



# Immaculate Conception

V A N C O U V E R

*Today, I will grow in knowledge, love of God and service to others.*

## PARENT HANDBOOK

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## Message from the Principal

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Immaculate Conception School. In choosing ICS, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

The Parent Handbook reflects the policies of ICS for the 2022-2023 school year. Please read this document carefully, as you agreed to abide by these policies when you signed the *Family Statement of Commitment*.

The staff of ICS looks forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and the spiritual development of your children in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Yours sincerely,

Colette Foran  
Principal

## Mission Statement

We are a Christ-centred community. Jesus commits us to creating a nurturing environment in which all students may develop a personal relationship with God and live the moral values taught. We recognize the strengths in each child and foster continuing growth in the knowledge and skills necessary in preparation for life-long learning.

## Motto & Philosophy

The school motto "***Today, I will grow in knowledge, love of God and service to others***" guides the students and staff at ICS.

We are Christian educators, growing in the knowledge and love of God, sharing our God-given gifts to provide an environment where children may develop a personal relationship with God, where they learn to live the moral values taught by Jesus Christ and where they acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to be fulfilled, responsible and contributing members of the community.

**The Spirit of Immaculate Conception School is one of community.** Everyone – Pastor, teachers, staff, students and parents – works together supporting each other in the education of children and in the activities of school life.

We believe each child is a unique creation of God and that each has the right to acceptance, love and respect within our school community.

*Immaculate Conception School acknowledges that the land on which we work, learn, and live is the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.*

## Goals – A Positive Catholic Formation

Immaculate Conception School strives to provide its students with a positive learning environment in the light of the Catholic faith. In cooperation with the parents and parish community, we strive to:

- Work to build a living Christian community
- Nurture a positive self-image in the students
- Provide an environment for, and encourage students to strive for academic excellence
- Recognize that enrichment is the core of educational goals for all students and strive to expose all children to a curriculum that enhances their ability to think creatively and critically as they learn
- Develop the whole person
- Encourage students to live their lives in empathy and understanding of others
- Develop a greater awareness of the variety of values and attitudes in regard to ethnic, religious and social differences within our own school community
- Integrate faith in personal life so that students are able to take their place in society as mature, loving and caring persons committed to living their faith

To assist staff, students and parents in reaching our educational objectives, we offer guidelines which lead to a sense of order and discipline at school. These guidelines aim to assist in creating the living Christian community we strive for at Immaculate Conception School. Each part of our community (students, parents, and staff) plays an important role in the growth of the school.

## Expectations of Students, Parents and Staff

### Students are expected to:

- Arrive punctually, attend regularly, and behave appropriately
- Be prepared and have the necessary books, materials and assignments
- Make a sincere, concerted effort to do well in studies
- Participate attentively and reverently in all religious observances
- Be considerate of the rights of others: peers, staff and neighbours
- Respect and comply with school regulations
- Wear the correct uniform at all times

### Parents are expected to:

- Ensure that students are at school on time each day
- Encourage children to conduct themselves in an orderly manner at all times
- Respond promptly and affirmatively to any student misbehaviour while in school or on the way to and from school
- Encourage high personal effort, achievement and prompt completion of assignments
- Accept the responsibility for the cost of tuition, uniform, supplies, testing recommended by the school and other school activities
- Support the school, the Principal and the entire staff in their efforts to maintain high standards of education in the school

- Supply a written and signed explanation of absences by 8:30 a.m.
- Notify the school by 8:30 a.m. if a student will arrive late to school
- Supply a written and signed explanation for lack of proper uniform, including gym runners and gym strip (Grades 3 to 7).
- Accept the responsibility of the “Family Statement of Commitment” as described (see page 15) and signed with the ICS registration forms
- Abide by the Parent Code of Conduct (see page 17)

#### **Staff Members are expected to:**

- Provide a school and classroom environment conducive to learning
- Teach basic curriculum as laid out by the British Columbia Ministry of Education
- Place special emphasis on religious instruction and on mutual respect
- Provide, when possible, for children with special needs
- Maintain order, plan carefully, teach meaningfully, and serve as role models to inspire the children
- Respect the personal worth, dignity and individual characteristics of each child
- Provide fair and just disciplinary treatment for all children as needed
- Keep parents/guardians adequately informed of the progress, performance and conduct of each child
- Be supportive of each other and of parents, who are the primary educators of their children
- Maintain a spirit of care and concern for all students

Christian values and attitudes are integrated throughout the day and should be evident in how we treat each other within the classroom, on the playground, and in community gatherings. Together, we foster a climate of understanding, caring and learning.

ICS will strive to maintain an average class size of 28 students per class. The Principal, in consultation with teachers and the Parish Education Committee, reserves the discretion to set the exact number of students at fewer than 28 students per class based on the relevant circumstances in each instance.

ICS follows the policies set out by the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese (CISVA). These policies can be found on the CISVA website ([www.cisva.bc.ca](http://www.cisva.bc.ca)).

## **School Schedule**

8:00	Office opens and playground supervision begins
8:30	School starts
10:30	Recess
10:45	Classes resume
12:00	Students eat lunch in classroom
12:15	Lunch recess
12:55	Classes resume
3:00	Dismissal (2:00 on Wednesdays)
3:20	Playground supervision ends (2:15 on Wednesdays)
4:00	Office closes



## What to do if ... (quick guide)

**Student is absent:** Call the school between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. and then submit an absentee note. Submission can be made in one of two ways: by filling out the form online ([www.icschoolvancouver.com/parents](http://www.icschoolvancouver.com/parents)) or emailing the office ([office@icschoolvancouver.com](mailto:office@icschoolvancouver.com)), indicating the reason for absence (medical or vacation).

**Student is ill:** Please check the Vancouver Coastal Health's (VCH) "Sneezes and Diseases" manual (<https://sneezesdiseases.com/resource/sneezes-diseases>) for information on when it is safe for the student to return to school.

