



*Nurturing the Heart, Mind, and Spirit*

# PARENT HANDBOOK

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## St. Mary's Mission and Motto

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### Message from the Principal

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to **St. Mary's School**, where faith, learning, and community come together. We are a Catholic school rooted in the Gospel values of love, service, and respect, and we are committed to nurturing the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical growth of every child entrusted to our care.

Parents are the first and most important educators of their children, and we value the partnership we share with families. Together, we strive to form students who grow in faith, develop their gifts, and live with compassion and integrity. We look forward to walking alongside you as your children learn, grow, and flourish within our St. Mary's community.

Yours sincerely,

**Ms. Brenda Krivuzoff**  
Principal

### Mission Statement

As a Christian community we strive to:

- Share the Catholic Faith
- Foster spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical growth
- Encourage greater love, knowledge of God and one another to the larger Christian community and society
- Ensure every child feels safe, accepted, and respected

### Territorial Acknowledgement

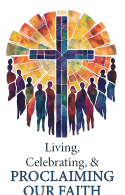
St. Mary's School acknowledges that the land on which we gather and work is the traditional and ancestral territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), sel̓íl'wítulh (Tsleil-Waututh), and s̓kwx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) Nations. We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship, and voice.

### Motto

The school's motto, "Nurturing the Heart, Mind & Spirit" guides the staff at St. Mary's. We provide a comprehensive education that embodies the Catholic faith.

### CISVA School Theme for 2025-2026 is "Proclaiming Our Faith"

The artwork serves as visual meditation on Christ's command to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), inviting viewers to reflect on their role in spreading the Gospel and embodying the Body of Christ.





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## I. Staffing and Scheduling

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### Administration and Teaching Staff

Principal	Ms. Brenda Krivuzoff
Vice-Principal/Learning Resource Coordinator	Mrs. Maryann Vukasovic
Vice-Principal/STEAM/IT Director	Mr. Mark Mogatas
Kindergarten	Ms. Ana Vukasovic
Kindergarten	Miss Mary Miiller
Grade 1	Mrs. Catherine Moffatt
Grade 1	Ms. Vanessa Paccani
Grade 2	Mrs. Christina Marino
Grade 3	Ms. Tina Cipriano
Grade 4	Mrs. Dolores Collins
Grade 5	Mr. Michael Quick
Grade 5	Mrs. Mirna Lewis (T-Th)
Grade 5	Mrs. Bev Ryznar (M, F)
Grade 6	Mrs. Faith Maier
Grade 6	Ms. Gabby Lombardo
Grade 7	Ms. Dolores Simmons
Grade 7	Mr. Jose Pascua
Physical Health Education	Mr. Joshua Gabriele
French/LRC	Mme Su Linn Yin (T-F)
Music/Band	Mrs. Bev Ryznar (T-Th)
Learning Resource	Ms. Patricia Olesiak
Learning Resource	Mrs. Jennifer Caldwell (T-Th)
Educational Assistant	Ms. Caroline Umali
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Marzanna Jaroma
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Susana Merrill
Educational Assistant	Ms. Sandra Cagliuso
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Eugenia Hodut
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Joahna Carvallo-Salas



Educational Assistant	Ms. Jacquie Eisner
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Tammy Samija
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Micaela Dewitt
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Lianna Rossander
Educational Assistant	Ms. Charlotte Lam (W-F)
Educational Assistant	Ms. Enakshi Patro
Educational Assistant	Mme. Su Lin Yin (M, F)
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Juliana Mustapic
Educational Assistant	Ms. Olena Kriuchkovenko
Educational Assistant	Mr. Elena De Costa

### Support Staff

Office Administrator	Mrs. Lora Scodeller (M-Th)
Bookkeeper/Office Support	Mrs. Michelle Burns (T-F)
Student Supervisor/Office Support	Mrs. Vanessa Faria
Bus Driver	Ms. Heather Carr
Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	Ms. Rayna Rumley
IT Consultant	Paymon
Maintenance	Mr. Kristoffer Simpao
Custodians	Ms. Renuka Lata; Mr. Tony Dutt
Public Health Nurse (Evergreen Community Health Centre)	Taylor Soo, RN, BSN

### School Schedule

7:30	SAINTS Before School Club begins
8:30	Student Arrival
8:30	Office opens, SAINTS Before School Club ends
8:50	School starts
10:15	Kindergarten Recess
10:30	Kindergarten Recess ends/Gr. 1-3 Recess
10:45	Gr. 1-3 recess ends/ Intermediate Recess begins
11:00	Intermediate Recess Ends



11:45	Primary Lunch Recess Begins
12:15	Intermediate Lunch Recess Begins/Primary Lunch in classrooms
12:45	Intermediate Lunch in the classrooms/ Primary classes resume
1:00	Intermediate classes resume
2:45	School-wide Prayer
3:00	Dismissal and After School Club begins
3:10	Supervision ends
4:00	Office closes
6:00	SAINTS After School Club ends

## II. **SAINTS Before and After Care School Club**

Our club offers dedicated homework support in literacy and math, alongside enriching activities such as physical education and art. Structured sessions blend learning with ample playtime, featuring access to computers, games, books, and more. Please ensure your child brings a nutritious snack from home. On Fridays, students can look forward to enjoying a movie and popcorn! Before School Club is open Monday through Friday 7:30-8:30 a.m. in the Grade 2 classroom (excluding holidays and professional days). After School Club is open Monday through Friday, from 3:00 until 6:00 p.m. in the Grade 1 classroom near the gymnasium (excluding holidays and professional days). Parents may register for the program, including drop-in days, using the google link provided through the website. (found in the Quicklinks section). Our program operates as a non-licensed service, and families will be provided with a letter for CRA purposes in February.

### **Transportation at Drop Off and Pick Up Locations**

Grade 1-7 students are to gather at the playground before the school bell by 8:30-8:50. Kindergarten students are to gather outside the gym on the ramp by 8:30-8:50.

Gr. 1-7 parents may park on side streets in designated parking areas near the school and walk their children to the playground. Only **Kindergarten** parents or parents who need disabled parking may use the driveway off Joyce into the south parking lot to park their vehicle and walk their child to the school. Supervisors are present before school to ensure safety, and parents must use caution for vehicles exiting the south parking lot after the 8:00a.m. Mass. Please respect and follow the directions of the traffic supervisors.

### **School Closure Due to Weather**

In the event of a school closure due to snow or severe weather, families will be notified by **7:00 a.m.** through the following channels:



- Email
- The school website under **School Announcements**
- The school website and App calendar
- School social media platforms

Weather conditions can vary significantly across Metro Vancouver. Even if the school remains open, parents are encouraged to use their discretion when deciding whether it is safe to travel from their location. Parents may also arrange for early pick-up if conditions change during the day.

If the school is open and you choose to keep your child at home, please notify the school by submitting a note through the school App.

**Student safety is always our highest priority.**

### **III. Registration, Attendance, Student Health, and Safety**

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#### **Registration**

Priority Kindergarten registration is open from **November 1 to January 31**. Children who are 4 years old and turning 5 by December 31 are eligible to register. For younger children who do not meet this cutoff, we will begin a waitlist for the following year, with admissions following our policy guidelines. Non-Catholic families are welcome to apply.

