



# Parent Handbook

## updated September 2017

## Annunciation School

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Annunciation School is one of eight schools governed by Catholic Independent Schools of the Diocese of Prince George (CISPG). Visit [www.cispg.ca](http://www.cispg.ca) for further information, and to view the CIS Policy Manual.



## Mission Statements

### Annunciation School

*We, the children, staff and families of Annunciation School, recognize that education is one of the most important ways by which our faith community fulfills its commitment to the dignity of the human person. Together, we seek to provide a sound, quality, Catholic education in a genuine, caring, safe environment where children can grow to their full God-given potential. We are committed to working towards developing a feeling of confidence, self-esteem, and self worth in our students, so as to enable them to create and attempt new things for the good of society.*

### Catholic Independent Schools – Diocese of Prince George

*The Catholic Independent Schools of the Diocese of Prince George share in the saving mission of the Church by fostering faith formation and academic excellence. With Jesus Christ as our model and within the context of our faith community we strive to educate our youth in a holistic way. In collaboration with their families we support their spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional growth. This Christ centered foundation enables our youth to serve as disciples and witness their faith in a global society.*

## Staff and Council

Kindergarten	Beth Armstrong-Bewick
Grade 1	Sara Rowse
Grade 2	Ruthanne Ciccone
Grade 3	Noreen Carignan / Lyna Sandhu
Grade 4	Terry Rudderham
Grade 5	Brenda Brown
Grade 6	Rebecca Brooke
Grade 7	Rose Ciotoli
Grade 8	Natalie Nundal
Physical Education	Dave Simmons
Learning Resource	Kathy Dann
Music	Katherine Punnett
Librarian / Computer Tech	Patricia de la Nuez
Education Assistants	Christine Evans
	Liz Fernandes
	Lina Greeff
	Zorina Corbeil
	Sharon Hoff
	Melony Wick
	Amanda Alvarez
	Dana Zak-Stewart
	Tina Simons
	Evelyn Vogel
Maintenance / Janitor	Danny Tighe
Secretaries	Colleen Hebert
	Deanna McNish
Principal	Laura Lowther

## School Council

Annunciation School and School Council are governed by the Constitution and By-laws of the Catholic Independent Schools of the Diocese of Prince George. Information regarding school and diocesan policies can be obtained through the school office.

School Council meetings are held once a month. Parents and parishioners are welcome to attend a meeting or add an item to the agenda by contacting the school office prior to a meeting.

For more information, please contact the school office.

## Communication with Parents

At Annunciation School, we strive to maintain close communication with parents. Every Thursday by 3pm, a school newsletter is emailed to parents. This newsletter contains important information on upcoming events and reminders. To receive newsletters online, send an email to the school office.

Daily communication is available through the use of student planners (or 'ziploc' bags for Grades K and 1). We ask that parents check their child's planner or ziploc for assigned homework, notes regarding upcoming class events, or any messages from the teacher.

Our school website is also a helpful resource to keep our parents informed – visit [www.annunciationpr.ca](http://www.annunciationpr.ca) and take a look!

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. By working together, we can ensure a happy, safe and enriching education for all students.

## Personal Information Privacy Policy

Annunciation School follows CISPG Policy 121 regarding the use of personal information. By registering your child at Annunciation School, you agree to the following:

### Consent for Use of Information

I acknowledge that the information provided is accurate to this date (of registration). I consent to having Annunciation School collect all of the above information, and any related documents, needed for registration.

I further consent to the use and disclosure of information contained in this form and otherwise collected by or on behalf of Annunciation School (1) for the purpose of establishing, maintaining, and terminating the student's or parent's relationship with Annunciation School, including events and fundraisers as organized by the Annunciation School Parent Support Group, (2) for additional purposes identified when or before personal information is collected, and (3) as otherwise provided in Annunciation School's Personal Information Privacy Policy, a copy of which is available on request. I also consent to the collection, use and disclosure of such personal information by and to agents, contractors, and service providers of Annunciation School.