**Student is late:** Call or email before 8:30 a.m. to inform the school office that student will be late. Student is to report to the office when he/she arrives at school. Students arriving at school after 10:30 a.m. will be marked absent for the morning.

**Student becomes ill at school:** Student should speak to classroom teacher, who will advise the office. The office will contact the parent/guardian for pickup.

**Student is in an accident at school:** Student should immediately notify the nearest staff member or supervisor. Any necessary first aid will be administered, and parents or emergency contacts will be notified.

**Student needs to use the telephone:** A telephone is available at the office for students and parents. Students must ask permission to be excused from class and must take a phone pass to the office.

**Parent/guardian has a concern:** Speak to the student's teacher first. He/she knows your child best and will hopefully be able to solve any problems and deal with your concern. Speak to the Principal if the problem involves the school at large, or if you do not feel satisfied that your concern has been acted upon or understood by the classroom teacher (see pages 9-10 of the Parent Handbook for more details).

## Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for success in school. If your child will be absent, **please call the school between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.** Whenever a child is absent, a note from the parent is required to explain the reason for the absence. Submit a note through the school website [www.icschoolvancouver.com](http://www.icschoolvancouver.com) or email [office@icschoolvancouver.com](mailto:office@icschoolvancouver.com). Notes are kept on file to verify legitimate absences when student attendance is audited. A physician's letter should explain an extended absence due to illness.

Students arriving at school after 10:30 a.m. will be marked absent for the morning.

If students are absent from school, they are to speak to the teacher about the work they missed and receive instructions regarding make-up work.

### *Notification of Illness*

The school needs to be notified immediately when children have communicable diseases such as pink eye, chicken pox, measles, mumps, etc. If the student is ill, please check the VCH's Sneezes and Diseases booklet (<https://sneezesdiseases.com/resource/sneezes-diseases>) for information on when it is safe for the student to return to school.

### ***Vacation Trips***

Government Law requires elementary school children to attend school during the regular instruction period.

Removing children for extended vacation trips, other than at school breaks, is a hardship on the children. If such a trip is unavoidable, a written letter, signed by the parents, must be sent to the school at least one week prior to the trip.

Making up work that has been missed due to vacation time is the responsibility of the parent and student. Parents, or a hired tutor, should explain the work, correct the missed work, and ensure that the student returns the work to his/her teacher. Teachers will not be involved with the assignments or in correcting work caused by a holiday trip during school time.

The practice of taking family vacations during the school year is discouraged. To qualify for government funding, students must be in attendance for at least 600 hours of instruction from September 1 to May 15. A student who, because of holidays or other reasons, is in attendance for fewer than 600 hours qualifies for partial funding only. Parents will be expected to make up the difference in funding for such students.

## **Care of Books and Property**

Parents are asked to ensure that their children treat all books and property with respect. Parents are responsible for the replacement cost of any lost/damaged books or property. Students are expected to keep notebooks and binders tidy and free from doodling. Books which do not meet this standard must be replaced.

## **Classroom Deliveries**

In the event that lunches or other items must be delivered after school begins, we ask that you place them on the table in the hallway (clearly labelled) or wait in the hall until the 12:00 noon lunch bell. Your child will come down to collect his/her lunch. If your child does not have a lunch for any reason, the teacher will ask other children to share or will make other arrangements.

## **Communication**

### ***Newsletters and Notes Home***

Monthly newsletters and most school notices will be sent via e-mail. Please ensure that the office has your current email address. It is important that parents read all school emails to ensure they are up to date on school activities and information.

From time to time, hard copies of notices are sent home inside your child's agenda. We ask that you help your child develop responsibility in this area by establishing a routine or procedure (perhaps notices could be handed to you as soon as your child reaches the car or put in a special place at home).

### ***Progress Reports & Parent/Teacher Communication***

Formal progress reports are sent home three times a year – November, March and June. Parents should attend parent-teacher interviews and student-led conferences during the year.



Progress reports contain both a written strengths-based description of the student's overall growth and development in the areas of the core competencies and descriptions of performance in relation to the selected learning standards (curricular competencies and content/concepts).

We often request meetings with parents throughout the year, and we encourage you to make appointments to discuss concerns between reporting periods.

Informal communication between parents and teachers is strongly encouraged throughout the school year.

#### Progress Report Copies

When progress reports are distributed, please keep your copy for your records. Requests for extra copies of progress reports will carry a \$25 administration fee; this reflects the considerable time and effort spent to access past reports.

#### *Invitations*

To be sensitive to all students, invitations to parties are not to be distributed on the school grounds unless the entire class is invited.

#### *Communication and Concerns*

Our goal as a staff is to be as helpful and supportive to parents as possible. If your child is having problems at home, in the classroom, or on the playground, please let us know immediately. However, we do not encourage unscheduled visits, either in the morning just before school or right after school in the afternoon, as often the teacher has other plans or duties, which must of necessity come first. Whenever possible, please pre-arrange a meeting time with the teacher.

Problems of any nature will affect self-esteem and general happiness, which in turn can affect your child's learning process. Any problem that has occurred at school should be handled at school; we ask that parents do not discuss these matters amongst themselves but rather follow the normal line of communication to ensure a swift resolution. This will avoid hurt feelings or blame being laid.

The normal line of communication is:

- Speak to the child's teacher first. He/she knows your child best and will hopefully be able to solve any problems and deal with your concern.
- Speak to the Principal if the problem involves the school at large, or if you do not feel satisfied that your concern has been acted upon or understood by the classroom teacher.
- If you are still dissatisfied with how your concern has been handled, make a formal **written** complaint to the Parish Education Committee.

It is our aim, with your help, to provide consistent quality education and a cooperative relationship between your home and the school.

#### *Dealing with Major Complaints*

In a Catholic school, parents, students, teachers and support staff form an integral part of the Christian school community. The administration, teachers and parents must work closely together in the formation of children according to the Gospel. To this end, parents are expected to be familiar with, accept and support the philosophy and policies of the school. Parents indicate this by signing the Statement of Commitment, as do teachers when they

sign their contracts.

