

St Joseph's School

Alens animos et mentes ~ Nurturing spirits and minds



HANDBOOK FOR FAMILIES

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ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

St. Joseph's School is committed to an educational program, which strives to provide academic excellence and to foster the total formation of the person. We aim to integrate the different aspects of knowledge in the light of the teachings of Jesus Christ as taught and lived in the Roman Catholic Church. We work to build an awareness of self within the community. We encourage and develop the growth of each person as a Christian.

We live out this commitment in striving to:

- foster a family spirit within the school and share that spirit with the local community.
- have the staff of the school serve as role models of Christian values.
- enlighten the students in the teaching of Christ, through knowledge and by example.
- develop within each child a sense of self-worth through his/her achievements in schoolwork and acceptance within our school family.
- develop our students' skills in oral and written language to enable them to communicate ideas and feelings effectively.
- develop our students' skills in computation and in the understanding of math concepts to enable them to be effective problem solvers.
- develop within our students the ability to think critically and to use their reasoning powers to help them function effectively in society.
- instill within our students a love of learning and an appreciation of knowledge that will continue throughout their lives.
- instill within our students the motivation to attain their fullest spiritual, intellectual, and physical potential.
- foster within our students a sense of responsibility as members of the global community.
- develop our school into an educational institution dedicated to meeting the needs of our students and families.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Bell Schedule

- 8:39 a.m. – Warning bell
- 8:44 a.m. – Classes begin
- 10:20 a.m. – Recess begins
- 10:35 a.m. – Classes begin
- 12:05 p.m. – Noon Recess
- 12:35 p.m. – Eating in class
- 1:00 p.m. – Classes begin
- 3:07 p.m. – *Dismissal

* Except on Thursday when the dismissal bell rings at 2:05 p.m.

Supervision Schedule

Students are supervised on the playground from 8:15 a.m. to 8:44 a.m., at recess, noon break, and after school until 3:22 p.m. or, in the case of bus students, until boarding their bus. Parents are asked to pick up their children for 3:22 or to be at the playground to supervise them after duty is over. This is especially important for children in primary grades. Students may not stay in the school after school hours.

School Calendar

Each family will receive a calendar for the school year. Before the beginning of each month your child will be given, or you will be emailed, a calendar of all the planned monthly events with the newsletter. This calendar will also be posted to the school website. If you do not receive your copy, please contact the office and we will send you another one. During the year there will be a number of professional development or administrative days. These dates will be given to you as soon as they are available.

Communication

Effective communication between the home and school is essential for the well-being of our students. In addition to this handbook, which provides information to our families, the school website provides important information and links. On Tuesday each week, a newsletter is sent home via email with a school calendar attached as the last page. In addition to its being sent out to our parents, it is also posted to our website: saintjosephsschool.ca. We have an information-based Facebook page as well. Parents are encouraged to attend Parent Support Group meetings and are welcome to observe at School Council Meetings. Parents are also encouraged to bring any queries or concerns that arise throughout the year to their child's teacher. If the concern does not relate to a child's learning, and/or the classroom learning environment or social environment, it may be appropriate to bring a concern to the principal. Appropriate, constructive communication between home and school does not include social media postings critical of programs, staff, students, or parents of the school and such incidents will be addressed.

Reporting

Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled for the first term. If you would like a meeting with the teacher, please call and set up an appointment for a mutually convenient time. There will be three formal reports sent home during the year. If you have concerns or questions about your child's progress or about something he/she is studying, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher. Teachers will also keep parents informed on an informal basis as required.

Emergency and Medical Procedures

Parents of students with medical alerts will note this on the registration form and for those students requiring a written medical plan, parents will update the office at the beginning of each year. In the event of an emergency that requires the school to close, parents will be asked to come to the school and SIGN OUT their child from a designated staff member, normally stationed at the parking lot gate way which is near the field muster area.

Lost and Found

Please ensure that all your child's belongings; including shoes, boots, coats, and lunch kits, are clearly marked with your child's name. Every year we accumulate clothing, shoes, boots and some unbelievable items in our lost and found. Please encourage your child to check if they have lost anything.