## School Hours and Fees

### Grades K - 5

Morning Bell:	8:50am
Recess:	10:30 – 10:45am
*Lunch Recess	12:00 – 12:30pm
*Lunch in Classrooms:	12:30pm
Afternoon Bell:	12:50pm
Dismissal Bell	3:00pm

### Grades 6, 7, 8

Students enter:	8:40am
Recess:	10:15 – 10:30am
*Lunch Recess:	12:00 – 12:30pm
*Lunch in Classrooms:	12:30pm
Afternoon Bell:	12:45pm
Dismissal:	3:00pm

\* Students will have playtime before eating lunch in their classrooms. Students going home for lunch will be dismissed at 12:00, and must be back at the school for the 12:50 bell (12:45pm for Grades 6,7,8).

## School Fees

### 2017/2018 School Fees Per Month

One Child	\$235
Family	\$295

(2 or more children)

School supplies for each child will be purchased by the school to ensure consistent quality and less waste. Parents will be billed a \$55 supply fee *per child*. Supply fees will be due at the end of September.

**All fees can be paid either in cash or by post-dated cheques (dated 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of each month) by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Payment by EFT (electronic funds transfer through your bank) is also available – visit the school office to complete the EFT form. (Our school does not accept credit or debit cards.)**

*\*Parents experiencing temporary financial hardship may enter into a written agreement with the school to pay an amount in line with their income. (This must be negotiated yearly.)*

## Religious Education

As a Catholic school, it is our privilege and responsibility to provide religious instruction to all students. Through formal lessons, liturgies and classroom activities, students grow in their understanding of the Catholic faith. Much more than just “another subject”, religious instruction is weaved into the school day, providing opportunities for prayer and faith-sharing.

All students in the school are required to participate fully in prayers, liturgies and religious studies.

### School Masses

Each month the school community comes together for the celebration of the Eucharist. Mass begins at 9:05 a.m. and takes place at Annunciation Church. Each class is responsible for preparing one or two celebrations. Parents and friends are welcome to join in these Eucharistic celebrations. Check weekly newsletters for dates.

### Sacramental Preparation

Children in Grade Two prepare for two Sacraments of Initiation: First Reconciliation and First Communion. In Grade Six, the children prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation. Information regarding Sacramental Preparation will be posted in parish bulletins. Contact the church office at 250-624-3035 for more information.

### Holy Childhood Association

The Holy Childhood Association is a Mission program which serves to raise our children's awareness of the plight of children all over the world. It is specifically designed to suit elementary level students and is closely tied to the Canadian Catechism.

The children are called to PRAY for, LEARN about and SHARE with children from mission countries in the world. The children will be asked to pray each day for the children in the particular country on which the Holy Childhood Association is focusing. They will learn about the specific country - its location, its population, the culture, and languages. Finally, the children will be encouraged to share from their abundance or from the little they possess.

The Holy Childhood Association is not a one-sided program. Even in the poorest third-world country, children are members of the Holy Childhood Association and they pray for and learn about others while contributing from the little they have.

All of the students' donations are sent to aid children in need. The donations are then sent directly from the Holy Childhood Association office to the mission areas. The motto of the Association is "Children Helping Children". Collection boxes will be sent home in the fall. Boxes may be kept through the year and returned to the school when they are full.

Thank you for your continued support in this vital area of our growth as followers of Jesus.

# Student Behaviour & Discipline Policy



## Reference: CISPG Policy 502 – Student Discipline

Annunciation School is committed to providing a caring and orderly environment in which every student feels safe, accepted and respected. We aim to create an atmosphere of kindness, mutual support and generosity based on Gospel values.

This code is to clarify and communicate expectations regarding student behavior while at school, while going to and from school, and while attending any school function or activity at any location.

