keep all of our children safe.

### Assignments

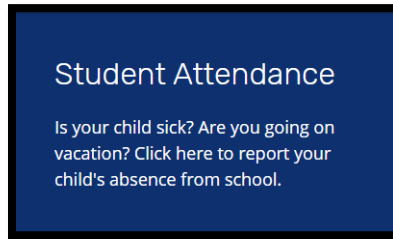
Students are expected to complete all assigned work, either in class or as homework. Students who are absent are responsible for missed work. To maximize learning, we solicit your support in helping us monitor your child’s assignments to ensure completion. Parents will be notified if their child does not complete assignments on a regular basis. Teachers may also ask students who have not completed their assignments to complete the work at alternate times during the day.

### Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is expected from all students. When a student is away due to illness or other reasons, parents or guardians are asked to please call the school to notify us of the absence. If there is no answer please leave a message with your child’s name, class and reason for the absence. Parents can also access the Student Attendance link on our website. Our school website at [www.jamesmowat.ca](http://www.jamesmowat.ca) is equipped with a Student Attendance button on the right side of the home page. Simply click on “Student Attendance,” select “Student Attendance” from the drop down menu of our “Contact Us” Section and fill in your information. Your child’s absence will be sent directly to the school once you hit “Submit”.

Please Note: **All absence notifications should be sent to the Student Attendance email address rather than emailing your child’s teacher directly.** Teachers are not always able to

check email first thing in the morning, and these emails are not accessible to substitute teachers who may be in the classroom on the day of the absence. Thank You.



Attendance checks are taken in the morning and afternoon. Office personnel will attempt to verify all unconfirmed absences by calling home, the work number and/or the emergency contact number provided to the school.

If absences become a concern, a letter will be sent home notifying parents/guardians of our concerns. If they continue, a meeting with the parents will be scheduled with the school administration. If absences still continue to be a problem the attendance board will be notified as is required by the Alberta Education Act.

### Bell Schedule

#### Regular School Day

08:25	Warning Bell
08:30	Period 1
09:00	Period 2
09:30	Period 3
10:00	Recess
10:12	Warning Bell
10:15	Period 4
10:45	Period 5
11:15	Period 6
11:45	Lunch
12:05	Recess
12:25	Warning Bell
12:30	Flex Time
12:50	Period 7
01:20	Period 8
01:50	Recess
02:02	Warning Bell
02:05	Period 9
02:35	Period 10
03:05	Dismissal

#### Early Dismissal

08:25	Warning Bell
08:30	Period 1
09:00	Period 2
09:30	Period 3
10:00	Recess
10:12	Warning Bell
10:15	Period 4
10:45	Period 5
11:15	Period 6
11:45	Lunch
12:10	Recess
12:35	Warning Bell
12:40	Period 7
01:05	Period 8
01:30	Break
01:35	Period 9
02:05	Dismissal

On early dismissal days students will be dismissed at 2:05pm. Parents should expect their child(ren) to come home approximately 1 hour earlier than usual.

### **Bicycles, Skateboards, Scooters and Rollerblades**

Students who ride their bikes to school must proceed directly to the bike racks and ensure their bikes are locked. When coming to school, students should ride their bikes up to the school grounds area, and then walk their bikes the rest of the way to the racks. Similarly, when going home, they should walk their bikes to the end of the school grounds area and then proceed home. No bikes shall be ridden through the parking lot. Bike racks are out of bounds during school hours. Remember, helmets are required to be worn by law. Skateboards, scooters, Heelys and rollerblades should not be brought to the school as there is no place to safely store these items for the day.

### **Communication**

Our school newsletter is available online at [www.jamesmowat.ca](http://www.jamesmowat.ca). Other communication can come in the form of emails, phone calls, School Messenger, and notices.

Teachers may also communicate through the agenda, classroom newsletters, telephone calls, teacher Microsites, Apps such as Remind or Seesaw, or Gmail. We encourage parents to also call us whenever they have a question or concern.

### **Computer/Internet Use**

Our school is equipped with a variety of devices to support learning. Prior to being allowed on the internet, each student and their parent or guardian must sign the EIPS Student's Responsible Technology User Agreement which indicates that the student using the internet will do so in accordance with all EIPS policies regarding technology use.

