

# John Knox Christian School

# STUDENT & FAMILY

## HANDBOOK 2012-13



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# WELCOME TO JOHN KNOX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

This School Handbook is designed to help you get acquainted with the routines of life at our school. There are many routines, procedures and guidelines in running a school and we hope this will help you become acquainted with how we do things here at JKCS!

At JKCS we strive to foster positive and mutually supportive relationships between home and school. It is our hope this handbook will provide you with material that is helpful and informative. Please contact the school if you still have questions or concerns after reviewing this handbook.

This school is rooted in a desire to help students love and serve our God. We invite you to partner with us to maintain a spirit of Christian kindness and cooperation.



Please note that JKCS is a nut-free school. Please take care when packing lunches that all items do not contain nuts or traces of nuts. Thanks for helping make JKCS a safer place for all students.



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**OUR MISSION:** John Knox Christian School provides Christ-centred quality elementary education for children of believers to equip them for a life of praise and service to God through dedicated teachers, parents and supporting community.

**OUR VISION:** John Knox Christian School is a prayerful, thriving, energetic school community where a Christ-centred education equips our students to lead a life of Christian service.

### **OUR CORE VALUES:**

- God is sovereign over all and is Creator of all reality. All creation is to bring glory to Him.
- All knowledge of and instruction in truth begins and ends with Him.
- Jesus Christ, the son of God, who has redeemed creation and has reconciled humanity to God and has reopened the way for a loving relationship with God, is the anointed King over all things and must be acknowledged King in every sphere of our lives.
- God has appointed the parents to be responsible for the training of their child(ren) to the end that God and his glory be central and supreme in the total experience of life.
- The Christian school, as an extension of the home, assists parents by carrying out a God-honouring, God-centred program of instruction.

The statements above flow from the following basic biblical beliefs:

- God is one yet three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- God reveals himself in His Word, the Bible, and in creation.
- Jesus Christ is both truly God and truly man. He died to atone for the sins of all who believe in Him. His resurrection, His reign, and his return are sure. God's gift of salvation through faith in Christ is also sure.
- The Holy Spirit, with His regenerating power, works in the lives of people to become new creatures living joyful, thankful lives in witness of Christ's saving grace and power.

## A MESSAGE TO PARENTS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents,

Welcome to John Knox Christian School, Woodstock. This handbook is meant to provide you with a variety of information pertaining to our school community. Whether you are new to the community, or whether you are already a member of our school, we hope that you will find what you are looking for, as you search through the pages of this publication. Please consider it as one of the ways that you can obtain information about John Knox Christian School. Other ways would be to talk to people already connected to JKCS, and one of the best ways to find out more about our school would be to come by and visit us! We would be happy to show you around, sit down and talk with you, and answer any questions you may have.

This year at JKCS, our school-wide theme is **God's Living Stones - Building for the King** based on 1 Peter 2:5a: *"You are living stones being built into a spiritual house"*. This 'picture' is fitting for followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus was the stone rejected by humankind, but sent by his Father to be the capstone or cornerstone in his spiritual house. God's spiritual house is constructed with a variety of stones, and the unseen stones that anchor the foundation are as important as the ornate stones we see. In the same way, each child of God is valued equally by the Father. Each is wonderfully made. In a special way this year, we at JKCS are able to bless the Builder, give thanks for Jesus the Capstone, and celebrate the gifts of every image-bearing child of God.

Our program of study is conscious of the guidelines and standards set by the Ontario Ministry of Education. However, the program is distinct from the provincial guidelines in its orientation and outlook. Emphasis is placed on teaching Christianly, providing students with the ideas and skills necessary to help them learn to discern how to best serve their Saviour with integrity and joy.

John Knox Christian School has a dedicated and professional staff who work together as a team. The teachers are qualified in the field of education, and they are committed to their work, and to the Lord! The staff strives to provide a rigorous, Christ-centered education, which falls in line with the teachings of both church and home. Together, we want to see children grow academically, socially, and spiritually. Please come by to meet us at JKCS; you are always welcome!

In Christ,

Mr. Michael Meinema, Principal and COO

## INTRODUCING JOHN KNOX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

John Knox Christian School is an independent Christian elementary school. It is operated by the John Knox Christian School Society, which is governed by a school board, elected from the supporting parent and community members. The school is funded by the membership and community members. As an incorporated non-profit organization, the society's purpose is the establishment and maintenance of Christian education in Woodstock and area.

### LONDON DISTRICT CHRISTIAN SECONDARY SCHOOL

We encourage students who graduate from JKCS to continue their education at the London District Secondary School (LDCSS). For more information about LDCSS, please contact the JKCS office or call LDCSS at 519-455-4360.

### JKCS AND THE ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Under the Private Schools' Act, JKCS is designated as an independent school. At JKCS, we voluntarily commit to meet or exceed the curriculum expectations the Ministry of Education guidelines prescribe for elementary schools in Ontario. In September 2000 we obtained recognition and assistance through Community Care Access Centers (CCAC) for students requiring health services.