As members of Annunciation School, students and staff are expected to treat each other with kindness and respect. Any actions, physical or verbal, whether in jest, through thoughtlessness or deliberate intent, that infringe upon the dignity or well-being of others are contrary to the rules of the school.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

As a student at Annunciation School, I will:

- ✓ Be gentle and caring to other students, staff members and parents.
- ✓ Participate fully and safely in all activities and put my best effort into all assignments.
- ✓ Be a friend to the environment (no littering, no wasting materials)
- ✓ Be prepared with all necessary materials and a positive attitude for each day.

### **IMPORTANT!**

- Games and activities involving physical contact (such as playfighting) are not allowed on school property. Students involved in rough play will be removed from the playground immediately. Repeated occurrences will result in the loss of playground privileges for an extended period of time.
- Knives or weapons (real or toy) are not to be brought to school and will be confiscated immediately. Parents will be notified and further consequences may be warranted.

## REMINDERS:

- a) Students leaving the school for lunch, or for other appointments, should bring a signed note from a parent. *Students cannot leave school grounds without teacher and parent permission.*
- b) Student use of any electronic item (ie: cell phone, mp3 player, gaming system) is currently not allowed on school property. If your child brings an electronic item to school, it must be turned off and left in his/her backpack, or it will be confiscated. At times, we permit certain electronics to be used for project-based learning – a permission form with details will first be sent home so that parents and students are fully aware of the intended use and guidelines.
- c) Students are not allowed to use the office phone, unless in case of urgent need. Students must obtain teacher permission to use the phone.
- d) Please ensure your child knows who is picking him/her up afterschool. Some children become anxious during the day because they do not know the plans for 3pm pickup. Feel free to write a quick note in your child's planner (or homework bag) if that helps him/her to remember the plan. If you need to let your child know of a change in pickup plans, just call the school office before 3pm and we will get the message to him/her.
- e) Party invitations are not to be handed out at school. The only exception is a full-class invitation where each student in the class is equally invited. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions.



## Discipline Policy

There is a general expectation that as children mature, more responsible behavior is expected of them. Children are to accept personal responsibility for their actions. We encourage students to report any problems or issues in a calm and respectful manner, and to take part in resolving any conflicts.

### **Consequences:**

General school rules and procedures are taught to students and practiced throughout the school year. These rules and procedures are also communicated to parents by the classroom teacher. In response to unacceptable conduct, staff will use consistent and fair consequences to correct the behaviour.

For recurring minor misbehaviours, or problems with homework completion, the teacher will contact parents and discuss ways to correct behaviour and support the student both at home and at school.

If the pattern of behaviour continues, or for more serious behaviours, the student will be sent to the office and staff will file a behaviour form with the principal. If warranted, parents will be called and a meeting may be set up with the parent, teacher and principal. Depending on the age of the student, he/she may be part of this meeting. A behaviour plan will then be created, stating expectations and further consequences. A child may be suspended until this meeting takes place. The student faces an escalating suspension policy: one day in-school, one day at home, then three days at home and for very serious offenses – expulsion.

**If a student exhibits repeated behaviours that harm or disturb another student, it will be considered bullying.** The student will be referred to the principal and his/her parents will be contacted. Removal of privileges (such as playground recesses) or suspension from school may be warranted. A behaviour plan will be agreed upon by the principal, teacher, parents and student in order to support behavioral change while protecting other students. All classes engage in anti-bullying lessons throughout the school year which focus on developing healthy friendships, encourage reporting of harmful behaviours, and support for affected students.

## Dress Code

Students are expected to be in full uniform every school day including the first day of school. Students should change out of their uniform after school. *Make-up, dangly earrings, excessive jewelry, pins, buttons or perfume are not acceptable at school. [Nail polish is only acceptable for students in grades 6,7, and 8.] Long hair should be in ponytails or braids.*

### Uniform Dress Code for both Boys and Girls (Kindergarten to Grade 5)

- Navy blue twill pants [*navy blue uniform shorts or skort may be worn before Thanksgiving and after Spring Break*]
- Short-sleeved light blue polo shirt with school crest
- Sweatshirt with school crest may be worn over polo shirt
- a pair of non-marking indoor sneakers

