

St. Alphonsus School Handbook

2016-2017



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"Open Hands; Caring Hearts"

Christ the Teacher Catholic School Division No. 212
Yorkton, Saskatchewan



VISION

St. Alphonsus School:

- One in which God, His Life, and His Truth are integrated into the entire program and everyday life at school. It is a community involving children, staff, religious personnel, and parents enlightened by the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- Parents are the first educators of their children. We welcome and encourage parental support, involvement, and communication, as they are critical in the education of our children.
- We aspire to develop citizens who will acquire the requisite skills to meet the academic, moral, and ethical needs of today and tomorrow.
- We strive to develop self-discipline in the student while honouring the dignity of the child.
- We strive to foster an environment that is friendly, open, caring and safe, which promotes respect, appreciation, and acceptance of all.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Catholic education of ALL children at St. Alphonsus School is centered on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which is based on creating an environment of unconditional love. Our purpose is to ensure success for all students by helping them develop academically, spiritually, socially, emotionally, and physically.

GENERAL INFORMATION

St. Alphonsus School functions on a six-day rotation schedule.

CLASS SCHEDULE

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 8:55 – 10:30 a.m. | Instructional Time |
| 10:30 – 10:45 a.m. | Recess |
| 10:45 – 11:45 a.m. | Instructional Time |
| 11:45 – 12:30 p.m. | Lunch |
| 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. | Instructional Time |
| 2:00 – 2:15 p.m. | Recess |
| 2:15 – 3:20 p.m. | Instructional Time |

NEWSLETTERS

The newsletter is an important means of communication between the school and our families. The newsletter will be sent home with the

youngest in each family, as well as be emailed to those families that wish to receive an electronic version.

PHONE CALLS

The office telephone is often kept very busy with business calls. We encourage families to make all possible arrangements prior to the school day, as this alleviates the number of calls and messages that must be conveyed to students. *We thank you in advance for your support and assistance in this area!*

For your convenience, the school has a TEXT ONLY (306)641-9901 phone number that you could text your child's attendance, or messages to if you would prefer this form of communication.

A student phone is available to students to make emergency arrangements. Students are required to obtain permission before accessing this phone.

ATTENDANCE AND CHILD SAFETY

If your child will be absent, please contact the school between 8:00 and 8:45 a.m. so that teachers can be made aware of details.

If the school has **not** been informed of a student absence, the school will contact a parent/guardian.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Students are expected to arrive at school between 8:45 and 8:55 a.m. Upon arrival, students are permitted to be in their classrooms to drop off their supplies. Students are then expected to proceed outside until the morning bell to start class.

Upon dismissal, students are expected to go directly home or to the home of their caregivers. Students should wait for their rides at the front of the school.

SCHOOL SAFETY

School Facility

To ensure a safe learning environment we must take considerable measures to keep our building secure. We are requesting that all visitors to our school enter through the main front entrance. It is also important that all visitors check-in at the main office.

All school Exit doors are locked during class times, with the exception of the main front door. All

entrance doors are unlocked during student breaks to provide quick access for use of school facilities and to assist with emergency situations.

Supervision

School supervision by staff begins at 8:40 a.m. and ends after the last bus leaves the school at the end of the day. Supervision during recess and noon hour is provided by an adequate number of staff members at all times.

Emergency Procedures

As a proactive measure for emergency conditions, we will conduct various evacuation and lock-down drills. This will provide students and staff the opportunity to build a calm, natural response to an emergency such as a fire.

PARKING/ SAFETY PATROL/ BUS

- Parents and students are asked to use the crosswalks and follow the Safety Patrol's directions at all times.
- There is no parking, loading, or unloading, in the area along the sidewalk immediately in front of the school. The sidewalks should remain unobstructed at all times.
- Bussing: Students are required to conduct themselves in a quiet, courteous manner that shows consideration for other passengers and for the bus driver.

CITY BUS: CITY OF YORKTON BYLAW

No person shall pass a School Bus, that has its safety lights and stop arms in operation, from either direction; and shall stop at least five (5) metres from the front or rear of the school bus, and shall not proceed until the operation of the school bus safety lights and stops arms have been discontinued. This provision shall apply in all areas of the city, outside of designated school zones.