### AFFILIATIONS

**CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL (CSI):** CSI is a service organization supporting over 400 Christian schools throughout North America. At JKCS, we use CSI-developed curriculum and also participate in their Employee Pension and Insurance Plans.

**CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS CANADA (CSC):** Christian Schools Canada's mandate and mission is 'to develop and promote a Canadian identity, voice and organization for Christian education based on a biblical world-view' and consists of three districts throughout Canada: Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia (SCSBC), The Prairie Center for Christian Education (PCCE), and the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS).

**ONTARIO ALLIANCE OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS (OACS):** The OACS represents over 70 schools (both elementary and secondary) with 700 teachers and 10 000 students throughout the province. The OACS provides guidance and services for administrators, boards, committees and teachers. At JKCS, we are blessed to use the many curriculum resources developed and published by the OACS in our classrooms.



# STUDENT/TEACHER CODE OF CONDUCT

God created us to live in relationship so we can help each other be who He intended us to be. As we seek:

## TO GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, WE:

- speak of God and His Word in respectful ways.
- encourage others and remember to listen and talk to God in whatever we do.
- develop and use the talents and abilities God gave us for serving..

## TO GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THOSE IN AUTHORITY:

We recognize that they are a gift from God to guide us and keep us safe and therefore we:

- respect each other in our speech and conduct.
- obey so no harm is done.
- encourage others to do the same.

## TO GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP TO OTHERS:

We work to honour, respect, and encourage each other. We do this when we:

- address each other properly and kindly
- respect each other's property, body and personal space.
- encourage everyone to feel included.
- use humour for enjoyment, not to harm others.
- apologize and make things right when we have caused harm
- forgive those who hurt us
- ask God to give us strength to care for each other as he cares for us.

## TO GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP TO OUR TASK AT J.K.C.S.:

Since all we do is for the Lord we:

- do our best to participate in lessons and activities to learn about God's creation and use it with respect.

## TO GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CREATION:

We proclaim that the 'earth is the Lord's and everything in it' (Psalm 24:1). Therefore we:

- respect the resources God has blessed us with at school (reduce, recycle and reuse wherever possible).
- accept responsibility for the cleanliness of the school
- care for school property (furniture, books, equipment, and building).
- report any damage done and volunteer to pay for damages if we are responsible.
- enjoy and care for our playground.

*"My child, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart." Proverbs 3:1*

## STAFF AT JOHN KNOX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

All teaching staff are required to have teaching certification. Many are members of the Ontario College of Teachers. All are members of Edifide (professional teachers organization) and all are required to have or to be working towards a Christian School, Teacher's certificate (CSTC). Criminal reference checks are required for all staff members who are in contact with students.

We are grateful to the staff for their dedication to the profession and for their love of the students.

<b>TEACHERS</b>		
Junior Kindergarten	Ms. Stephanie Linker	s_linker@jkcs.on.ca
Senior Kindergarten	Mrs. Linda Westerveld	l_westerveld@jkcs.on.ca
SON Beams	Mrs. Diana Kuipers	d_kuipers@jkcs.on.ca
Grade 1	Mrs. Lesa Racicot	l_racicot@jkcs.on.ca
Grade 2A	Mrs. Tracy Bulthuis Mrs. Lisa Lammers	t_bulthuis@jkcs.on.ca l_lammers@jkcs.on.ca
Grade 2B/3B	Mrs. Erica Shuster	e_shuster@jkcs.on.ca
Grade 3A	Mrs. Jannette Hickey	j_hickey@jkcs.on.ca
Grade 4/5	Mrs. Natalie VanAndel	n_vanandel@jkcs.on.ca
Grade 5/6	Mr. Greg Hiemstra	g_hiemstra@jkcs.on.ca.
Grade 7	Mrs. Helen Ysselstein	h_ysselstein@jkcs.on.ca
Grade 8	Mrs. Carol Verbeek	c_verbeek@jkcs.on.ca
Music	Mrs. Elizabeth Martin	e_martin@jkcs.on.ca
French	Ms. Stephanie Linker	s_linker@jkcs.on.ca
Resource	Mrs. Carol Cole Mrs. Tracy Bulthuis	c_cole@jkcs.on.ca t_bulthuis@jkcs.on.ca
<b>SUPPORT STAFF</b>		
Administrative Assistant	Mrs. Lucille Koopman	office@jkcs.on.ca
Advancement Director	Mrs. Dawn Streutker	admissions@jkcs.on.ca
Educational Assistant	Mrs. Janet VanderSpek	j_vanderspek@jkcs.on.ca
Librarian	Mrs. Janet Vanderspek Mrs. Bernice Huinink-Buiter	j_vanderspek@jkcs.on.ca b_huinink-buiter@jkcs.on.ca
Custodian	Mrs. Brenda Grevers	
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Vice-Principal	Mrs. Bernice Huinink-Buiter	b_huinink-buiter@jkcs.on.ca
Principal & COO	Mr. Michael Meinema	m_meinema@jkcs.on.ca

## COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Good communication between home and school is critical to building community. There are various ways in which we at JKCS seek to communicate between home and school and school and community.