### Uniform Dress Code for Senior Intermediates (Grade 6,7,8)

- Navy blue twill pants [*navy blue uniform shorts or skort may be worn before Thanksgiving and after Spring Break*]
- Short-sleeved or long-sleeved white, buttoned shirt with school monogram
- Cardigan, sweater or knitted vest with school crest may be worn over white shirt
- a pair of non-marking indoor sneakers

The school office has some samples available for sizing. Please contact the secretary to arrange a time for uniform fitting. Polo shirts and sweatshirts are available locally at Stuck-On Designs (404 McBride Street). Polo shirts, sweatshirts, pants, skorts and all uniform items for students in grades 6, 7, & 8 are available through Neat Uniforms: [www.neatuniforms.ca](http://www.neatuniforms.ca) (phone and online orders).

**\*\*\*All uniform items should be purchased through our designated suppliers. Please do not purchase items from other stores.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Students are sent outside for almost all recess and lunch-hour playtimes. *There are very few “indoor days” during a school year.* Please ensure that your child is properly dressed for whatever weather may occur during the school day. Appropriate footwear (sneakers or rainboots) is also very important, as impromptu walking field trips can often occur.**

### Gymstrip (Grades 1-8)

Students should wear a loose t-shirt and sweatpants for P.E. classes. It is important that all students have good quality running shoes as their ‘indoor shoes’ for school. *\*Please ensure that the shoes have non-marking soles.*

## Responsibility of Parents

To support us in providing the best education possible for your child, we expect that parents will:

- Ensure that children arrive punctually at school, well-rested and properly dressed, with all necessary materials;
- Provide a nutritious lunch;
- Monitor homework daily to ensure completion;
- Promptly read and reply to notes and forms sent home;
- Participate regularly in fund-raising activities;
- Pay tuition fees and other fees when due;
- Support teachers' rules and decisions regarding behaviour and quality of schoolwork.

***Catholic families are expected to attend Mass regularly, and take an active role in their children's faith journey.***

### Parent Concerns

It is always best to make every effort to resolve a problem or deal with a concern with the person directly involved. Building and maintaining good relationships is our primary goal and is the foundation of the family atmosphere at our school.

If, throughout the course of the year you have any concerns, we encourage you to follow CIS Policies 473, 474, 475. The steps of this process are summarized as follows:

1. A parent/guardian with a complaint should contact the person in question first.
2. If no solution to the problem is found, the parent/guardian is to contact the Principal.
3. If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the action taken, she/he is to bring the matter in writing to the School Council.
4. If the parent/guardian does not receive satisfaction from the above parties, an appeal in writing is to be made to the Board of Directors of the Society.
5. The decision of the Board of Directors of the Society on the matter shall be final and binding on everyone involved.

We appreciate your co-operation in this matter. When this policy is followed many concerns can be resolved quickly and with the least amount of stress. (*Copies of the Policies are available on request*).

## Nutrition

Children learn better when their bodies are healthy! We urge all parents to provide nutritious lunches and snacks for the school day.

Get your children involved in shopping for healthy snacks and foods and helping to prepare lunches. Establish daily routines for packing lunch kits and always check that children have their lunch before leaving the house! As children get older, they should be taking more responsibility for packing their own lunch – it gives them a chance to practice what they learn in Health class, and they are more likely to eat the items they have chosen themselves.

“Fast-food” lunches should be kept to a minimum. If you need to drop off a lunch at the school, please bring it to the office before 12:00pm. Your child will pick it up there. Please make sure that your child’s name is on their lunch!

Annunciation School encourages all families to eliminate unnecessary garbage. Pack lunches and snacks in reusable containers (labeled with the child’s name, please).

**Please include a spoon or fork** with your child's lunch, if required. Do not send a lunch that requires hot water or a microwave.



## Health and Safety

# ANNUNCIATION SCHOOL IS AN ALLERGEN-AWARE ENVIRONMENT

In accordance with the BC Ministry of Education's Anaphylaxis Protection Order (M232/07), and CISPG Policy #575 regarding Anaphylaxis, Annunciation School is designated "**allergen-aware**", with the primary goal of maintaining a safe environment for all students.