Application forms are available on our website. Tuition is eligible for a tax receipt, and subsidy options are available for St. Mary's parishioners. We also guarantee spots in our Before and After-School Club program for all registered students.

Registration for children entering older grades runs from **December 1 to March 31**. During this time, we will also begin conducting interviews with prospective families seeking admission to the school.

#### **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.



## St. Mary's Fundraising and Donation Program

Throughout the year, [St. Mary's fundraising and donations program](#) provides events and opportunities to raise money for our school and students. Parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution to the St. Mary's Development Program at the time of Registration and Re-registration.

## Personal Information Privacy Policy

St. Mary's 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. 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 St. Mary's Privacy Policy is posted on the school's website ([www.stmary.bc.ca](http://www.stmary.bc.ca)).

## International Students

1. The student should have the basics of English, both spoken and written.
2. To apply for admission to St. Mary's School
  - Please complete the Pre-Registration Form
  - Please note: Submitting this form does not indicate acceptance at St. Mary's
  - Please attach your most recent transcript (in English) of all academic marks
  - If residing in Canada, please attach a copy of your current Student Visa
  - If residing in Canada, please attach a copy of your guardian's Canadian Citizenship or Landed Immigrant document
  - Copy of Private Medical Coverage documents
  - Copy of Immunization documents
3. If possible, an appointment should be set up with the Principal, the student applying, and the guardian.
4. Call the office for tuition rates. Upon receipt of tuition, a Letter of Acceptance will be issued. The tuition is not refundable. Upon acceptance, a school uniform will need to be purchased.
5. For a student applying from outside the country, this letter will be sent to the applicant, and they should apply for a Student Visa at their nearest Canadian Immigration office. This process can take 6 – 8 weeks. A copy of the Student Visa must be sent to St. Mary's School as soon as it is received.
6. St. Mary's School does not provide Homestay.

## Withdrawal & Refund Policy

If 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. If you have paid for tuition in advance, a refund will be issued for the period from the end of the month of departure. If payments are made monthly, they will be stopped effective at the end of the month of withdrawal, or notice period.

Please note that the student activity fee, which was paid prior to the commencement of the school year, is non-refundable.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Punctuality and regular attendance are essential to every student's success, and we ask your cooperation in being diligent in this regard. Continual tardiness is very disruptive to the start of the day, not only for the student but also for the class.

The school calendar is accessible through our school website in September with all the scheduled school holidays and early dismissal days for your convenience.

When planning appointments and holidays, please refer to the calendar to avoid missing classes. Please note that statutory holidays and CISVA calendar dates are constant, but other school events are subject to change.

If your child is sick, absent, or late for any reason, we prefer you to download the St. Mary's School App and use it to inform us. The school office and teacher will be notified directly. If you do not have a smartphone to download the school App, you must email or call the school office and inform the office administrator or leave a message on our voice mail before or after school hours; and send an email or signed note explaining the reason for the absence to the teacher when your child returns to school.

### **Leaving School Grounds**

Students are required to stay on the school grounds, including before and after school. Once students leave school grounds, they are not permitted to return; this includes but is not limited to purchasing food or drinks and returning to school.

### **Classroom Deliveries**

If lunches or other items must be delivered after school begins, we ask that you buzz the office for access to the building, place them on the table in the foyer. Your child will come to collect his/her item or lunch. Families are requested to not disturb classes by delivering items.

### **Invitations**

To be respectful and inclusive of all students in our school community, please refrain from distributing invitations to parties on school grounds. Please make alternate arrangements to communicate with families regarding events.

### **Safety and Security Procedures**

The front door will be kept locked during the school day. A telecommunication system is available at the front door for visitors to communicate with the front office. In-person visits



should be for essential purposes. Parents can drop off lunches, supplies and instruments at the front door. Parents volunteering for yard duty, library services, hot lunch, or a fundraising program will have school access to complete their hours.

Parents and visitors are asked to monitor their health before entering the school. Upon arrival, please report to the office on the second floor to check in and sign in before proceeding to any classroom or other area. These procedures will eliminate classes being disturbed unnecessarily, and is also a safeguard for our students' protection. All visitors will wear a visitor pass while in the school building. All doors/gates will be open and maintained by staff for 8:30-8:50 a.m. drop off and from 3:00-3:10 p.m. for picking up students.

Our school is equipped with 24hr surveillance cameras for security reasons.

At the time of registration, you provided emergency contact information. Parents must keep this record up to date. Please inform the school office of any changes in the workplace, home, or emergency phone numbers.

### **Emergency Procedures**

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. In the event of an earthquake, do not phone the school. Children will be released to parents or designated caregivers only. Please report to the Release Station, which will be indicated by a sign by the church. Be patient and calm as releasing students will take time.

### **Walking Home Permission Form**

Choosing to have your child walk home from school is a parental decision based on your assessment of your child's independence and maturity. If you choose this option, please request a Walking Home Permission Form from the office, complete it, and return it to the school. Once received, the classroom teacher will be notified and the form will be placed in your child's file.

### **Student Health**

Following the BC Health ACT (Schools), CISVA schools are to have procedures in place that cover communicable disease control (immunization), prevention from blood-borne viruses, school management of students infected with blood-borne pathogens, and prevention and management of Anaphylaxis in a school setting. Parents are required to provide their children's health and safety information at registration and notify the school of changes. [CISVA Student Health Policy 406](#), [Vancouver Coastal Health](#).

### **Communicable Disease Control**

Please read our latest Communicable Disease Update on our website. The immunization program provided by VCH is aimed at maintaining adequate levels of protection in school populations against major vaccine-preventable diseases. Parents will provide immunization



records at registration and consent forms for all immunizations (consent form will indicate yes or no).

### **Prevention and Management of Anaphylaxis in the School Setting**

#### [CISVA Policy 434, Anaphylaxis](#)

Anaphylactic students will have Epinephrine injectors while at school and at school activities. Injectors will be left in the students' backpack for their trip to and from school.

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 parent/guardians annually and as directed by a physician on the child's care plan. The school will telephone 911 and inform that a child has an anaphylactic reaction, telephone the parent/guardians, and accompany the child to the hospital if the parent is not available to receive the child at the hospital.

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.

### **Children with Medical Conditions**

Children with medical conditions such as 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 are to make the school aware of their child's medical condition upon registration and provide updates if this condition changes. Parents are to assist the school in completing a care plan for their child and provide appropriate medications for both management and emergencies. The plan will indicate where the drug will be kept and administered. Teachers have a copy of student personal information including names of parent/guardian with home and work contact information and student care card number, in case this information is needed by emergency personnel attending a traffic accident or other emergency during a class field trip.

### **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.

On occasion, we have been asked by a parent to ensure their child receives prescribed medication. Please be aware that to do so, we require a signed, dated note.

### **Head Injuries**

All head injuries will be reported and filed at the office. Appropriate concussion protocols will be followed, and the Parent/guardian is to be informed. A student with a head injury is to be monitored for symptoms of concussion.