JKCS sends out a weekly newsletter, the **KNOX TALKS**, in paper format with the youngest child in the family. It contains information about school activities, as well as a schedule for homework and tests for the week for each grade. This newsletter can also be found on our website [www.jkcs.on.ca](http://www.jkcs.on.ca) in the News & Events section.

As well, each classroom teacher has a **WIKISPACE** which offers students and parents information about school activities and homework assignments.

In addition, the **INKLINKS** is distributed to families and extended community bi-monthly, which highlights some of the major events taking place at JKCS. It also contains student work from various grades.

Three times a year, the **COMMUNITY LINK** is published. This newsletter is used to promote the school throughout our local community.

The **JKCS WEBSITE** - [www.jkcs.on.ca](http://www.jkcs.on.ca) - offers information about the school, and keeps families up-to-date about the latest events. If school is to be cancelled due to inclement weather, parents are requested to check the website for the latest news.

Daily happenings and photos are also posted on the **JKCS FACEBOOK** page.

# **CURRICULUM AND SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The curriculum at JKCS is centred on God as creator and sustainer of all life, who meaningfully structured the world and all that He has made worthy of study. In our learning, students explore and uncover the wonderful truths and love of Creator and Redeemer God, so they may respond in awe and loving service to him.

In all subject areas, – math, language arts, Bible, Social Studies, science, history, geography, physical education, the arts – teachers and students proclaim "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it." Ps 24:1

Teachers use a variety of curriculum series, textbooks, unit studies and other resources. Curriculum guides for all grade levels are available at the school. They explain the assessment practices as well as the essential questions, learning goals, content and learning activities of the units. Please contact the vice-principal if you are interested in seeing the curriculum materials for a particular grade or unit.

## **ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

It is our goal at JKCS to have students experience assessment and evaluation as blessings - to maximize learning so they become as fully and completely equipped as possible to take their place in the life of service to which God daily calls them.

Assessment as the gathering of information related to teaching and learning, occurs daily throughout the learning experience - FOR learning, AS learning and OF learning. Through assessment FOR learning the teacher monitors progress towards the learning goals, and modifies instruction and feedback as needed in order to further learning. Students become involved in self and peer assessment to further their learning (Assessment AS learning) Assessment OF learning occurs at or near the end of the unit of study and is a summary of the learning at a specific point in time. This can take the form of unit tests, projects, oral presentations, video presentations, etc.

Evaluation is the summary of the assessment information primarily shown through report cards and special academic testing tools.

## **REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Teachers use a variety of techniques to report student progress and social development. Communication between home and school is vital to the child's educational development. Staff members are encouraged to call or email frequently and immediately both to praise and encourage as well as to raise concerns. Daily agendas are also used to communicate concerns or joys between home and school. In senior grades, a monthly packet of quizzes and/or tests may be sent home for the parent(s) to peruse and return signed to the classroom teacher.

## **Student Report Cards**

Interim anecdotal reports are sent home mid-October. Progress report cards for each student are sent home at the end of each term- November, March and June.

## **Parent-Teacher Interviews**

Formal interviews are scheduled annually for all students after the first reporting period and for select students after the second reporting period. Interviews are 15 minutes long, allowing parents to choose a convenient time slot. Parents are urged to take advantage of these interview times to discuss with teachers how to best work together to ensure learning progress for their child.

## **Academic Testing**

The school conducts formal testing of all students from Grades 3-8. The Canadian Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) is administered in alternating years at these grade levels. The testing is planned for October 2012, and is designed to determine if students are receiving basic instruction in language, arts, math and cognitive reasoning skills, as well as to obtain a general indication of how JKCS students compare academically with students in other OACS schools and in schools across Canada. The school uses the results of this testing to adjust programs as needed to ensure that learning goals for each grade are being met. The results of these tests are available to parents and are kept in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR) file.

In the primary grades yearly reading (vocabulary and comprehension) testing is done using the Gates-McGinitie Reading Tests.

## **HOMEWORK AND PROJECT WORK**

Students may be assigned specific learning tasks or complete work that has not been finished in class as homework. Assignments will generally be listed in student agendas and in the weekly newsletter, Knox Talks. The amount of homework assigned is left to the discretion of the classroom teacher. If your child has too much homework, please communicate with the teacher to make adjustments.

From time to time, special projects may be assigned in order to explore topics of interest for students and allow them to demonstrate their personal interest, knowledge and skill in these areas.

## **CLASS TRIPS**

A class trip is a planned, supervised learning experience away from school, for the purpose of enhancing the student's classroom education. These excursions, educational tools to bring added interest and joy to

the learning process, are encouraged when they are a natural extension of the course of studies taught in the classroom. Parental permission is required for student participation in these off-site activities. Oftentimes, parent/guardian supervision is requested; assistance and participation is appreciated.

