OCEAN CREST ACADEMY

2739 Dunsmuir Avenue, Cumberland BC V0R 1S0

Parent & Student Handbook

Welcome to Ocean Crest Academy

Dear Parents, Caregivers, and Students,

Welcome to Ocean Crest Academy.

We are proud to offer a learning environment where students are known, supported, and challenged to grow. At OCA, learning extends beyond the classroom into the mountains, forests, and ocean environments that define our region. Students will regularly engage in outdoor learning, field studies, and experiential programming that connect academic concepts to real-world application.

Ocean Crest Academy is a special place that strives to provide a safe, supportive, and engaging environment in which each student can flourish. We are committed to building strong relationships between students, staff, and families, and to fostering a school culture grounded in respect, responsibility, and curiosity.

We believe that education is a partnership between school and home. Parents and caregivers are a child's first and most influential educators, and we value your role in supporting your child's learning journey. Open communication and collaboration between families and the school are essential to student success.

This handbook provides important information about our program, expectations, and policies. Please take the time to read it carefully and review it with your child. We look forward to working together to create a meaningful and rewarding school experience.

Warm regards,
Ocean Crest Academy

Core Values

Ocean Crest Academy is grounded in a set of core values that guide all aspects of school life. We are committed to experiential learning, where students learn through direct engagement with their environment and community. Academic excellence is supported through a strong

foundation aligned with the BC curriculum, ensuring students are well prepared for future pathways.

We place a high value on connection, fostering meaningful relationships between students, teachers, and the broader community. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, their actions, and their role within the school community. Environmental stewardship is central to our philosophy, and students are expected to develop respect for the natural world and an understanding of their impact on it.

We also prioritize student well-being, recognizing that emotional, physical, and social health are essential for effective learning. Our goal is to support the development of confident, capable, and compassionate young people.

Program Overview

Ocean Crest Academy offers a comprehensive Grades 8–12 program that integrates academic learning with experiential and outdoor education. Students engage in core subjects such as mathematics, sciences, humanities, and language arts, while also participating in project-based learning, leadership development, and extended field experiences.

The program is designed to provide both structure and flexibility. Students are challenged academically while also being given opportunities to apply their learning in meaningful and authentic contexts. Outdoor education is not an add-on, but a core component of the program, with regular opportunities for exploration, environmental study, and physical activity.

The school operates on a four-day academic week, Monday through Thursday, allowing for longer, more immersive learning blocks. Fridays are used for extended field experiences, enrichment opportunities, student support, and staff planning. This structure supports deeper learning while maintaining a balanced pace.

Program Delivery Framework (Founding Year)

During the founding year, Ocean Crest Academy operates in partnership with School District 47 through the Partnership in Education (PIE) program. This partnership ensures that all students are enrolled within a recognized educational framework that meets the requirements of the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Students are registered through PIE for administrative and reporting purposes. A BC-certified teacher is assigned through PIE and works in collaboration with Ocean Crest Academy staff.

This teacher conducts regular weekly check-ins, supports alignment with BC curriculum standards, and ensures that student learning outcomes meet provincial expectations. PIE is responsible for submitting formal reports to the Ministry.

All instruction, programming, and day-to-day learning experiences are fully designed and delivered by Ocean Crest Academy educators. Students will experience the full OCA program, including experiential and outdoor learning, without interruption or modification. The partnership operates in a supportive capacity and does not change the nature or quality of the student experience, aside from the inclusion of an online reporting component.

Daily Schedule

The school day runs from 8:45 AM to 2:45 PM, Tuesday through Friday. Students should arrive between 8:30 and 8:45 AM to allow time to prepare for the day. It is important that students arrive on time, as late arrivals can disrupt learning and impact group activities.

The daily schedule includes a balance of academic instruction, experiential learning, and project work. Students will spend time both indoors and outdoors each day, depending on the program and weather conditions. Breaks and lunch are scheduled to allow students time to rest, refuel, and socialize.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for student learning and engagement. Due to the integrated and experiential nature of the program, missed days can significantly impact a student's experience and understanding.

Parents are required to notify the school of any absence prior to the start of the school day. If the absence is due to illness, families are asked to provide a brief description of symptoms. Extended absences should be discussed with the school in advance.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled school days and remain for the full duration of the day unless prior arrangements have been made. Consistent attendance supports both academic success and the development of strong peer relationships.

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Arrival and Departure

Students should arrive at school prepared for the day, with all required materials and appropriate clothing. Families are asked to ensure safe drop-off procedures and to be mindful of student movement in parking and arrival areas.

At the end of the school day, students are expected to leave campus promptly unless they are participating in a supervised activity. Parents are asked to arrive on time for pick-up to support a smooth and safe dismissal process.

Clothing and Gear

Ocean Crest Academy operates in all weather conditions, and students are expected to be prepared for outdoor learning every day. Appropriate clothing includes waterproof rain gear, warm layers, and suitable footwear for hiking and uneven terrain.

Students should bring a complete change of clothes, including socks, to ensure they remain comfortable throughout the day. Clothing should be practical, durable, and appropriate for physical activity. Families are encouraged to label all items clearly to avoid loss.

Food and Nutrition

Students are required to bring a nutritious lunch and snacks each day, as well as a reusable water bottle. Given the physical and outdoor nature of the program, students should have sufficient food to maintain energy throughout the day.