## Head Lice

Cases of Head Lice should be reported to the school office. In the event we are notified, the school will send out the information provided by Vancouver Coastal Health on how to deal with head lice. Controlling head lice if it is caught early on is quite easy, but the earlier, the better, although even advanced cases of head lice are treatable with specially designed shampoo and combs.

## Hearing & Vision Screenings

Hearing and Vision screenings take place in kindergarten, and students may be referred for follow up with health care providers.

## Tobacco, Vapour and Cannabis Products Policy

Use of cannabis on school properties will continue to be against the law, along with tobacco smoking and vaping. Smoking or vaping tobacco or cannabis is also illegal on playgrounds, sports fields, skate parks, and other places where children and youth spend time. Students will be encouraged not to use these products or be exposed to vapour emissions.

## Responding to Student Abuse/Neglect

[CISVA Policy 405](#)

### Rationale

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

### Procedure

Anyone who has reason to believe that a child is in need of protection, has the legal duty to report the concern to a child welfare worker.

The Appointed School Official (ASO) is the principal, Ms. Krivuzoff. The second Alternate Appointed School Official (AASO) is the vice-principal, Mrs. Vukasovic. The ASO is responsible for liaising with the child welfare worker and/or police as applicable. The ASO can seek appropriate guidance from the child welfare worker and/or police in regard to matters such as:

- Communications with parents/guardians – including whether the parent/guardian will be contacted about the investigation, and if so by whom and when;
- Arranging interviews of the child with the child welfare worker and/or police.

The ASO is also responsible for working with childcare workers to determine whether a child has been harmed by someone who works or volunteers at school or works on contract for the school. The role of the alternated appointed official is to ensure the continuity of the reporting and investigation process in the event of possible involvement of the primary appointed official in a matter that falls under section 14 of the CFCSA.



The ASO may be required to:

- Investigate on behalf of the school authority whether there is a duty to report
- Ensure a safe school environment during investigations
- Consult with the child welfare worker and/or police
- Ensure that no school employee interferes with any investigations
- Communicate with parents/guardians with respect to actions taken by the school authority
- Report to the British Columbia Teacher Regulation Branch and/or the Inspector of Independent Schools when the School Authority dismisses, suspends, or otherwise disciplines a certified teacher
- Refer student(s) for counselling

### Guiding Principles

1. The safety and well-being of children are the paramount considerations
2. Children are entitled to be protected from abuse, neglect, harm or threat of harm
3. 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
4. If, with available support services, a family can provide a safe and nurturing environment for a child, support services should be provided
5. The child's views should be taken into account when decisions relating to a child are made
6. Kinship ties and a child's attachment to the extended family should be preserved if possible
7. The cultural identity of Aboriginal children should be preserved
8. Decisions relating to children should be made and implemented in a timely manner

## IV. Student Uniforms

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The wearing of a school uniform is a decision made by the school community. It will be strictly enforced throughout the year.

### Mass Days (Grades 3–7 only):

Students are expected to wear their school uniform for all school Masses (First Fridays and designated Wednesdays—see school calendar). If PHE falls on a Mass day, students will be given time to change afterward.

Each student is REQUIRED to be in the following uniform:

<b>Boys:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Grey Pants</li><li>● St. Mary's Crested Polo Shirt</li><li>● St. Mary's Crested Burgundy Cardigan</li><li>● Dark, Grey or White Socks</li><li>● Grey Walking Short (Optional for Summer - April-Oct.)</li></ul>
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<b>Girls:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tartan Jumper (Kindergarten – Grade 3)</li> <li>• Tartan Skirt (Grade 4 – Grade 7)</li> <li>• St. Mary's Crested Polo Shirt</li> <li>• St. Mary's Crested Burgundy Cardigan</li> <li>• Navy Blue Knee Socks or Tights</li> <li>• Grey Skorts (Optional for Summer - April-Oct. ) with plain white socks and runners</li> </ul>
<b>PE uniform for all:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St. Mary's Athletic Logo T-shirt</li> <li>• St. Mary's Athletic Logo Black Short</li> <li>• St. Mary's Crested Black Track Suit (Hoodie &amp; Sweat Pants)</li> <li>• Running Shoes &amp; White Sport Socks</li> </ul>
<b>Shoes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain Black Low Heeled Dress Shoes or plain Black Running Shoes with no contrasting stripes</li> </ul>
<b>Hair:</b>	Modest hair accessories are allowed and should complement uniform colours (e.g., burgundy, black, navy, dark green). Hair colour should be natural and not dyed. All hair has to be brushed, neatly tied back if long enough and kept out of the face. No long sleeve shirts under t-shirts, or tights under shorts.
<b>Grade 7:</b>	Class Hoodie alternative to Cardigan (except Mass days)

**Jewelry:** for safety no hoops or dangling earrings. Stud earrings are acceptable.

The school cannot be responsible for lost, missing, or broken jewelry.

**Note:** All uniform pieces with the exception of shoes must be purchased through:

**McCarthy Uniforms**

1050 Boundary Rd. Burnaby

Telephone: 604-205-7555

**SMSAINTS Apparel:** St. Mary's offers a variety of branded items for students and adults available to purchase. Parents will be notified with pop-up orders throughout the year. Specialized clothing items are not part of the school uniform, but can be worn on designated days. The Walkathon prize t-shirt can substitute for the gym t-shirt.

## v. **Curriculum and Programming**

### **Curriculum**

#### **Academics**

The school follows the Ministry of Education curriculum. The curriculum, with its focus on Big Ideas, Core Competencies, Curricular Competencies, and essential Content, is intended to be an enabling framework, giving teachers space and flexibility to innovate. The curriculum design



respects the unique nature of disciplines while supporting cross-curricular learning. The curriculum supports student-driven, inquiry-based approaches to teaching and learning by planning an increased focus on concepts and content that address “real-world” issues and problems. Students receive instruction in the areas of Religion, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical and Health Education, Career Education, Arts Education, Applied Design, Skills and Technologies and French. Our Catholic World Views and Aboriginal Knowledge and Perspectives are integrated with what students are learning.

### **Christian Education**

St. Mary's School follows the Christian education curriculum prescribed by the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese (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. This program provides an alternate delivery method of covering the prescribed learning outcomes for human sexuality.

The Archbishop mandates 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 Three both at home and in the classroom.

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

### **Sacramental Programs**

#### **Reconciliation and Communion**

In Grade Two, the children prepare to receive two sacraments: Reconciliation and Communion. Their journey begins with the Enrolment Celebration held in the fall. The students gather with their parents at Mass and the children renew publically the vows done for them at Baptism – they say a strong “I do” to the faith of the Church. They submit signed promises agreeing to do activities as a family throughout the year to strengthen their relationship with Jesus. These pledges of time and prayer will help prepare their hearts to receive Christ in these new ways.

In February, the children celebrate their First Reconciliation during an evening celebration, and the whole family is welcome to attend. Each child meets Jesus in this new special way, understanding that he is always there to forgive their sins and to comfort them. The child receives the Sacrament, and the whole family is given a blessing of peace – and then sent forth to celebrate that “the lost have been found.”