## **FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR**

With the busy work schedules that families face, there are times when family trips are planned outside of scheduled school holidays. Though not encouraged, we do understand why it occurs. Parents, not the staff, are responsible for work missed during the vacation. Teachers may provide suggestions of work student(s) can do while away, but are not required to provide detailed lesson plans, nor work beyond a general list of topics covered. Teachers are not expected to ensure that the student(s) gets caught up when (s)he returns, but will work with the parent and child to get back on track.

## **RESOURCE PROGRAM**

At JKCS, we strive to meet the needs of all our students. The Learning Resource Program is committed to assisting students whose academic needs cannot be completely met within the regular classroom environment. The goals for this program are as follows:

- To develop an intervention strategy that stresses prevention in the primary years.
- To provide direct service to children outside the classroom, as determined by the specific needs of the child.
- To implement an individual plan for each child which includes specific objectives to be met that year, with activities to reach the learning goals. Additional of-site professional consultation may be advised by the teacher or resource personnel.
- To remain flexible enough to meet each child's and teacher's needs, and to work closely with the classroom teacher to allow for ongoing special education to occur in the classroom as well.

The procedure for entrance into the program involves consultation between parents, classroom teacher(s) and the resource teacher, after which a number of tests may be administered to determine how to best help the child. Once the individual educational plan (IEP) is determined, the student remains in the program until the classroom teacher and the resource teacher, in conjunction with the parent agree that the student leave the program.

The needs of students working above grade level expectations and requiring more academic challenges in various subject areas are presently being met by the classroom teacher(s). At present, there is no structured Enrichment Program at JKCS.

## MUSIC PROGRAM

Music is an integral part of the school community and curriculum at JKCS. Students develop as singers, instrumentalists, and listeners during their elementary school years. We are very blessed at JKCS to have a band program for our students in Grades 6-8. JKCS students learn to use music as a tool for worship and a way to glorify God. Students develop an understanding of this through the study of music and through performance. Our graduates attain high levels of musicianship and enjoy a significant head-start in secondary school music programs.

## LIBRARY

The library at John Knox Christian School plays an important and exciting role in the total educational program of our school. The library is a warm and inviting place, used regularly by our staff and students, and it provides a program of services and resources that meet the needs of the curriculum, and also the interests and abilities of our students. We seek to provide materials which will encourage both spiritual and intellectual growth. Each class has a scheduled library period each week during which the librarian and/or volunteer are available to sign out books and to assist them in finding books and research materials. Books are loaned for a two-week period and it is important that books be returned on time. Overdue notices are distributed every Friday. Students will reimburse the school for lost books.

## COMPUTER AND INTERNET

### **John Knox Christian School Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy (CIAUP)**

**J.K.C.S. Mission Statement:** John Knox Christian School provides Christ-centred quality elementary education for children of believers to equip them for a life of praise and service to God through committed and dedicated teachers, parents and supporting community.

The mission of John Knox Christian School is to provide quality Christian education that challenges each student to fulfill the potential of his/her God-given abilities in service to God and the community. The intention of the Computer and Internet Use Policy is to reflect this mission.

The purpose in providing computer accessibility and Internet access is to equip the students of JKCS with the ability to explore, discern, unfold, understand, develop, and care for God's world. Computer technology and the internet are tools that JCKS can use to bring about growth in knowledge, wisdom, and obedient service to God.

At John Knox Christian School, we believe that technology can be a powerful tool in equipping our students to be agents of change in the Kingdom of God, teaching them to use the tools of their generation to make an impact now and in the future. In addition, we believe that technology can enhance learning, enabling students to access, work with, and communicate knowledge and information.

While there can be hazards associated with the use of technology, JKCS believes that the benefits far outweigh them. We try to take every measure possible to ensure the safe and appropriate use of our technology and the Internet. To complement this, all students, staff and parents will learn about and adhere to established standards of acceptable use when using the school's technology or access to the Internet.

#### **Students at John Knox Christian School will:**

- Use computers in ways that both honour and nurture the well-being of self, others, and God.
- Use computers for educational purposes.
- Use the JKCS network, including access to the Internet, with teacher supervision.
- Use computing and networking facilities and resources in a manner that is consistent with the mission and vision of JKCS and the JKCS Student Code of Conduct.
- Use computers in a way that honours the law and licensing, including copyright laws.
- Protect privacy, be it personal or the privacy of others, including JKCS contact information and login information and passwords.
- Respect the property of JKCS including all hardware and software belonging to the school/others.
- Submit their own work and cite any materials used that is not their own.

#### **Teaching Staff at John Knox Christian School will:**

- Use computers in ways to further honour and nurture the well-being of self, students, and God.
- Supervise students using computers, and teach students to use these resources appropriately.
- Select educationally appropriate web sites for students to view.
- Teach students to think critically about information gathered and evaluate web site content for authenticity.
- Ensure that computer and internet use at JKCS is used appropriately by students.
- Maintain the privacy of students, including password use and login information.
- Protect student information from email and/or web pages.