All unclaimed belongings will be donated to charity during Christmas, spring and summer break.

Bussing

Students at St. Joseph's have access to Bulkley Valley Christian school bussing for a fee. Full payment is due in September. Students are dropped off and picked up at the library entrance to the school. Because each child is checked off the bus list as he/she boards the bus, it is important that the school be informed if a child will not be taking the bus. Older children can let their teacher know, while for younger children a note from the parents may be more appropriate. Discipline problems arising on the bus are dealt with by the driver and /or the bussing authority. *Please ensure your child knows the plan for the bus each day and use something like a yes or no card system in the backpack if your child is forgetful.*

A) Bus service

1. The operation of bus routes is at the sole discretion of the board.
2. Bulkley Valley Christian school may operate bus routes of BVCS students and those students who belong to schools with whom BVCS has a formal transportation agreement.
3. BVCS may elect, at its sole discretion, to form transportation agreements with other schools from time to time and as needs arise. Such agreements must be ratified by the board or its designated representative(s).
4. This policy will be amended from time to time at the discretion of the BVCS board.

B) Definitions

1. "Eligible" riders are those who meet all of the following conditions:
 - i. Are enrolled as part- or full-time students at Bulkley Valley Christian school or at a school with which BVCS has a formal transportation agreement;
 - ii. Have completed all steps in the established bus registration process;
 - iii. Have been assigned a bus route and bus stop; iv. Have paid their transportation fees.
2. "Courtesy" riders are those who meet all of the following conditions:
 - i. Are enrolled as part- or full-time students at Bulkley Valley Christian school or at a school with which BVCS has a formal transportation agreement;
 - ii. Parent/guardian has completed the bus permission slip for the student
 1. to get off the school bus at a scheduled stop other than his/her own as authorized by the student's parent/guardian;
 2. OR to ride the school bus to spend time at a relative or friend's house as authorized by the student's parent/guardian provided there is room on the relevant bus.

C) Priority

1. RIDERSHIP priority: The priority for determining school bus ridership will be as follows:
 1. BVCS eligible riders
 2. Eligible riders from other schools
 3. BVCS courtesy riders

4. Courtesy riders from other schools
2. TRIP AND USAGE priority:
 1. BVCS administration reserves the exclusive right to make ad hoc decisions about bus trip and usage priority. For example, in some circumstance administration may decide to allow an after-hours or overnight trip to take a bus, thus cancelling Page 1 of 3 · Bus Transportation Policy AM/PM routes for that time. Administration may make these decisions on a caseby-case basis. A decision in one situation does not set precedent for another situation. If administration makes a decision that affects field trips or AM/PM routes, they will ensure the decision is made with adequate time to communicate and allow affected parties to adjust their plans accordingly.
 2. In the absence of an administrative decision to the contrary, trip and usage priority will be in order as follows:
 1. Morning and afternoon routes
 2. After-hours and overnight trips (field trips, athletics, etc.)
 3. Daytime overnight and after-hours usage
 1. Buses may be used for daytime, overnight or after-hours field trips and other uses provided such use does not violate the priorities set out above unless such use has the authorization of BVCS administration.
 2. Any daytime or after-hours use should be booked in advance. Bus reservations can be made at the front office.

D) General Policies

1. Bus rules are outlined in policy “Student Conduct on Buses”. Policy will be updated from time to time.
2. Families wishing to use the bus for AM/PM routes will be provided with a bus registration form available at the BVCS office or emailed to them. This must be completed, and the bus fee paid, before the children may ride the bus.
3. Families who use the bus will be charged the annual fee. The fee will be set by the finance committee and/or the business administrator. The bus fee is for per-term enrolment and not per-ride service. Therefore, BVCS will not pro-rate this amount for missed days (weather, mechanical issues, etc), school vacations, student absences, professional development days etc.. BVCS does not provide refunds (full or partial) if a family cancels their bus enrolment early.
4. The number of routes, stops on the routes and assignment of bus units to routes shall be determined by BVCS staff. Given our limited number of buses and the broad geographic area that we serve, it is recognized that we will not be able to serve all families.
5. Bus drivers are employees of Bulkley Valley Christian School.
6. BVCS does not rent or loan its buses to other organizations, schools or individuals.

E) Operational Policies

1. Full bus safety, handling and operational protocols are defined in “Appendix A” of the Building Grounds and Maintenance Mandate in the board policy manual. Drivers shall be familiar and in compliance with all items in that document.
2. BVCS drivers shall abide by all federal, provincial and municipal laws governing school bus transportation including but not limited to:
 - i. Thorough and documented pre-trip vehicle inspections;
 - ii. Obeying all road rules including seat belts, speed limits;

- iii. Properly logging driver time as required by law.
- 3. Drivers must complete and submit all of the following before driving for BVCS:
 - i. Current driver abstract; Page 2 of 3 · Bus Transportation Policy
 - ii. Current criminal record check;
 - iii. A copy of their drivers license (BC class 1 or 2)
- 4. Maintenance responsibilities of drivers;
 - i. Minor maintenance issues, such as bulb replacement, fluid maintenance, mirror adjustments, and so on should be resolved by the driver or another qualified individual.
 - ii. Major maintenance issues such as unidentified noises, mechanical concerns, electronic concerns and so on must be directed to a repair facility;
 - iii. If in doubt about a maintenance or repair issue, the driver will contact a repair facility and notify the school.
 - iv. Under no circumstance shall a bus be operated unless the driver is confident of the unit's safety, it has been properly inspected and licensed
- 5. Drivers are required to make judgment calls regarding route timing, route safety, weather and road conditions, and so on. Drivers will use good judgment with a view to student safety. If a driver is not fully confident that a route can be carried out safely, he/she will contact BVCS administrative staff to cancel, delay or alter their route.
- 6. When a route is delayed, altered or cancelled due to weather, mechanical issues or any other influence the driver will communicate this to designated BVCS administrative staff who will then inform the ridership using whatever means have been established.
- 7. Drivers have responsibility for student safety while students are on board the bus. Therefore, drivers have authority to expect and require student conduct that does not cause undue noise, confusion or chaos on a bus. Drivers who encounter disciplinary issues with students will report incidents and students to their respective Principal(s) who will follow up with further inquiry and disciplinary action when necessary.
- 8. "Courtesy" riders may be permitted to ride BVCS buses provided that the parent/guardian give 24-hour notice to the school office by completing the bus permission slip. Permission is at the discretion of BVCS office staff and/or the bus driver(s)

ADMISSIONS

Procedure

The parent(s)/guardians(s) of each applicant will meet with the principal or Admissions Committee to discuss the school's philosophy, programs and policies. The child's previous school and/or other appropriate professionals will also be contacted with parental permission. CISP Policy 311 is followed for admissions.

Criteria

- The child's ability to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the school.
- The school's ability to meet the child's particular needs.
- The enrollment priorities outlined above.

FINANCES

School Funding

The Provincial Government grants our school 50% of the cost per public school student for operating costs. No government funds are provided for buildings, maintenance, or equipment/furniture. The funding we do receive per child is based on the student's attendance. Notes are required for absenteeism for the government audit. Additional funding to help cover the operating costs of the school comes primarily from the tuition you pay, although special grants and donations from the parish, groups and individuals also help the school financially. Fundraising is used to finance special projects and is also important to the running of the school.

Tuition and Supply Fees

Tuition fees may be paid by cash in one (September) or two (September + February) installments, or by 10 or 12 post-dated cheques to be dated by the 15th of each month. Pre-authorized automatic debit is also available through the office. E-transfers are also now available: stjetransfers@cispg.ca Homework Book fees are payable by the end of September. Bus fees may be paid in two installments; first bus fees are due in September and the second in January.

Major Fundraising

Each year we hold several fund-raising events involving all the students in the school. The money raised is used for school equipment and educational resources/activities directly used by the students. Participation in any fundraising event is voluntary. Fundraising is also done by the Parent Support Group, School Council, and some classes throughout the year. All fundraising events must be approved by School Council.

PROGRAMMING

Educational Program

St. Joseph's School is dedicated in providing a quality educational program for its students. We aim to create an environment where every student experiences success in doing his/her best and where Christian values are lived. Our school is mandated by the government to meet the learning outcomes of all areas of the B.C. curriculum. In addition to these core curricular areas, St. Joseph's School provides instruction in Catholic Religious Education as well as music for all students in grades K to 7. A resource learning resource teacher and education assistants are available to provide extra support to students experiencing difficulties.

Extra-Curricular Programs

Each year a variety of extra-curricular activities are offered to students. What is offered depends student desires and on the volunteering of staff and parents and their availability. Some of the extra-curricular activities normally offered are choir, basketball, cross-country running, soccer, volleyball, track and field, skipping club, puzzle & games club, and office

monitoring.

Homework

At the intermediate level, homework is seen as an important part of the educational program as it helps to develop good study habits and a sense of responsibility towards schoolwork. Homework assigned at these grade levels should require about 30 minutes to complete. In grades one to three, homework, aside from reading and math facts practice, will not normally be assigned unless it is “catch up” work. Parents need to check and sign their children’s homework book each day as the regular use of the homework book is required and important to effective work habits. Good study habits also require a quiet place to work and the establishment of a routine homework time.

Parents can be an audience for oral reading, spelling practice, and math drills. If, on occasion, your child is unable to complete his/her homework assignment, a note from a parent/guardian is required to be sent to the teacher stating the circumstances. The student will be expected to complete the assigned work in the near future. Students who do not have a valid reason for incomplete homework will be supervised outside class time in study hall at 12:05 p.m. so they can complete their homework. Study hall is also available for any student wanting to complete homework at school or wanting assistance with their homework. We encourage students to avail themselves of this opportunity.

Library

- Students are responsible to care for their books and see that they are returned weekly.
- Books are due back by your child’s next library period.
- If a book is late, your child will be given a note reminding them to return the overdue book.
- If a book is more than two weeks overdue, a note will be sent home, asking your help in finding the book and your child will not be able to check out another book until the late book is returned
- If you cannot find it, you must pay the replacement cost of the lost book as indicated on the request note. Once this is done your child will be allowed to sign out books again.
- If the lost book is found after it has been paid for, you may return it and have your money refunded.
- Your child is also responsible for replacing any books which he/she has borrowed but returned in a damaged condition.

Sacramental Preparation

Sacramental preparation for Catholic students is done at home and through the church. Registration for the Sacraments is done through the Parish office. The Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion are received in grade two and the Sacrament of Confirmation is received in grade six.

Field Trips

When you register your child, you will be asked to give your permission for your child to take part in low-risk, walking field trips which are part of the regular school program. These include such things as walking trips to the library, skating rink, and fire hall. If the field trip requires transportation, the parent's written permission for the specific event will be required. Parent chaperones are required on field trips for supervision.

STUDENTS

Expectations

St. Joseph's School operates on these basic assumptions:

- Philosophical - that all of our students have a desire to develop as whole persons - spiritually, physically, intellectually, and socially - within the school environment.
- Behavioral - that all students will be respectful towards other students and staff. Disciplined behavior is viewed as integral to the provision of a quality Christian education at St. Joseph's.
- Academic - that all students will demonstrate a reasonable and co-operative effort in the learning process. Students will be supported and encouraged to work to the best of their ability in all program areas. Students will come prepared to work with all the necessary supplies. It is expected that students are responsible for completing their homework and making up missed assignments. The daily use of the homework book is required for students in grades three to seven. (Primary students generally do not receive homework, except for reading and math facts practice. Intermediate students can expect approximately 30 minutes of homework a night.)

Discipline

Discipline at St. Joseph's School is based on Christian values and the premise of mutual respect. Discipline is seen to be a joint home/school responsibility with parents and staff being supportive of each other in requiring respectful conduct. Positive support and good communication between home and school is essential to the effectiveness of our school. Students are to be polite, cooperative and respectful in their dealings with both staff and other students. We believe that children need and want fair and firm guidelines. A school code of conduct is used in dealing with all problems. A copy of the classroom rules will be posted in each class. The classroom conduct code will be available to parents by the end of the third week of school. More detail is given in our student code of conduct.

Code of Conduct

St Joseph's Code of Conduct is in place to ensure each student can learn in a safe and caring environment. The Code of Conduct is based on Christian values and the premise of mutual respect from students and staff that holds in high regard the personal dignity of each individual as a child of God. Our school believes children need fair and clear boundaries and expectations. Our core school-wide expectations outlines desired and acceptable conduct.

School-wide expectations

Learners are expected to be:

Safe – Helpful – Accountable – Respect – Polite

Unacceptable conduct

Student conduct that affects learning or violates the best interest of any individual in the school community is unacceptable to this code of conduct will be addressed. Learning from misconduct is seen to be a joint home-school responsibility with parents and staff being supportive of each other in requiring respectful conduct. The goal of addressing misconduct is for children to learn how to be their best selves, restore relationships, and make wrongs right. Positive support and good communication between home and school is essential to the effectiveness of our school.

Bullying prevention

St Joseph's School, as part of CISPG, is committed to a Bully Free School that strives to ensure every child feels safe, accepted, and respected. All classes engage in anti-bullying lessons throughout the school year, which focus on developing healthy friendships, encourage reporting of harmful conduct, and support affected students. A copy of the classroom rules is determined by each class and shared with students.

Communication

Parents/guardians will be informed of repeated or serious incidents of misconduct. Teachers set class expectations in addition to school-wide expectations (SHARP); as a first step, teachers and/or other staff address concerns as they arise, which may include consequences. Parents/guardians are welcome to discuss their child's conduct with relevant staff.

Code of Conduct Violations

When a student is referred to the principal due to repeated or serious misconduct, the following steps usually occur:

- 1. First Referral to Principal** - Incident is recorded and a discussion/meeting occurs between the student and principal to determine a resolution to the problem. Restorative justice or a consequence more significant than the one assigned previously should occur. Parents/Guardians may be contacted at this time. Discretion is left to Principal.
- 2. Second Referral to Principal** - Incident is recorded and a discussion/meeting occurs between the student and principal to determine a resolution to the problem. Restorative justice or a consequence more significant than the one assigned previously should occur. Parents/Guardians are informed, and a parent meeting may be requested.
- 3. Additional Referral to Principal** - Incident is recorded and a discussion/meeting occurs. Parents/Guardians are informed and a team meeting may occur. Outside agencies may be contacted if warranted. Restorative justice and/or consequence more significant than the one assigned previously should occur.

Severe Cause - Criteria for Severe Cause Includes:

- Willful disrespect or disobedience of a teacher/supervisor or severely disrupting a

learning environment.

- Willful infliction or threat of physical harm or severe insults towards another person.
- Intentional defacement, damage, or destruction of property.
- Use/possession of illicit drugs or paraphernalia.
- Other serious illegal acts

A child meeting one or more of the above criteria can expect the matter to be taken very seriously. The principal will consult with the superintendent on the matter, the student may be suspended until further notice while an investigation/threat assessment is completed, and if warranted, the student may receive a suspension or expulsion.* Severe misconduct may disregard usual steps.

If a student exhibits repeated misconduct that intentionally harm or disturb another student, the student will be referred to the principal and his/her parents/guardians will be contacted. Loss of privileges (e.g. disqualification from teams, field trips, IT access), modified attendance, modified learning environment, or suspension of up to 5 days from school will be determined at the discretion of the principal. A behaviour and or safety plan will be agreed upon by the principal, teacher, parents/guardians and student to support behavioral change while protecting the well-being of other students and staff.

Dress Code

Students are to dress neatly and appropriately. For example, tops should cover one's middle when one raises hands above one's head, sleeveless tops should be fitted around the arms and straps no less than "two finger" widths. Shorts and skirts are to be at least mid-thigh in length. Any slogans or pictures on clothing should be in keeping with Christian values. If students are dressed inappropriately, they may be asked to change into their gym strip, cover up with a sweatshirt, or call home for a change of clothes. In order to keep the mud and dirt outside, we ask that all students have an extra pair of non-marking, gym-appropriate shoes for indoor wear. Gym running shoes may be worn as indoor shoes. As students spend recess and lunch break outside, except in very inclement weather, they are asked to always dress accordingly. Very inclement weather means very wet conditions or colder than -15 degrees C.

Attendance

In the case of illness, parents/guardians are asked to phone the school before classes begin or as soon as possible. For school government funding purposes, a note or email must be sent from home stating the date(s) and reason for absence or tardiness. A standard form is available at the office to use. Every effort should be made to have students attend regularly; absenteeism has an adverse effect on student progress.

Participation

It is expected that students participate in the entire educational program of the school. A note is required if there is a valid reason for a student to be excused from scheduled classes and activities. The school determines validity.

Leaving School Premises

Students are required to have parental permission to leave the school grounds between 8:41 a.m. and 3:07 p.m. The school office or classroom teacher must be informed in advance by email, phone, or by letter. Unless students regularly go home for lunch, they are not allowed to leave school grounds until the school office receives parental confirmation. Students leaving the school and/or returning to the school during school hours must check in at the office.

Responsible Use of Technology Agreement

St. Joseph's School supports the use of technology to enhance and facilitate learning. Our goal is to ensure that student interaction with technology contributes positively to the learning environment at school and in the community.

St. Joseph's provides education and supervision to ensure students understand and comply with the safe, legal and responsible use of technology and the information accessed by its use.

Your child's information is protected by Catholic Independent Schools of Prince George Diocese' Policy 121: Personal Information Privacy Policy and PIPA. Safeguarding personal information of parents, students, and staff is a fundamental concern of Catholic Independent Schools of Prince George. CIS is committed to meeting or exceeding the privacy standards established by British Columbia's Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA).

A. Use of Information Technology Equipment

Please understand that using this equipment is a privilege, not a right. This privilege can be withdrawn if necessary.

- Only use devices such as computers, laptops and iPads for the tasks directed by the staff member in charge.
- Do not tamper with the computer system.
- Do not use personal software on the computers without permission.
- Do not enter a computer room without permission or unless a staff member is present.
- Do not swap around any equipment.
- Report all equipment faults to a staff member immediately.
- Computers, laptops and iPads are not to be used unless permission has been given by a teacher and/or under teacher supervision.
- Students are not to have food or drinks of any kind in any proximity to an electronic device.
- Computers, laptops and iPads should be used by only one person at a time, unless directed otherwise by their teacher.
- Students are expected to be responsible when posting or viewing information online, refraining from using technology to degrade or defame others. Those individuals who partake in such behaviour will have their privileges revoked
- Students can only access and use their own accounts with permission from their teacher (at school and at home)
- Students will not forward inappropriate materials or communications and will report an inappropriate content to a teacher immediately.

- No network files are to be copied from the network without the written permission of the School Computer Coordinator or an Administrator.

B. Use of the Internet

Students are responsible for good behaviour on the school computer network. The sending, creating, storing or displaying of inappropriate mail, messages, documents, videos or graphics, by way of the internet or any other manner, is not allowed on any school device. Violators of this policy will lose their computer use privilege, and will suffer consequences in conjunction with the severity of their behaviour.

C. Use of the Cell Phones and other personal electronic devices

Students who bring cell phones or other personal electronic devices to school are not permitted to use them during school hours. These must be kept in the student's backpack and turned off during the school day. The school is not responsible for damage or loss of cell phones. If students do use their devices during school hours without permission, the device(s) will be held at the principal's office until a parent can pick it up after school. Exceptions will be made for students with special needs where a personal device is needed for meaningful and safe participation at school (ie. dex-com system for students with diabetes)

PARENTS

Rights

- to be recognized as the first educators of their children.
- to participate in the religious, social and academic education of their children.
- to elect school council members from members of the parish.
- to participate in Parent Support Group (PSG) activities and to elect PSG executives.
- to require excellence in education.
- to be informed regarding the progress and/or concerns relating to their children.
- to have their views on any aspect of the curriculum and activities taken into serious account.
- to visit the school when appropriate.
- to have the school reinforce the Catholic moral and religious guidance and discipline given in the home.
- to have concerns and complaints according to established policies and procedures

Responsibilities

- to take the initiative and leadership in the religious education of their children and to be supportive of the religious program in the school.
- to set a good example for their children by practicing values consistent with the Catholic faith.
- to take an active role in the guidance of their children's education.
- to familiarize themselves with the CISPG and school's policies and to abide by them.
- to co-operate with teachers for the welfare of their children.

- to attend meetings called by the school.
- to participate in school activities and events whenever possible.
- to attend parent/teacher interviews as scheduled or to make alternate arrangements.
- to ensure that the child has all the supplies needed for proper participation in school.
- to ensure that children are given enough time and suitable working space to complete homework assignments.
- to support the school financially

Parent Input

We are dedicated to growing and improving our school. Parents are encouraged to attend our PSG meetings, which are listed on the monthly calendar. Monthly School Council meetings are also open to all parents. Elected School Council members must be Catholic, but non-Catholic parents can be on committees of School Council. In keeping with the family nature of our school, we feel a special need to consider our parents' concerns and ideas.

Resolving Concerns

Communication is essential for providing an effective and nurturing school for your child. If you have a concern, first contact the staff member most directly involved during school hours. Please call or email to set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time if warranted. If the problem cannot be solved satisfactorily at this level, contact the principal. If you feel you have not received satisfaction from the above parties, you may contact the superintendent of the Catholic Independent Schools of Prince George. Major complaints follow CISPG policy 310.

Volunteering

Volunteers are really valued and make significant contributions to our school in a variety of ways such as:

- providing adult supervision in situations such as field trips where adult/children supervision ratios must be met
- providing assistance to the teacher in the classroom with instructional materials or activities
- assisting in the instruction of children by reading to or listening to children read
- providing transportation for field trips and off-site activities

The Catholic Independent School Board of Directors has implemented a policy that requires all volunteers who are working with children to complete an application form which will give consent for the completion of a criminal record search. This policy aims to ensure that children learn in a safe environment. If you feel you have time to volunteer in any of the above ways, you **MUST** complete a criminal record search application form which can be picked up at the school office. We also require any parents who will be driving students to give the office a Driver's Abstract and a copy of their vehicle's insurance. The Driver's Abstract can be obtained online.

Parent Support Group (PSG)

St. Joseph's PSG is an integral part of the school, fostering a sense of community and trust

through the active involvement of parents and teachers. The PSG allows parents to be informed and involved in issues, events and programs concerning our school. The PSG is involved in a variety of activities (e.g., the Hot Lunch Program, Fun Day, Thanksgiving dinner, etc.) and in activities that help build strong, supportive communication between and among teachers and parents. The PSG allows parents and teachers to work together towards enhancing the school and meeting the teachers' needs in their programs. For more information on the PSG, please contact the school office or the PSG chairperson. Parent involvement in the PSG is essential in ensuring the continued success of our school for our students and their families.

Hot Lunch

The Parent Support Group (PSG) runs a Friday hot lunch program from October to May. Monies raised go towards resources and equipment for the school. The grade seven parents run a pizza lunch throughout the year, alongside the Hot Lunch Program, as a fundraiser for the annual Grade 7 year-end field trip. Students place their orders Wednesday each week for the Friday lunch. If you would like to help with the hot lunch program, please contact the coordinator. Each team is scheduled to help with just three or four hot lunches per school year.