BICYCLES/ ROLLERBLADES/ SKATEBOARDS/ SCOOTERS

- Students may use their bicycles, rollerblades, skateboards, and scooters as transportation to and from school, but may not use this equipment for recreational activities at recess or lunch.
- Students are expected to walk their bikes on school property and to securely lock them in the designated area.
- Rollerblades should be removed before entering the school.
- The school will not be responsible for any lost or damaged equipment.

STUDENT POSSESSIONS

- The presence of any personal electronic devices such as iPads or cellular phones which may be distracting from the school experience are not allowed. Any "special circumstances" must be addressed or discussed with school staff and/or administration. Failure to follow guidelines may result in the device being confiscated by school staff and/or administration.
- The school is not responsible for the loss of valuable items; these items are better left at home.

LUNCH BREAK

Students staying for lunch will be required to conform to expectations. Eating lunch at school is a privilege. All students are expected to eat in their classrooms using polite manners and quiet conversation with classmates. Failure to do so may result in the loss of this privilege.

Students leaving the school property for lunch must have written/verbal parental permission presented to the homeroom teacher.

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

In keeping with our Christian values, students are expected to dress in a modest and neat fashion. The following guidelines must be observed:

- Tops must be modest and cover the mid-section of the body.
- Only clothing with positive messages and pictures is permitted.
- Hats and other forms of headwear are not to be worn inside the school.
- Outdoor wear (boots, coats, etc.) is not to be worn in the classroom.
- Choices of clothing or accessories that attract undue attention and distract from the learning environment should be avoided. This includes items such as: headbands, bandanas, chains, and excessive jewellery.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

The following school division winter weather guidelines have been established. Temperatures noted include reported windchill factors:

- **Temperature of -29°C and above**
Students are expected to be outdoors.
- **Temperature of -30°C to -35°C**
Students have the option to stay indoors.
- **Temperature of -36°C and colder**
Students must stay indoors.

Please ensure that your child/children are dressed

appropriately.

MEDICATION

SCHOOL POLICY regarding the administration of medication (over-the counter or prescription) requires the completion of an “*ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION*” form by a family physician and by a parent/guardian. Forms are available at the school office.

STUDENT CONDUCT

We expect students to behave in a Christian manner towards each other at all times. We expect children to respect each other and each other's property, to apply themselves diligently to their schoolwork and to apply the teachings of Jesus in their daily lives.

A focus of our school is to create an environment where children feel safe and can learn in a risk-free manner. To help assist us in our endeavours we will focus on pro-social skills. We will assist students in developing positive behaviours in our student population. The ultimate goal is to create students who are self-disciplined and reflective of their behaviours and their actions. The Gospel values of healing and forgiveness will guide us in seeing discipline as an opportunity to teach and nurture.

In managing student behaviour, teachers will deal with problems that may arise. In areas of more serious behaviour problems, there may be intervention by the school's administration. The school's administration will be guided by the Christ the Teacher Administrative Procedures and by the expectations outlined in The Education Act, 1995.

THREAT – RISK GUIDELINES

The Christ the Teacher School Division requires that all threats be treated seriously. A **threat** is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. It can be written, spoken or symbolic, such as a hand gesture. A “threat” may include words or actions to intimidate, intent to inflict harm, harass or bully other persons or damage property.

All “threats” will be assessed. The school Threat Assessment Team will determine the appropriate interventions and disciplinary actions to be taken. Please refer to school division administrative procedure AP 354 Threat Assessment Protocol for further information.

FAIR NOTICE LETTER

The Christ the Teacher School Division is committed to ensure a safe and caring environment in each of its schools. Consequently, the school division has developed a Threat Assessment Protocol to deal with high-risk incidents. These are incidents that involve weapons, threats to harm, or vicious assaults. Though such incidents occur very rarely the division wants to respond in an appropriate manner that ensures the safety of students and staff, while at the same time respecting the rights of those involved with the incident.

The division recognizes that many threats, especially by younger children, are likely not serious. However, it is important that students and parents know that the school will respond in accordance to this protocol. In addition, part of our purpose is to educate students so they know that such behaviours are not acceptable.

The Division Threat Assessment Protocol administrative procedure can be viewed at www.christtheteacher.ca.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this protocol, contact the Director of Education, Mrs. Barbara MacKese, at (306) 783-8787.

PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES

St. Alphonsus School provides programming for students in Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8. In addition to offering the same high quality instruction and curriculum as other schools, St. Alphonsus School also provides a number of additional supports to enhance student learning. St. Alphonsus School focuses on four main areas: the Learning Program (instruction), Community Development, Parent and Community Involvement, and Supporting Integrated Services.

CURRICULUM

St. Alphonsus School offers Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8 English programming as determined by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Learning. Locally developed options include:

- Religion
- Band (Grade 5-8)
- Applied Arts Program (Grade 7-8 - instruction occurs at Sacred Heart High School)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religion is an integral part of the daily school routine at St. Alphonsus School, both in expression and instruction. All grades use the national Catechetical series, *Born of the Spirit*, supplemented by the Fully Alive family education program.

SACRAMENT PREPARATION

St. Alphonsus School students have the opportunity to receive various Sacrament(s) through the Come Join Us at the Table parish/home based program.

St. Gerard's Church offers the Sacraments of Confirmation, First Communion and Reconciliation. St. Mary's Church offer the Sacraments of First Solemn Holy Communion and Reconciliation.

PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of daily school life. Classes have many opportunities to pray in their classrooms and at school assemblies. St. Alphonsus School regularly celebrates masses and liturgies with the priests from St. Gerard's Church and St. Mary's Church. Each day begins with prayer; grace is offered before lunch; each day ends with prayer.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

St. Alphonsus School offers a Pre-K program to families with children who are 3 and 4 years old. Major aims of the program are: to develop positive self-esteem, to develop speech and language skills, and to socially prepare the children for Kindergarten.

Families with children who are 3 and 4 years old are invited to complete an application form for the program. An application form is available at the school office or on the school's or division's website. A selection process is in place to determine which students will qualify for the Pre-K program.

SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAMS

St. Alphonsus School is concerned about the safety and well being of our students and has implemented a number of preventative programs at each grade level which provide students with skills and strategies for coping with situations which may be encountered at school and in everyday life.

These programs include:

Kindergarten – *The Incredible Years*

Grade 1 – *The Incredible Years and C.A.R.E. (Challenge Abuse Through Respect Education)*

Grade 2 & 3 – *Second Step*

Grade 4, 5 & 6 – *Steps to Respect*

Grade 6 – *RespectEd – “Beyond the Hurt” (Bullying and Peer Harassment)*

Grade 7 – *RespectEd – “It’s Not Your Fault” (Abuse & Neglect)*

Grade 8 – *RespectEd – “What’s Love Got To Do With It?” (Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships)*

TECHNOLOGY

St. Alphonsus students have access to a fully equipped lab of computers. Student learning is enhanced through the implementation of the Christ the Teacher *Scope and Sequence*, which provides expectations for technological skills and applications at each grade level.

Internet Use

Christ the Teacher Catholic School Division encourages the use of the internet as a valuable educational tool and resource. Students and parents/guardians are required to complete the *Use of Student Work and Personal Information Parent/Guardian Permission Form* before students are granted permission to access the Internet.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools have developed an extensive outdoor educational program, with each grade targeting specific learning outcomes to enhance the regular instructional programs. Activities at each grade level include:

Grade 4: Swimming - Water Safety (Yorkton Gallagher Centre)

Grade 5: Ecological Nature Hike - Ecological Study

Grade 6: Good Spirit Sand Dune Hike

Grade 6 & 8: Downhill Ski Instruction

Grade 7: Overnight Canoe/ Camp Skills Training (York Lake Provincial Park)

Grade 7: AMPO – Christ the Teacher One-Week Camp Program (Duck Mountain Provincial Park - Madge Lake)

Grade 8: Overnight Cross Country Ski Excursion (Good Spirit Lake Provincial Park)

MEASURES OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS

Assessment results ensure that schools, parents and other stakeholders in our communities have access to high-quality information needed to make informed judgments and effective educational decisions. Schools continuously collect assessment data on student learning to plan for student growth. Teachers assess knowledge, skills and strategies on an ongoing basis. Regular assessments, both classroom and large scale, allow teachers to determine the effectiveness of their instruction, assess student learning, and make informed decisions about how to organize and pace instruction.