#### **Electronic Mail ("email") Use**

Email will allow users to communicate with people throughout the world and should be primarily used for educational or administrative purposes. In order to be able to access some programs, students are required to have an email account, so JKCS has provided one for each student at JKCS from grade one through grade 8. This way, should a teacher decide to use email, it can be done here at JKCS with all emails falling under the same format (email addresses) for use in particular software or net-based educational materials.

The two main purposes of the JKCS email system are the conducting of school-business and the educational enhancement that comes from this type of communication. At times, personal use of the JKCS email system is permitted within reason. Each email that is sent from a JKCS address is a reflection on the sender, and it is a reflection on John Knox Christian School. Therefore, JKCS expects that all email users



will conduct themselves accordingly and within the parameters set forth in the JKCS Student Code of Conduct. \* Email that resides within the JKCS network structure is considered the property of JKCS.

**Students and Staff at John Knox Christian School will:**

- Use email in ways that will honour and nurture the well being of self, others and God.
- Use email for educational purposes.
- Protect the privacy of email of both self and others by not sharing passwords.
- Protect the privacy of other's email.
- Report any abuse of email to the principal of JKCS.
- Ensure that language used in email is respectful and appropriate.

John Knox Christian School remains committed to providing the best possible education it can for the students of this school, and technology continues to be an excellent and valuable tool for student programs and progress. The JKCS network is a protected network, which is done to ensure that content seen by staff and students remains in line with the vision and mission of our school. This policy is meant to provide the means by which staff can ensure that the teaching done at John Knox Christian School can be enhanced by technology, and that the learning done by students can be meaningful, current, and honouring. In order to ensure that staff, students, and parents are all in line with this policy and its procedures, an Agreement Form has been created. We will ask that parents, staff and students read through this policy, and that they sign the agreement. This agreement will be signed once, but reviewed annually. (August 2010)

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL DAY

**SCHOOL HOURS:**

8:20	First bell rings
8:25	Classes begin with devotions
10:45 - 11:00	Nutrition Break. Students eat in classrooms
11:00 - 11:25	Recess Break
11:30	Classes resume
1:30 - 1:40	Nutrition Break. Students eat in classrooms
1:40 - 2:05	Recess Break
2:10	Classes resume
3:30	Dismissal

## **DAILY ARRIVAL**

Most students arrive at and leave school via one of the JKCS buses. If parents are bringing students to school, please park in the front parking lot and bring them into the school by the front doors. Students can then make their way outside to the playground until school begins. When picking students up at the end of the day, parents will come into the school building and get their children. The parking lot is a busy place and teachers are instructed to ensure students stay in the school until parents come in to get them. Our commitment is to make sure students arrive and leave the school safely.

## **ATTENDANCE/LATE SLIP**

If your child will be absent for the day, or will arrive late, please call (519-539-1492, fax 519-539-1893) or send an email ([johnknox@execulink.com](mailto:johnknox@execulink.com)) to the school office or send a note with another child to be sent to the school office. Children who arrive late are asked to obtain a late slip from the front office before going to their classroom.

## **CALLING THE SCHOOL**

Parents may call the school at any time to leave messages for teachers or administration. If no one is available to take your call, please leave a voice mail message. Voice mail messages are checked regularly and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

## **BALANCED SCHOOL DAY**

At JKCS, we follow a balanced school day schedule. The day is divided into three sections - two 120 minute teaching segments and the final segment is 80 minutes long. There are two nutrition breaks; one from 10:45 - 11:00 a.m., the other from 1:30 - 2:05 p.m. Students eat their lunches in their classrooms and then enjoy a recess break (11:00 - 11:25 a.m., and 1:40 - 2:05 p.m.) with teacher supervision. Students will be outside for these breaks except in cases of inclement weather, workroom assignment times (Gr 3-8), or when parents send a written note requesting their child stay inside due to illness, etc.

## **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Once students have arrived at school, they may not leave the school grounds at any time unless accompanied by a parent. They must have written parental permission, or a phone call from the parent(s) to leave the school with another person.

## **SCHOOLYARD SUPERVISION**

The schoolyard is supervised before school from 8:00 - 8:20 a.m. by teachers who welcome students off the bus. Teachers and volunteers supervise the playground at recess breaks and then again at 3:40 p.m. as students leave the school to go to their buses.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire Drills are conducted twice a year. As well, students are instructed as to the procedures to follow in the event of a lockdown or other emergency situation.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING**

In the event of weather conditions in which it is deemed unsafe to transport students, school may be cancelled. Notice of cancellations will be made on the school website ([www.jkcs.on.ca](http://www.jkcs.on.ca)), on the school's telephone answering machine (519-539-1492), and on the radio stations 101.3 FM, 104.7 FM & 104.3 FM beginning at 6:15 am. If the JKCS buses are not running due to poor ice or snow conditions, the school will be closed for the day. On fog days, the school is open to receive students at the regular times even if buses are cancelled.

# **SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE**

In September, families are requested to pay an activity fee to cover the cost of class trips (transportation, admission fees, etc). This fee does not include items such as school photos, hot lunches, or other school events. The cost for this year is \$55.00 per student for Grades SK-8, and \$40.00 for students in JK.

