

# **St. Dominic Catholic Elementary School**



## **School Handbook**



EDMONTON  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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## **Absences:**

Parents are asked to contact the school office if your child will be absent from school. In the event that the school is not notified, student contact information that is on file will be used to contact the home. It is extremely important that the school is notified of changes to this contact information (i.e. emergency contacts, work contacts, home contacts).

## **Access To Building and Security:**

The front door is open at 8:23 a.m. Outdoor supervision begins at 8:10 a.m. Please do not bring your child to school prior to this time as there will not be school supervision present. We are asking parents to not enter beyond the front doorway without signing in with our secretary. Permission and subsequent visitor tags for parents and other visitors must be approved by the office first.

## **Agenda Book: Grades 1-6**

It takes the cooperation of everyone to successfully use the agenda book. The following are some responsibilities of individuals involved with the day-to-day use of the agenda book.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Makes sure that assignments are written in agenda book.
- Take agenda book home each night.
- Complete assigned work by due date.
- Ask teacher for clarification if an assignment is not understood.
- Review school handbook with your parents.
- Record the Home Reading/Homework assignments for each day.
- Indicate any key announcements that need to be communicated home for any given day.

### **Parent Responsibilities:**

- Review agenda book with your child.
- Check agenda book regularly for assignments, test quiz dates and notes.
- Communicate relevant information to teacher via agenda, email or phone call
- Initial agenda book each night after students have completed assigned work. Assist child when necessary.

### **Teacher Responsibilities:**

- Ensure that assignments and test dates are clearly written on the board.
- Review agenda book with students.
- Check books for parent signatures.
- Give students time to enter assignments.
- Arrange for periodic reinforcement of appropriate agenda book use.
- Communicate relevant information to parents.

## **Attendance:**

Student attendance is taken in the morning and afternoon. Students attending school is a legal requirement of all students. To ensure accurate tracking of all students, an individual who arrives after the bell at registration must obtain a late stamp from the office. Parents are asked to call the office if a child will be late or absent.

## **Bicycles:**

Bicycles are to be locked in the racks that are provided in the playground and they shall be left alone until dismissal. Bicycles are left at the school at the student's own risk. The school does not take responsibility for theft or damage. By law and in consideration for their own safety, students must wear bicycle helmets.

## **Birthdays:**

Birthdays are a special event in a child's life. In recognition of this fact, St. Dominic School announces birthdays during our regular morning announcements and students also receive a Birthday Treat (i.e. pencil, sticker). Birthdays that fall on weekends and holidays are also recognized either immediately before OR after the holiday. Our Summer birthdays are announced starting in June. Some parents may wish to bring a snack for their child's class: These should be prepackaged, easy to distribute and consume.

## **Bullying:**

\*\*\*Please See Student Code of Conduct Policy On This Website for more specific information related to Bullying (Click [HERE](#)) or contact the school.

## **Care of School Property:**

Students registered at St. Dominic Catholic School must return all school owned, borrowed materials in a satisfactory condition. Additionally, students while utilizing school facilities and amenities (i.e. gymnasium, physical education equipment, science equipment, computers, school furniture, technology, washroom facilities) must do so in a respectful manner.

Loss or damage of school material or property, through student negligence or improper conduct, is the responsibility of the student. Failure to observe this responsibility could result in the student being assessed the cost of repair or replacement.

## Cell Phone Use:

We are asking that students NOT bring cell phones to school.

- If parents would like their child to bring a cell phone for purposes of emergency communication to and from school, this choice is at the family's own risk.

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones.

- If parents choose to send their child with a cellphone, this phone must remain off and in their child's backpack all day (i.e. it cannot be taken outside at lunch or recess).
- Students cannot bring cell phones on field trips.
- Students while on school property before and afterschool, should not be taking photos or videos.

## Communication: Parental Concerns:

The Edmonton Catholic School District and St. Dominic Catholic School are committed to working cooperatively with our parent community.

We recognize at times there may be differences in understanding, interpretation and opinion. The district has a protocol for addressing classroom and school concerns. All parties in a conflict situation must recognize and respect this protocol, and more specifically the principle of **"first contact."** This means that the person who has the concern, has a responsibility to begin addressing the concern directly with those persons with whom they have the concern **before** taking their concern elsewhere.

On the basis of the principle of **"first contact"** parents must address concerns directly to teachers before raising these concerns with the school administration or Catholic Education Services staff, when their concerns are about their child's teacher, program, and/or program support.

Likewise, if a parent has a concern about the school administration, the parent is expected to deal with that concern with the school administration first, before raising these concerns with the Superintendent of Schools.

If, in the view of the complainant, the ruling of the school principal is unacceptable, the complainant may address his/her concern(s) to the Superintendent of Schools (School Operations Services).