- There are students in our school with **life-threatening allergies to nuts**. A severe reaction can be triggered by eating any amount of the allergen, or by touching trace amounts left on objects by others. Some reactions can also be triggered by smelling the allergen (especially nuts/peanut butter).
- We recognize that these allergens are present in a multitude of foods, often in "hidden" quantities. The school does not expect to eliminate all food allergens.
- Our primary goal is to provide a safe learning environment for every child. We recognize that the safest way to protect these children is by promoting avoidance and establishing daily cleaning procedures.
- We ask for your assistance by requesting that, whenever possible, parents avoid sending nuts in snacks and lunches.
- Students with nut products in their lunches will eat in designated areas that will be carefully cleaned.
- All students will be educated regarding allergies as well as the importance of frequent hand-washing. They will be reminded not to share food items or utensils.

We realize that this poses an inconvenience for you when packing your child's snack and lunch. Thank you for your support and understanding of this potentially life-threatening situation.

# Health and Safety

## Student Attendance

Students should be in the playground before the school bell each day that school is in session. Parents should notify the school before 9:00am if students are going to be absent or late (leave a message on voicemail or send an email). *For the safety of the student, if we are not notified, school personnel will call your home or work to check on the student's whereabouts.*

Notes are required for all absences from school. Please write a short note with child's name, grade, date of absence, and reason (sick, holiday, dentist, etc.) and send it to school when your child returns. Messages sent by email are also acceptable.

## School Safety

In order to ensure a high level of safety for our students, all doors are locked throughout the school day. The main door at the front of the school will operate on a buzzer system. Please wait to be let in, then report to the office.

The school yard is closed to vehicle traffic, Monday to Friday. When parking along the sidewalks, make sure you are not encroaching on the yellow lined areas; they are there to provide visibility for pedestrian crossings.

Be advised that students are not supervised before 8:40am or after 3:00pm.

## Accidents

School staff are trained to deal with minor injuries that may occur on school grounds. In the event of an accident requiring medical attention, parents will be notified immediately to bring the child to the doctor or emergency room.

In any urgent cases, an ambulance will be called, and parents will then be notified.

## Illness

Please do not send your child to school if he/she is ill. There are a number of illnesses that are highly contagious, including the H1N1 influenza virus.

It is best for children to be kept at home if they are not feeling well.

If, however, your child becomes ill while at school, and does not feel better after a short stay in the sickroom, we will contact you to pick-up your child. If we cannot reach a parent, we will then call the emergency contact person(s) listed for your child. *Note that when a child complains of nausea, especially during influenza season, we immediately phone parents to take the child home.*

## Photos / Videos

Parents are asked to sign a permission form which allows school use of photos, videos, and student work. To protect those students who are not to be included in photos/videos, all parents are reminded that their own photos/videos are not to be posted online or shared in any manner.

# Homework and Reports

## Homework Guidelines

Students generally receive homework for most school days. Time spent on homework will vary depending on the student and the circumstances of that student's day, abilities and work habits. Homework completion also depends on the student's work habits at home. We strongly encourage families to provide a quiet area for homework, away from distractions such as television, gaming systems, phone calls, etc. Parent supervision and support is essential!

If you have any concerns about the homework, contact your child's teacher.



In case of student absence, you may phone in the morning and request homework from your child's teacher. The homework assignment will be ready for pick-up at the office by 3pm. This is not necessary for most one-day absences.

**Note that homework will not be assigned prior to a student's absence due to vacation or sports. At the teacher's discretion, a student may be assigned some reading, writing or math homework. *No homework assignments can replace the hands-on, interactive learning dynamics of the classroom. Students who are away for long periods of time may receive lower grades due to their absence.***

## Report Cards

Three formal written reports will be issued each school year: November, March and June. Two informal reports are given as well, the first being a student-led conference held in October. Information regarding this conference will be sent out through school newsletters.