From time to time issues may arise where the concerned parties differ in their perspectives. In these cases, both concerned parties are expected to work toward a resolution of the issue in a Christian manner respecting each other's point of view. All parties involved must maintain confidentiality with respect to all information surrounding the particular issue.

To facilitate an amicable resolution to issues of conflict, the concerned parties will abide by the guidelines found in the CISVA policy manual. The manual can be found on the CISVA website ([www.cisva.bc.ca](http://www.cisva.bc.ca), Policy 302).

### ***Personal Information Privacy Policy***

Immaculate Conception School acknowledges that there will be no disclosure of personal information to unauthorized personnel or third parties who are not directly involved in school management or the care, supervision and instruction of children at the school, unless written authorization from a parent or legal guardian is provided to the school. Disclosure of student records and information for the purpose of delivery of health services, social services, or other support services does not require prior parental consent. The school will securely store all electronic and hard copy parent and student personal information. If you have any questions, please contact the school's privacy officer, the Principal. A copy of ICS' Privacy Policy may be found on the school website ([www.icschoolvancouver.com/parents](http://www.icschoolvancouver.com/parents)).

## **Curriculum**

### ***Academics***

The academic programs of each grade are those determined by the British Columbia Ministry of Education in conjunction with the guidelines established by the CISVA. This involves instruction in the areas of Christian Education, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Career Education, Physical and Health Education, Fine Arts, Applied Design, Skills and Technologies, and French.

### ***Religious Curriculum***

Immaculate Conception School follows the Christian Education curriculum prescribed by the CISVA. The catechism program is structured along the liturgical year and feast days are incorporated into the curriculum.

The CISVA provides a parent program on Human Growth and Development for parents of students in the intermediate grades ("Sexuality and Your Child"). This program provides an alternate delivery method of covering the learning standards around human sexuality.

It is mandated by the Archbishop that parents attend the support meetings for this program.

The Archdiocesan-developed child abuse prevention program, "I'm A Gift from God", is taught in Kindergarten to Grade 3, both at home and in the classroom.

Non-Catholic students enrolled at ICS are also required to participate in our religious curriculum. Students are encouraged to follow the precepts of their own faith according to their denominational standards and attend church services regularly.

### *Sacramental Programs*

Students in Grade 2 prepare for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Grade 7 children prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This involves scheduled meetings, as well as celebrations for the children and their families.

Parents are expected to attend meetings so that they will be able to participate more fully in this process of faith development.

### *School Masses*

Mass is a way of increasing the faith of our children and building a strong Christian community. Attendance at, and participation in, the parish Sunday masses is an essential feature of our school families' lives. Masses are regularly offered for the whole school, usually in the first week of each month. Students are given an opportunity to share in the preparation of the Masses and parents are invited to attend. If they wish, non-Catholic students may receive a special blessing at Communion.

## **Homework**

Homework is an important skill that needs to be developed gradually over the elementary school years so that children can work independently by the time they enter high school.

Homework can be organized into two categories – formal and informal. Both help students establish good study habits.

Informal homework consists of assignments that need to be completed at home.

Formal homework consists of assignments that the teacher gives with the intention that they are done at home. Its purpose is to provide enrichment, reinforcement of concepts that have been taught, and further development of skills. Formal homework will be assigned on weekdays. Homework is not normally assigned on weekends with the exception of incomplete work, long-term assignments and projects.

The times listed below are guidelines established for each grade level to help teachers in assigning work and parents in supervising homework. If children work diligently, they should be able to complete work within this time frame, unless otherwise advised by the classroom teacher.

For the primary grades we ask that you read aloud and listen to your child read daily. Practice in reading, writing, and math operations may be given as assignments during the primary years.

- Grade 2 - 30 minutes per week on average
- Grade 3 - 60 minutes per week on average
- Grade 4 - 90 minutes per week on average
- Grade 5 - 120 to 150 minutes per week on average
- Grade 6 - 180 to 210 minutes per week on average
- Grade 7 - 240 to 300 minutes per week on average

Parents are the most important motivators and teachers in helping their children develop good study habits at home.

- Set a specific time each day for your children to do homework. If there are no school assignments to be done, use the time to read to your children, have them read to you, encourage recreational reading, write letters to grandparents or friends, etc.
- Insist that there be no distractions – no TV, phone calls, etc.

- Help them to be organized before they start work – all paper, books, and writing materials at hand

Children in Grades 1-7 will use an agenda. Parents are asked to check it regularly/sign it and to use it to communicate with the teacher if there is a comment about or problem with an assignment. If your child has not been able to complete assigned work, please advise the teacher. If your child frequently spends more or less time on homework than is indicated here, please contact the classroom teacher. If a student does not complete homework, he/she will be required to do so within a given time frame. Parents may be contacted to help seek a solution.

## Discipline Code

The staff at Immaculate Conception School is committed to ensuring that our school environment is safe and inclusive for all students. The school promotes a culture in which everyone is valued as a unique gift from God and where individual cultures, ethnicity, talents and learning styles are celebrated. All students should be able to learn in an atmosphere free from intolerance, harassment and bullying.

**Students are expected to follow the ICS “Be-Attitudes” (Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Like Jesus), and:**

- Treat each other and staff members with respect
- Respect the property of others
- Follow school guidelines regarding behaviour and safety
- Take responsibility for their own learning

The aim of the school is to encourage the development of self-discipline. Students are expected to behave in a reasonable and responsible manner. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with promptly.

Expectations for students are consistent, but consequences may vary depending upon the age of the student, the offense and the circumstances. The monitoring of unacceptable behaviour is primarily the responsibility of the teacher directly involved with the student(s). He/she will take whatever steps are deemed necessary to deal with the specific situation in a manner most suitable for the individual(s) concerned.

If the teacher cannot effect a change in the student's pattern of behaviour, the student will be referred to the Principal.

Parents may have been contacted prior to such a referral; however, under most circumstances, at this stage, the Principal will report the matter to you either verbally or in writing. It is the responsibility of the parents to support the school in disciplinary matters.

Parents will be asked to cooperate with the school in finding ways to encourage the student to behave in a reasonable manner. A plan will be put in place after a team meeting with the teacher, Principal and parents and will be agreed to in writing and signed by all parties.

If together, student, school administration and parents are unsuccessful in altering the behaviour pattern, the student will be placed on an in-school suspension for a specific period.

Certain serious student behaviours, such as fighting, theft, vandalism, wilful disobedience or disrespect, bullying, or

purposeful, serious injury to the character or person of other students, will result in an out of school suspension for the student for a specific period of time. In this event, parents will be notified as soon as possible. The Principal will inform the Pastor and the Parish Education Committee chairperson. The child will not be readmitted to classes without a parent/teacher/Principal conference. If the Principal concludes a student's behaviour may warrant expulsion, the Parish Education Committee will meet to consider such action.

### ***Harassment and Bullying Prevention***

Our school makes every effort to promote an environment of safety, acceptance and respect for all. Every person has a right to feel safe. Anyone who bullies another is denying them that right. The school will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to feel safe, and it will take whatever steps necessary to stop such behaviour. Therefore, in accordance with CISVA Policies 407 and 408, and the Ministry of Education's *erase* strategy, our goals are:

- To promote a secure and happy environment free from threat and harassment and where Christian values and attitudes are nurtured.
- To show commitment to overcoming bullying by practicing zero tolerance.

Strategies to prevent bullying will only be effective when placed within the context of our Catholic culture where respect for all others, made in God's image, is consistently taught and demonstrated in every aspect of school life. Christian values, which represent the antithesis of bullying, must be continually affirmed in words and actions.

### **Strategies to Prevent Bullying**

- Affirm through religious education, liturgies and assemblies, that the value of the individual person and the qualities of compassion, kindness, reconciliation, tolerance, respect and justice are upheld and encouraged.
- Extend this teaching of values across the curriculum to include teaching specifically related to bullying in appropriate curriculum topics.
- Ensure that students hear from adults very clear statements about the unacceptability of bullying behaviours.
- Teach positive ways of resolving conflict.
- Provide support for teachers and parents through information seminars and workshops, including *erase* training.

### **Action**

- The school will ensure that corrective and preventative action takes place.
- The school will keep adequate records of all bullying incidents.
- The school will work with the parents of the student who is bullied to assist their child to avoid being bullied in the future.
- The school will initially assist the student who bullies to change his/her behaviour.
- Resistance to behaviour change and repeated offences will lead to consequences ranging from detention to missing out on special events or field trips.
- The school will access community resources designed to assist families and schools as needed.
- The school will work with the parents of the student who bullies to establish joint strategies for behaviour modification.

- Continued bullying by a student will result in suspension and may lead to expulsion.

## Extra-Curricular and Co-curricular Activities

Each teacher sponsors special activities for our students throughout the year. These include extra-curricular activities (outside normal school hours) such as cross-country running, volleyball, basketball, badminton and track and field, and co-curricular activities (activities that take place during school that are not part of the curriculum) such as choir, chess, peer helpers and outreach activities.

**Choir:** Students from Grades 3-7 can join the choir, which sings at various performances throughout the year. There is no audition necessary. All students are welcome. Choir practices are once per week at lunch hour and children are expected to attend all practices to participate in performances.

**Seasonal Clubs:** Chess information is distributed to children in relevant grades.

**Speech Arts:** All students must participate in an area of public speaking (Bible Reading, Prose Recitation, or Poetry Recitation). Students are selected from each class to compete in our school's Speech Arts Festival and winners go on to compete in the Archbishop Carney Speech Arts Festival.

**Sports:** A wide variety of sports take place outside of normal school hours. Students are provided with permission forms and information notices at the beginning of each term.

Cross Country (September - October) Grades 2 - 7

Volleyball (September - November) Grades 5 - 7

Basketball (December - March) Grades 5 - 7

Badminton (March - April) Grades 6 - 7

Track and Field (April - June) Grades 3 – 7



## **Family Statement of Commitment (CISVA Policy 411)**

Partners in Catholic Education (home, school, parish) must work together to provide an environment where faith and learning go hand in hand, leading the young people to be the best they can be.

The following statements support the goals and philosophy of our Catholic school and need to be accepted and supported by all members of the community.

When parents register for the school, they are asked to sign the following statement of commitment:

- Parents and guardians agree that they and their families will exhibit conduct consistent with Catholic denominational standards. The determination of whether any conduct contravenes these standards is the right of the Board of Directors of the CISVA.
- All students are required to participate in our religious education curricular and co-curricular programs including liturgical celebrations, retreats, prayer, etc.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to support the religious education program and participate in it as required.
- Regular school attendance and full participation in all aspects of the academic program of the school are required of every student. Each student is expected to strive toward the development of his/her full academic potential.
- Each family is expected to support and participate in the fund-raising activities of the parish/school. This means each family shares in the responsibility of educating our Catholic children.
- Each student is expected to know and follow school policies on behaviour.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to know and support school policy and procedures as found in the Parent Handbook.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to attend at least one orientation session, which will focus on the philosophy and goals of our school.
- Parents/Guardians agree to accept the responsibility for the cost of tuition, supplies, and other school activities.

If any of these conditions are not met, the school reserves the right to refuse admission or remove the student from the school, or take any other appropriate action in the circumstances.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips related to curriculum studies are an integral component of a good education. Teachers and volunteer parents will closely supervise all activities outside of the school. All information, including time and place of the field trip will be provided in a note from the school prior to any such event.

All students must have written parental consent prior to participating in a field trip. Parental consent forms will be kept by the classroom teacher. All students are required to be in uniform unless otherwise informed by the teacher. Students must have the required clothing and supplies in order to participate in the field trip.

It is expected that students leave from the school and return to school from field trips. Any changes in the driving list must be arranged with the classroom teacher prior to the day of the trip. At times, buses may be used to transport students to and from venues.

As these are school functions, a designated number of parent supervisors will be required. Teachers will take only the number of parents required for effective supervision and transportation. The ratio of adults to student is one adult for every five students for primary classes and one adult for every eight students for intermediate classes.

Parent helpers will be assigned a group of students for supervision. Students are expected to respect parents in this role as the “adult in charge”. Parent supervisors should devote their undivided attention to the students in their care and are responsible for the safety, supervision and behaviour of the students. They should report all concerns to the teacher in charge.

In the event a student breaches school guidelines for appropriate behaviour during a field trip, parents and school administration will be notified and the student transported home or to school as soon as possible.

**In cases where private drivers are required to transport students, the following will apply:**

- Volunteer drivers are covered by an additional Archdiocesan insurance for excess third-party liability. They must have a valid driver’s license and insurance on the vehicle, a copy of which must be submitted to the school office before the field trip.
- Volunteer drivers must complete the ICS volunteer driver form and submit it to the school office.
- The mechanical condition of the vehicle is the responsibility of the parents who volunteer its use.
- The vehicle will only carry the allowed number of passengers.
- Every passenger must wear a seat belt.
- No child may be in a front seat with an airbag.
- Students under 12 years old must not travel in the passenger front seat of a vehicle.
- A child who requires a car seat or booster seat should bring it to school and use it for the field trip.
- Parent drivers are to drive directly to and from the destination without stops for shopping or snacks.
- Parent drivers are to refrain from purchasing treats for the children in their group unless directed by the teacher
- All drivers must carry emergency contact information for the duration of the field trip.
- Drivers are responsible for supervision of students traveling in their vehicles at all times.
- Drivers must not bring along babies or toddlers if they are transporting students on field trips.

### ***Outdoor Education***

The outdoor education program is an integral part of the Grade 7 curriculum at ICS. It is a four-day camp that usually takes place in October. The trip is an introduction to outdoor and experiential education with a focus on both individual challenges and team building. Through a range of outdoor activities such as hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing, archery, high ropes and orienteering, students support their classmates and bond through shared experiences and challenges. The objective of the outdoor education program is to encourage confidence, cooperation, responsibility and leadership.

Prior to the camp, an information meeting is organized for parents and students. The meeting provides an opportunity for families to meet a representative from the camp, obtain additional information and ask questions.

- All students must have written consent from a parent or guardian before participating in an overnight field trip (parental consent forms will be kept by the classroom teacher).
- Students must sign a code of conduct contract before participating in an overnight field trip.

- In the event of a student breaching the terms of the code of conduct, parents and school administration will be notified and the student will be transported home as soon as possible.
- At least one staff member at the venue must have current first aid certification.
- If possible, buses will be used to transport students to and from venues.

The cost of the outdoor education program is mainly comprised of the camp fees per student, transportation expenses, wages for substitute teacher(s) and some minor incidental costs.

The cost of the outdoor education program is shared between the school and the Grade 7 families.

## **Parent Code of Conduct (CISVA Policy 412)**

The Parent Code of Conduct informs the school community of expected conduct based on the principles of respect for rights and dignity of all persons in order to promote a safe and respectful environment within the school community.

Parents are expected to (but not limited to):

- Be examples of Catholic witness (those parents who are Catholic) by attending Sunday Mass with their children (proclaiming and building the Kingdom of God – see Family Statement of Commitment).
- Be supportive of the mission of the Catholic Church and supportive of the religious educational programs of the school.
- Respect the decision-making of school administration and the Education Committee.
- Respect the rights and dignity of all persons in the parish/school community at all times.
- Refrain from participating in or promoting any behaviour that would threaten, intimidate, demean, verbally assault (use of abusive language) or cause harm to any person within the school community.
- Refrain from behaviour or communications, including the use of any technology/media devices to defame the character or reputation or cause harm to the character of a parish/school community member.
- Show an active interest in their child's schoolwork and progress as well as attend required meetings (Sacramental meetings, Human Growth and Development Meetings, student progress interviews/conferences etc.).
- Ensure that their child attends school regularly, is on time and is prepared.
- Work cooperatively with teachers in all areas of their child's school life including academic or disciplinary issues.
- Be familiar with and abide by the school's codes of conduct, policies and regulations (i.e., uniforms, internet use, traffic safety on school grounds, etc.).
- Take concerns to the appropriate person(s). Follow the complaints procedure as provided in CISVA Policy 302 – Major Complaints.
- Avoid involvement in rumours and dissemination of rumours.
- Build bridges of acceptance and understanding among the different cultures represented in the school community.

The Pastor/Archbishop's Representative has the right and duty to provide for the spiritual welfare of the students and families within the parish and the school. They work towards this end with parental cooperation.

The Principal has the discretionary right to take appropriate action to maintain a safe and orderly school environment and to ensure that staff, students, parish members or other members of the school community are not subjected to threatening, intimidating, or harassing behaviour. The Principal's authority includes the right to prohibit or remove any person from the school premises or property who is deemed to be a disruption to the school or threat (in deed or word) to the safety or security of students, employees, or any other member of the parish or school community. The Principal will inform the Education Committee, Pastor and Superintendent's Office if any person is prohibited or removed from school premises. If a person is prohibited or removed from the school premises by the Principal, that person must immediately leave, and must not enter the school premises again except with prior written approval from the Principal.

The Parish Education Committee, in consultation with the Principal, reserves the right to determine consequences for non-compliance.

## Parent Participation Program

ICS is a Parent Participation school. The Parent Participation Program (PPP) plays an integral part in the operation of our school. The aim of the program is to create a spirit of community among families and staff as we work together to provide the best education for our students. Active participation provides positive role modeling for our children while teaching them the value of helping others.

### *Parent Participation Requirements*

The parent participation requirement is **40 hours per family per year**. We recognize that some families may not be able to commit this amount of time to the school. Families that cannot, or would prefer not to, contribute their time will be assessed a parent participation fee.

