



Hans Helgesen Elementary

4983 Rocky Point Road, Victoria, B.C. V9C 4G4
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Tuesday, September 8th, 2026.

Welcome back to school! We are looking forward to a wonderful year of learning and growth at Hans Helgesen. I am honoured to be part of this supportive school community and am especially excited to be working with the wonderful children at Hans Helgesen. We have an incredibly skilled staff and exciting plans in the works as we start the school year. This newsletter outlines some information about the first weeks of school.

This week we are opening our doors to **202 students** in 9 classroom divisions. Today we were joined by **14 new students in grades 1-5**, and we will be welcoming **39 Kindergarten children** in the coming days. Today we are extending a warm welcome to our new Grade 1-5 students: **Royce, Alida, Kaden, Kole, Charlotte, Bauer, Evan, Summer, Elowen, Brody, Bobby, Sullivan, Alexander and Wesley.**

We have a few new staff members to introduce at Hans Helgesen this year. We would like to welcome **Alyssa Richard, Lynelle Ridewood, Tinisha Leung, Maxie Southern and Elizabeth Kannangara.** We are so glad you are here!

Across the District, we are experiencing changes in student enrolment and many new registrations this week. Students will remain with last year's classes most of this week. New students will be joining grade level peers for some introductory activities for the first few days.

Once student enrolment is confirmed at all schools in the District, we will be instructed to move children to their new classes. This is standard practice across the District. *Changing student numbers are very important this week as we finalize staffing levels and arrange support for students.* If you are moving and have not contacted the office, please let us know. Information about class configurations and teaching assignments will be posted in our next newsletter. As noted previously, **we cannot consider any requests for class placements at this time.** Thank you for your understanding.

On Wednesday, children in Grades 1-5 resume regular school hours of 8:30 – 2:38. Kindergarten children will have a short outdoor visit on Thursday, September 10th from 1:00-2:00, followed by alternating morning and afternoon visits. **Full Day Kindergarten will begin on Wednesday, September 16th.**

Frequently Asked Questions:

What are the school hours this year?

First bell (Students go to classrooms)	8:25 am
Second bell (Announcements & classes begin)	8:30 am
Recess	10:03 – 10:18
Lunch eating time	11:38 am – 12:00 pm
Lunch play	12:00 pm – 12:38 pm
Dismissal	2:38 pm

When should we send school supplies?

Students are encouraged to wait to bring supplies until they move to new classrooms. We will not need supplies at school while students are in their former classes. Individual teachers may request special classroom supplies which are particular to their classroom program.

When does the lunch program start?

Please look for information going home this week regarding the Flourish Food program. Lunch delivery for this program begins next Monday, September 14th. We always try to have small snacks available for children needing food at school.

What are the morning routines? How does drop-off work?

Teacher supervision is provided for 15 minutes before school. Supervision begins outside at 8:10 for our 8:25 bell. For safety reasons, *students should not be dropped off earlier*, unless they are arriving by school bus. Bus students will be supervised by designated school staff upon their scheduled arrival.

Student drop-off will continue to be supported by staff in the lower parking loop at the front of the school. The upper parking lot is reserved for staff and buses only. As noted in last week's newsletter, the Ministry's Childcare centre is now open in the back annex on our site. **Parents will be escorting their pre-school aged children to the centre in the morning.** We are encouraging families attending the daycare to access the parent parking lot outside of our busy drop off and pick up times. Thank you for your patience as we establish new routines.

Thank you for helping our staff keep students safe by following the traffic loop and not pausing to park in the through lane. We appreciate your cooperation!

What is happening at the Ministry of Education and Childcare's new Childcare Centre at the back of the school?

We are excited that the new childcare centre is operational and we look forward to a "grand opening" soon. The new build provided spaces for an additional 56 children from infants to school age. The YMCA operates the site in the centre and will continue to operate inside the school. We are excited about the partnership opportunities and look forward to having tours of the centre at our upcoming "Welcome Back Picnic" this month.

What are some important play time rules at Hans Helgesen?

Students are encouraged to be kind, safe and responsible. This means keeping hands to self and behaving safely around others. We encourage students to include others in their play and to be respectful. ***Students are asked to leave personal toys, sports equipment, collector cards and electronics at home***, unless teachers have requested these items be brought to class. More information on expectations for learning and behaviour will be sent home with teachers, along with our District Code of Conduct.

When is after school supervision?

Dismissal is at 2:38 and staff supervision ends at 2:53, or upon the arrival of the last bus. Thank you for arranging to have your child in the care of a parent/guardian outside of supervision times. Our school rules and expectations remain in effect while students are on site.

How can parents assist with student safety at school?

Thank you for encouraging your children to follow the direction of the crossing guards, walk safely within the crosswalk and ensure that bikes are walked on and off school grounds. We appreciate your help to teach children to stay on the sidewalks and paths near the parking lot.

Thanks to parents for reinforcing the site boundaries and play expectations we have for children during the school day. Children know that jumping off the top of play structures and backstops is not allowed during or after school. Parking lots and our “Neighbourhood” forest at the front of the school are not considered play spaces.

Are dogs allowed on the playground?

We love pets, but during the bookends of the school day (including pick-up and drop off times) animals are not allowed on school grounds. Sometimes, there are special occasions arranged for animals to visit classrooms as part of curricular programs. We rely on owners to pick up after their pets if they are visiting school property during evenings and weekends.

Will my child be supervised at the bus?

Yes. Bus supervision is provided before and after school. Every afternoon, District bus students are met by our staff and checked off the bus list as they board. Daycare providers are responsible for taking attendance at daycare buses. Parents must **contact daycares directly prior to the end of the school day** if they do not want their child to take their daycare bus.

What should I do if my child needs to leave school early?

Thank you for sending a note or emailing your child’s teacher ahead of time if you know you will be arriving early to pick up your child. If you are needing your child picked up in an emergency, please call the school and check in at the office upon arrival. We will ensure your child meets you at the office.

How do I join the PAC?

All parents are welcome to participate as members of PAC. Our PAC meets monthly to learn more about school happenings, offer feedback and participate in planning school-wide events and fundraising. We appreciate the dedicated work of our parent volunteers. **PAC will be hosting their first PAC meeting of the year in the library, following the “Welcome Back Picnic”.** More details to come!

It was wonderful to see so many families at school today. Enjoy September and the excitement of “Back to School”!

Sincerely,

Karen Sjerven

Principal



Karen Sjerven (she/her)

Principal

Hans Helgesen Elementary School

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<https://hanshelgesen.web.sd62.bc.ca/>

We acknowledge the traditional territories of the Coast Salish: T'Sou-ke Nation and Sc'ianew Nation and Nuu-chah-nulth: Pacheedaht Nation. We also recognize some of our schools reside on the traditional territory of the Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation.