

Notre Dame School Student/Family Handbook 2023-24



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*This Handbook contains basic information about Notre Dame School.
If you have a concern or question that is not addressed by this publication, please contact the
administration at 250-782-4923.
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PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

Notre Dame School

2023 - 2024



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INTRODUCTION

July 6, 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Notre Dame School!

We at Notre Dame are pleased to contribute to your child/ren's education. We aim to provide opportunities for them to grow and develop in all aspects of their lives, especially spiritually, academically, and emotionally. In addition, we strive to prepare students to think critically about the world, and find their way as constructive, creative members of society. Notre Dame Staff is blessed and privileged to contribute to this inspiring, significant task.

I am fortunate to work alongside a dedicated, caring, and knowledgeable staff within the school and parish and supportive parents and families. Together, we can make a difference in our children's lives and spread our gifts throughout the school and local community.

This Handbook is intended to be a reference that will introduce you to our school policies and procedures. It will be updated yearly with additional changes from current 'normal' school routines.

Our goal at Notre Dame is to be prepared for the unexpected and to keep you informed promptly. Our priority will continue to be you and your child/ren. Your health and well-being are the most important issues and will always be our priority. Please check our [school website](#) for Communicable Disease updates whenever you have questions. We will post updates as soon as they come to us in a timely manner.

If you have any other questions about the school or its programs, please feel free to contact me.



Your Partner in Education,
Colleen Richard
Principal, Notre Dame School
250 782 4923
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CATHOLIC INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS, DIOCESE OF PRINCE GEORGE

Notre Dame School is one of eight Catholic Independent Schools in the Diocese of Prince George. Catholic Independent Schools, Diocese of Prince George (CISPG) comprises the northern half of British Columbia and includes Catholic schools located in the communities of Prince Rupert, Terrace, Kitimat, Smithers, Prince George and Dawson Creek - a geographic span of 1200 kilometres. The CISPG community acknowledges, respects, and honours the following traditional territories in which they work and learn: the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation in Prince George; the Tsimshian Nation in Prince Rupert and Terrace; the Haisla Nation in Kitimat; the Wet'suwe'ten Nation in Smithers; and the West Moberly and Saulneau First Nations in Dawson Creek.

CISPG Purpose/Mission

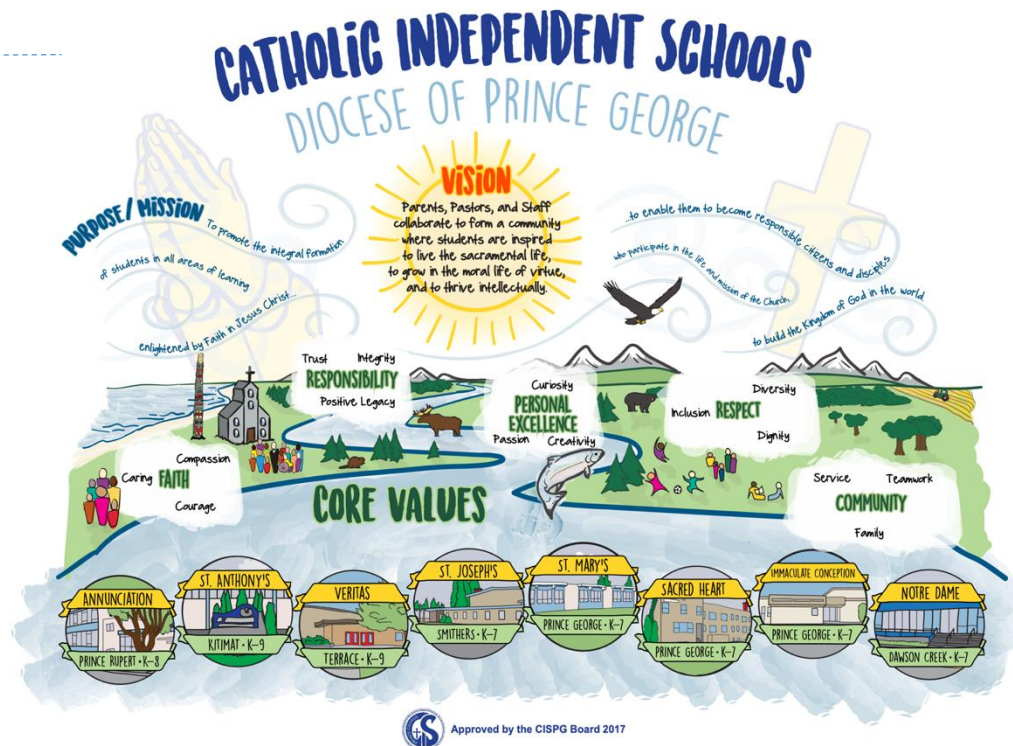
To promote the integral formation of students in all areas of learning enlightened by Faith in Jesus Christ to enable them to become responsible citizens and disciples who participate in the life and mission of the church to build the Kingdom of God in the world.

CISPG Vision

Parents, Pastors, and Staff collaborate to form a community where students are inspired to live the sacramental life, to grow in the moral life of virtue, and to thrive intellectually.

