



*In partnership with family, Church and community, we provide
Catholic Education of the highest quality to our students.*

2020-2021 St. Francis Xavier School Parent-Student Handbook

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Welcome to St. Francis Xavier School

St. Francis Xavier School is dedicated to the fullest development of the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional and physical dimensions of each student.

As a Catholic School, St. Francis Xavier School endeavors to:

1. Teach and reinforce the principles of Catholic faith.
2. Provide a thoroughly Catholic Christian atmosphere to enable each student to gain understanding of his/her faith and learn to apply Catholic principles to an everyday life situation.

In order to achieve our objectives, communication with, and cooperation from parents are of utmost importance. Consequently, parents are encouraged to communicate frequently with the school and participate in school sponsored activities whenever possible.

St. Francis Xavier School provides a safe and caring environment. It is important that this continues, and welcome any suggestions and/or feedback from parents.

St. Francis Xavier (1506-1552 A.D.)



Francis Xavier, born Francisco de Jasso y Azpilicueta April 7, 1506. He died on December 3, 1552. Francis was a pioneering Roman Catholic missionary born in the Kingdom of Navarre (now part of Spain) and co-founder of the Society of Jesus. He was a student of Ignatius of Loyola and one of the first seven Jesuits, dedicated to Montmartre in 1534. He led an extensive mission into Asia, mainly in the Portuguese Empire of the time. He was influential in the spreading and upkeep of Catholicism most notably in India, but also ventured into Japan, Borneo, the Moluccas, and other areas which had thus far not been visited by Christian missionaries.

Our Mission:

“Showing the Face of Christ to All.” Through the examples of our patron, Saint Francis Xavier, we as a learning community will “Be Great in Small Things.”

Our Mission Statement:

With Christ and St. Francis Xavier as our inspiration, our students will grow in Faith, Hope, Love, Knowledge, Understanding and Commitment.

Our Vision:

At St. Francis Xavier School, we envision a Christian community of active learners. Using innovative and trusted methods, staff will modify and evaluate programs based on individual needs. A sense of partnership between parents, staff, and students will be established through mutual respect and acceptance of each person as a gift from God.

Our Motto:

“Be Great in Small Things”

Our Partnerships

St. Francis Xavier School is a dynamic school community that continually strives to develop its partnership between staff, students, parents and the parish.

Expectations for School Staff

- ❖ To provide an opportunity for students to develop good study and work habits.
- ❖ To be consistently firm, fair, friendly and flexible.
- ❖ To be a model of acceptable social and academic standards.
- ❖ To strive for the development of positive self-worth in our students.
- ❖ To be attentive and to treat students, parents and each other with dignity.

Expectations for Parents

- ❖ To ensure regular and punctual attendance for their children.
- ❖ To support student growth by providing a rich home environment.
- ❖ To support school staff as they attempt to foster the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, emotional, cultural and moral development of each student.
- ❖ To contact school personnel and discuss student progress at regular intervals.
- ❖ To attend parent/teacher conferences as requested.
- ❖ To support staff in having students follow through with their responsibilities.

Expectations for Students

- ❖ To be responsible for their education and be actively involved.
- ❖ To be prepared for learning and receptive to new ideas.
- ❖ To exercise self-control and become a self-directed learner.
- ❖ To possess a positive attitude.
- ❖ To have respect for authority.
- ❖ To treat others and their property with respect and dignity.
- ❖ To work to the very best of their ability.

Expectations for the Parish

- ❖ To serve as a link between home, school and the parish.
- ❖ To work toward the development of the spiritual growth of our community.
- ❖ To provide sacramental programs for students and assist in the development of their lives within the church.

Policies

School Attendance and Lates

1. Students are expected to attend all their classes and must make up time for which they are absent (truant or without reason). Repeated absences will be addressed by school administration.
2. As there is sufficient break time allowed between classes, students must arrive to class on time. Teachers may assign consequences to students who are late.
3. Parents are asked to phone the school by 8:45 am when their child is going to be absent or late.

Early Arrival and Supervision of Students

Students are encouraged to arrive after 8:35 am. Supervision is provided: mornings at 8:35 am-8:55 am, during the lunch break, and after school (until the bus arrive). Students who do not normally take the bus at the end of the day much be picked up at 3:35 pm. Students who need to remain at the school after this time (on a regular basis), will be asked to register in the Out of School Care Program.

Code of Student Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting a Catholic Christian School. Administrative Procedure 351 - Student Conduct is available (in its entirety) via the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education website at www.mhcbe.ab.ca

Dress Code

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting a Catholic Christian School. Therefore, students are expected to:

1. Wear modest respectable dress and maintain a neat and tidy appearance.
2. Not wear any article of clothing this is unacceptable in the school environment (example, spaghetti strap tops that show a bare midriff and/or have an unacceptable logo on them); otherwise they risk being sent home to change or given another clothing item to put on.
3. Wear shorts of a suitable length and appearance. Cut-off shorts are not acceptable.
4. Wear clothing that does not contain holes or have a ragged appearance.
5. Remove their hats upon entering the school.
6. Remove facial and body ornaments (example, eyebrow/nose rings, etc.).
7. Not wear excessive make-up (or else they maybe be asked to remove it).