## **TEXTBOOK AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

The school supplies all textbooks for students. In the August letter written by the classroom teacher to students, a list is provided for specific supplies needed for the school year.

## **STUDENT HEALTH PROCEDURES**

If a child becomes sick during the day, parents or contact person will be called during the day and arrangements made for the student to be picked up from school. In the event of a more serious injury, the parents or contact person will be called and the student will be immediately taken to a doctor, dentist or hospital. NOTE: If telephone contact cannot be made, but an injury is deemed serious, the student will be taken to the hospital or the nearest medical clinic by school personnel.

## **SCHOOL PHOTOS**

School photos (individual and class) are taken in September of each year. Various packages are made available for purchase.

## **STUDENT USE OF TELEPHONE**

If students need to use a phone to call parents, they are to use the phone in the main office, but only with written permission from their teacher. Students are asked to use the phone for emergency purposes only.

## **EXTENDED ABSENCES**

We ask all parents to consider the matter of attendance when planning family vacations. If students are to be absent for more than a day, please call the teacher to discuss arrangements concerning missed schoolwork. If parents are away and children are staying with another family, please make the office aware of these details.

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

JKCS has a dress code for students, requesting that students dress neatly and modestly. Shorts may be worn, but must be of an appropriate length, with the lower hem reaching a point halfway between the hips and knees. Tops and t-shirts should be modest; tops for students in Grades 4-8 will have sleeves and modest necklines, T-shirt slogans should demonstrate good taste, reflecting a positive message. Cut-offs, torn jeans, muscle shirts, tank tops, shirts that show a bare midriff are not permitted. The school reserves the right to ask students with unacceptable clothing to make necessary changes. Caps and hats may not be worn during assemblies or in class. School polo shirts available for sale in the office will be worn by students representing the school as members of the choir and band.

## **INDOOR SHOES**

To assist in keeping the school clean all students are required to wear indoor, non-scuffing shoes. These shoes are to be left at school and may not be worn outdoors during recess. For reasons of safety and hygiene, students may not walk barefoot in the school, and flip-flops are not acceptable footwear.

## **GYM WEAR**

All students participating in gym activities will wear appropriate shoes with non-marking soles. The athletic shoes worn for physical education classes and for school sports should be sturdy and provide proper support and traction.

All students in Grades 4-8 are required to have a change of clothing (T-shirt and shorts available for purchase from the school office) for physical education classes. These clothes should be kept in a tote or a gym bag that may be left at school and/or brought home for washing.

## **ADMINISTERING MEDICATION AT JKCS**

In order to ensure that JKCS remains a safe school for our students, the following guidelines regulate the administering of medication at the school:

- All prescribed medications that are required to be taken during school hours will be stored in a locked location by the Administrative Assistant in the school office.
- Parents whose children need to take the prescribed medication will supply the Administrative Assistant with the medication.
- The Administrative Assistant will keep a current list of students who need prescription medication. S/he will also keep a schedule of times and dosage.
- The student will come to the office at the proper time to take the medication. The Administrative Assistant will call the student to come if s/he forgets.
- The Administrative Assistant may also give non-prescription medication such as acetaminophen to students, but only to those students whose parents have given permission via the September medical questionnaire or a signed statement giving the school permission to that effect.

## HEAD LICE

Head lice are an occasional problem at school. Contracting head lice has nothing to do with cleanliness but can spread as a result of contact with other children at school. A whole school check for lice is conducted in the first week of September, and if lice are detected, parents will be contacted. If parents find lice in their child's hair, please contact the school as quickly as possible so it can be stopped from spreading. Students are requested to stay home until proper procedures have been followed. The Health Unit and/or a pharmacy have advice on how to treat this condition.

## LOST AND FOUND

A box for Lost and Found items is placed in the hall near the school library. Students/parents are asked to check this regularly for missing items. Smaller and more valuable items like jewellery, watches, and cell phones can be claimed from the school office. When possible, mark clothing with the child's name. Items not claimed will be donated to a community thrift store at the end of every month.

## G.I.F.T.S. PROGRAM

G.I.F.T.S. ("Getting involved for the Students") is a participation program designed to encourage our families to use their gifts in ways that will enhance our children's education. John Knox Christian School is a parent-run school that relies on parental involvement and support. Through volunteers we are able to offer a range of educational activities, meet high standards, and keep tuition affordable. According to recent statistics, informed and involved parents also allow students to perform better academically.

Goals and objectives:

- To encourage parental involvement in school activities
- To better communicate volunteer needs and opportunities
- To better co-ordinate volunteerism throughout the year
- To promote development of new ideas
- Reduce costs through increased participation

Secondary benefits:

- Increased awareness/appreciation of effort required
- Dispel perception of inequity (20% doing 80% of the work).
- Relationship building/ School community
- Increased "ownership" of school
- Matching of gifts and skills with school needs
- Increases the support shown at Membership & PTA Meetings.
- It allows families to plan their participation over the course of the year.
- The children love it

There are many ways to get involved at JKCS. We request that each person look at the talents that God has given them and ask God to show you where He is calling you to be a blessing to our school community. We realize that parents have years when they are not as involved (new parents, parents with new babies, church commitments, etc.) and times when they are able to give more. Points are not difficult to achieve. It is our hope that all parents will want to be involved as they are able.