- At least 20 of the 40 hours must be completed by the end of January. The remaining 20 (or fewer) hours must be completed by the end of the school year.
- A **minimum of five mandatory hours**, out of the 40, must be served in **fundraising** events (Christmas Fair or Walkathon), of which one hour must be on the day before, or on the day of, the Christmas Fair.
- **Three mandatory hours**, out of 40, are required towards your **grade event**. See list below.
- Only a set number of hours may be logged for specific jobs/events (see ICS website for details, [www.icschoolvancouver.com/parents](http://www.icschoolvancouver.com/parents))
- For more information on grade events, participation opportunities, how to log your hours, how to create a report of your hours and more, refer to the SignUp area in the parent section of the ICS website.

### *Grade Events*

The following events occur throughout the year and are the responsibility of one or two grades.

- First Communion Reception

- Confirmation Reception
- Teacher Appreciation Luncheon
- Grade 7 Farewell Reception

## **Parent Support Group**

The Parent Support Group (PSG) is a necessary parent liaison group between the school and the BC Gaming Commission. The formation of this group meets the eligibility for receiving gaming funds from the BC Gaming Commission. CISVA schools establish a Parent Support Group independent of the Parish Education Committee and any other group in the school.

Each school shall hold an election for three officers that will comprise the Parent Support Group. The officers will be elected annually from the parent body of the school. It is recommended that nominations and elections take place at an annual general meeting of the PSG. Officers on the PSG have a one-year term but can stand for re-election. The PSG, in accordance with BC Gaming Commission regulations (Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch), opens its own banking account to receive funds from BC Gaming.

Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch – Guidelines for Applying for a Community Gaming Grant states “grant funds must remain under the control and management of the PAC (note: PSG is the term used in CISVA whereas PAC is a public-school term) whose membership is comprised of parents or guardians of students attending the school”.

The PSG is to follow all the regulations of the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch in making application for gaming funds and the expenditure of funds benefiting students.

## Parish Education Committee

Together with the Pastor and Principal, the Parish Education Committee (PEC) is responsible for the running of the school.

- The Pastor is responsible for faith development and is the Archbishop's Representative.
- The Principal is responsible for the administration and educational component of the school community.
- The PEC is responsible for the business operations of the school; it prepares the budget for the operation and maintenance of the school, ensures the school maintains accurate records, hires teachers and staff with the approval of the Pastor, and more.

The PEC does not work in isolation. ICS is one of 46 parochial schools within the CISVA. The CISVA governs both elementary and high schools in Vancouver. The PEC makes decisions and sets policy to govern the school, providing these decisions fall within the CISVA's policies and regulations.

The PEC is composed of active members of Immaculate Conception Parish (not necessarily parents of students) and the Pastor. Members are elected or appointed by the Pastor and serve two-year terms (up to a maximum of four terms).

The PEC meets once a month with the Pastor, the Principal and a representative from the teaching staff. Meeting minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the school hallway. Parents are always welcome to join the meeting as observers. parents wish to present an issue of concern to the PEC, they may do so with seven day written notice to the Chair.

Please refer to the school website for a copy of the PEC Annual Report for more details ([www.icschoolvancouver.com/parents](http://www.icschoolvancouver.com/parents)).

## Re-registration

Re-registration for the upcoming school year is held in February each year. Each family will receive a registration package and is required to return the necessary documents and cheques by the registration deadline. After the deadline, all spaces available in each grade are assessed and interviews start for prospective families seeking admission to the school.



## Responding to Student Abuse/Neglect (CISVA Policy 405)

Every student has a right to a life free of abuse, neglect and violence. Child abuse is a serious societal issue. As “service providers”, staff at ICS must be aware of signs of child abuse or neglect and know how to respond to them.

### Guiding Principles

- The safety and well-being of children are the paramount considerations.
- Children are entitled to be protected from abuse, neglect, harm or threat of harm.
- A family is the preferred environment for the care and upbringing of children and the responsibility for the protection of children rests primarily with the parents.
- If, with available support services, a family can provide a safe and nurturing environment for a child, support services should be provided.
- The child’s views should be taken into account when decisions relating to a child are made.
- Kinship ties and a child’s attachment to the extended family should be preserved if possible.
- The cultural identity of Aboriginal children should be preserved.
- Decisions relating to children should be made and implemented in a timely manner.

### Policy

CISVA policies prohibit any form of child abuse, neglect or violence. School personnel are responsible both for reporting suspected child abuse and for cooperating with resulting investigations.

- At the beginning of each school year, the school Principal will review with all school personnel the following documents: *BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect* (BC Ministry of Children and Family Development), *Responding to Child Welfare Concerns* (BC Ministry of Children and Family Development), and *Supporting our Students: A Guide for Independent School Personnel Responding to Child Abuse* (Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools BC)
- The school Principal, Colette Foran, is designated as the ‘Appointed School Official’ (ASO) in accordance with *Supporting Our Students: A Guide for Independent School Personnel Responding to Child Abuse*, and a second ASO, Mary Luyten, is appointed by the Principal to act as a backup
- School personnel will report suspected child abuse, neglect or violence immediately. Everyone who has a reason to believe that a child has been or is likely to be physically harmed, sexually abused or exploited, or neglected by a parent, or otherwise in need of protection as set out in Section 13 of the Child, Family and Community Service Act is legally responsible under section 14 of that Act to report promptly to a social worker. School personnel who are uncertain about their duty to report will consult with a social worker who can discuss the options and course of action.
- School personnel will inform the Principal (or another school official if the Principal is the alleged offender) of a report as soon as possible.
- School personnel will co-operate with the resulting investigation.
- School personnel will support students who have experienced child abuse, neglect or violence.
- Any information that is gathered by school personnel in carrying out any responsibilities under this Policy will be handled in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act and the *BC Handbook on Action for Child Abuse and Neglect*.

## Procedure

- Anyone who thinks a child is being abused or neglected has the legal duty to report the concern to a local child welfare worker. There is contact information available on page 12 of the *BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect*.
- If it is after hours or in the case of uncertainty about whom to contact, call the Helpline for Children toll free at 310-1234 (area code not required) at any time of the day or night. The caller's name is not required.
- If the child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.

## Safety and Security Procedures

The front door will be kept locked during the school day. Anyone who wishes to enter the school must use the buzzer to gain access.

Parents and visitors to the school must visit the office and sign in upon entering the building. All visitors will wear a visitor pass while in the school building.

### *Early Removal from School*

Parents who take their children out of school early are required to sign them out at the office.

### *Emergency Forms*

At the time of registration, you provided emergency contact information. It is imperative that you keep this record up to date. In the event that grandparents or neighbours move or change phone numbers, or you yourself change workplace or phone numbers, please inform the school office so that we can update our files.

Similarly, if you will be away on holiday and your child/ren will be staying with friends or relatives, please give us the alternate phone number, address and name of the guardian for that period.

If you discover your child develops an allergy, this also needs to be added to the medical record file. Please keep your child's teacher and the school office informed of any medical concerns.

### *Fire, Earthquake and Lockdown Drills*

Regular fire, earthquake and lockdown drills are held throughout the year to give the children safety routines for school and to reinforce safety plans you may have discussed at home.

### *Earthquake Procedures - Parent Roles and Responsibilities*

**Do not telephone the school** – if an emergency has occurred, the telephone lines will be needed for the emergency.

In the event that an emergency incident occurs, and evacuation of the school is required:

- Child/ren will be released to parents or designated alternate caregivers only.
- Report to the Release Station (which will be indicated by a sign) on the playground.
- Be patient and calm – releasing students will take time.
- The Release Station staff member will send a runner to bring your child/ren to you. In case of an injured child, the parent or designate will be taken to the child. If more than one child in a family is at the school, all will stay in the assembly area until the parent and injured child are ready to leave the grounds.

- When reunited with your child/ren, a Release Station staff member will require your signature on a Release Form.

### *Pets on the playground*

Please ensure that pets are on a leash at all times while on school property and under your supervision. Do not allow children to run around with pets on the playground, as many children are afraid of dogs or may have allergies.

## **School Closure**

In the event of a school closure due to snow, notification will be posted on the school website by 6:30 a.m. and an email will also be sent out.

We will also inform CBC (690 AM), NEWS 1130 and Global TV of the closure.

## **Student Health**

In accordance with the BC Health Act (Schools) CISVA schools are to have procedures in place that cover communicable disease control (immunization), prevention of infection from blood-borne viruses, school management of students infected with blood borne pathogens, and prevention and management of anaphylaxis in a school setting.

### *Communicable Disease Control*

The immunization program provided by Vancouver Coastal Health is aimed at maintaining adequate levels of protection in school populations against major vaccine-preventable diseases.

The School Administrator will:

- Distribute immunization information and consent forms when required.
- Collect completed forms for the community health nurse (to be handed over to the community nurse once collected).
- Provide a safe environment in the school for delivery of the immunization program.

The Parent/Guardian will:

- Provide immunization records when a student registers in the school for the first time.
- Provide a completed consent form for the student for all immunizations (consent form will indicate yes or no).

The Student will:

- Return signed parental consent forms to the school (no student can give personal consent for an immunization).
- Attend designated immunization areas in an orderly manner.

### ***Prevention and Management of Anaphylaxis in the School Setting – See CISVA Policy 434***

Anaphylactic students will wear Epinephrine injectors while at school and at school activities. Injectors will be left at school overnight; therefore, students must have an additional injector in their backpack for their trip to and from school and for extracurricular activities.

Although most anaphylactic children learn to administer their own medication by about age eight, individuals of any age may require help during a reaction due to rapid progression of the symptoms. Therefore, adult supervision is required.

The school will provide training for all staff members in the use of the epinephrine injector. The school will review school emergency procedures for each anaphylactic student with staff and parents/guardians annually and as directed by a physician on the child's annual care plan.

In the event a student has an anaphylactic reaction:

- The school will telephone 911 and inform that a child is having an anaphylactic reaction.
- The school will telephone parents/guardians.
- A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital if parent not available or not immediately present to receive the child at the hospital.

### ***Children with Medical Conditions***

Children with medical conditions such as anaphylaxis, seizures, asthma or diabetes are to have a care plan in place every year. The community health nurse can be a source of information and assistance in effecting a plan.

#### Parents' Role

- Make the school aware of their child's medical condition and provide updates if this condition changes.
- Assist the school in completing a care plan for their child.
- Provide appropriate medications both for management and emergency and determine a plan with the school about where and how these should be kept and administered.

#### School's Role:

- Keep a record of students who have identified medical conditions.
- Ensure that care plans for students with medical conditions are updated regularly.
- Consult with the community health nurse if there are questions about a care plan for a student.

### ***Administration of Medication***

In the case of ongoing administration or self-administration of medication or provision of a health care procedure a plan with parental consent is to be in place with accompanying medical documents and/or support.

Written parental permission is required in the case of administration or self-administration of occasional medication (Tylenol, Advil etc.).

If medication is required while a student is attending school, an administrator or any person designated by him/her shall administer or supervise the self-administration of medication. If required, the community health nurse will train a person/persons in the administration of medication or health care procedure.

No person shall perform any medical or health care procedure or administration of a medication that endangers the well-being of a student or subjects that person to risk of injury or liability of negligence (the exception is in the case of a life-threatening emergency).

### *Head Injuries*

- All head injuries are to be reported and filed.
- Parent/guardian is to be informed and made aware of the injury.
- A student with a head injury is to be monitored for symptoms of possible concussion.

## **Technology and the Internet**

### *Internet Use*

We require internet/computer acceptable use policy forms to be signed by parents and children so that the students can access the internet in school for instructional purposes. We encourage parents to provide permission for posting their children's work and photos on our website.