## Counselling:

Although St. Dominic School does not have a school-based counsellor, to supplement assistance that may be provided by staff, referrals to outside agencies may be made. We also have access to counselling services in crisis situations. Please contact the school if assistance is required. We would be happy to provide direction.

## **Curriculum:**

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 follow the approved *Program of Studies* as outlined by Alberta Education. In September, parents are invited to attend “Meet the Staff Night” where each teacher reviews the curriculum areas and goals to be achieved during the school year. Alberta Education publishes a [curriculum handbooks](#).

## **Discipline:**

The St. Dominic Catholic School Community recognizes the need for a learning environment that is well-organized and safe. It is everyone’s responsibility to provide a non-threatening Christian environment within which all students and staff are able to work to their full potential. It is important that all individuals respect the dignity and self-worth of other members in our school community.

### **Process for Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour**

If problem behaviour occurs, the school will follow a simple step procedure.

Minor offences are best dealt with by the teacher/supervisor at the scene.

The supervisor helps the student to identify the behaviour and notifies the classroom teacher. The teacher and student discuss ways to avoid the behaviour in the future.

If the negative behaviour continues, parents may be asked to become involved in helping the teacher to resolve the situation.

In the case of major offenses, or when repeated attempts by a student, parent, and teacher to resolve the situation have not been successful, the administration will be asked to provide assistance. Major offences are those behaviours which endanger the safety or well-being of self or others, or which cause persistent disruption of the teaching/learning process.

School administration may determine that serious consequences are required. These might include meeting with parents before a student may return to the regular classroom and/or in-school or out-of-school suspension.

\*\*\*Please See Student Code of Conduct Policy on this Website for more information (Click [HERE](#)) or contact the school.

## **Early Departure:**

Parents are asked to notify the office if they are leaving the school early during regular school hours. If a student returns to school or comes back during the day, they must once again check in at the office. A late slip will then be issued to the student. This is for safety and security reasons.

## **Edmonton Catholic Schools:**

Edmonton Catholic Schools provides quality education surrounded by the love and faith of Jesus Christ. Courses in all District schools are taught using the Gospel values of dignity and respect to ensure the best possible learning environment for each child. Catholic education is complete education addressing the needs of the whole child - spiritual, academic, physical, emotional, and social. Visit our website for more information.

## **Emergency Procedures:**

A Division mandated On-site Crisis Management Plan exists within the school. Fire Drill, On Alert and Lock Down practice occurs regularly. Additionally, in the event that an evacuation of the school building is warranted, students and staff would be relocated to the JJ Bowlen School, right across the playground from St. Dominic School.

## **Extra-Curricular**

Students have an opportunity to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities at St. Dominic Catholic School. Please monitor the school Week at a Glance, student agenda book and Swift Messages home for further details.

## **Fees:**

School Fees are to be paid promptly once school is in session. Fees must be paid online through Powerschool, we are unable to take cash through the office. Bus pass fees need to be paid upfront monthly along with fieldtrip fees.

## **Field Trips/Signatures:**

Field trips, tours and out-of-town excursions are school-planned enrichment activities that complement the curriculum. Students are expected to participate. Each teacher is responsible for the organization of field trips taken by the class. Parents will be informed in advance of the field trip as to the nature of the trip and costs involved. An Edmonton Catholic Schools consent form must be signed and completed for each child. Field Trip Forms (and all school signatures for that matter) may only be signed by a parent or legal guardian. Fieldtrips need to be paid online through PowerSchool

## **Footwear:**

Student footwear should be clearly labelled in order to facilitate a prompt return in the event of loss. For cleanliness and safety reasons, each student is asked to have outdoor and indoor footwear. We would ask that students wear inside footwear of the ‘non-scuff’ variety. All footwear must be appropriate and safe.

## **Health Services:**

Alberta Health Services works with schools and community agencies to provide a range of coordinated health and support services for school aged children and their families. Our common goal is to build on the health and education potential of students by providing nursing, rehabilitation, speech and language and dental services in schools. If you have any concerns about your child's health, please talk to your local Public Health Centre.

## **Homework:**

Homework is an extension of the student’s daily activities. The amount of time each student will spend doing homework may vary according to grade, ability, and study habits. Many studies conclude that regularly assigned homework leads to immediate higher academic achievement, as well as to improved study skills and attitudes. Students are advised to have a “homework buddy” that may forward any classroom material and assignments that are missed in the event of an absence. It is strongly recommended that parents engage in their child’s Home Reading Program.

Homework should serve to help a student to:

- complete assignments that the child has been unable to finish at school.
- carry-out “Catch-up” work that may be assigned by the teacher if the child has been absent from school.
- overcome academic difficulties through the assignment of supplemental work.
- encourage motivation in areas of personal interest.
- promote self-reliance and good study habits.
- share his or her progress with parents.
- develop and learn concepts taught

There are many ways parents can help with homework including:

- Providing a quiet, consistent place in which a child may do homework.
- Helping the student organize his or her time for assignments
- Being the “audience” for reading practice and spelling and math drills.
- Checking and signing the student’s agenda book.