Each family is expected to contribute 40 hours or 40 points of PARENTAL involvement. First year families and families with their eldest child in SK are required to complete 50% of G.I.F.T.S. program requirements as they become familiar with the school's activities and discover where God is calling them to serve in the school society. Single parent families and families with their eldest child in JK are encouraged to contribute 15 hours (points) or what they are able. All parents are encouraged to do their best to meet this goal. Families who elect not to participate in the program are requested to make a donation of \$500.00 to JKCS. If you feel that the point requirement is unattainable for your family, please write the G.I.F.T.S. committee regarding a possible reduction or exemption. All letters will be confidential, and will be responded to in a timely manner.

Tracking for volunteer hours will be completed by using the G.I.F.T.S. tracking form. This is to be done by parents on an honour system. This form can be found either at the school office or downloaded from the JKCS website. When completed, the Tracking form should be forwarded to the G.I.F.T.S. coordinator, by the end of June at the latest. Points can only be awarded for time volunteered on behalf of parents, not students. There will be no banking of points for the following year.

A GIFTS survey will be distributed in September. Please review each school committee or activity listed on the survey indicating the areas that you are interested in participating in, or match well with your 'gifts' and skills. This survey is a very useful tool for volunteer management. It indicates who has the skills required for a task, or who is interested in various volunteer jobs. It saves a great deal of time when calling for volunteers for different functions or events. It also ensures that you will be asked for something that you are interested in being involved in. This form is just an indication of your areas of interest. It is not a binding commitment. You will still be asked whether you are able to participate when the events come closer.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are important people in our school community. All those who assist in the operation of the school in some way, without being paid for their time are considered volunteers. Volunteers assist teachers and students in class, in library duties, in yard supervision duties, in coaching sports teams, in technology support, with the elective program, and other activities. Volunteers are asked to submit a recent police check which will be kept on file with the principal.

# DISCIPLINE POLICY AT JOHN KNOX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

As image-bearers, the task as students, teachers and parents at JKCS is to live a life of service to God and to each other. Christian love, as found in 1 Corinthians 13, forms the basis for all interaction between the teachers, the parents, and the students. Together we strive to create within the school a wholesome and safe environment where significant learning is possible and God is honoured.

The COO will ensure that the school property is a safe place for learning and for social relationships to occur.

All Ministry policies applicable to JKCS as well as JKCS Board policies will be made known to the educators, parents, and students.

It is the mission of JKCS, as society and board, to invite students into a world and life view that brings them closer to God. Teachers encourage growth for the whole child, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. They strive to invite students into a relationship with God and all those around them. Teachers invite students into a greater awareness of their true status, purpose and destiny, as covenant children, citizens in the Kingdom of Heaven, and citizens in this country of Canada.

A wholesome school atmosphere develops when the roles of teacher, student and parent are fulfilled with mutual love and respect.

(i) Teachers are called to guide, to motivate, to instruct, and to create an environment in which the child will freely want to engage with learning. Teachers will be aware of their moral and legal obligations to implement the Board's policies. Teachers communicate with parents as they deem necessary when their child(ren) have chosen to break community through hurtful, inappropriate activity. Parents may then also be invited to participate in the healing process.

(ii) Students are called to engage with God's world in playful, meaningful ways so that they grow in their ability to problem solve and respond purposefully to their world and its Creator. When they choose to respond in inappropriate and hurtful ways that damage relationships, they will be called back into community through an invitation to dialogue and repair the harm done. In this way students experience forgiveness, restoration, and unconditional love and learn to provide this for others.

(iii) Parents are partners in education. They assist the staff by helping their children understand the importance of developing, maintaining, and restoring caring relationships. Parents communicate with teachers as needed, sharing any concerns their child(ren) may be experiencing.

It is our prayer and desire that JKCS be a school that is safe for all, where growth in student responsibility and self-discipline takes place, where a growing sense of community is built, and an open, transparent process of discipline exists to bring about restoration of relationships.

Commonly it is conflict that gives rise to the need for discipline, that is the need for correction, restitution, and reconciliation. Too often conflict is seen as a negative when instead it presents positive, valuable opportunities for teaching and learning. A key concept in discipline is teaching, and therefore teachers play a vital role in the process. Teachers must provide a high level of support, nurture, and encouragement,



while at the same time making sure that clear, consistent expectations are in place. In this way, students are led to take responsibility for their actions, given opportunity to repair harm/damage that was done, and experience the forgiveness of those affected by his/her actions.

