

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2009-2010

St. Mary's Catholic School

"People of Peace"

"We are people of faith in times of doubt; we are people of hope in times of despair; we are people of peace, people of peace, Oh Lord, Your instruments of peace."

St. Mary's School Message

Welcome to St. Mary's Catholic Elementary School. The Ontario Catholic School Graduate expectations proclaim that upon graduation from Catholic Secondary School, our students will be: discerning believers; effective communicators; reflective, creative and holistic thinkers; self directed responsible, lifelong learners; collaborative contributors; caring family members; and responsible citizens. The community of St. Mary's Catholic School strives to provide quality Catholic education within a safe, caring, Christ-centred environment enabling all students to realize their full potential as significant members of the Church and society. Thanks to a dedicated team of educators, a supportive parent community and a close partnership with St. Joseph's Parish, St. Mary's has established a tradition of educational excellence. At St. Mary's, our primary goal as a Catholic School is to support this spiritual development of our students. In our school, the bases for all activities are the gospel values. Religion programs, sacramental preparation, school Masses, faith celebrations, charity fund raising, and student recognition assemblies, collectively create an enriching faith experience. We recognize that one of Christ's most precious blessings was teaching His children the sign of peace.

**"Let us not develop an education that creates in the mind of the student
a hope of becoming rich and having power to dominate.
That does not correspond to the time we live in.
Let us form in the heart of the child and the young person
the lofty ideal of loving,
of preparing ourselves to serve and to give oneself to others.
Anything else would be education for selfishness and we want to escape
the selfishness that is precisely the cause of the great malaise of our society."**

Archbishop Oscar Romero

This student agenda combined with monthly newsletters and information provided by classroom teachers, provides important information regarding school procedures and expectations. With this information parents are better equipped to work in union with school staff to support the safe and healthy development of all children.

We extend a warm welcome to all members of our school community!

St. Mary's Staff

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
1209 Tremaine Ave. South
R.R. #4 Listowel, ON
N4W 3G9
Phone: (519) 291-3000 FAX: 291-1103
Website- <http://hesson.hpcdsb.edu.on.ca>



ST. MARY'S STAFF 2009-2010

Principal	Mr. Dave Cassone
Kindergarten	Ms. Melissa Walker
Grade 1	Mrs. Cathy Buchanan
Grade 2	Mrs. Pamela Haid
Grade 3/4	Mrs. Danielle Peters
Grade 2/3	Mrs. Kim Buchanan
Grade 5	Ms. Christine Hesch
Grade 6/7	Mr. Ken Schoonderwoerd
Grade 7/8	Mr. George Haid
French & Phys-ed	Mrs. Debra Ross
Resource	Mrs. Heather Tamas
Music	Ms. Christine Hesch
Library Technician	Mrs. Eileen Coutts
Ed. Assistant	Mrs. Norah Allan
Custodians	Mr. John Lima, Mrs. Shelly Couto
Secretary	Mrs. Janeann Haid
Monitors	Mrs. Dietrich, Mrs. Couto
Priest	Fr. Keith Morrison

SCHOOL HOURS

8:55 a.m.	Morning Announcements
9:00 a.m.	Classes Begin
10:15-10:30	Morning Recess
12:00-1:00	Lunch (Recess 12:20 – 1:00)
2:20-2:35	Afternoon Recess
3:20 pm.	Buses Park to Load
3:25 p.m.	Dismissal Students

SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Classes Begin	September 1, 2009
Thanksgiving Day	October 12, 2009
Christmas Break	December 21- Jan. 1/09
Family Day	February 15, 2010
Mid-Winter Break	March 15- 19, 2010
Good Friday	April 2, 2010
Easter Monday	April 5, 2010
Victoria Day	May 24, 2010
Classes End	June 28, 2010

HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

P. O. Box 70
Dublin, Ontario
N0K 1E0
Phone: 519-345-2440

Director of Education	Mrs. Martha Dutrizac
Superintendent of Education	Mrs. JoAnn MacGregor
Superintendent of Education for Secondary	Mr. Dan Parr
Special Education Coordinator	Maureen Sabin

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY DAYS

Sept 25, 2009, Nov. 13, 2009, Dec. 4, 2009, Feb. 1, 2010,
Mar. 1, 2010, June 29, 2010

SAFE ARRIVALS

If your child does not arrive at school, it is important that we are assured he/she is safe. If a child is going to be absent FOR ANY REASON, parents are required to notify the school by WRITTEN NOTE (brought to school by a sibling), or by calling 291-3000 before 9:00 a.m. You may leave a message in the **Attendance Mailbox**, if calling the night before or before school hours. When parents fail to do this, the school will call the home number, the alternate number, and finally the parents' work places. We need to have the complete co-operation of parents and/or guardian, if the program is to be effective. Students who are returning to school during school hours must report to the office and be signed in by a parent before going to class.

Please note: students who are dropping their children off by car are asked to enter and exit via the North Driveway-please do not enter the bus loading zone during our drop-off times (8:30 – 8:45 am & 3:20-3:30 pm.)