## **Indoor Recess:**

Students are encouraged to have games or other activities ready in the event that an indoor recess is required. Lunch Leaders assist in the classrooms and staff members supervise designated indoor areas.

## **Internet Use:**

To ensure appropriate use of the Internet, all St. Dominic Catholic School staff and students must sign the Edmonton Catholic Schools Acceptable Use Policy document prior to accessing the Internet.

## **Legal Custody Agreements and Other Court Documents:**

Please ensure that any court documents that a court has deemed necessary to share with St. Dominic School administration are made available to the school AND are kept up-to-date.

## **Lost and Found:**

Please appropriately label all items of clothing (jackets, shoes, boots, etc.) with your child's name. This will facilitate the prompt return of misplaced items. A lost and found cupboard is located near the music room. Unidentified items will be placed in this area. We encourage students and parents to check this area frequently. Smaller items such as keys/jewelry are normally kept in the office. Unclaimed items will be donated to Goodwill.

## **Lunch Policy:**

All students are welcome to enjoy the privilege of eating lunch at school. Appropriate student behaviour is expected at all times. Students are expected to follow the rules of the lunch supervisors and monitors. Students who stay for lunch are NOT to leave the school property unless a parent or guardian personally meets their child at the school.

## **Medication to Students:**

On occasion we have been asked by parents to ensure their child receives prescribed medication. Please be aware that in order for school staff to do so, parents must complete a "Request For Administration of Medication At School" form and have it signed by their family doctor. The school will administer the medication according to the Doctor's prescription, provide safe, limited access storage, and shall keep a record of each student receiving medication. Please assist us in ensuring that prescribed pills, liquids and inhalers are not casually left in student frequented areas AND please ensure that prescriptions are filled and up-to-date.

### *Medical Alert:*

If your child has a condition that would require special medication, please complete the "Medical Alert" form as accurately as possible. Complete and return it to the school as indicated each year. It is important that you keep us informed of any changes in your child's medical status.

### *Allergies:*

If your child suffers from serious allergies, please notify office personnel so that appropriate preventative measures may be taken.

## **Newsletter - Week at a Glance:**

An electronic weekly newsletter is sent home each week via Swift Messaging. This newsletter contains important information regarding school activities and community events. It is one of our prime instruments for keeping parents informed about school activities. Please watch for the newsletter and keep it as a handy reference.

## **Photography/Video:**

Due to our District FOIP (Freedom of Information and Privacy) Policy, students are asked NOT to take photos of other students OR in the school itself unless permission is first granted. If parents are volunteering on fieldtrips, or are in the school in any capacity, they are asked not to take photographs of students. Staff will take pictures of activities and will share these through our Front Office TV system and on the school's Instagram account.

## **Parent Volunteers:**

We are most grateful for the assistance, time, and talents that parents, and other interested persons in the community, are willing to share with our school. Volunteers can assist the school in a number of areas. Volunteer Permission Forms must be filled out before volunteering may take place. Please contact the school for more details.

## **Parking (Pickup and Drop-off):**

For the safety of all St. Dominic Catholic School, we would ask that parents refrain from picking up and dropping off students from the school parking lot.

There is a pickup/drop-off area in front of the school or on the south side of 144 Ave.

## **Playground/Fields:**

Students are expected to:

- Adhere to a "NBC – No Body Contact" policy whereby students must not lay hands, feet or other body parts on a fellow student. This means no tackle or touch football, contact soccer, etc.
- Use school equipment appropriately and safely and return items borrowed.
- Play safe games that will not harm or potentially endanger themselves or others.
- Gather and play in designated playground areas.
- Stay on school property
- Show consideration for others.
- Attempt to solve playground problems peacefully, using respectful strategies, involving staff when appropriate.

## **School Advisory Council: Parent Advisory Council**

The St. Dominic Catholic School “School Advisory Council” (SAC or PAC) is a collective association of parents, school administrators and staff who seek to work together, through the exchange of ideas, to promote the well-being and effectiveness of the entire school community. The SAC is a means to facilitate cooperation among all parties within the school community. SAC meetings are held once a month. Please contact the school for more details.

## **School Calendar:**

An up-to-date school calendar can be found on our school website.

## **School Celebrations/Ceremonies:**

A number of religious and other celebrations are held during the year. Celebrations may be school-wide or within individual classrooms. Please check our website calendar for dates and times. Attendance by parents is always welcome!

## **School Phone:**

Students require permission from their homeroom teacher to use the phone. This use is for emergency or illness purposes (not for school or social activities). After-school activities must be arranged outside of school.