### *Personal Electronic Devices Policy*

To promote respect for the dignity of all members of our school community and to enhance student achievement and safety, the use of a **personal electronic device (PED) is strictly prohibited** in the school or during school related activities (such as retreats, field trips, sports events, etc.).

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the confiscation of the PED and/or disciplinary action. The school assumes no responsibility for the loss, recovery, repair or replacement for any PED brought onto school property.

PEDs are to be kept out of sight, turned off and not used within school premises or during school-sanctioned events. To prevent the loss or damage of PEDs, the school encourages students to leave their PEDs at home. Phones are to be left with the classroom teacher, for pickup at the end of the day.

Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) are wireless and/or portable electronic handheld equipment that include, but are not limited to, existing and emerging Mobile Communication Systems and Smart Technologies and any other convergent communication technologies that do any number of functions.

PEDs also include any current or emerging wireless handheld technologies or portable IT systems that can be used for the purpose of communication, entertainment, data management, word processing, wireless internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting/receiving/storing, etc.

### *Telephone Use*

Our school phone is in great demand. We try to keep it open for emergencies and for school business. The school phone is not to be used to arrange after-school activities with friends. If an extra-curricular activity is cancelled the phone is available to the students concerned. Students are permitted to use the telephone only if they have permission from their classroom teacher and the school secretary.

## Tobacco and Vapour Products

The use of tobacco, cannabis and vapour products is prohibited on school grounds

## Tuition

### *Tuition Rates*

Tuition rates are updated each year based on the Category 1, one child rate mandated by the CISVA. These rates are provided with the registration information.

### *Non-payment of Fees*

In the event there are tuition fee payments in arrears from the current year, re-registration for the following year will not be accepted until the amount in arrears has been paid in full. An exception is made where the Pastor has approved a revised payment plan (see below).

### *Financial Difficulty*

If your family is experiencing financial hardship and you require an extended tuition payment schedule, please contact the Pastor. This will take place in a confidential manner.

## Uniform

All students must wear the school uniform as prescribed. Students are to wear the ICS uniform to school and to all school functions. Sweaters/vests must be worn to all masses, assemblies and special events and should be brought to school every day.

Students who are unable to wear the complete uniform (including gym strip) at any given time are required to provide a note of explanation from their parents.

Uniforms must be purchased from Neat Uniforms (1050 Boundary Road, Burnaby; [604-205-7560](tel:604-205-7560); <https://www.neatuniforms.ca>)

### Boys

Sweater: Choice of pullover or vest with school logo, purchased from NEAT

Shirt: Plain white golf shirt with short sleeves, squared collar and no lettering or decor \*

Pants: Dark navy pants, purchased from NEAT

Shorts: Dark navy shorts, purchased from NEAT; may be worn from April 1 to October 31

Socks: Navy blue socks\*

Shoes: Black dress shoes, walking shoes or loafers only (not ankle boots)

### Girls

Sweater: Choice of cardigan or vest with school logo, purchased from NEAT

Shirt: Plain white golf shirt with short sleeves, squared collar and no lettering or decor \*

Tunic: K-Grade 3 wear the ICS blue tartan tunic from NEAT

Kilt: Grades 4-7 wear the ICS blue tartan kilt from NEAT; skirt length is no more than four fingers above the knee

Pants: K-Grade 7 girls may choose to wear the navy uniform pants from NEAT

Socks: Navy-blue knee-high socks or opaque navy tights\*



Shoes: Black dress shoes, walking shoes or loafers only (not ankle boots)

\* Golf shirts and socks/tights may be purchased elsewhere but must comply with the guidelines described above

Gym strip: Shorts and gym shirts are required for Grades 3-7 and purchased only through ICS  
Proper running shoes

#### Additional Requirements:

- Appropriate outerwear (raincoat, boots, mittens, etc.) is required on cold and rainy days as students will be sent out to play whenever possible
- When in school, all sweatshirts, jackets and any other non-dress code clothing must be removed
- Hats are not to be worn in the building
- Students must not wear make-up, nail polish or tattoos; natural looking hair colours only
- Jewelry is discouraged; small earrings that do not dangle below the ear may be worn
- Please consider the school a perfume-free area out of respect for those with allergies

Thank you for ensuring that your child is wearing the correct uniform and that it is cleaned and in good repair. Please remember to label all clothing and supplies with your child's name.

## **Use of School Grounds/ Playground Supervision**

We are responsible for the students during school hours, and their safety and welfare is our primary concern. If students need to leave the school during these hours, we must have a written note from you explaining why, and a parent/guardian or responsible adult must sign them out.

Students who go home to their own house for lunch every day need to bring a letter of permission from you, their guardian, covering the whole school year.

Playground supervision begins at 8:00 a.m. each morning. After-school supervision is provided for 20 minutes. Please ensure that your child is picked up or has left for home by 3:20 p.m. (2:15 p.m. on early dismissal Wednesdays). If you will be delayed, please phone the school office.

## **Withdrawal & Refund Policy**

In the event that your child is unable to complete the school year, we would kindly ask that you provide written notice to the school, at least one month in advance of departure.

Parents/guardians are responsible for tuition payments up to the end of the month of departure, or for one month after departure if one month's notice is not given. If you have paid the tuition in advance, a refund will be issued for the period from the end of the month of departure (plus one month if no notice is given) to April 30. If payments are made monthly, they will be stopped effective the end of the month of departure or notice period.

For example, if the school were notified on December 1 that a student would withdraw December 18, the last tuition payment would be December 1. No automatic debits will be made after the December 1 payment. If tuition was paid in advance for the year, a refund will be issued for four months' tuition, being January 1 through April 30. No partial-month refunds are given. If, however, notice was not given until December 18th that the child was withdrawing, then the last tuition payment would be January 1.

Please note that the tuition deposit for May and June, which was paid prior to the commencement of the school year, is non-refundable.

## **Principal's Right to Amend**

The Principal retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause, and parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.