MILK & SPECIAL LUNCHES

Milk tickets are sold in sheets of 10 tickets for \$6.50. Milk may be purchased for .75 cents per carton. Both white and chocolate are available. We are designated a Healthy School. A healthy snack(s) are available for student(s) who may not have a snack or lunch. There are bins in each classroom which are monitored by the teacher. Special lunches are offered once per week. Prices and options vary. A food order form is sent home at the beginning of each term. Orders must be placed by the due date. There are no exceptions to lateness.

SCHOOL CLOSING – Inclement weather

Due to inclement weather, we are occasionally forced to cancel school or delay buses.

If school is to be cancelled, or the buses delayed, it will be announced on the following stations, prior to 7:30 a.m. as well as posted on our website: <http://hesson.hpcdsb.edu.on.ca>

CKNX (Wingham)	102 FM
CHYM (Kitchener)	96.7 FM
CJCS (Stratford)	1240 AM

The two-hour delay means that there will be a delay in pick up time (e.g., a student who is usually picked up at 7:45 a.m. would be picked up at 9:45 a.m.). **Please DO NOT call your bus driver or teacher to check on cancellations.** Children should NOT be dropped off at school during this delay because the school will be closed. If pupils must be sent home early, it will be announced on the same radio stations one-half hour before the buses leave the school.



REQUEST FOR TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM AN ALTERNATE RESIDENCE

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board has implemented a policy regarding alternate transportation. The form requesting transportation to/from an alternate residence, for childcare purposes, is included with your package of materials that you receive in September. Additional forms may be obtained by calling the school office. **Please note that requests must be renewed each school year.**

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

It is imperative that addresses and telephone numbers are kept up to date in our files. In case of accident or illness, it may be necessary to contact parents at home or work.

The following changes should be relayed to the school:

- change of home, address, phone number, and cell phone number
- change of employer, address, and phone number for the parents
- change in “emergency” contact person (neighbour / relative)
- change in medical information

For any of the above changes, please phone the school secretary, or send a note with your child.

SPECIAL PERMISSION TO LEAVE SCHOOL

If a student is to be released from school during the day, his/her parent, or an older sibling known to the staff may only pick up the student. If they are to be picked up by another adult, that adult must have a note of permission signed by the parent, or the school must be notified in advance. Students who are picked up at the end of the day are asked to stay in the office until the parent comes to sign them out. **Please note: Parents who are picking up their children are asked to enter and exit via the North Driveway-please do not enter the bus loading zone during our drop-off times (8:30-8:45 a.m. & 3:20-3:30 p.m.).**

SCHOOL BOOKS

School textbooks are the property of the school and must be taken care of properly. If a student loses or destroys a schoolbook, he/she must pay the cost of replacing it.

FAMILY LIFE: Parent books for all Family Life programs are available upon request by calling the school office.

HOMEWORK

Each grade has specific homework expectations, which will be communicated in the respective teacher’s first newsletter. In general, up to the end of Grade 3 no written homework will be assigned other than to complete work unfinished from that day in school. Students in Grade 4, 5

and 6 can expect a moderate amount of homework to be assigned (2 to 3 hours per week). Students in Grade 7 and 8 can expect assigned homework plus AR reading of up to one hour per night. Students who are absent from school are required to complete missed work as soon as possible.

VALUABLES

Pupils **must not** bring valuables or money to school, other than by teacher request (e.g., trips). **This includes toys, games, music players, CD’s, cell phones, etc.**

DRESS CODE

- For physical education classes, all students should wear appropriate attire: T-shirt, shorts, socks, and running shoes. These expectations apply to both daily wear and class excursions.
- Students are requested to leave a pair of properly fitting shoes, **with non-marking soles**, at school to be used for physical education and the classroom.
- ALL articles of clothing and personal belongings left at school should be **labeled** with permanent marker.
- Parents need to assist their children in making appropriate choices for seasonal dress.
- Students are encouraged to wear hats and sunglasses for sun protection. These protective items are not to be worn inside the school.

In keeping with our Catholic values, clothing and personal belongings are to be neat, clean, presentable, modest, and respectful. The following clothing and personal belongings are not acceptable:

- Clothing that reveals the midriff or underclothing
- Shorts, skirts or dresses which are shorter than arms at one’s side with extended fingertips
- Halter, tube, and spaghetti strap tops, or tops that are cut low in the front or back, mesh or muscle shirts, spandex bicycle wear, and cut-off shorts
- Clothing or personal belongings that promote racism, profanity, offensive messages, violence, drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or sex

For all school masses, the children are to be appropriately dressed.

Final determination on appropriate clothing rests with the school.

ATTENDANCE

Students are required to come to school everyday except if the child is ill or has a medical appointment.

SCHOOL/HOME COMMUNICATION

We will do our best to keep lines of communication open between home and school. Parents are encouraged to give their child's teacher a call if they have any questions or concerns about programming or progress.

School information will be distributed on a monthly basis via the school newsletter. These newsletters contain the monthly calendar for the upcoming month and valuable school information. Teachers may also send class newsletters home. The sharing of information in both of these kinds of newsletters is a valuable component of your child's full experience at school.