CISPG Values

- **Faith:** caring, compassion, courage
- **Responsibility:** trust, integrity, positive legacy
- **Personal Excellence:** passion, curiosity, creativity
- **Respect:** inclusion, diversity, dignity
- **Community:** service, teamwork, family



Approved by the CISPG Board 2017



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NOTRE DAME SCHOOL – ABOUT US

Our Purpose/Mission

"We, the teachers of Notre Dame School, choose as our mission to educate the whole child providing knowledge and skills for lifelong learning within a Christian environment wherein all are accepted and valued and, as disciples of Jesus, to spread these Gospel values outwards into the broader community."

Our Philosophy

Notre Dame School offers an academic program that complies with all requirements of the curriculum guidelines of the BC Ministry of Education. In addition, we offer programs from Kindergarten to Grade Seven in Learning Assistance, French, and Library-Learning commons. A wide variety of extracurricular activities are sponsored by the staff and enjoy a great deal of support from Notre Dame students.

Notre Dame School is committed to an educational program which strives to provide not only academic Excellence, but to foster a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We work to build up an awareness of self within the Christian community and transmit the Gospel values of living in the work and making it a better place. We encourage this growth not only through our Religious Education programs but also in the day-to-day lives of staff and students.

The expectation of our Catholic community is that all of our children participate or be respectfully present in the religious life of our school both in the classroom and at religious celebrations held at the school or at Notre Dame Parish.

Our Operational Structure

Our school is classified by the BC Government as a Group 1 Independent School, which means that all teachers and the Principal are British Columbia certified and all Ministry of Education curriculum standards are met. Authority for the operation of all Catholic Schools within the Diocese of Prince George is vested in CISP, a legal body incorporated in 1957 as a Society. CISP includes the Bishop, a Board of Directors, and the Superintendent of Schools.

As a Group 1 school, Notre Dame School receives 50% operational funding from the government and no capital funding. Tuition fees make up a portion of the remaining funding required to operate the school. In order to retain its standing as a Group 1 school, the school is evaluated regularly by the Ministry of Education. These reports have been consistently very positive. The 50% funding received from the Ministry is dependent on Notre Dame School meeting and exceeding the basic curriculum, as well as other physical and safety requirements.

Our Staff

The dedicated staff of Notre Dame School includes British Columbia certified teachers and Principal, trained education assistants, and, where necessary, contracted specialists. We are dedicated to fully implementing the



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BC curriculum in a Catholic environment. A listing of our staff and contact information can be found on our [Notre Dame School website under staff](#).

Our School Council

Notre Dame School Council, along with all the school councils in the Prince George Diocese, is constituted by the authority of CISPG and is directly responsible to CISPG and the Bishop. The Council consists of a minimum of six members and the pastor. Council members are elected for a two-year term, may complete up to three consecutive terms, and must be practicing Catholics. The Council is responsible for all areas of the management and operation of the school in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, guidelines, directives, policies and regulations of CISPG.

Parents/Guardians are an integral part of the school community and are invited and encouraged to become involved in the activities and endeavors of the school. The School Council is the primary avenue for involvement of parents/guardians in the school. It is the responsibility of the School Council to approve and direct any parent group working or acting on behalf of the school.

Regular monthly meetings are held and are open to parents/guardians, with the exception of in-camera sessions, which focus on confidential matters. If you wish to make a presentation as an individual or group to Council, you must make your request in writing at least one week prior.

The officers of the Council are: Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Subcommittees may include Finance, Maintenance, as well as various committees beneficial for Notre Dame school. You do not need to be an elected member to work on the subcommittees. If you are interested in volunteering for any of the subcommittees, please contact the Council Chairperson.

Please visit our [school website](#) under Our School, School Council, for names and contact information of the Notre Dame School Council members. As well, under School Council, please see the local school policies.

Our Faith Formation

Every student enrolled at Notre Dame School participates in the religion program, [Alive in Christ](#) and [The Body Matters](#) which is approved by the Prince George Diocese. The [Alive in Christ](#) program is a religion curriculum that focuses on the life, mission and saving work of Jesus Christ. Scripture is presented in ways that encourage students to learn about the people and stories of the Bible and listen to the voice of God. [The Body Matters](#) program is a teaching tool intended to support and to be inserted into already-existing curricula [Alive in Christ](#).

One of the most integral parts of our school community is the celebration of Mass. School Mass is usually held on the second Friday of each month. Students in each grade have an opportunity to play an active role in Mass throughout the school year. Parent/Guardian attendance at school Mass is encouraged whenever possible.



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NOTRE DAME SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Admissions

Parents of students who wish to enter Notre Dame School must fill out an application package. Registration will be considered when the application form is complete, and the required documents are submitted.

[CISPG Policy 501](#) dictates the priorities for admittance into CISPG Schools:

1. Students presently enrolled in the school.
2. Students with siblings presently enrolled in the school (Catholic/Non-Catholic).
3. Students whose families are parishioners (defined as practicing Catholics – for the purpose of this policy, "practicing Catholics" shall mean those individuals who are registered in a parish and attend Sunday Mass faithfully).
4. Catholics of surrounding parishes, Non-Catholics, students whose families are not practicing Catholics, but accept the goals and philosophy of the school and sign the Family Statement of Commitment.