*All decisions concerning school dress code are made by and at the final decision of school staff.

School Discipline Policy

School discipline is guided by the principles of Christian behavior. Each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. If occurrences are considered serious or repetitive, a parent/teacher/administration meeting will result. Likewise, suspension or alternate programming may be the result.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Alberta Education defines bullying as the following:

Bullying is a relationship problem. It is the assertion of interpersonal power through aggression. Bullying by its conventional definition involves:

- ❖ Repeated and consistent negative actions against another person.
- ❖ An imbalance of power between the bully and the target.
- ❖ Contrasting feelings between the bully and the target as a result of the bullying episode (the child who bullies may feel excited, powerful or amused – while the target feels afraid, embarrassed or hurt).

The four most common types of bullying are:

- ❖ **Verbal Bullying** - name calling, sarcasm, teasing, spreading rumors, threatening, making references to one's culture, ethnicity, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, unwanted comments.
- ❖ **Social Bullying** - mobbing, scapegoating, excluding others from a group, humiliating others, damaging someone's social reputation, gestures or graffiti intended to put others down.
- ❖ **Physical Bullying** – hitting, poking, pinching, chasing, shoving, coercing, destroying, unwanted sexual touching.
- ❖ **Cyber Bullying** - using the internet or text messaging to intimidate someone, hurt someone's reputation or to put down or spread negative rumors/images about someone.

Based on our philosophy that Catholic Schools has been established to provide an environment of faith, which brings all of life together within the grace and love of God, we have established the Anti-Bullying policy set forth. The Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education, of which St. Francis Xavier School belongs, views bullying as unchristian behavior, and therefore it will not be tolerated. The goal of St. Francis Xavier School's Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that all students experience a safe, Christian environment that is conducive to learning. The following initial steps will be taken when dealing with bullying incidents:

- ❖ Isolated or initial incidents which do not constitute bullying will be handled by the teacher in charge at the time of the incident.
- ❖ Whenever possible, any incidents which may constitute bullying should be reported immediately to the teacher in charge at the time of the incident. The teacher in charge at the time of the incident will immediately deal with those involved in the incident.
- ❖ In some cases, students may choose to report the incident to a different adult in the building, such as their homeroom teacher, a secretary, or the principal. If so, students are encouraged to report the incident on the same day as it occurs.

The Anti-Bullying policy required the following:

1. Staff members of St. Francis Xavier School should:
 - a. Remain alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it.
 - b. Report incidents of bullying to the principal or teacher in charge, who will determine what disciplinary action will be taken.

- c. Offer support and encouragement to student being bullied, including notifying parents, principal, and/or support staff as needed.
 - d. Encourage all students to refrain from bullying behavior, and encourage reporting of any bullying behaviors they witness.
2. Parents of St. Francis Xavier School students should:
- a. Report concerns of bullying behavior to their child's appropriate teacher as soon as possible following the incident(s). If concerns are not handled sufficiently at this level, a report should be made to the school principal or teacher in charge.
 - b. Support the school's anti-bullying policy and actively encourage their child to avoid bullying behavior.
3. Students of St. Francis Xavier School should:
- a. Report incidents of bullying they witness to the teacher in charge at the time of the incident, or to another staff member as soon as possible following the incident.
 - b. Whenever possible, stand up for the student being bullied, and refrain from joining in bullying behavior.
 - c. Treat others with the respect and dignity that is expected of any Catholic school student.

Electronic Equipment

Please keep cell phones, iPads, cameras and all other electronic equipment at home. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items under any circumstances. All cell phones, iPads and all other electronic equipment are not permitted during the entire duration of the school day. These items are expected to be in the "off" position and stored in the students backpack during the day (students are responsible for the care and proper storage of these items).

If a student is found in possession of one of these devices during any part of the school day, the student will be asked to turn it off and immediately surrender it to a staff member (where it will be stored at the front office until the end of the day, or longer, if problem persists). These devices will only be returned to the students at the end of the school day, upon the request of the student or his/her parents. In some cases, the school may require that a parent come pick up the device. Students refusing to surrender a cell phone/music device/gaming unit upon request of a staff member may receive an "in-school" suspension for refusing to comply with the school policy.

Work Attitude and Assignments

Students are expected to apply themselves diligently to their students during the school day. Furthermore, they are expected to complete their daily class and homework assignments. If they fail to do so, (without an acceptable reason), they will be required to complete the work at recess, lunch break, or upon repeated occurrences – after school.

Closed Campus

Students must check in at the front office whenever entering or leaving the school during the day or any time after classes have started. This includes the lunch hour when students are only permitted to leave the grounds accompanied by their parents or guardians (e.g. medical, dental, etc.) Parents/Guardians are asked to notify the office or administration by note or phone in advance, whenever they plan to take their children out of school during the school day.