At JKCS, a continuum of Restorative Practices is used to bring about restitution, forgiveness, and reconciliation. These include:

- A) In order to foster a sense of awareness if a student has erred, teachers will use affective statements and questions so that students will come to know what they have done wrong, whom they may have hurt, and what steps can be taken to bring about restitution. This phase usually involves just the one causing harm and the teacher.
- B) If ineffective then teachers will set up small conferences with the student involved in the unacceptable behaviour, including, if appropriate, those affected by the action. The purpose of this meeting is to promote healing and reconciliation by prompting the students to find a solution acceptable to all parties. The teacher leads this conference asking affective questions.
- C) If the behaviour has caused considerable hurt and/or gentle reminders and small conferences have been ineffective, the teacher will call students involved to a more formal large group conference involving those directly involved as well as their peers--the whole class. The intent of this meeting is to expose how all are impacted by the action in question and working together might find ways to provide support and ways for restoration, forgiveness, and reconciliation to be experienced.
- D) In cases where reconciliation has not yet been achieved after using the previous steps, a formal conference is scheduled. Such a conference includes those who have caused the harm and their parent(s), the harmed and their parent(s), and administrator(s), one or two classmates/other adults chosen by each student directly involved, and one or two classmates/other adults chosen by the teacher. This meeting is chaired by the school administration (or outside facilitator), and its purpose is to seek restitution, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Should this goal not be reached and it is not possible for the harm to be repaired, school administrators with Board endorsement will make a final decision that upholds the well-being of all in the school.

While the process is being undertaken, to ensure that further harm is not experienced and enough time is provided so that the well-being of all is ensured and pursued, a teacher/administrator may suggest a temporary loss of privileges, appropriate work assignments, in-school or out of school suspensions, etc. If deemed necessary, parents will be contacted to inform them of their child's involvement in the process.

Through grace, God intervened to restore the broken relationship between Himself and His children. He sent Jesus to be our redeemer, bringing us back to wholeness. So we too at JKCS follow this Biblical truth of restoration in the middle of our brokenness. Turning the wrong into that which is right, while honouring one another as God's children, leads to the rebuilding of relationships and a new beginning. (Spring, 2009)

# JKCS SCHOOL BUS GUIDELINES

We are privileged to have an efficient bus system through which most of our students travel to and from school. Within this setting, we strive to create for our students and the bus drivers a positive, safe environment in which God is honoured.

The COO will ensure that the bus is a safe way for students to travel. Bus drivers have been designated to be responsible for the students while on the bus and it is their task to transport students to and from school safely. Bus patrol students, who are selected by the COO, assist the driver in maintaining safe conditions on the buses.

Students ride only the bus that they have been assigned to by the JKCS Transportation Committee. Any necessary changes in pick-up or drop-off locations are made after dialogue with the Transportation Committee. If students occasionally require a ride on another bus, written permission is granted through the office of the COO.

Since all we do is for the Lord, we strive as a community to respect and love each other as Christ calls us to do. A wholesome bus atmosphere develops when the roles of bus driver, passenger and parent are fulfilled with respect and trust.

- (i) Bus drivers are given responsibility to drive the students to and from school safely.
- (ii) The students (passengers) are responsible for enjoying the ride while providing the best possible environment for the bus drivers to get them to school. When passengers and bus drivers engage in a respectful, meaningful manner with each other, a community of peace and appreciation for each other is ensured. Passengers are also asked to engage with each other in a positive, encouraging manner that will allow for a comfortable, safe ride.
- (iii) Parents are partners in the process of transportation. They assist the bus drivers by helping their children understand the importance of following safe guidelines in riding the bus to and from school. They support the bus-drivers in their task as they guide their child(ren) to respect and honour the driver and fellow passengers.

Following are guidelines school bus passengers follow while riding the school bus:

1. Passengers follow Instructions by the bus drivers relating to bus policy and safety.
2. Passengers are at pick-up location on time, so that the bus will be able to stay on schedule.
3. Passengers are seated in assigned seats.
4. Passengers accept responsibility for the cleanliness of their bus space and do their part in keeping the bus litter-free. For this reason, snacks are eaten before or after the bus ride, and kept in backpacks for the duration of the bus ride.
5. Passengers respect and care for the bus property by engaging in activities that maintain the condition of the bus and by reporting any damages that may have incurred.

6. In warm weather, with permission from the bus driver, windows may be opened. Respect is granted to other vehicles and safety ensured by keeping all objects inside the bus.
7. Passengers engage in quiet, wholesome activities while riding the bus. Appropriate, encouraging language is used in speaking to one another and voices are kept at a noise-level that does not distract the driver from driving safely. The relationship between passenger and bus driver as well as passenger to passenger is one of respect and appreciation.
8. Large sports equipment, musical instruments and /or pets are not transported to and from school by bus.
9. The No Smoking policy is in effect on the buses.

When conflict arises between passengers or between passengers and bus drivers, bus drivers follow the continuum of Restorative Practices to bring about restitution, forgiveness and reconciliation. Bus drivers can at any time involve the administration of the school in the process. (See the Discipline Policy above).

*"Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always." Psalm 105:4*

Notes: