



vancouver | christian | school

Dear Parents,

As Vancouver Christian School approaches its 70th year of operation, we are delighted that you are considering our new K-12 campus for your child(ren) for the 2018/19 school year.

VCS is an interdenominational Christian school; we educate students from more than 50 churches in the Lower Mainland. Our curriculum is taught from a Christian perspective and meets all requirements set by the BC Ministry of Education, as do our teachers, who are certified by the Ministry, committed Christians, and dedicated to the mission and vision of VCS, "preparing students for a life of transformation and service through excellent, Christ-centred education".

From the very beginning, VCS has been parent-led, sustained and supported by our families. We are a welcoming community, and parents are always encouraged to volunteer and connect with the school, and with other families. Please feel free to visit our website at [www.vancs.org](http://www.vancs.org) for in-depth information about our philosophy and program. Likewise, please consider booking a personal tour with our development coordinator, Jennifer Milley, ([development@vancs.org](mailto:development@vancs.org)), or joining us for our Open House event in October each year.

If you believe VCS is the right school for your family, we ask that you carefully complete and submit your application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ellen Freestone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ellen Freestone,  
Lead Principal



## Admissions Policy

Applicants will be considered for admission based on the following guidelines.

1. VCS will only accept a student if we feel that we can provide a suitable educational program and related resources for him or her.
2. VCS primarily exists to offer Christian education to Christian families. Prospective parents must:
  - a. support having their children educated in accordance with the school's basis and purpose;
  - b. must fully support the aims of the school; and are
  - c. able to abide by the school's constitution and bylaws.
3. Families will be considered in the following order:
  - a. Returning VCS students and their siblings.
  - b. Christian families that are coming from another Christian school and that are in agreement with Article 4 of the VCS Constitution of the Vancouver Christian School Association.
  - c. Christian families that are in agreement with Article 4 of the VCS Constitution of the Vancouver Christian School Association.
  - d. Families that are not in agreement with Article 4 of the VCS Constitution of the Vancouver Christian School Association.
  - e. International Students. (See International Student Policy)
4. VCS reserves the right to reconsider a student's enrollment at its own discretion. Failure to disclose relevant student information on the application or during interview(s) could disqualify a student's enrolment.



## The Application Process

The application process begins with an introduction to our school through our Development Office. Our development staff will introduce you to our school community at our Open House in October or with a personal tour of our facilities. You will have an opportunity to see a class in session and to ask any questions. After meeting with a representative from our Development Office, parents are invited to continue the application process as outlined below:

- 1. Submit a completed application package along with the required documentation, and a non-refundable application fee to the school office.** Applications will be accepted at the Open House prior to the September of the school year to which you are applying. For example, we will begin accepting applications for the 2018 – 2019 school year on October 19th, 2017.
- 2. Applications will be reviewed in accordance with our Admissions Policy,** and parents may be invited for an admissions interview with the Lead Principal or designate. Interviews will be conducted between late November and early February.
- 3. After the parent interview, an assessment session may be arranged for the student(s).**
  - a. Kindergarten students will be invited a Kindergarten morning in April.
  - b. Grades 1 – 7 will be invited to an assessment session to gauge basic skill levels.
  - c. Grades 8 – 12 will be invited for an interview with the high school principal.
- 4. Letters will be sent to parents starting in late December through to early spring.**
  - a. VCS does not accept families on a first come basis; however, when considering equal applications, we may take into account the date an application was received.
  - b. Acceptance packages are to be completed and returned with a non-refundable deposit within two weeks of receipt. This deposit will be applied to the first month's tuition.
  - c. Acceptance packages for high school students (Grade 9 – 12) will also include a course selection booklet and forms to be returned to the school office.



## The Interview Process

Every late winter and early spring, I have the privilege of interviewing families who want to send their children to Vancouver Christian School. This is one of my favourite tasks as a principal. I love meeting new people and learning about their history, beliefs and hopes for their children. I usually start with some general questions about the family's background. Sometimes I learn some really interesting things and before I know it, the half hour is past and we haven't even started the "real" interview.

The real interview starts with questions about how the family heard about the school and whether they know anyone attending VCS. Then we get into the "big" question: "Why do you want to send your child to a *Christian* school?" The answers I receive come from all over the map. Some are brief, some are long; a few are fuzzy, and a few give me goose bumps (the latter referring to scary *or* inspiring answers).

Let's get to the goose bump answers! The answer that has a tendency to somewhat scare me is when a parent seems to be looking for a place that has less evidence of sin, and generally better students, parents and staff than elsewhere. I have heard from people both inside and outside our school when describing someone who has messed up, "I thought this was supposed to be a Christian school!" said with both shock and righteous indignation.

We need to be clear that VCS is not that kind of school. We are no better than anyone else; our students are going to do things we would rather they didn't; our parents and teachers are going to sometimes lose their tempers and say some rather outrageous things; and, occasionally, we are going to deeply hurt others. The "real" world is right inside our walls.

If this is the case, you might wonder, why bother with a Christian school? There are significant reasons and this is what gives me the good goose bumps. We can openly discuss our limitations while recognizing that we are in the hands of a loving God. We rely on something beyond ourselves to make sense of a confusing world and can openly talk about what it means to model grace, healing and forgiveness. We can confront and challenge the injustices and inconsistencies we see around us, deal with controversy and encourage children to wrestle through issues. To me, this does not always guarantee a risk free environment, but it does promise the kind of security that comes from acknowledging a Creator and Saviour who is active in our lives.

So, are there any "wrong" answers at a new parent interview? Contrary to what a few people may think, we don't turn away families because their answers don't all line up in a neat tidy row or their children don't have challenges. Rather, we look at the potential of a partnership in which we grow and learn more about what it really means to bear the "Christian" name within and without the walls of our school.

***Ellen Freestone, Lead Principal***