Teachers are always available to discuss your child's progress at any point during the school year. Please call the school office to leave a message for your child's teacher if you wish to arrange a conference.

## Physical Education

Physical Education is taught to all students by a Physical Education specialist.

If students have P.E. first period in the morning, they may wear their gym strip to school but must change into school uniform immediately after gym.

*If your child suffers from any physical ailments please let the P.E. teacher know at the start of the school year. Otherwise full participation in all P.E. activities is expected. We require written notes from parents if a child is unable to participate in PE activities.*

### Lunch-Time Intramurals

Students in the upper grades have a choice to join one or all of the lunch hour activities planned over the year. Students not only participate but help keep score, referee and coach.

### Interschool Athletics

The opportunity for interschool athletics is offered to those students who show an interest in certain sports and the commitment to develop their God-given talents. Individual and team success is measured by the level and improvement they have achieved over the season. Also included in the experience are the life skills one gains from the instruction and participation in these sports.

Sports include: Volleyball, Badminton, Basketball, Softball and Track and Field. There usually are several opportunities during the year to play games against other schools. Watch for notes home and in the newsletter for more information.



# Parent Involvement

Much of the success of our school programs is directly related to the dedication and support of parents volunteers. From yard duty to reading groups, giving rides or serving on our Parent Support Group, we are blessed to have many wonderful volunteers.

## Parent Support Group

The Parent Support Group is involved in a variety of fund-raising activities throughout the school year, such as monthly 'student lunches', chocolate sales and frozen meat orders. The funds raised are used to purchase items which enhance our school community. New members are always welcome (monthly meetings are kept short!) and volunteers for each fund-raising activity are needed.

For more information, see the weekly school newsletters.

## Volunteers

Throughout the school year, there are many opportunities for parents to volunteer with various projects and activities. Some examples include: giving rides for field trips; reading with young children; assisting with craft activities; giving a presentation about a hobby or field of study; co-coach a team sport; making props or costumes for plays... the list is endless!

As you may know, CIS policy states that anyone wishing to volunteer in any capacity at the school (driving, reading, playground duty, etc.) is required to complete a Criminal Record Check. Please pick up a form from the school office, then bring it to the RCMP office for completion. There is no charge (with accompanying letter from school). Only offences pertaining to children will be revealed.

Added requirements for driver volunteers are as follows:

- Driver's Abstract - this is available at the Government Agent's office at no charge (201-3<sup>rd</sup> Ave West) (yearly update required);
- Copy of Current Vehicle Insurance/Registration (yearly update required)
- Copy of Driver's License

Please do not let these requirements discourage you or other family members from volunteering. These policies are in place to ensure the safety of all of our students.

(In accordance with policy, criminal record checks are updated every five years.)

# General

## Library

Your child will borrow at least one book each week. If books are overdue, written reminders will be sent out. Encourage your child to enjoy the books he/she borrows. Share them with the family, read them together and discuss them. Remembering to return books will be a lot easier if there is a consistent place where books can be safely stored when they are not in use. *Students who frequently return books late or damaged will lose borrowing privileges.*

## Technology

At Annunciation School, our 32-station computer lab is accessed by all classes every week. Students develop typing, word processing, internet and multi-media skills under the supervision of their classroom teacher. Students must follow the procedures and guidelines for the computer lab, or they may lose computer privileges. Most classrooms have two computer terminals as well, with printer access on each floor. Students will be supervised while using computer equipment. No access to email is allowed for students. A computer use agreement will be sent home with students at the beginning of the school year, outlining privileges and responsibilities for use of technology.

## Cultural Program

Annunciation School takes part in a cultural program sponsored by School District #52. This involves live presentations, usually held at the Lester Centre of the Arts.

For the past few years, we have been “going green” to the Lester Centre – all students and staff walk to the theatre and then back to school. We’ve gotten wet at least a few times on these outings, so it is very important to make sure your child is well-prepared for the weather.