Catholic student/family applications must be accompanied by Baptismal, First Communion and/or Confirmation certificates where applicable. While priority is given to the children of Catholic families who participate in the faith life of Notre Dame Parish, we welcome children of other faiths/beliefs, provided their families accept their child's participation in our religious activities. The final decision to admit a child resides with the Admissions Committee and is conditional upon an interview with the parents/guardians and the student. Every child's needs are complex. As stated in CISPG's Family Statement of Commitment, Notre Dame School reserves the right to re-evaluate your child's enrolment if their learning needs are not being met despite our best efforts.

Each February, current families are required to complete a re-registration form declaring their intent to return to Notre Dame School in the following school year. This enables staffing decisions and budget considerations to be made in preparation for the coming school year.

Registration

If interested in registering your child at Notre Dame School, please contact the office and make an appointment with the school Principal. We accept applications of school age children throughout the school year. Kindergarten Registration begins in January of each year. Only those children who will be 5 years of age by December 31 of the following school year need apply.

For the appointment, please ...

1. Bring the most current report card.
2. Bring any relevant information such as individual education plans (IEPs) and/or other professional reports (Psych Ed., Occupational Therapy, Behaviour Plans, etc.) for review and discussion.
3. Inform the administrator if any testing has been planned in the future and the nature of the testing. Failure to disclose information regarding any testing may result in an application being withdrawn after acceptance has been granted.
4. Bring the child to meet the Principal and participate in a tour of the school.



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After meeting with the Principal, a meeting with the Pastor of Notre Dame School should be made by calling the church (250 782 3456). See the local school [Registration Package](#) at this link.

Tuition

Tuition is collected to assist with the operation of Notre Dame School. Amounts are set by the Notre Dame School Council and are reviewed annually.

It is an expectation that all families pay their tuition fees on a regular basis and in full by the end of the current school year. Invoices are mailed regularly and therefore it is important to ensure that the school office has a record of your current mailing address.

Contact the bookkeeper either by phone (250 782-4923) or email ndsbookkeeper@cispg.ca for information regarding your account balance.

Families seeking assistance in paying tuition fees must contact the Finance Committee notredame@cispg.ca with a request for assistance. Your request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. All decisions made by the Finance Committee are final.

Monthly Tuition Fees for the 2022/2023 School Year

One Child	Two Children	Three or more children	Parish Support Program
\$215	\$285	\$325	20% discount to eligible families

Notre Dame School has introduced the following options for payment of fees/tuition for the 2020/2021 school year:

- 1) Lump sum payment by September 15, 2021 (via cash or cheque)
- 2) Cash payments on the 1st of each month (over 10)
- 3) Pre-authorized Debit payments on the 15th or 30th of each month (over 10)
- 4) Cheque payments on the 1st of each month (over 10)
- 5) Pre-authorized Credit Card payments on the 15th or 30th of each month (over 10)
- 6) Interac E-transfer on the 15th or the 30th of each month (over 10) via ndsaccounting@cispg.ca

Please see the ["Payment Option" form](#) in the registration package for more details. If paying by cheque (either post-dated or current), please note that a **\$25.00 NSF charge** will apply for bank-returned payments.

If there are other persons responsible for fees/tuition for your child(ren), please notify the school office so we can send them a copy of this letter and the enclosed form. In addition, copies of any court documentation/letters outlining shared tuition must be provided to the school.



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We ask that you please **return the following to the school office - attention Mr. Caguitla** – Notre Dame School Bookkeeper:

- One completed copy of the "[Payment Option](#)" form (the other copy is for your records)
- The lump sum or first month's payment for your child(ren) 's fees/tuitions
- [The Financial Commitment letter](#) with the **declaration signed at the bottom of the page.**

Please see the "[Financial Assistance Request and the Overdue accounts policies](#)" under School Council section on our school website.

School Supplies

Students in grades K-7 should purchase their supplies through the school office. School supply fees are due each September. School Supplies Fees for the 2020-2021 School Year: **\$85 per year.**

Busing

Families living in rural areas can ride SD59 school buses for a fee. Students transfer to and from a shuttle bus at South Peace in the morning and Central in the afternoon. The shuttle bus drops off and picks up the students each day at the 105 Avenue gate before and after school. Please review the busing regulations and student expectations found on the school website under the [Parent Information tab.](#)

Shuttle Bus Fees:

- \$21.94 per day (to be shared among the number of Notre Dame students on the bus)

Busing Fees:

- One child - \$40.00 per month
- Two children - \$80.00 per month
- Three or more children - \$85.00 per month

School Hours

School hours are from 8:45 am – 2:45 pm

Please note that information on school hours and schedules may be different due to Communicable Disease guidelines. Please refer to current Communicable Disease information on the Notre Dame website.

Bell Schedule

School Gates are opened at 8:30 am to allow students entry to the school through the playground doors. Supervision of students starts at 8:30 am. Students arrive and go straight into the school upon their arrival. Students change their shoes and then head to their classroom.

School gates and doors open at 8:30 am with supervision starting at 8:30 am.

- 8:45 am

The first bell of the day rings. Students are in their classrooms. The parking lot gate is then locked for security purposes.



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Students wait quietly for O' Canada. Morning Prayer follows O' Canada. Students are expected to remain respectful, make the sign of the cross and pray as a school together.

- 8:50 am

The second bell rings. The bus gate is located. Students arriving after 8:50 am must enter the school through the front doors and sign in.

- 10:15 am

First Morning recess. Teachers walk their class to the mudroom.

- 10:30 am

Second Morning recess. Students line up to enter the school.

- 12:00 noon

Lunch recess. Teachers walk their class to the mudroom.

- 12:25 pm

End of lunch recess. Students line up to enter the school. Students eat their lunch in their classrooms. Teachers are in their classrooms at 12:30 pm to relieve supervisors.

- 12:45 pm

End of lunch bell. Students put their lunch away and begin afternoon sessions.

- 2:45 pm

End of day bell. Teachers walk their class to the mudroom and wait until their class is outside before returning. Students are picked up at the end of the day by 2:50 pm from the playground.

- 2:50 pm

The second end-of-day bell. Gates are locked. The remaining students go to the office to sit quietly while they wait to be picked up. Students must be picked up no later than 3 pm.

Attendance

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to ensure their child arrives at school on time. Students who arrive late often miss important instruction and interfere with the learning of others. When students arrive late, they are to report to the office and sign in.

If your child is absent for any reason, parents/guardians must contact the school either by phone (250 782 4923) or email (notredame@cispg.ca). After morning attendance is complete, the office staff will contact parents/guardians of absentees who have not contacted the school to ensure the student is safe. Students who are absent or late will be required to bring a note to the office (can be written in the agenda), even if a phone call has been made.

If you wish your child to leave the school grounds any time between the welcome bell and the dismissal bell, please inform the school by phone, email (notredame@cispg.ca), or a written note. All students must sign in and out at the office.

To qualify for provincial government funding, students must be in attendance for a minimum of 600 hours of instruction from September to May 15. The funding is based on the students' actual days in attendance. Because



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of holidays or other reasons, a student who is in attendance for less than 600 hours qualifies for partial funding only.

Dated and signed notes stating the reason for absences are required for funding calculations (personal holidays do not qualify as an acceptable absence). The days a student is absent due to a personal holiday will be subtracted from the total grant monies. In these cases, parents may be asked to reimburse the school the grant monies lost due to absences ([See CISPG Policy #501 – Family Statement of Commitment](#)).

Chronic lateness or absences can adversely affect the learning of a child. Therefore, students who are late or absent are responsible for meeting with the teacher to review what was missed when away, complete the missed assignments, and/or any requirements needed to achieve the set objectives of learning.

NOTRE DAME PARENTS

Rights of Parents/Guardians

- Be recognized as the first educators of their children
- Engage in ongoing parent-teacher communication
- Expect Excellence in teaching and learning
- Be informed in a timely manner about progress and concerns regarding their children
- Appeal to CIS Prince George when problems cannot be solved locally
- Elect School Council members

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

- Take an active role in the education of their children at home and support the religious, social, and academic programs of Notre Dame School
- Familiarize themselves with school policies (locally and CISP) and abide by them
- Attend all meetings called by the school (learning support meetings, student-led conferences, parent-teacher meetings)
- Participate in school activities and events
- Support the school financially (tuition payment, fundraising events)
- Support the school through service (volunteering) whenever possible
- Ensure children attend school and on time
- Meet children after school in a timely manner
- Review the website on a regular basis for newsletters and other communication
- Be aware of social media and its impact on the school, student, staff and community and use proper channels to solve problems

Communication

As parents/guardians are the first educators of their children, the school and home need to engage in regular communication. We strive to ensure parents/guardians are well informed about what is happening at Notre Dame



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School through monthly newsletters, weekly emails, special notices, the yearly calendar, and our [website](#). The majority of our communication is via email; please make sure you have a current email address at the school office. Be sure to check the school website and your email regularly. Classroom teachers may be contacted by parents/guardians via a note in the student agenda, email, or by leaving a message at the school office.

Visiting the School

Please note that information on visiting the school may be different due to Communicable Disease guidelines. Please refer to current Communicable Disease information on the Notre Dame website.

Parents are encouraged to visit the school and keep informed of their children's progress. At specific times during the school year, parents receive invitations for various parent activities. When visitors come into our school during instructional hours, they must report to the school office and sign in. If they desire to see a specific teacher, the office staff will be happy to check schedules and make a mutually convenient appointment.

Parent/Guardian Concerns

At Notre Dame School, we encourage open communication between parents and staff. It is important that concerns are brought forward. We cannot address issues we do not know exist, and we want to work with you. It is easier to handle a concern before it escalates to become a serious problem. Parents/guardians and teachers are expected to communicate in a timely manner regarding any concerns they may have.

When parents/guardians have a concern, it is important that they confer with the teacher first. If the concern cannot be resolved here, the Principal will be informed to reach a solution.

The following [CISPG Policy 473](#) outlines the formal procedure used to address parental/guardian complaints against school personnel:

- **Step 1:** A parent or guardian representing a student and having a complaint about personnel should contact the person in question as the first step to resolution.
- **Step 2:** If a resolution is not affirmed or if the parent or guardian does not wish to meet with the person in question, the parent or guardian shall request a meeting with the Principal. A record of the meeting shall be made by the Principal.
- **Step 3:** The Principal will then investigate the complaint or refer the complaint to an outside agency, at their discretion.
- **Step 4:** The Principal will then decide either to facilitate a meeting between all parties or refer the complaint to CISPG. The principal or parents/guardian, in writing, can request the matter be presented to the CISPG office. The Principal is to keep the School Council aware of any serious situation.
- **Step 5:** If the parent or guardian does not receive satisfaction from the CISPG office within Step 4, an appeal, in writing, can be made to the CISPG Board of Directors.
- **Step 6:** The CISPG Board of Directors will arrange for an investigation of the appeal ([Policy 470](#)) and will provide a decision on the matter in writing and communicate this to the parent or guardian on a timely basis.

Notre Dame Parent Support Group



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The Notre Dame Parent Support Group (ND PSG) role is to support the Principal and school staff in meeting the needs of the students at Notre Dame School.

Financial and Physical Support shall be provided by:

- Conducting fundraising functions and programs to aid in the provision of additional educational, recreational and cultural development for the school's students.
- Involving as many parents or guardians of the students as possible and encouraging new parents/guardians to become a part of the school community.

The ND PSG operates under the following limitations:

- The actions of the ND PSG shall be in accordance with the policies established by the Notre Dame School Council.
- The ND PSG shall not be involved in the day-to-day operation of the school. These matters remain the responsibility of the Principal and the teaching staff.
- The general membership shall be free to make suggestions regarding expenditures. However, to avoid conflicts, all fundraising projects and the disposition of funds raised for the school will be subject to the approval of the Principal and the school council.

Please note that the volunteer guidelines may change due to Communicable Disease guidelines. Please refer to current Communicable Disease information on the Notre Dame website.

Volunteers

[CISPG Policy 501 Section B](#) states: "Once a student has been admitted to the school, parents/guardians will be required to participate in the various activities of the school, including fundraising". Volunteers are necessary and very much encouraged within the school and in a variety of ways: classroom, hot lunch, field trip, fund raising, and for field trips as supervisors of small groups of students ...

All volunteers must complete the CISPG volunteer application form (available at the school office and included in the student application form), sign the confidentiality form, submit a Criminal Record Check and other applicable forms (driver's abstract, vehicle insurance and driver's license).

Criminal record checks are completed through the RCMP (forms can be found in the office). This takes time, so if interested, fill the forms out at the beginning of the school year. It is a good idea to check each year to see if you are required to do the process again as these must be done every three years.

Volunteers must abide by the Volunteer Code of Conduct, which states that all Notre Dame School volunteers ...

- Will be supervised by a school employee and must follow that person's directions.
- Must adhere to the policies of the school and CISPG and the rules of the school in which they are volunteering.
- Must treat staff, parents and students with politeness and respect.
- Must deal judiciously with students and defer to the teacher's authority in all matters relating to the classroom.
- If uncertain about their role or any other matter, will seek advice from the teacher with whom they are working or the Principal, as appropriate.



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Volunteers must also abide by the [Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement](#), which states that all students, staff and others working in the school have a right to expect that information about them will be kept strictly confidential by volunteers. Therefore, volunteers ...

- Will not communicate anything they learn about any student or anything that they observe in the course of volunteering to anyone other than appropriate school employees.
- Will not share information about students, even with others who may be genuinely interested in a student's welfare, such as social workers, recreational leaders, family friends, physicians, etc., except when legally required to do so.
- Will keep anything they learn about school employees or other volunteers strictly confidential.
- If asked for information concerning a student or staff member(s), will refer the request to the teacher or Principal.
- If in doubt about whether they may divulge information concerning a student or staff member, will consult with the school principal.

The [Volunteer Application Form](#), which includes the Volunteer Code of Conduct and the Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement, must be signed by all volunteers and approved by the Notre Dame School Principal.

NOTRE DAME STUDENTS

Notre Dame School is an Allergen Aware School. There are students with allergies at Notre Dame School. As such, Notre Dame School requests that parents/guardians be aware of foods that contain nuts when sending snacks to school. Classroom teachers will update their newsletters when there are any allergy awareness alerts.

Rights of Students

- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Be safe and feel secure within the school
- Have every opportunity to learn to the best of his/her abilities
- Receive consistent and regular feedback on daily work
- Have opportunities for self-evaluation and reflection throughout the year
- Be encouraged to become leaders of their own learning
- Request and/or attend meetings to discuss progress
- Report issues of safety to a supervisor
- Have opportunities to provide feedback and suggestions to make the school a better place

Responsibilities of Students

- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Behave in a way that promotes safety for others and for self
- Observe all school and classroom expectations
- Be an active participant in learning
- Complete work in a timely manner and to the best of his/her abilities



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- Respect school property and the property of others
- Report issues of safety to a supervisor
- Strive to become a leader of their own learning
- Follow procedure when dealing with a conflict or concern

Communicating Student Learning

Communicating student learning occurs throughout the school year. Three written reports are issued; as well, two student-led conferences are held each school year. In addition, all classrooms use an electronic platform to share student learning and progress. Kindergarten to grade 7 use the student agendas to maintain communication between the school and home.

If a parent/guardian has any concerns regarding their child's progress at any time, they are encouraged to contact the teacher via email or by calling the school. All appointments must be made in advance.

Notre Dame Code of Conduct

Reference: [CISPG Policy 502 - Student Discipline](#)

As part of CISPG, Notre Dame School 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, focusing on developing healthy friendships, encouraging reporting of harmful behaviours, and supporting affected students.

The Notre Dame Code of Conduct is in place to ensure each student can learn in a safe and caring environment. The Code of Conduct supports respect from students and staff and regard for the personal dignity of each individual. We expect all community members to maintain an attitude that is cooperative, courteous, and respectful. Student behaviours that impact learning or violate the best interest of any individual in the school community will not be tolerated.

Respect Yourself

- Follow Notre Dame's Dress Code.
- Always strive to do your best.
- Be punctual and ready for school with all required materials and assignments.
- Use the provided agenda or communication folder to record homework and school events.
- Participate in all curriculum areas and school-related events.

Respect Others

- Be polite (no rude or offensive language, gestures, or remarks).
- Show understanding for other's feelings.
- Follow the directions of all staff and volunteers.
- No fighting, rough play, or striking another student.
- Walk quietly in the hallways.
- Be honest and tell the truth.

Respect Property



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- Use school property, equipment, books, etc., appropriately and under supervision.
- The personal use of electronics, including cell phones, is not permitted during the school day.
- Clean up after yourself and others, if necessary.
- Respect and care for the environment by maintaining a clean building and school grounds.

Be Safe

- Sharp or dangerous objects are not allowed in the school or on school property.
- Show concern and care for those around you. Move about the school and playground without causing harm to others or self.
- Promote a code of citizenship by reporting any incidences of bullying, harassment, or unsafe behaviour to a "tellable" adult.
- Any wheel items, such as bicycles, scooters, and skateboards are to be walked on and off school property.
- When on the school bus, follow all safety guidelines.

Violations of the Code of Conduct

Reference: [CISPG Policy 502 - Student Discipline](#)

Parents/Guardians will be informed of severe or repeated infractions.

When a student is referred to the Principal for recurring and/or serious infractions, the following may occur:

First Referral to Principal - Incident is recorded, and a discussion/meeting occurs between the student and Principal to determine a resolution to the problem. Parents/Guardians may be contacted at this time. Discretion is left to the Principal.

Second Referral to Principal - Incident is recorded, and a discussion/meeting occurs between the student and Principal to determine a resolution to the problem. In addition, parents/guardians are informed, and a parent meeting may be requested.

Additional Referral to Principal - Incident is recorded, and a discussion/meeting occurs. Parents/Guardians are informed, and a team (parent, teacher, student & Principal) meeting may 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.

A student meeting one or more of the above criteria for severe cause will face appropriate consequences at the discretion of the Principal and/or [CISPG Policy](#), up to and including expulsion from the school.

If a student exhibits repeated behaviours that intentionally harm or disturb another student, the student will be referred to the Principal, and their parents/guardians will be contacted. Loss of privileges or suspension from school will be determined at the discretion of the Principal. A behaviour plan will be agreed upon by the Principal,



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teacher, parents/guardians and student to support behavioural change while protecting the wellbeing of other students and staff.

Dress Code

All students at Notre Dame School are to dress appropriately for school:

- Students are not to wear short-shorts, or bare midriffs (i.e. belly shirts)
- Students in Grades 4, 5, 6, and 7: tank top straps should be a minimum of three fingers wide
- Student fingertips must touch the fabric of shorts/skirts when their hands are naturally at their sides
- Student clothing and sports equipment that support or promote drugs, alcohol, violence, racism, sexism and/or sexual in nature are not appropriate for school. Students will be asked to change their clothing, and a call home will be made for appropriate clothes to be brought to school
- Students are not to overuse and wear heavy makeup or have facial piercings
- Students should avoid using scented lotions, colognes, perfumes or spray deodorants
- Students are not to wear hats inside the classrooms
- For safety and health reasons, students are required to wear shoes in school. To assist in keeping teaching areas clean, students are requested to have an indoor pair of shoes.

Please note that the student dress code may be subject to change with *School Council* input.

Gym Wear

- All students must have indoor running shoes for physical education activities
- Gym shoes that are only worn indoors may serve as indoor shoes
- Students in grades 4 -7 may be required to bring a gym strip. This clothing must meet the school dress code guidelines. It should be taken home regularly and cleaned.

Cold Weather

Students are expected to go outside during winter months unless the temperature is -20 C and below with the wind chill. Please ensure your child dresses warmly.

Students are encouraged to wear a warm coat, hat, scarf, gloves/mittens and boots when it snows.