### **Student Conduct**

Elk Island Public Schools has a Student Code of Conduct. Students are accountable for their actions and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour may include, but are not limited to, missing a recess, written reflection, missing activities, or in-school and/or out-of-school suspensions. The behavior is reviewed with the student and alternative actions are discussed. Parents are notified of **repeat** minor offenses or of major offenses.

### **Dress Code**

Students are expected to be dressed appropriately for school and for weather conditions. Please ensure all clothing is appropriate for a school setting. Students wearing inappropriate clothing will be asked to change. Make-up is not considered appropriate for elementary students. Shoes must be worn at all times. Each child needs two pairs of shoes, one for indoor use and one for outdoor wear. Indoor shoes should have soles that do not mark the floor. Depending on the activity, students may be asked to change into appropriate attire for Physical Education. Because so many pairs of shoes are similar, **parents should put the child's name on all footwear.** Hats may not be worn inside the school unless it is 'hat day.'

### **First Nations, Métis, Inuit**

James Mowat School acknowledges that we are on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene and Nakota Sioux. We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries. We strive to build a safe and caring environment where cultural practices and traditions are honored and celebrated. We honour not only those who have walked before us, but those who will walk in years to come.

### **Home Assistance**

Parents often ask what they can do to assist their child with his/her schoolwork, or how they can help their child improve his/her grades. The following is a brief list of the most common tips parents may use:

1. Make sure your child has enough sleep each night.
2. Make sure your child has a good breakfast and a nutritious lunch.
3. Check with your child daily as to what assignments he/she has that day.
4. Sign or initial the agenda book daily.
5. Check to make sure your child has all his/her books and supplies.
6. Set aside a daily time and quiet space to do homework and study.
7. Have your child read and review daily, even if no tests are scheduled.
8. Call or email your child's teacher if your child is having difficulty understanding what to do.

### **Hot Lunches**

The Parent Council sponsors several 'hot lunches' over the course of the year. These are pre-sold approximately 2 weeks in advance and brought in on the specified day. Information on dates and type of hot lunch available can be found in the School Newsletter and Parent Council sends home notices prior to each hot lunch to specifying when the order deadline is. All hot lunches are ordered online at [www.jamesmowat.hotlunches.net](http://www.jamesmowat.hotlunches.net). If you have any questions or concerns regarding hot lunch, please email Parent Council at [jamesmowatpaa@gmail.com](mailto:jamesmowatpaa@gmail.com).

### **Jay PRIDE Awards**

James Mowat recognizes students who take pride in our school through perseverance, respect, integrity, discipline and excellence. Students may be commended in the classroom and during daily announcements.

### **Lost and Found Box**

We have a 'lost and found' box located just outside the Library. Students and parents are asked to check the lost and found box if they are missing any items. The box is emptied three times a year and all items that are not claimed are given to charity.

### **Medication**

Parents/guardians must complete and sign the appropriate forms before medications will be administered at the school. Please contact the office for the appropriate forms. Students should bring medication to the office to be stored and administered unless otherwise indicated on the

Medication/Personal Care Management form. Students will come to the office to receive medication that they require. When students are leaving the school grounds for a field trip, teachers will take the medication required with them.

### **Parent Advisory/School Council**

The James Mowat School Council/Parent Council is a body of parents that meet approximately once a month. Parent Council has an open dialogue and acts in an advisory capacity with school administration. They organize many special events for our school, including a Halloween Dance, a monthly Hot Lunch program, and many more. Parent Council also fundraises to provide financial support to our classrooms and special programs at our school.

All parents are welcome to attend the council meetings and participate in school activities. Please read the monthly newsletter or check out their [Facebook](#) page for more information on parent council meetings and events.

### **Volunteers**

As a school we are very appreciative of the assistance that we receive from our parents and community volunteers. If anyone is interested in volunteering please contact our office and let us know your area of interest. Some of the areas that we have received assistance in the past are reading to and listening to students read, working within the classroom, making classroom materials, supervising field trips, clerical work in the office and the library and coming in as guest speakers on special topics of interest. All these make the educational experience more meaningful for our students. Following School Board procedure, all volunteers will be required to complete a Volunteer Form which is available at the school office. This form is only valid for one year.

### **Parent Visitors**

The staff at James Mowat School are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all children. We therefore request your cooperation with the following procedures;

- We require all parents to sign out their child in the office if they are picking their child up outside the regular pick up times. If you are picking up your child early, please come to the office instead of waiting outside your child's classroom. We will be very happy to call your child down to the office. We cannot send children out of the school, to wait outside, at the request of a parent.
- If parents have materials or lunches to deliver to their child during the day, we ask that you please come to the office and we will be happy to do this for you.
- All visitors and volunteers must wear a volunteer/visitors badge and sign in at the office.