St. Alphonsus School will be implementing the Christ the Teacher *Learning Assessment Schedule*. To view the provincial and division assessments by grade level, refer to www.christtheteacher.ca

Teachers will communicate results of the assessments with parents/guardians throughout the year.

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS

Students will no longer receive a percentage grade for their classes. Percentage grades and letter grades tied to a percentage scale are meant to rank students. At this point in their life, that is, from Grades 1 through 9, students only need to know how their work matches up against the grade-level expectations and their own past performances. They do not need to be compared to others.

Research shows that grades have many negative effects. They diminish students' interest in what they are learning. They also discourage risk-taking, as students will select the easiest possible task so as not to jeopardize their grade. They also tend to reduce the quality of students' thinking. Students become preoccupied with whether or not a concept will be on the test rather than asking probing questions about the concept itself. No research has contradicted these findings. (Kohn, 2011).

Students will be assessed on their progress toward the attainment of the outcomes for their grade-level. They will provide evidence of their achievement through their productions, and conferences with teachers. Teachers will also collect evidence through their observations of each student's learning.

The level of student achievement will be indicated for each strand of the subject area. A strand is a group of outcomes related to one area of the curriculum for the subject. Each subject has no more than 4 strands. Students will not receive a rating for the subject as a whole. Assessing by strand gives students and parents more precise information about a student's strengths and progress in each area of the curriculum than is possible with one number.

Through the learning process, students will always be aware of the learning target, and they will receive frequent and detailed feedback on their progress toward that target. Reports will be distributed in November, March and June.

The school division has prepared common criteria for the outcomes, to ensure consistency in assessment across the division.

STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES

Student-Led Conferences, which take the place of the traditional "Parent-Teacher Interviews", are used as a further means of communicating student progress. Your child will highlight exemplary work, and share items from his/her learning portfolio, as well as the parents/guardians will have a chance to connect with the teacher about any questions or concerns you may have.

Student-Led Conferences are held in November and March of each year. Parents will be notified with dates and possible other relevant information.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Student recognition programs are held during the school year in November, March, and at the conclusion of each school year to recognize individuals who deserve honour and recognition for their efforts and achievement.

St. Alphonsus School incorporated four new awards (The Parable Awards) into its recognition program. Below is a description of them:

The Parable Awards:

Prodigal Son Award

*Sponsored by St. Mary's Church
Yorkton, SK*

- Awarded to someone who has made dramatic improvement - academically, socially or both

Talents Award

*Sponsored by Redemptorists Fathers
Yorkton, SK*

- Awarded to someone who is working at maximum potential regardless of academic ability

Shining Lamp Award

*Sponsored by St. Gerard's Church
Yorkton, SK*

- Awarded to someone who demonstrates individuality and strong convictions

Angels' Wings Award

*Sponsored by St. Alphonsus School's School
Community Council
Yorkton, SK*

The criteria for this award are as follows:

- *The student has strong academic standing according to ability.
- *The student is involved in school activities.
- *The student has a positive rapport with peers and staff.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

Our staff, students and volunteers work hard to develop, enhance and maintain strong extracurricular programs to challenge our students to excel in sports, the arts, leadership, and service. Students have the opportunity to participate in various activities, such as: Cross Country Running, Volleyball, Basketball, Badminton, Football, Environment Club, the A-Team, Curling, etc.

HOUSE LEAGUES (INTRAMURALS)

House league programs are provided for students

in Grade 4 to Grade 8 during the noon break. This is an opportunity for students to become involved in high participation, low competitive events and activities.

THE A-TEAM

The A-Team is comprised of executive members from Grades 6, 7, & 8. The A-Team provides leadership for student activities and assists the school with creating a positive school environment.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

St. Alphonsus School Community Council (SCC) is elected annually from parents and guardians of students enrolled in school, as well as from Catholic electors residing in St. Alphonsus School attendance area. The SCC serves as an important link between parents, communities, and the boards of education.

The SCC provides insight into the needs and expectations of families and supports the important work of improving student learning. The SCC plans and implements school family events, which help create strong relationships between families, staff and students.

All parents and guardians are encouraged to support the SCC by attending meetings or family events.