In April or May, the children and their families gather for the most magnificent feast of all – the Eucharist – Holy Communion! This celebration is held on a Saturday afternoon and involves the students of the school and the Parish Religious Education Program. At this celebration, an offering of food is collected and is given to the Collingwood Neighbourhood House Breakfast



Program for the homeless. This collection acknowledges that hearts fed with the Body of Christ must now be challenged to be like Christ and help with the needs of the world.

## **Confirmation**

Confirmation is the final sacrament of initiation. It's about celebrating one's commitment to the Catholic faith and promising to maintain a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit.

At St. Mary's, Grade Seven students receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the spring. Their spiritual journey begins in the fall with the Enrolment Mass. At this Mass, students renew their Baptismal vows in front of the priest, their parents, and the church parishioners. This Mass initiates the students as Confirmation Candidates charged with the responsibility to strengthen their faith for the service of others. Throughout the year, the students complete the Confirmation Program with their classroom teacher. This program follows the education curriculum framework set by CISVA. Outside of school, students attend Mass, a spiritual retreat, complete service hours, and choose a Confirmation name and a Sponsor to support them in this journey.

## **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, the first Friday of each month and one Wednesday each month. Students share in the preparation of the Masses, and parents are invited to attend. Non-Catholic students will receive a special blessing at communion.

## **French**

The French program at St. Mary's is offered to students in all grades and is taught by a certified teacher of the Accelerated Integrated Method or *AIM*. The teaching practice, using gestures for each word spoken, follows what is known as the Communicative-Experiential Approach. The focus of student learning is the acquisition of purposeful language to perform practical, real-life skills. Communication in French (listening, speaking, reading, viewing, and writing) is the focus and is used as a vehicle to explore the richness of culture, tradition, and the arts- through story writing, drama, music, and technology.

## **Music**

The music program at St. Mary's School is comprised of an Orff approach in the primary grades and an instrumental approach in the intermediate classes.

The Orff program follows a sequence of learning experiences beginning with speech patterns, rhythmic movement, and simple tunes. Use of glockenspiels, xylophones, and various non-pitched percussion instruments is widely used in the primary grades.





Students in intermediate grades graduate to instrumental skills (recorder, ukulele, band instruments) and note-reading skills. Singing skills are integrated into the program at all levels.

We are proud to offer a curricular band program in grades 5, 6, and 7. Students receive 60 minutes of band instruction per week and perform at least twice during the school year. Clinics with professional musicians are provided to our beginning students. The Grade 7 band students will have opportunities to participate in festivals and workshops within the Catholic Secondary Schools in Vancouver. Instruments include flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, trumpet, trombone, baritone, and percussion.

At St. Mary's, we endeavor to expose our students to as many musically cultural and historical experiences as possible. To this end, some of our students annually attend the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra's Elementary School Concerts at the Orpheum Theatre and other performing groups, such as The Vancouver Opera in The Schools, Green Thumb Theatre and various Indigenous Artists, visit our school each year to provide all our students with the opportunity to experience culture and the arts.

Our goal is that, upon graduation, our students will have acquired sufficient skills in music to continue on their chosen instruments, contribute to their high school choral programs and to have gained an appreciation for all genres of music.

### **Physical Health Education**

St. Mary's offers Physical Education classes, instructed by a Physical Education Specialist to all students three times per week in 30-minute sessions. The primary objective of the Physical Education program is to develop students' physical literacy. By establishing the competence and confidence to participate in a broad range of physical activities, students have a strong beginning to a healthy, physically active lifestyle.

Essential physical skills of balance, coordination, stamina, speed, strength, agility, and flexibility are at the core of all units of study. Programming is designed to optimize the development of these skills as the child enters the phases of growth most conducive to training in that element. Programming directives and guidelines are sourced from the BC Physical and Health Education curriculum, the Provincial Ministry of Sport (ViaSport), and Health Canada, through the Long-Term Athletic Development Model.

In acquiring physical literacy, students explore a variety of team and individual sports, fitness opportunities, creative movement, and wellness exercises. Outdoor activities are coordinated with classroom teachers and may include snowshoeing, ice skating, stand-up paddling, hiking, and other opportunities in the Lower Mainland. Students in Grades 2-3 participate in the Red Cross "Swim in School" program.

Throughout the Physical Education program, children are guided towards experiencing, understanding, and responding to the growth, development, and biomechanics of their changing bodies. Athletes are encouraged to appreciate the simple but profound joy of being



healthy and able to be physically active. In St. Mary's Physical Education, an authentic ethos is fostered for respect for life and the human body.

### **STEAM Education**

St. Mary's has launched a STEAM Education program (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math). A specialist teacher works collaboratively with K-7 students and teachers with Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies curriculum, also known as ADST. This curriculum builds on students' natural curiosity, inventiveness, and desire to create and work in practical ways.

Each aspect of ADST has a natural development. Design is born from curiosity, followed by testing and experimentation and then developing into identified needs. Skills follow a routine that we often recognize in sports: initial play, practice, and then the acquisition of specific skills. Technology focuses on the tools that extend human capabilities that then become task specific which eventually can become more intricate or complex.

### **Library Services**

Students at St. Mary's visit the "Book Nook" on a weekly basis and are able to sign out books using their student accounts. The library system used is the Follet Destiny program to aid in maintaining the catalogue. A team of dedicated parent volunteers assists with helping access books, organize the collection, and storytelling with the primary grades. Classes participate in various activities offered, including author studies, writing contests, trivia, and author visits to promote literacy in the school. There is also an annual Book Fair held every year, in which proceeds are given back to the "Book Nook."

### **Second Step: A Program for Academic and Social Success**

St. Mary's School implements the Second Step Program throughout grades K to 7. This social and emotional learning program is a universal, classroom-based program designed to increase students' school success, build positive peer relationships, and decrease problem behaviors by promoting social-emotional competence and self-regulation. While participating in this program, students develop skills that strengthen their ability to learn, have empathy, manage their emotions and behaviors, and solve problems.

The Second Step program offers a comprehensive bullying prevention curriculum for grades 1-5 through its Bullying Prevention Unit. This unit builds on the foundational social-emotional skills students have developed in the core Second Step program, teaching both staff and students how to recognize, respond to, and report bullying. Additionally, it emphasizes empowering bystanders to take an active role in preventing bullying.

For students in grades 6-7, the program extends to include a dedicated cyberbullying unit. This module addresses online safety and equips students with the knowledge and skills to navigate the digital world responsibly, while also combating cyberbullying.

Research tells us that students with strong social and emotional skills do better academically and socially. These skills are essential to us here at St. Mary's because teaching the whole child



in an environment that is safe, caring, and welcoming is ingrained in our mission as a Catholic school.

More information about our [Second Step Program is found on their website](#).

### **Learning Resource Centre**

The Learning Resource Team consists of 4 teachers who work on an individual or small group basis with students requiring a more direct focus on skill development in various areas of the curriculum. This support is provided through referral and is either done in pull out or in-class format.

There is also a Learning Resource Coordinator who works collaboratively with the classroom teachers, Learning Resource Team, Educational Assistants (EAs) and parents to facilitate identification, development, and implementation of appropriate learning goals for neurodiverse learners. Professional service providers supporting students outside of school are also welcome to join this collaborative process.

All students receiving support from the Learning Resource Centre have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that guides staff in supporting students in successfully achieving planned goals and objectives. The Learning Resource Centre supports all grades from Kindergarten to Grade 7.

### **Swimming**

When available, St. Mary's Physical Education includes the Red Cross "Swim in Schools" program in Grades 2-3. The program is typically six sessions. Students are grouped within their class according to their swimming background. Beginners gain the skills essential for survival in water, while advanced students work on improving techniques in various swimming strokes and even life-saving skills. Beyond crucial survival skills, students will have the foundations to open them to a world of water-based opportunities from artistic pursuits like synchronized swimming and diving, to team pursuits such as water polo and competitive racing clubs, or recreational opportunities like snorkeling, canoeing, stand-up paddling, windsurfing, or kite-boarding. Whichever directions students' interests take them, they will have the foundation to be aquatically active for life!

### **Field Trips**

Field trips related to curriculum studies are an integral component to "real world" learning. They allow students to experience lessons they have learned in class or provide an important experiential scaffolding upon which lessons can be built upon. Many times, classes attend field trips away from the school, and sometimes, outside resources are brought into the school to complement lessons. Field trips are educational, memorable and fun!

### **Grade Seven Outdoor Education**

Outdoor Education is an excellent opportunity for the Grade Seven students at St. Mary's. Students enjoy four days and three nights participating in several ecological and team-building activities. Outdoor Education brings the classroom to life and reinforces the Ecosystem unit



students are learning in Science. Every day is packed with field studies, recreation activities, chores, and free time. This field trip is a highlight of the Grade Seven year!

### **Cheakamus Overnight Indigenous Cultural Program**

Grade Fours have the opportunity to attend the overnight cultural program at the Cheakamus Education Centre in Squamish. This program is an in-depth indigenous program that provides a wide-range of hands-on learning experiences. It is guided by indigenous interpreters. Students will be immersed in traditional Coast Salish practices, situated in and around an authentic longhouse and surrounding ecological reserve. This overnight indigenous cultural program is based on three major ideas that underlie the activities at the longhouse: *Respect, Sharing, and Seasonality*.

### **Nordic Adventure: Cross-country Skiing**

Grade Six students will receive skiing lessons to develop skill and proper technique while exposing them to the natural beauty of Cypress Mountain.

### **Victoria Field Trip**

In Grade Five the students participate in an away trip to Victoria where they have the opportunity to visit the BC Legislature, sit in the public gallery to hear debates and tour the Royal BC Museum. The purpose of this day-long trip is to help students understand that Canadian institutions and government reflect the challenge of our regional diversity. Travelling on the BC Ferries provides the students with the chance to appreciate British Columbia's natural beauty and wealth of resources.

### **Salmonids in the Classroom**

The Kindergarten and Grade Four students take part in a long-standing tradition of the Salmonids in the Classroom Program to teach the students the importance of the connection of the land and resources in which they live. The students maintain a nursery of salmon eggs in which we hatch coho salmon and release the fry in Stanley Park. This program lends itself to several field trips which include the Capilano Fish Hatchery, the Salmon release in Stanley Park, and the Seymour Fish Hatchery.

## **VI. Assessment, Reporting, and Communication**

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### **Communicating Student Learning & Parent/Teacher Communication**

The progress of your child is reported in many different ways throughout the school year. This includes three formal report cards, parent-teacher conferences, student-led conferences, digital portfolios, IXL for Language Arts and Math skills, Raz-Kids (primary) and regular student/parent/teacher check-ins. Our approach to reporting reflects the revised BC curriculum. Our goal is to provide you with a clear picture of your child as a learner (a focus on grade-level



expectations and an adapted performance scale). Assessments are based on learning standards, including core competencies, curricular competencies, and content for a particular grade and assessed on a proficiency scale recommended by the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese. This report focuses on a child's strengths and promotes ongoing skill development to create successful learners in our changing world. The Term 3 summative report will include a requirement for student self-assessment of the Core Competencies with teacher support as needed.

## **VII. Student Extra-Curricular Activities**

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### **Athletics**

In our mission to develop the whole child, St. Mary's provides opportunities for physical, social, and emotional growth through an inclusive, extra-curricular sports program. Age-appropriate, quality programming is provided by staff volunteer coaches who understand and use Canada Sport for Life's Long-Term Athletic Development model as a framework for training.

Students are provided opportunities to play within St. Mary's and/or with other schools. As athletes develop an interest or enjoyment of a sport, they are encouraged to continue in community programs which follow Health Canada Guidelines in training and competition structures, and ideally have coaches affiliated with the Coaching Association of Canada. Participating in club or community programs is neither a pre-requisite nor a co-requisite to participating on a St. Mary's team.

Sports offered range from volleyball, to cross-country running, basketball, and track and field. Depending on athletes' backgrounds and interests, teams may be entered in sports organized by the CISVA Athletics' Commission. Opportunities for other sports may be offered as staff and student interests, and opportunities arise. Practices are held before and after school and during lunch hours. Exhibition and league games and tournaments are held both during and after school hours.

In all extra-curricular athletics, students, coaches, and families are required to follow the model of "reverence, respect, and responsibility". This means to respect all teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, and spectators. Athletes are to expect the best of themselves and others and to honour their commitment to a team. Athletes, coaches, and families are to accept that when everyone is working their hardest, there will be differences in knowledge and skill, yet everyone is accepted on the team, and our community supports and celebrates learning and one another.

In short, the Principles of Catholic Education are applicable to St. Mary's Athletics Department, namely that "Catholic Education calls us to witness...the inherent dignity of every human person, especially the marginalized and most vulnerable", and that "Catholic Education is inclusive and welcoming where every student is nurtured in developing a right relationship with God and others by balancing the rights of the individual with the common good." This is the ultimate expression of teamwork.



**Sources:**

<https://www.coach.ca/responsible-coaching-movement-s17179>  
<http://sportforlife.ca/qualitysport/long-term-athlete-development/>  
<https://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Long-Term-Development-in-Sport-and-Physical-Activity-3.0.pdf>  
<http://www.basketball.ca/files/LTAD.pdf>  
[https://volleyball.ca/uploads/About/LTAD/LTAD\\_Electronic\\_April2007.pdf](https://volleyball.ca/uploads/About/LTAD/LTAD_Electronic_April2007.pdf)  
[https://athletics.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/LTAD\\_EN.pdf](https://athletics.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/LTAD_EN.pdf)  
<http://respectgroupinc.com/respect-in-sport/>  
<https://www.viasport.ca/quality-sport/physical-literacy>

**Entering Events under the name of "St. Mary's School"**

Parents and groups are not allowed to use the name of "St. Mary's School" when organizing activities and entering a student or team in a community event. Only events organized by the school and sanctioned by the principal will be registered under the name of "St. Mary's School."

**Choir**

St. Mary's is pleased to offer two extra-curricular choir programs to our students. Our Primary Choir, for students in grades 2 and 3, rehearses weekly all year long. This choir performs at least twice per year.

The Intermediate Choir, which is divided into Junior (grades 4 and 5) and Senior (grades 6 and 7), rehearses weekly all year long and performs multiple times per year. In addition to leading the singing for our monthly school Masses, the choir sings for several Christmas events in our community, Christmas Musicals, sacraments during the spring (First Communion and Confirmation), Ash Wednesday Mass for the Parish, the STMC Chancellor Music Festival, and our St. Mary's School Spring Concert.

**St. Mary's Reads Competition**

The St. Mary's Reads Competition will feature three rounds of head-to-head debates as teams compete to determine the school's next "must-read" book. Within each round, teams will present a prepared statement, discuss opinions based on common themes, and provide closing arguments to solidify each team's case. At the end of each round, all club members will vote on which team presented the most convincing arguments. With eight books in contention, only one will ultimately be voted the top read by the students!

**Spelling Bee**

St. Mary's participates in the CISVA Spelling Bee competition. It is open to students from grades 4 to 7. Once the words have been assigned, a preliminary Written Bee is given. From there the top four students from each grade participate in an in house Oral Bee in front of their peers. The winner of the Oral Bee is then sent to represent St. Mary's at the CISVA Spelling Bee.



## **Student Network**

St. Mary's School offers a Student Mentor program for students in grades one through seven. The Student Mentors are comprised of 5 Executive Members and 2 Class Ambassadors from each grade one through seven. Elections for the mentor positions are held in the spring and for class ambassadors in the fall.

Student Mentors and Class Ambassadors demonstrate positive leadership and are elected to represent the students in the community and online, attend Student Body meetings, lead prayer at the end of the day and monthly assemblies, and organize student-led fundraisers and Out-of-Uniform Days for the community of St. Mary's.

## **Peer Helpers**

Students in Grades 6-7 can apply to become Peer Helpers on the playground during lunch recess breaks. Students will attend training sessions and wear vests to identify them as helpers. They will be assigned shifts on a rotating schedule.

### **Role of a Peer Helper:**

- Support peers on the playground using Second Step strategies
- Encourage participation in games
- Listen and communicate effectively
- Serve as role models
- Be approachable and offer help when needed
- Report concerns to supervising adults
- Help create a happy and safe playground environment

### **Criteria:**

- Attentive and responsible
- Good communication skills
- Reliable in remembering assigned shifts
- Able to express different perspectives when solving problems

## **VIII. Volunteerism**

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### **Parent Participation Program**

Parental co-operation and support is vital at St. Mary's. Involving parents in the school community to engage with their children's learning and to integrate their faith into the parish community is a priority.

Parents have a range of opportunities to contribute their knowledge, skills and talents to support school goals and to promote fundamental teachings of Catholic Education. There will be



flexibility with parent work schedules and parent participation hours. The PEC offers two options for participation.

- 1) No Participation (NP) – \$800 monetary contribution. In lieu of participation, an amount \$800 shall be debited from your bank account and credited to the school on September 15.
- 2) Full Participation (FP) - minimum 40 hours participation and no fee. Parents who choose this option are required to log into the volunteer website (Parent Portal) to record, report, and track their completed hours. <http://www.stmary.bc.ca/volunteer.php>

Note: We make every effort to offer a variety of opportunities for parents to complete their participation hours. If you are unable to meet the minimum annual requirement, a financial contribution may be required to fulfill your participation commitment.

- 3) New Families only - Your account set-up in the OnVolunteers portal will be completed by school administration. You will be notified by email once your account is created.

Parents can choose a maximum of 1 Recurring Role (September-June commitment) or apply for several flexible volunteer positions directly from our volunteer website throughout the school year until their required hours are met.

### **Safety Reminders While Volunteering**

We kindly remind all parents who are volunteering in any capacity that additional children may not accompany you while you are on duty. To ensure the safety and well-being of all students, volunteers must be able to give their full attention to the task at hand. Having younger siblings or other children present creates distractions and can compromise supervision, especially during high-risk responsibilities such as traffic duty.

Please ensure your flexible role hours are entered onto the website by June 1. All parents are eligible to apply to volunteer on school field trips, but they are coordinated directly with the classroom teacher.

A Criminal Record Check (CRC) is required for most positions involving the supervision of children and/or inside the school building.

Link to apply for CRC: <https://justice.gov.bc.ca/criminalrecordcheck>

Organizational Access Code: **GYE4HTFPTS**

Free for St. Mary's Parents (Valid for 5 years upon office notification/approval)

CRC Clearance Letter is sent to school Administrator

**NO SHOW Policy and Penalties for late** or absence from shifts.

A penalty of “2x the Duration of the Scheduled Shift” will be added to the **Target Hours** needed or translated into a penalty fee in the equivalent **Required Hours Value** section (valued at \$20/hour)





Volunteer hours are reviewed in June to confirm parents have met their 40-hour target commitment. No amount will be owing if all target hours are completed. If hours are owing, a letter will be sent home to parents indicating the balance due AND notification will be emailed at least (10) days before the debit is scheduled to be taken from your account (see Permission to use EFT payment form)

### 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, you can notify the office by email or through the school App with the reason. Please ensure a parent/guardian or responsible adult signs them out.

Playground supervision begins at 8:30 a.m. each morning. After-school supervision is provided for 10 minutes. Please ensure that your child is picked up or has left for home by 3:10 p.m. If you will be delayed, please phone the school office. ***Students who are not picked up at this time may be placed in the After School Club, and parents will be charged a drop-in fee of \$20.***

We offer a SAINTS Before & After School Club service for parents who require early drop off or a late pick up time. Registration is available online through a link.

**Students who are not picked up on time after school or following a sports practice or home game will be placed in the club. A \$20 drop-in fee will be charged.**

## IX. Codes of Conduct

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St. Mary's School follows the policies set out by the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese (CISVA). These policies can be found on the [CISVA website](#). Our school's code of conduct is Reverence, Respect, and Responsibility. We have adopted the Dominican *Virtues in Practice* program. This program helps children grow closer to God by imitating the virtues of the saints.

### Student Code of Conduct

The staff at St. Mary's 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, ability levels, 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 display Reverence, Respect and Responsibility.

- Be an example of God's loving presence in your thoughts, words, and actions.
- Treat each other and staff members with respect
- Respect the property of others
- Follow school guidelines regarding behavior and safety
- Take responsibility for his/her own learning



The aim of the school is to encourage the development of self-discipline. Students are expected to behave in a respectful and responsible manner. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with promptly. Expectations for students are consistent but consequences may vary depending on the age of the student, the offense, and the circumstances. Communication with parents and their support is critical. The monitoring of unacceptable behavior is primarily the responsibility of the teacher directly involved with the student. He/she will take whatever steps are deemed necessary to deal with the specific situation in a manner most suitable for the individual concerned. If the teacher cannot effect a change in the student's pattern of behavior the student will be referred to the Principal or Vice-Principal. The matter will be reported to parents either verbally or in writing. It is the responsibility of the parent to support the school in disciplinary matters.

You will be asked to cooperate with the school in finding ways to encourage the student to behave in an appropriate manner. If warranted, a plan will be put in place by the school team. If the unacceptable behavior persists, despite parent and school intervention, the student may be placed on a school suspension as outlined by [CISVA Policy 426](#).

Certain **serious** student behaviours, such as fighting, theft, vandalism, willful disobedience or disrespect, bullying, purposeful and serious injury to the character or person of others, will result in a suspension for the student for a specific period of time under the CISVA policy of suspension and expulsion at the discretion of the principal. 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 re-admitted to classes without a parent/teacher/principal conference. If the Principal concludes a student's behaviour may warrant expulsion, the Parish Education Committee and Superintendent will meet to consider such action.

## **Bullying Prevention**

### [CISVA Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy 408](#)

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. 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 prevent and address bullying

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 the value of the individual person and the qualities of compassion, empathy, 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 through our Second Step Program.
- Provide support for teachers and parents through information seminars and workshops.

### Action

- The school will investigate all reports of peer conflict, mean behavior, and bullying
- Records of reports will be maintained by school staff.
- With confirmed cases of bullying, the school will work with the parents and the students involved to resolve and change behaviour where all students feel safe and respected.
- The school will access community resources designed to assist families and schools as needed.
- Resistance to behaviour change and repeated offences may lead to suspension.
- Continued bullying by a student may lead to expulsion.

### An Excerpt from the CISVA Anti-bullying Policy (Date revision November 1, 2019)

#### Definition

*Bullying is a pattern of repeated actions targeted at a person in a deliberate manner, intended to reduce the perceived power that person has over the situation or to harm that person. All acts of bullying have the characteristics of being dehumanizing, intimidating, humiliating, threatening, and evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress in the person being targeted. Bullying encompasses a wide range of behaviours in a relationship between a dominant and a less dominant person or group where:*

- *an imbalance of the perceived power is manifest through aggressive actions*
- *physical or psychological (verbal and social) abuse occurs*
- *negative interactions occur directly (face-to-face) or indirectly (online, gossip, exclusion)*
- *negative actions occur with intent to harm, which can include some or all of the following:*
  - a) *physical actions such as punching, kicking, biting and initiating unwanted sexual touching, can hurt the person's body, damage belongings or make the person feel badly about himself or herself;*



- b) *verbal actions such as threats, name calling, insults, racial and cultural slurs or inappropriate jokes and/or comments; this includes sexual harassment; that is, when a person or group hurts another person by taunting or discussing sensitive sexual issues, creating sexual rumours or messages, and making derogatory comments on a person's perceived sexual identity;*
- c) *social exclusion such as spreading rumours, ignoring, gossiping, excluding.*
  - *negative actions are repeated and/or the intensity or the duration of the actions establishes the bully's dominance over the person. The person thus becomes a victim of injustice.*
  - *information and communication technologies are used physically to threaten, verbally harass or socially exclude an individual or group.*

### **Family Statement of Commitment Annex**

Partners (home, school, parish) in Catholic Education 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.

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

#### **Family Statement of Commitment\***

1. 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 Catholic Independent Schools of Vancouver Archdiocese.
2. All students are required to participate in our religious education curricular and co-curricular programs including liturgical celebrations, retreats, prayer, etc.
3. Parents/Guardians are expected to support the teachings on faith and morals in the Christian Education Program and participate in the program as required by the school.
4. All students are expected to attend school on a regular basis and full participation in all aspects of the educational program of the school are required of every student. Each student is expected to strive toward the development of his/her full potential.
5. Each family is expected to support and participate in the fund-raising activities of the parish/school. In this way, each family shares in the responsibility of educating our students.
6. Each student is expected to know and follow school policies on behaviour, and each parent/guardian is expected to review these policies with their own child.
7. Parents/guardians are expected to support their student's educational program. Parents/guardians agree to consult with that teacher, Principal or other school staff member with respect to the student's educational program as required.



8. Parents/Guardians are expected to attend at least one orientation session which will focus on the philosophy and goals of our school.
9. Parents/Guardians agree to accept the responsibility for the cost of tuition, supplies and other school activities.
10. If applicable (see Schedule A below), each parent/ guardian agrees to:
  - a. Provide the school with complete and updated versions of any orders or agreements
    - i Affecting, restricting or prohibiting a parent/ guardian's ability to access the school or a student attending the school
    - ii Impacting a parent/ guardian's authority over decision making in relation to a student's education
    - iii Ensure that any updates to these orders are given to the school as they occur
  - b. Minimize and void any disruption to the school associated with the implementation of those orders or agreements, and
  - c. Comply with the terms of any orders or agreements
11. 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.

*\*Statements from CISVA Policy 411 Annex-A Family Statement of Commitment*

If any of these conditions are not met, the school reserves the right to refuse admission or remove the student from the school.

### **Parent Code of Conduct**

According to the [CISVA Policy of the Parent, Guardian Code of Conduct 412](#), Parents are expected to (but not limited to):

- a. 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 Policy 411 - Family Statement of Commitment).
- b. Be supportive of the mission of the Catholic Church and supportive of the religious educational programs of the school.
- c. Respect the decision-making of school administration and the Education Committee.
- d. Respect the rights and dignity of all persons in the parish/school community at all times.
- e. 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.



- f. 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.
- g. Show an active interest in their child's school work and progress as well as attend required meetings (Sacramental meetings, Parent Support Evenings (Sexuality and Your Child, Human Growth and Development), student progress interviews/conferences etc.).
- h. Ensure that their child attends school regularly, is on time and is prepared.
- i. Work cooperatively with teachers in all areas of their child's school life including academic or disciplinary issues.
- j. Be familiar with and abide by the school's codes of conduct, policies and rules (i.e. uniforms, internet use, traffic safety on school grounds, etc.)
- k. Take concerns to the appropriate person(s). Follow the complaints procedure as provided in CISVA policy 302 – Major Complaints.
- l. Avoid involvement in rumours and dissemination of rumours.
- m. Build bridges of acceptance and understanding among the different cultures represented in the school community.

### **General School Administration**

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

### **Communication and Concerns**

If your child is having problems at home, in the classroom, or on the playground, please let your teacher know as soon as possible.

The line of communication is:

1. Contact your child's teacher to set up an appointment. You can contact your child's teacher by leaving a phone message, or you can contact the teacher more directly through his or her school email. Please allow 1-2 school days for the teacher to respond.
2. Speak to the Principal if the problem involves the school at large, or a resolution was not found in the first step.
3. If you need to pursue your concerns further, refer to the [CISVA Major Complaints Policy 302](#).

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



## X. Information Technology

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St. Mary's integrates the use of Information Technology into many aspects of school life. Classes are equipped with Interactive Whiteboards and students have access to a variety of devices such as laptops, tablets, and streaming devices to enhance their learning. All of our students have accounts with IXL to compliment the math and language arts curriculum and the primary grades use Reading A-Z to assist students in reading fluency at home and school. We not only support informing our parents through email, but have also developed a widely followed social media access through the use of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

You can follow us at:

**Facebook** @smsaints604

**smsaints604Twitter and Instagram** @smsaints604

#wearesaints

St. Mary's School App available in iTunes, Window's Store, and Google Play

### Internet

Students all have access to our server within our Google Workspace for Education under the domain of stmary.bc.ca. These emails provide them with storage for school work and Google Suite for Education. These emails are internally managed. Students are taught to use the internet responsibility and will lose their privileges if found not following acceptable use rules.

