

Golden Hills School Division #75



Student Handbook

George Freeman School

1150 Edgeview Road, Strathmore, Alberta T1P0H2



Welcome to George Freeman School

George Freeman School is a K–9 school located in Strathmore that serves over 500 students. Supported by the Golden Hills School Division, we are proud to provide an accessible, high-quality education to our students and the Strathmore community. As a school, we integrate our values into all of our classes and extracurricular opportunities to foster a holistic learning experience.

Our motto, “*Building Everyday Heroes*,” reflects our commitment to nurturing student potential, preparing them for future challenges, and empowering them to make meaningful contributions to society. Inspired by the legacy of George Freeman—whose life exemplified service, resilience, and care for community—we mentor students to live out our three pillars:

- **Action in Character** – encouraging kindness, perseverance, teamwork, and always giving one’s best effort.
- **Action in Our World** – promoting citizenship, volunteering, environmental stewardship, and respect for others.
- **Action in Life** – emphasizing the importance of embracing opportunities, caring for physical and mental wellness, and developing resilience through sport and active living.

Students thrive academically, socially, and personally within a supportive community of teachers, peers, and families. Through academics, athletics, fine arts, specialized academies, and community service, students gain the confidence, skills, and values to become well-rounded individuals who actively contribute to their communities.

GFS Communication Plan

At George Freeman School, we value open and transparent communication with all stakeholders. We adhere to Golden Hills School Division policies, Human Rights legislation, and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) to ensure our communication practices are respectful and secure.

Our Commitment to Families:

1. School Website • The [George Freeman School website](#) serves as a central hub for all essential information, including calendars, announcements, and updates. Please check it regularly to stay informed and notify us of any inconsistencies.
2. Primary Communication
 - Our primary methods of communication include email and phone. Parents are encouraged to reach out with questions or concerns, which we address promptly to foster collaborative problem-solving.
3. Communication Hours & Procedures
 - Staff are available to respond to messages between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm on weekdays. We aim to reply within 24-48 hours. For emergencies, please contact the main office directly. To minimize disruptions, avoid contacting your child during instructional time.
4. Classroom Communication
 - Teachers may choose to send weekly email updates to provide insights into classroom activities, upcoming events, and suggestions for parental support at home.
5. School-Wide Communication
 - Important school-wide information and updates are sent to parent-provided email addresses. Follow us on our Facebook or Instagram for additional updates and highlights.
6. PowerSchool
 - Parents can track their child's academic progress and receive learner profiles through PowerSchool, which are emailed twice a year. Log in at [PowerSchool](#) for real-time updates.

Parent and Guardian Responsibilities:

- Stay informed by reading school communications, checking the website regularly, and returning completed forms promptly.
- Keep your contact information up to date, including phone numbers, email addresses, and mailing addresses.

- Address any concerns directly with your child's teacher early to facilitate timely resolutions.
- Please schedule appointments instead of dropping in to respect teaching and instructional time.
- Participate in student learning conferences and consider attending School Council meetings to stay engaged with the school community.
- For urgent matters, call the Main Office directly.
- Respect the communication methods and schedules established by your child's teacher.
- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to address concerns effectively, fostering a partnership that benefits students.

School Operations

Office Hours

The school office is open from 8:00 AM until 3:45 PM during school days.

Bell Schedule

K-2		Grade 3-6		Grade 7-9		PE Schedule	
8:20	Start of Day	8:20-9:05	Block 1	8:20-9:05	Block 1	8:20-9:05	Block 1
		9:05-9:50	Block 2	9:05-9:50	Block 2	9:05-9:50	Block 2
		9:50-10:30	Block 3	9:50-10:35	Block 3	9:50-10:35	Block 3
10:10-10:25	Recess	10:30-10:45	Break	10:35-10:45	Break	10:35-10:45	Break
		10:45-11:30	Block 4	10:45-11:30	Block 4	10:45-11:30	Block 4
		11:30-12:10	Block 5	11:30-12:15	Block 5	11:30-12:15	Block 5
11:45-12:05	Lunch	12:10-12:30	Lunch	12:15-12:55	Lunch	12:15-12:50	Lunch
12:05-12:25	Recess	12:30-12:55	Recess	12:55-1:40	Block 6	12:50-1:30	Block 6
		12:55-1:00	Transition time	1:40-2:20	Block 7	1:30-2:10	Block 7
		1:00-1:40	Block 6	2:20-3:00	Block 8	2:10-2:50	Block 8
		1:40-2:20	Block 7				
		2:20-3:00	Block 8				
3:00	Dismissal						

Cold Weather Policy

If the weather is -20C, or -25C with the windchill, Admin will declare an indoor recess. If the temperature does not reach this threshold, students will be expected to go outside, unless otherwise determined by the Principal. It is expected that students are prepared to go outside and should have adequate winter clothing. This includes snowpants, a warm winter jacket, gloves, toque, and winter boots.

- **Before School:** if the weather is -20C, or -25C with the windchill students will be able to access the school beginning at 8:00 am.
 - **Students on the Bus:** GHSD Transportation expects that all students riding the bus are prepared with winter clothing in the event that there is an accident, delay, or breakdown.
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Student Expectations at George Freeman School

George Freeman School is dedicated to creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment that encourages academic success and personal growth.