Student Conduct on School Buses

In accordance with Administrative Procedure 351, the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education expects all students to behave responsibly and respectfully while being transported on school buses. Therefore, all school bus passengers must obey the following rules:

1. Prior to loading (on the road and at school):
 - a. Be on time at the designated stop (to ensure that the bus can stay on schedule).
 - b. Stay off the road or street at all times while waiting for the bus. Students must conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting and must not interfere with other students who are also at the bus stop.
 - c. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter.

2. While on the bus:
 - a. The driver is in full charge of the school bus at all times and students must obey the driver promptly.
 - b. If the Principal appoints one of the older students as a monitor or patrol on the bus, the other pupils are to cooperate fully with him/her in the carrying out of his/her duties.
 - c. The driver may assign a seat for which the student will be held responsible and he/she will retain this seat until directed otherwise by the driver.
 - d. Students must be on time, and any student who habitually delays the driver will be reported to the principal.
 - e. Unnecessary conversation with the driver is prohibited.

- f. Classroom conduct is to be observed on the bus and any disturbance that may distract the driver and endanger the safe operation of the bus is prohibited.
- g. There is no smoking or consumption of alcohol or drugs on any school bus.
- h. Students must not litter the bus with waste paper or other rubbish or throw any articles out of the bus windows.
- i. Students must not extend any part of their body out of the windows.
- j. Students must remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- k. Students will be debussed at their regular stops unless a note from the parent is presented to the driver.
- l. When leaving the bus, students must pass in front of the bus.

Students violating these rules will be reported to the school principal. This may result in the student being suspended from riding the bus until assurance is received from both parents and the student that these rules will be observed.

Medication

In accordance with Administrative Procedure 316, we are not authorized to administer any medications unless specifically requested and supplied by the parents. A special authorization form (available from the office) must be completed and must include the name of the medication, the amount to be administered, at what time during the day this medication is to be administered and must have the name of the student and authorizing physician well displayed on the container.

Student Health Problems

Parents are requested to inform the school of any health problems that their child may have (i.e. allergies, bladder problems, asthma, etc.) at the beginning of the school year or when first medically identified. School administration reserves the right to ask for a medical note and/or documentation to support a parents' medical claim. This information will be kept confidential by teachers (and kept on file for use whenever circumstances arise).

Locked Doors

It is a policy of the school to keep all outside doors (other than the front doors) locked during the normal school day hours. Anyone visiting the school is asked to please check-in with the secretary or principal at the front office.

Parental Inquiries

Parents who wish to discuss a matter of student discipline or concern should first contact the child's teacher. Further inquiries or complaints should then be addressed to the school principal. If the matter cannot be resolved by the principal, the parent will be directed to contact the Deputy Superintendent, then the Superintendent and, if necessary, the Board of Trustees.

Student Evaluation

Report Cards are sent home to parents three (3) times per school year (November, March and June). The school utilizes Outcome Based Report Cards to communicate student achievement/marks, for each reporting period. Please see your child's teacher or school administration for more detail. Provincial Achievement Tests will be administered in May/June in the core subjects for grade 6 students. Students in grade 3 no longer write Provincial Achievement Tests.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents are welcome to request a conference with the classroom teacher or the principal at any time (with reasonable notice, and at a mutually agreed upon date and time). Formal Parent Teacher conferences will be available and scheduled in October and again in March.

Religion Instruction

As a Catholic School, our goal is to provide an environment where religious values are permeated throughout the entire day. Periodically, we will have masses and celebrations that mark the liturgical calendar. Parents are most welcome to attend these events. Dates and times are outlined in our digital monthly newsletters and calendars. St. Francis Xavier School students will be celebrating mass approx. four (4) times at St. Patrick's Church throughout the school year.

Students in grade 1-6 receive 150 minutes of classroom instruction in Religion per week (30 minutes per day). They will also receive an integrated unit on family life. Students in grade 2 and 3 are candidates for preparation for the Sacrament of First Eucharist (Holy Communion) and Reconciliation. It is the sole responsibility of the parents to contact the church and prepare their child for these sacraments. The sacraments will be conferred through the Parishes. We encourage you to watch your Sunday Parish Bulletin for announcements regarding parent meetings (usually in September). Although the sacramental themes are discussed in the Religion programs at school, the Diocese requires parents to do the preparation and instruction of the sacraments at home.

Lunch Policy

The students will eat lunch in their own classroom. Students are expected to finish eating their lunch between 11:55 pm - 12:15 pm.

1. There are no microwaves available for student use to heat lunches.
2. Students are expected to clean up their desk area after they have eaten.
3. At 12:15 pm, the staff member on lunch supervision will dismiss the classes. Students are required to put their disposable items in the garage can (located in the hallway) as they leave.
4. Students are expected to either go outside after they have eaten or to the gym to participate in intramurals (on their specified day).
5. Any student who abuses his/her lunchroom privileges may be asked to eat his/her lunch outside of the classroom.
6. Students who eat lunch at school are expected to remain in the school grounds for the entire lunch period.