Healthy Body and Environment

At Notre Dame, we promote healthy eating. We encourage your child to have healthy foods and avoid excess processed sugar, as studies have shown sugars affect cognitive functioning and memory. A healthy lunch is a must for an active body and an alert mind (*British Journal of Nutrition, 2004*). Chewing gum is not allowed except for specific students on specific programs.



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We encourage recycling to keep our earth healthy as well. Whenever possible, please pack lunches in reusable containers.

Illness or Injury

If your child is not feeling well, it is best to keep them at home to prevent the spreading of germs. However, the school reserves the right to call and have parents pick up their child when the child is experiencing vomiting, severe coughing or fever.

Parents will be notified in case of illness or injury. If unable to reach the parent, the school will call the emergency contact. If unable to reach the emergency contact, the school may take such action as calling an ambulance. All serious injuries are documented and kept on file.

NOTRE DAME SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Field Trips

The school strictly follows [CIS Policy #635](#) regarding any school-sponsored field trip. Field trips are an integral part of the education program at Notre Dame School as they provide children with unique experiences within the context of the curriculum. Together, children discover new insights into a learning concept with their classmates. A permission letter will be sent home, including specific information for each field trip. The permission letter will indicate the curriculum area of study, location, transportation, supervision, cost, date and time of the field trip. CIS policy requires that the legal parent/guardian's written permission be obtained before students are permitted to leave the school. Permission must be granted by signature on the official field trip permission slip. Using a specific form, we ensure that parents/guardians have received pertinent information concerning the trip. Declaration of medical conditions, emergency numbers and contact name must be provided as well. Transportation for field trips may be by school bus or walking unless special arrangements have been made through the office.

Personal Privacy

A Personal Information and Privacy Policy regarding employees, volunteers, parents/guardians and students took effect January 1, 2004. CISPG has implemented a policy that meets the standards set by the [British Columbia Personal Information and Protection Act](#) (PIPA) and models policies set by the [Federation of Independent Schools Association](#) (FISA). All students are required to have a signed PIPA form on file in the school office. This form is a part of the [Notre Dame School application package](#).

Notre Dame School consistently adheres to the protocols outlined in the Personal Information Privacy Act (PIPA) of BC. No information regarding individuals who work or attend Notre Dame can be given to others without permission.



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Please appreciate that as professionals, all teachers must adhere to the [Professional Standards for BC Educators](#) and cannot discuss teachers, staff, students, and issues that do not relate directly to their teaching assignment and/or your child.

Parents/Guardians refrain from any kind of public defamation of Notre Dame School and Notre Dame School Staff. This includes, but is not limited to, social media. The families of parents/guardians who repeatedly engage in public defamation may be required to leave Notre Dame School.

Technology

Parent/Guardian permission must be obtained before students having access to the internet. The teachers monitor internet use at all times. Access to the internet allows students the opportunity to learn and share new information and concepts.

Notre Dame School is equipped with an iPad cart of 30 iPads and a chrome book cart with 30 chrome books shared between kindergarten to grade 7. For the use of school iPads and Chromebooks, please see the student "Code of Conduct" contracts included in the [registration packages](#) and on the [website](#).

Notre Dame School may monitor the use of technology, including all sites accessed by the user. Therefore, users must not expect privacy regarding their use of the internet or email. Incorrect use of the internet and technology may result in student privileges being restricted or suspended at the teacher and/or principal's discretion. All students must have a signed [Internet Use Agreement Form](#) on file in the school office.

Improper Activities

Students may not share, spread, or knowingly receive harassing, bullying, sexually explicit, threatening, or illegal information, including offensive jokes or cartoons, through any technology. Technology may not be used to access, create, transmit, print, or download information derogatory, defamatory, obscene, or offensive, including information based on race, colour, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or political beliefs. Technology must not be used to record (audio or video) any individual (students or staff members) without their expressed permission and only for purposes related to learning activities.

Students engaging in improper activities with any piece of technology may have their devices confiscated and may lose internet and technology privileges. In addition, if necessary, [CISPG Policy 502 – Student Discipline](#) may be followed.

Cell Phones

If brought to school, a cell phone permission form must be filled out and signed. Cell phones are to be turned off and placed in the locker or book bag during school hours. If not properly stored or if used for the wrong purpose, cell phone privileges will be withdrawn. The teacher may confiscate cell phones and may be given to the Principal if cell phone expectations are not followed. Cell phones will be returned to the student on the first confiscation of the school year; subsequent confiscations will require a parent or guardian to collect the cell phone from the Principal. Continued violation of cell phone policy will result in students not being allowed to bring their cell phones to school. If necessary, [CISPG Policy 502 – Student Discipline](#) may be followed.



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Parents/Guardians should not call student cell phones as they are not to be accessed during the school day. However, if parents need to contact their child, please call the office, and a message will be delivered to the student. In cases of emergency, the office will contact the parent.

Students have permission to use the school telephone at the discretion of the Principal, secretary or teacher.

Other electronic devices must also be turned off and left in the locker or book bag until the student is off school property. At times, technology is used within the classroom under the guidance and supervision of the classroom teacher. Letters outlining such protocols will be sent home for parents to read and sign. Notre Dame School cannot be held responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

Vandalism

According to [CIS Policy # 512](#), "a student(s) found guilty of destroying or damaging school property will be liable for suspension until his/her parents or guardian makes restitution for the damage, or until arrangements satisfactory to the school and local school council are made." Vandalism is defined as "willful destruction or defacement of things" (Gage Canadian Dictionary, 1984)

Threats to Student Safety

As part of the Provincial Erase Bullying Program, Notre Dame School accesses outside agencies at times where there is any threat to a student's safety. These agencies, such as Safer Schools Together, do online searches of social media accounts on behalf of the school. These searches are looking for content that may help determine the level of severity of any possible threats to student safety.

What behaviours initiate a student threat assessment?

A student threat assessment will be initiated when behaviours include, but are not limited to, severe violence or violence with intent to harm or kill, verbal/written threats to harm/kill others, Internet website and/or social media threats to harm/kill others, possession of weapons (including replicas), bomb threats and fire setting.

Duty to report.

To keep school communities safe and caring, staff, parents, students and community members must report all threat-related behaviours.

What is a Threat Assessment Team?

Notre Dame School has a Threat Assessment Team which is multi-disciplinary. The team may include the Principal, CISPG's Safer Schools Coordinator, school counsellor, police, and youth mental health personnel.

What is the purpose of a student threat assessment?

The purposes of a student threat assessment are:

- To ensure the safety of students, staff, parents and others.
- To ensure a full understanding of the context of the threat.
- To understand factors contributing to the threat makers' behaviour.
- To be proactive in developing an intervention plan that addresses the emotional and physical safety of the threat maker.



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- To promote the emotional and physical safety of all.

What happens in a student threat assessment?

All threat-making behaviour by a student shall be reported to the Principal, who will activate the protocol for the initial response. Once the team has been activated, interviews may be held with the students(s), the threat maker, parents and staff to determine the level of risk and develop an appropriate response to the incident. Intervention plans will be developed and shared with parents, staff and students as required.

Can I refuse to participate in a threat assessment process?

All parties need to engage in the process. However, suppose for some reason there is a reluctance to participate in the process by the threat maker or parent/guardian. In that case, the threat assessment process will continue to promote a safe and caring learning environment.

Illicit Drugs

Notre Dame School observes a policy of zero tolerance towards illicit drugs.

Smoking/Vaping

Smoking or use of vapour devices is prohibited in all CISPG Schools and during any school-sponsored activity. Any student found smoking, vaping, or with smoking, or vaping materials will receive a minimum of one-day suspension from school. If the problem persists, the length of suspension will escalate, up to and including expulsion. If necessary, [CISPG Policy 502](#) will be followed.

All vaping devices or products will be considered and treated as smoking paraphernalia and thus subject to the same restrictions and consequences.

Drinking/Drugs

Any student involved with or in possession of illicit drugs at school or a school-sponsored event may be expelled. This includes cannabis, which is illegal for use by youth under the age of 19.

Any student under the influence or possession of alcohol while at school or at a school-sponsored event may be expelled.

Emergency Management Plan

Students are instructed and required to practice emergency preparedness procedures (fire, earthquake, and lockdown drills) in a safe environment throughout the school year. In addition, each classroom is equipped with a red safety backpack that includes first aid supplies, emergency contacts, health information and other pertinent personal information.

In an emergency, parents/guardians will be alerted via the local radio station, mass emails and/or the school website. We require that, in an emergency, parents/guardians refrain from calling the school as phone lines must remain open for emergency personnel.

Entering the School



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Any persons entering the school must be buzzed into the school at the front entrance by a staff member. For the security and safety of everyone, all visitors (including parents/guardians) must report to the office before visiting a classroom or using our facility during school hours. Entry to the school through any other door is not permitted. All visitors must sign in and wear a visitor's tag unless otherwise informed.

Parents/Guardians may leave lunches, homework, etc., at the school office. In addition, students will be called to the office to collect items that do not interrupt classroom instruction.

Supervision

All staff members are available outside for morning supervision beginning at 8:30 am each instructional day. In addition, students are supervised by staff during recess, lunch, and after school until 2:50 pm.

If your child is to be picked up after school by anyone other than the parents/guardians, please notify the school office via phone, written note, or email.

Traffic and Parking

Everyone is required to follow traffic rules and patterns on Notre dame School property. Extra attention must be given at the beginning and end of the school day when students enter and exit the property. The Notre Dame Staff Parking lot is closed in the morning and at the end of the day for student safety. The large gate at the parking lot will be open for students to exit. This will allow for easier student entry in the morning and leaving at the end of the day. Please park along the road and walk to the gates or have your child meet you on the sidewalk.

Crosswalk Safety: A crossing guard is paid and hired by the school for student safety. Please remind your child(ren) to use the crosswalk. Also, when having your child cross the road to meet you, please encourage the students to use the crosswalk for student safety.



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The Notre Dame Team

Value each other, work to be worthy of trust and lift each other up!

Welcome to our Notre Dame Family!