Parents provide permission in the registration package to post student's work and photos on our website. In the spirit of respect and privacy, if parents or family members wish to share images that include students other than their own, they must seek permission from the respective parent or guardian.

### Personal Digital Devices and School-based Technology

The use of school-based technology has the potential for positive communication and enhanced student learning. Along with these benefits come associated risks and concerns, and thus all digital devices are owned regulated by the school.

The use of school-based technology a school is a privilege, not a right. This privilege may be revoked when it is shown to have been willfully abused.

Personal Digital Devices (PDDs) 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.

PDDs 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.

PDDs include but are not limited to laptops, phones, tablet computers, gaming devices, electronic toys, wearable technology such as glasses, watches, and cameras.

To promote respect and dignity of all members of the school community and enhance student achievement and safety, the use of a personal digital devices (PDDs) by students is strictly prohibited in the school or during school related activities such as retreats, field trips, and sports events. If parents want their children to have these for use before arriving on the school grounds or after leaving the school grounds, they may do so.

Students choosing to use these items while at school, - despite school rules to the contrary - risk having the item confiscated and returned at a date/time set forth by the principal. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen items.

### **Telephone Use**

As our phone is a business phone, we need to have it free for important incoming and outgoing calls. We encourage the students to show responsibility by letting you know ahead of time their scheduled practice times for sports, etc. If practices are changed at the last minute, we will allow the children to inform you. We will not allow calls home to seek permission to go to a friend's home after school. Such arrangements must be made ahead of time.

If an emergency situation arises where you need to get a message to your child or his/her teacher, please call the school and leave your message with the school. **If you call during school hours and the matter is an emergency and you get the voicemail, please hang up and try again until you get through.**





## XI. Financial

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### Programs and Clubs -- Fundraisers and Donations

#### Fundraising

As a Group 1 Independent School, St. Mary's receives 50% of the provincial education grant for operational funds. (e.g. teaching resources & supplies, salaries, maintenance). Our school raises the remaining 50% through tuition, parish subsidy and fundraising.

Every family plays a vital role in supporting our students by helping raise funds for the school. This year, we're excited to focus on a cause that has been close to our hearts for the past two years: acquiring a new school bus. Your generous contributions will bring us closer to this important goal! Throughout the year, there will be various opportunities to support our efforts, whether through pledges, purchases, or selling items.

#### St. Mary's Parish Building Fund

We participate in a variety of capital fundraisers to help support the St. Mary's Parish Building Fund. Our current school building has served us well but is now nearing the end of its effective life. To continue providing the best academic education rooted in faith and virtue, we must create a new, larger and more modern school building that meets the needs of today's students and generations to come. The time to act is now. The school has initiated a voluntary Building Fund Pledge form to be distributed with the registration and re-registration package. Your contribution, of any size, will allow us to meet the anticipated start-up costs and break ground. As past generations build and paid for our church, school, rectory and grounds, it is now our turn to pass on these gifts and build a great legacy for the future of St. Mary's. To find out more on how you can help, download our form from our website. Thank you for your generosity.

#### Tuition Rates

Tuition rates are updated each year based on the Category One, one child rate range mandated by CISVA. If you are accepted into the school, you will be required to sign up for Direct Withdrawal for your monthly Tuition Fees. Student Activity Fees will be paid upon acceptance as a deposit. Families who take their children on extended holidays during the school year, and thereby not qualify for full government grant, will be expected to reimburse the school for the amount lost.

#### 2025-2026 Tuition Rates

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
	Regular Parishioner	Non-Parishioner	Non-Catholic
One Child	\$449	\$559	\$699
Two Children	\$808	\$1034	\$1328



Three Children	\$952	\$1224	\$1580
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*Excludes Registration, Uniform and Activity fees.*

### **Category 1: St. Mary's Parishioners**

- Your family members are registered parishioners of St. Mary's Parish
- Your family regularly attends the Parish liturgical celebration (Mass/Sacraments)
- You regularly use the Parish Sunday Envelope program (minimum of **35** times per calendar year).

*Note: Families who use the online donation option are still required to use envelopes and make them "online giving"*

### **Category 2: Non-Parishioners**

- Catholic families who belong to another parish but have children in St. Mary's School, or all other Catholic families who do not meet Category 1 requirements.

### **Category 3: Non-Catholics**

### **2026-2027 Tuition Rates**

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
	Regular Parishioner	Non-Parishioner	Non-Catholic
One Child	\$480	\$600	\$768
Two Children	\$864	\$1100	\$1459
Three Children	\$1018	\$1314	\$1736

### **International Rates**

Please call the office at 604-437-1312 for current rates.

### **Non-payment of Fees**

In the event there are fees in arrears related to school expenses from the current year, re-registration for the following year will not be accepted until the amount in arrears has been paid in full. A penalty of \$35.00 will be levied for all NSF payments.

### **Financial Difficulty**

Special consideration for tuition if required will be discussed during your interview.



## **XII. Accessibility in St. Mary's School**

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At St. Mary's School, we recognize the importance of accessibility, not only for individuals with disabilities but for the benefit of the entire school community. We are committed to providing a learning and working environment that supports all students, staff, and community members.

### **Accessible B.C. Act**

The Accessible British Columbia Regulation, under the Accessible British Columbia Act, came into force on September 1, 2022. The goal of the act is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and involve them in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to their full participation in the life of the province.

#### [Legislation – Accessible BC Act](#)

#### [Regulation – Accessible BC Act](#)

#### [Accessibility Legislation Plain Language Summary](#)

### **Important Definitions from the Accessible B.C. Act:**

1. **Disability:** An inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.
2. **Barrier:** Anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with an impairment.
3. **Impairment:** A physical, sensory, mental, intellectual, or cognitive impairment, which is permanent, temporary, or episodic.

### **Implementation of the Accessible BC Regulation**

1. **Accessibility Committee:** The Catholic Independent Schools Vancouver Archdiocese (CISVA) began the process of establishing an accessibility committee in June 2023. The committee is currently made up of 4 individuals and was registered in October 2023. The committee, in consultation with CISVA schools, developed an accessibility plan for CISVA Schools. Individual schools will also provide unique feedback into the plan.

### **Accessibility Plan (Plan and forms available on website)**

The St. Mary's Accessibility Plan outlines our commitment to accessibility and the actions in our Three-Year Accessibility Plan for 2023-26.



## **St. Mary's Accessibility Plan**

Feedback about the Accessibility Plan may be made by completing the Accessibility Feedback form

### **Accessibility Plan Feedback**

#### **Mechanism for Reporting Accessibility Accomplishments and Barriers**

We have developed a form to provide input about individual accessibility accomplishments and barriers at our school. The feedback is reviewed throughout the year and is taken into consideration for future versions of the plan.

### **Report an Accessibility Accomplishment or Barrier**

#### **Accessibility Survey**

#### **Call for Committee Members Form**

Anyone interested in serving on the CISVA Accessibility Committee is encouraged to apply. Please submit completed application forms via email to Nick Schneider at the CISVA Accessibility Committee [accessibilitycommittee@cisva.bc.ca](mailto:accessibilitycommittee@cisva.bc.ca).

### **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.