Families are encouraged to provide healthy food options and to avoid highly processed foods or excessive sweets. Reusable containers are recommended to reduce waste and support environmental responsibility.

Personal Items and Technology

Students should not bring items that may disrupt learning or pose a safety concern. Valuable items should remain at home, as the school is not responsible for lost or damaged belongings.

Personal technology devices are not required for the program and should only be used when directed by staff for educational purposes. Students are expected to follow all guidelines regarding appropriate use of technology.

Health and Illness

Students who are unwell should remain at home to support their recovery and to protect the health of others. A student should not attend school if they are unable to participate fully in daily activities.

Students may return to school once their symptoms have improved and they are able to engage in regular learning. If a student becomes ill during the school day, parents will be contacted and asked to arrange prompt pick-up.

Families are responsible for keeping the school informed of any health concerns or medical conditions that may impact their child's participation.

Emergency Procedures

Ocean Crest Academy has procedures in place to respond to medical emergencies, fire, and environmental events. Staff are trained to respond appropriately, and student safety is the highest priority in all situations.

Students will participate in regular safety drills to ensure they understand procedures and expectations. In the event of an emergency, staff will remain with students until they can be safely reunited with their families.

Student Code of Conduct

Ocean Crest Academy is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment. Students are expected to behave in a way that supports their own learning and the learning of others.

Students must demonstrate respect toward teachers, peers, and the environment. They are expected to follow school rules, participate actively in learning, and take responsibility for their actions. Disruptive behaviour that interferes with the learning of others is not acceptable.

Students also have a responsibility to contribute to a positive school culture, where all individuals feel safe, included, and valued.

Safe Environment

Ocean Crest Academy is committed to maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all students. Bullying, harassment, and discrimination are not tolerated under any circumstances.

Students are encouraged to report any concerns to a staff member as soon as possible. Early reporting allows staff to address issues promptly and effectively. Students are also supported in learning how to resolve conflict respectfully and constructively.

We recognize that conflict is a natural part of social development. Staff work with students to distinguish between normal conflict and more serious behaviour, and to develop the skills needed to navigate challenges in a healthy way.

Discipline Approach

The school uses a progressive and restorative approach to discipline. Minor concerns are addressed through conversation, guidance, and redirection. If behaviours are repeated or more serious, parents may be contacted and additional supports put in place.

In cases where behaviour significantly impacts the safety or well-being of others, school leadership will become involved. Consequences may include removal from activities, suspension, or, in rare cases, removal from the program.

The goal of all discipline is to support student growth, accountability, and positive behaviour.

Communication

Effective communication is essential to a successful school experience. Parents are encouraged to communicate regularly with their child's teacher regarding any questions or concerns.

If an issue cannot be resolved at the classroom level, families may contact school leadership for further support. Communication should be respectful and focused on supporting student success.

Parents are asked to schedule meetings for more in-depth discussions, as arrival and dismissal times are not appropriate for extended conversations.

Parent Involvement

Ocean Crest Academy values the involvement of families in the school community. Parents are encouraged to participate in school events, volunteer opportunities, and community initiatives where possible.

A strong partnership between home and school enhances the overall experience for students and contributes to a positive and supportive environment.

Assessment and Reporting

Student learning is assessed using BC curriculum standards, along with project-based and experiential learning evidence. Students receive ongoing feedback to support their growth and development.

During the founding year, reporting is supported through the PIE partnership. Families may be required to access an online reporting system to view student progress and documentation.

Outdoor Learning Expectations

Outdoor education is a foundational element of the Ocean Crest Academy program and reflects our commitment to experiential, place-based learning. We believe that meaningful learning extends beyond the classroom and that regular time in nature supports not only academic growth, but also physical well-being, resilience, independence, and a deeper connection to the environment.

At Ocean Crest Academy, students participate in **daily outdoor experiences** as part of their regular school schedule. Much of this programming takes place in the **Cumberland Forest**, which serves as an extension of our classroom. This nearby natural environment provides rich opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, including science, physical education, environmental stewardship, and reflective practice. Students engage in activities such as hiking, nature observation, land-based learning, team-building, and outdoor skill development, all guided by qualified staff.

Through consistent time outdoors, students develop confidence, problem-solving skills, and an appreciation for the natural world. Safety, preparation, and appropriate supervision are integral to all outdoor activities. Students are expected to come to school prepared for outdoor conditions each day, with appropriate clothing and footwear suitable for varying weather.

In addition to daily use of the Cumberland Forest, Ocean Crest Academy may offer extended field trips or excursions to locations beyond the immediate community. These experiences are designed to enrich the curriculum and provide broader learning opportunities. **Any field trips that take place outside of Cumberland will require signed parent/guardian permission forms in advance**, and families will be provided with detailed information regarding the nature of the trip, transportation, supervision, and any associated costs.

Outdoor education at Ocean Crest Academy is grounded in a philosophy of respect—for self, others, and the environment—and is an essential part of our approach to educating the whole child.

Closing

Thank you for being part of Ocean Crest Academy. We are excited to work together to create a meaningful, engaging, and supportive learning experience for all students. Together, we are building a community grounded in respect, curiosity, and connection.