*We thank you for your support and look forward to having you visit our school.*

### **Personal Property**

All private items that the students bring to school should be clearly labeled with the student's name. These include clothing items such as mitts, shoes, boots, and school supplies. Students should not bring games, toys, electronics, etc. to the school. Any student who brings these does



so at his/her own risk. Although every effort will be made to try to recover such lost or stolen items, the school is not responsible for their security.

### **Phones**

Students will be allowed to use the school phone only in case of emergencies or school related matters. They must obtain the consent of the homeroom teacher who will either send a note or contact the office prior to the student being allowed to use the phone.

As per EIPS Board Procedure 145 students shall not access personal communication devices at school unless required for diagnosed medical conditions or an identified inclusive educational need. Students are to keep their personal communication device in their backpacks during the school day.

### **Playground Conduct**

Common sense and safe practices should guide playground activities. Students need to use all equipment in the way that it was intended (example: walk up the ladder of the slide and slide down the slide, sit while on the swings, etc.). Students are responsible for their own actions and need to be aware of where their hands and feet land at all times. Language should be appropriate for an elementary school playground and respectful to other students and supervisors. Students who do not use due care may be asked to leave the playground.

### **Public Health Services**

The following Health Unit services are available to students for this school year:

#### *Public Health Nursing – All grades*

- \* Communicable diseases control and emergencies as necessary
- \* Health education on a variety of health related topics

#### *Kindergarten*

- \* It is strongly advised that your child should complete the recommended immunization during the kindergarten year. Please contact your nearest Health Unit office to make an appointment. Immunization is NOT given to kindergarten children in the school setting.

#### *Grade 6*

- \* Hepatitis B Immunization Series
- \* Before any immunization is given in school, a consent card will be sent home for your signature. After immunization a notice will be sent home. Students are encouraged to keep this record for future reference.

#### *Speech, Language and Hearing*

Speech-Language Pathologists provide speech and language assessments and intervention services in the schools or at the local Health Unit office. Referrals can be

made through the teacher. An Audiologist is available at the Health Unit to do hearing tests.

### **Reporting Periods and Interviews**

Report cards are issued 3 times a year: end of November, mid-March and end of June. Parent-teacher interviews are scheduled for November and March.

### **Report Card Access**

To access the your child's report card, you will need to either log into your PowerSchool Parent Portal, or create your PowerSchool Parent Portal account. Both can be found at: <https://powerschool.eips.ca/public/home.html>.

If you are having difficulty logging into your PowerSchool Parent Portal, please contact us at school. Once you set up and/or log into your account, click on the "Communicating Student Learning" button. This will take you to the report card. Click on a scale to view a description of the scale levels. Click on the + to expand subjects or comments.

If you wish to print the report card, scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the "print" button. You can either print the condensed or full version.

### **School Fees**

School supplies such as pencils, pens, erasers, scribblers, etc. remain the responsibility of the students. A list of supplies is prepared each spring and sent home with the students indicating what they will need for the next year.

### **School Fees - Field Trips**

Field trips are charged on a per trip, cost recovery basis. Teachers planning field trips will notify parents in advance. The notice will outline the time of departure, anticipated time of return and type of activities that will be involved. Parents will be asked to sign a consent form indicating that they are aware that their child will be leaving school grounds during the day and approve of such leave.

Students going on any field trip are reminded that these are considered part of the school program and all school and EIPS policies and procedures apply. Furthermore, students are ambassadors of James Mowat School and need to conduct themselves accordingly. Students who misbehave on trips may be sent home, returned to school, restricted from going on other trips, or be given other consequences as deemed appropriate.

Where bus transportation is provided, all the rules of the EIPS bussing policy shall apply. When extra supervisors are required or invited to come along, they must be a minimum of 18 years of age as per EIPS policy.

### **School Fees – Noon Supervision**

The James Mowat School lunchroom program is an optional service for the convenience of parents whose children are unable to go home for lunch. Students are welcome to stay daily or when the need arises.

The lunch program is cost recovery program with payments covering the cost of hiring supervisors.