Policy Objectives:

1. Promote a Safe and Inclusive Environment: Foster a community where all students feel valued, respected, and safe.
 2. Emphasize Academic Excellence: Encourage regular attendance, timely completion of assignments, and active participation in learning.
 3. Develop Character and Values: Instill integrity, responsibility, honesty, and perseverance in students.
 4. Respect: Maintain a respectful attitude toward teachers, administrators, and staff.
 5. Adhere to the Dress Code: Contribute to a professional and respectful school atmosphere.
 6. Participate in Extracurricular Activities: Support personal growth and school spirit through active engagement in activities beyond the classroom.
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Attendance Policy

George Freeman School recognizes that consistent attendance is critical to student success.

Regular school attendance is a legal requirement under Alberta's Education Act, ensuring that students fully engage in their learning. Punctuality is also essential, as arriving on time maximizes learning opportunities and minimizes disruptions.

Parents play a crucial role in supporting attendance by ensuring their child is present at school and notifying the school of any absences. Clear and timely communication about absences helps to support student success.

Extended Absence Due to Vacation

We recognize that families may occasionally choose to travel during the school year. When students are absent for family vacations or other extended leaves, it is the responsibility of the student and their family to ensure that missed work is completed. While teachers will do their best to support students upon their return, they are not expected to provide advance lesson plans or one-on-one catch-up instruction. We encourage families to communicate with the school in advance regarding any planned absences to help support a smooth transition back to class.

Appropriate Dress

We recognize that there is a diversity of opinion in society as to what constitutes suitable dress for school activities. Students are expected to present themselves in a way that enhances the school's learning climate and respects the age range and diversity of our school community. Students not dressed appropriately will have the choice to change into more appropriate attire or return home to change into more suitable clothing.

Guidelines for Appropriate Dress

- Tops/Bottoms must provide appropriate coverage.
 - Footwear must be worn at all times
 - Clothing must be worn in a way that ensures undergarments are not visible.
 - No clothing portraying violence, offensive language, or depicting drugs or alcohol
 - Suitable for the learning activity
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Technology Policy

At George Freeman School, we believe that technology is a tool for learning and must be used responsibly. As such, students are required to respect the privacy of others while ensuring they use devices appropriately and securely. This includes accessing and sharing only content that is both age-appropriate and suitable for a school environment. Our technology policy is based upon [Golden Hills School Division Administrative Procedure 145](#) regarding the use of personal mobile devices and access to social media.

Personal Devices:

- Personal mobile devices should remain in lockers during school hours.
- Headphones may be used only with teacher permission for educational purposes.
- Students are expected to use social media responsibly, promoting respect and kindness.

Consequences for Violations:

- Loss of technology privileges.
 - Disciplinary actions for repeated or severe violations.
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Volunteering and Parent Involvement

1. Opportunities to Get Involved:
 - Parents can contribute by assisting in classrooms, school events, and extracurricular programs.
 2. How to Volunteer:
 - Visit the main office to complete necessary forms and learn about available opportunities
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Transportation Guidelines

1. Bus Safety Rules:
 - Students must follow all bus regulations to ensure a safe commute.
 2. Drop-Off and Pick-Up Zones:
 - Parents are asked to use designated areas to ensure safety and minimize congestion.
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Field Trip and Extracurricular Guidelines

Students participating in extracurricular activities, including trips, are expected to maintain academic and behavioral eligibility. They must adhere to all school rules and demonstrate respect toward staff, peers, and the broader community at all times.

Grievance and Appeals Process

1. Steps to Resolve Concerns:
 - Parents and students are encouraged to address issues directly with teachers first. If issues remain unresolved, contact school administration, and follow Golden Hills School Division procedures if needed.
 2. Commitment to Resolution:
 - The school strives to resolve all concerns fairly and transparently.
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Assessment Policy

Key Principles:

1. Assessment for Learning: Ongoing feedback supports growth and improvement.
2. Assessment of Learning: Summative assessments evaluate student achievements and mastery of concepts.
3. Diverse Methods: Teachers employ various strategies to cater to different learning styles and abilities.
4. Fairness and Equity: Assessments are designed with accommodations as needed to ensure accessibility for all students.

Late/Missing Work Policy:

- Final Submission Date: Assignments must be submitted at least one week before each report card.
 - Homework Room: Students with incomplete assignments are encouraged to attend lunchtime support until all work is completed satisfactorily.
 - Insufficient Evidence: Failure to submit work by the final deadline will result in an "Insufficient Evidence" mark, reflected as zero.
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Athletics

George Freeman School offers a variety of sports and athletic programs to promote physical activity and teamwork:

1. Junior High Sports:
 - Students can participate in volleyball, basketball, badminton, track and field, and specialized academies such as soccer and baseball.
 2. Student-Athlete Expectations:
 - Athletes are expected to commit to all practices, games, and tournaments
 - Maintain positive communication with coaches and uphold academic standards.
 - Represent the school's values both on and off the field.
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Academies

At George Freeman School, our academies provide students with opportunities to pursue their passions and develop specialized skills alongside their regular studies. Through a blend of expert instruction, structured training, and a focus on personal growth, our academies help students challenge themselves and build confidence both in and out of the classroom.

- **Soccer Academy:** In partnership with Cavalry FC, students receive professional-level coaching that develops technical skill, tactical awareness, and fitness while fostering teamwork and commitment.
- **Baseball/Fastball Academy:** Athletes enhance their baseball and fastball skills through targeted training and gameplay, focusing on fundamentals, strategy, and leadership on and off the field.
- **Piano Academy:** Students explore their musical abilities through dedicated piano instruction, building technical proficiency, musical literacy, and performance confidence in a supportive environment.

Our academies embody the GFS spirit of excellence by encouraging students to strive for growth, balance academics with personal passions, and represent our school's values with pride.