## **St. Dominic Standards of Student Dress:**

### *Philosophy*

In Edmonton Catholic Schools, students are expected to dress in a manner that honors the dignity of the human person, who was created in the image of God, and that supports an inclusive, welcoming, caring, respectful, safe, and Catholic learning environment that promotes the well-being of all. Each school in the Division will have a Standards of Student Dress for their community. Understanding that it is not possible to list all the specific types of acceptable and unacceptable student dress, the purpose of establishing Standards of Student Dress is to empower students to make appropriate choices

Students are expected to dress in a manner which is appropriate for the school day or for any school sponsored event. All students shall come to school dressed in a comfortable manner that allows them to be authentically who they are, while also meeting the standards in this document.

Students who do not meet the Standards of Student Dress will be required by the school principal or their designate to meet the standards before participating in school activities. Schools will facilitate the enabling of students to meet the standards in such situations whenever possible.

Student dress must maintain personal safety and the safety of the school community. Students are not permitted to wear articles of clothing, jewelry or accessories that indicate or suggest membership in or affiliation with any group or organization that does not support a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe, and Catholic learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

Students are to remove outside footwear upon entry to the school (in both winter and summer). A clean pair of running shoes (non-marking) must be worn inside the school for safety reasons and are required for students to participate in Physical Education classes.

**Students at St. Dominic must wear:**

- A shirt or the equivalent (tops) with fabric in the front, back, and sides under the arms
- Pants or the equivalent (bottoms), and
- Shoes

\*Courses or activities may require specific attire for safety or curriculum purposes (ie: PE, field trips)

**Students at St. Dominic may wear, as long as they are in alignment with this standard's philosophy:**

- Headwear that is specifically required for religious observance (i.e. hijab, yarmulke, turban) or for medical reasons in consultation with the principal
- Illustrative examples of tops: t-shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters, tank tops
- Illustrative examples of bottoms: jeans, leggings, sweatpants, skirts, dresses, shorts
- For outdoor recess, hats and other headwear must allow the face to be visible to staff, and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff. Hoodies must allow the face and ears to be visible to school staff. Hats and hoodies should not be worn in school.
- Clothing with logos or text on it that is positive in nature, respectful, or implies or encourage a healthy lifestyle/choice for children and youth.

**Students at St. Dominic may not wear:**

- Articles of clothing, jewellery or accessories that indicate or suggest membership in or affiliation with any group or organization that does not support a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe, and Catholic learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging
- Articles of clothing that discriminate based on age, religion, gender, gender identity/expression, body type, race, ability, and socio-economic status
- Articles of clothing with words or text that depict or imply hate, violence, profanity, drugs/drug use, alcohol/alcohol use, sexual activity, or criminal activity.

**Students who have not met the standard, as outlined above, will be addressed in the following manner:**

- At the first possible opportunity for a private conversation, the staff member who has identified the issue will speak to the student about the concern in a manner that respects their privacy and dignity. Care will be taken to avoid "shaming" or statements of bias
- The student will be presented with options to bring them into closer alignment with the standard for the remainder of the school day such as:

- Wearing another article of their own clothing which they have at school that is in alignment with the standard
- Contacting a parent or guardian to bring in an article of clothing that is in alignment with the standard
- Borrowing an article of clothing from a friend that is in alignment with the standard
- Where possible, students should not be required to wear school owned replacement garments and should never be required to wear specific garments as a disciplinary measure.

## **Student Records:**

Student records of attendance, achievement, program special services, promotion and vital statistics are kept by the school. These records are maintained in strictest confidence to respect the “worth and dignity” of each student.

Parents/guardians have a right to be informed as to the content of the educational record and to receive an interpretation, when necessary, of such records by qualified school staff. You may obtain access to your child’s record through an administrator. All procedures are in keeping with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

## **Valuables:**

Children should refrain from bringing money and expensive personal items to school. Students should never leave money and valuables on or in their desks, in their coat pockets, in boot rooms or back packs.

Students should not bring articles such as electronic devices, iPhones/iPads, MP3 players, games (i.e. Gameboys), cell phones and similar items.

We strongly suggest that articles and items with personal meaning be kept at home. The school cannot be held responsible for damage or loss.

## **Visitors to the School:**

All visitors are required to report to the school office through the front doors. Visitors, which include parents, are not to see staff during class time. Normally, visitors should wait until a teacher is free. Access to teachers by parents is for the purpose of discussing the impact of learning on a child’s program, progress, and behaviour.

## **Weather and Dress:**

If the weather is inclement students will be kept indoors during recess and noon hour. This policy will be followed when:

- a) The temperature is -20 C or colder
- b) There are periods of continuous rainfall
- c) Playground conditions are hazardous (i.e. wet, slippery)

Students are encouraged to have games or other activities ready for indoor recess. Lunch Leaders assist in the classrooms and staff members supervise designated indoor areas.