Current fees for noon supervision are:

**Daily \$1.00**

**Yearly \$100.00 (due October 31<sup>st</sup>)**

**Family Plan (3+ students) \$ 200.00 (due October 31<sup>st</sup>)**

Children who stay for lunch are expected to use appropriate behavior which includes:

1. Staying seated in a desk.
2. Using inside quiet voices.
3. Asking permission to go get a drink or go to the washroom.
4. Waiting until the end of lunch to throw garbage away, recycle juice containers and clean desks.

Lunches should be fully prepared and ready to eat as students do not have access to microwaves.

After eating, the remaining time is to be spent outside so it is important that students dress appropriately for the weather. If the weather is too cold or wet, students are kept indoors and partake in games and other activities.

Students who stay for lunch are not allowed to leave the school grounds without written permission from their parents.

### **School Fees - Making a Payment**

School fee information is posted on the PowerSchool Parent Portal by late September. All fees are due within 30 days of being posted. To access your fee information, simply log in to the PowerSchool Parent Portal and go to “Student Fees.” There you can view your fees and pay online using Visa, MasterCard or INTERAC Online—when available from your financial institution.

Don’t forget to log in to the PowerSchool Parent Portal regularly throughout the year. Fees are often added to your child’s account to cover the cost of certain school activities such as field trips, athletic-team fees, etc.

We strongly encourage all payments to be made through the PowerSchool Parent Portal, however, parents may still submit fee payments (cash or cheque) directly to the school. Cheques should be made payable to James Mowat School.

## **Safety**

The safety of our students and staff is always a high priority. During class time, the front door will remain open, but all other doors will be locked. We remind all parents and visitors to our school to always sign in when you visit us.

## **Supervision**

Teachers provide outside supervision starting at 8:15am in the morning, during the first and second recess, and from 3:05pm to 3:20pm after school. Students should not be arriving at school prior to 8:15am and should be on their way home by 3:20pm. Students who are not in the lunchroom program and go home for lunch should not return to school prior to 12:15pm.

## **SchoolMessenger**

Ongoing communication with our families is important to us. Elk Island Public Schools uses School Messenger as one way of sharing information directly with our families by phone and email. Messages may include bus cancellations or delays, inclement weather, upcoming events, last-minute cancellations, parental engagement opportunities, emergency notices, and more.

Phone calls going out through SchoolMessenger will display one of the following toll-free numbers rather than the school or Division number.

Messages programmed from Student Transportation: 1-833-298-5234

Messages programmed from schools and the Division office: 1-833-202-1419

Parents/guardians can call back to this number to replay all recent phone messages they've received through SchoolMessenger. If you've missed a call or would like to replay a message to confirm you have all the details, simply call back the applicable 1-833 number and follow the prompts to repeat any recent messages.

Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) requires the Division to provide all recipients with the opportunity to unsubscribe from receiving these emails, as they may occasionally contain content that is commercial in nature. You can choose to unsubscribe at any time by clicking the "Unsubscribe" link in the footer at the very bottom of any email you receive. If you do unsubscribe, you will no longer receive any of these updates. If you ever need to re-subscribe in the future, contact your child's school. **Please note:** Those who unsubscribe risk missing important information on activities and projects including school-based events, fundraising activities, musical or theatre productions, school photos, dances, etc.

## **Water Bottles**

Students are allowed to have a small water bottle with them in class. They are asked to take their bottles home and clean them on a regular basis.

## **Weather and Road Conditions**

Because Elk Island Public Schools covers such a wide area, it has been divided into four regions. For Fort Saskatchewan the school bus service, including all pay-ride bus services, shall be suspended when a temperature of -40°C or a wind chill factor of -50°C is measured at the Edmonton International Airport at 5:00am.

In the event that conditions are extreme, bus service may be suspended in any or all regions of EIPS when weather or road conditions warrant. In this instance:

- suspension of bus service information will be released to the public by local area radio and television stations commencing at 6:00am;
- a message will be placed on EIPS' central switchboard (**780-464-3477**)

**EIPS believes parents have the right and responsibility to make choices for their children based on their beliefs and perceptions of safety during times of inclement weather even when buses are running and schools are open.** For safety of students who ride school buses, it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children are suitably dressed for coping with the weather conditions and arrangements have been made for alternate shelter for their child if no one is home.

Our homepage website, [www.jamesmowat.ca](http://www.jamesmowat.ca), now has a "Transportation" button on the top right-hand corner. This can be used to check if your child's bus is running on time.