There will be an opportunity to request parent-teacher interviews for the fall, winter, and spring terms. Parents are encouraged to come to all interviews. Students are also asked to attend the interview. Parents are also free to call the school to find out how their child is doing. Please call prior to 8:30 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents may participate in the following:

- School excursions
- School masses
- Special events in the school
- Classroom helpers

Please note that all parents and volunteers, who regularly assist at school must, by law, submit a current (within 6 months) criminal record check as well as a TB (Tuberculosis) test. All volunteers must sign in and out at the office. A visitors tag will be given.

LIBRARY FUND

Please save grocery tapes from all Zehrs Stores, and Foodland stores in Milverton and Listowel. Money raised from these tapes will be used for Library books.

MEDICALLY-AT-RISK STUDENTS



A student with a medically diagnosed predetermined health condition may experience a life-threatening event, which would require immediate action. Such conditions would include severe allergies (anaphylaxis), uncontrolled asthma, juvenile diabetes, epilepsy, lowered immunity or hemophilia. School Policy will adhere to the Board Policy (3D: 4), which outlines the information required to be available regarding medically-at-risk students. In addition, according to policy, an individualized management plan (safety plan) is drawn up which identifies specific responsibilities of parent(s)/guardian(s), and the school personnel, to reduce the risk of a medical emergency. This school policy will be reviewed and completed with all staff on a yearly basis. It adheres to the three A's of anaphylaxis survival - awareness, avoidance and action. Please advise the principal and the classroom teacher immediately if your child is medically at risk. Please note: these forms must be updated annually.

MEDICATION:

Board policy requires that a form be filled out if parents wish school personnel to administer oral medication.

The major points of the policy are:

Only medication presented by a physician or other health care professional will be considered a request for the service.

The authorization to provide such service is to be made in writing by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the physician.



This form, available through the school's office, specifies:

- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Frequency and method of application
- Dates to which authorization applies
- Any possible side effects

Under no circumstances is the principal or a teacher allowed to administer medication without prior authority.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Purposes of the Code:

St. Mary's School is committed to working with families, our parish, and community partners in maintaining a safe and orderly Christ-centered learning environment. A format of progressive discipline will be implemented in our school and we will endeavour to build a safe and caring school environment through appropriate interactions between all members of the school community.

Roles and Responsibilities (as found in Provincial Code of Conduct, Oct. 2007):

Students

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others through acceptable behavior.

Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a student:

- comes to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- shows respect for himself or herself, for others, and for those in authority;
- refrains from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others;
- follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his or her own actions.
- Uses technology according to the expectations and rules of the board (3B:5) **specifically the electronic transmission or posting of photographic images of a person or persons on school property, at school events, and during school activities and/or hours, is prohibited.**

Parents

Parents play an important role in the education of their children, and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.

Parents fulfill their role when they:

- show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- communicate regularly with the school;
- help their child be neat, appropriately dressed, and prepared for school;
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
- show that they are familiar with school routines and expectations
- encourage and assist their child in following these routines and expectations

- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child

Definition of Progressive Discipline

Progressive discipline is a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behavior and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviors. In everything we do at our school we are lead by our faith and a conscience effort to model the Beatitudes while responding as a Caring Catholic Community. We continue to employ a range of responses to misbehaviors that foster learning opportunities which reinforce positive behaviors, while helping our students make good choices in the future.

Range of Responses

The components of our progressive discipline continuum include, but are not limited to:

- verbal or non-verbal messages from a teacher or adult in authority
- Class Meetings
- teacher generated written activities which offer reflection, apology and action plan
- teacher collaboration with parent or guardian (orally or in writing – Incident letter)
 - peer mediation
 - referral to principal
- detention, loss of privileges
- re-location within the classroom or learning environment
- referral to out-of school personnel (counseling services, truancy officer)
 - restitution, restorative justice
 - suspension
 - expulsion

On an annual basis, the principal will review the School Code of Conduct with School Advisory Council members and with all staff members. Annually, the Code of Conduct will be communicated to all students, parents and staff.

All staff, in dealing with incidents of student misbehaviour, will act in accordance with the definition of progressive discipline and the expectations of the student's IEP where applicable.

INCIDENT Tracking

In order to keep parents informed about all issues in the school, incident forms may be sent home if the student needs a reminder about proper behaviour at school. Please sign the form and discuss the incident with your child. Parents are encouraged to maintain contact with the teacher to maximize the development of healthy social skills. The process of discipline requires parents to be active partners in this process.

A SPECIAL NOTE TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Guarantees for student success as illustrated by various proven studies:

- Become involved in your child's education.
- Be a friendly critic.
- Support a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Learn about the New Ontario Curriculum for grades 1-8 and how it can benefit your children.
- Encourage your children to cooperate fully and to join in school activities, taking pride in themselves, the school building, grounds and community as a whole.
- Spend time with them. Read, play, share activities, express feelings, speak about successes, difficulties, uncertainties, plans....
- Have high expectations – of conduct, as well as achievement.
- Praise specifically. Recognize and name strengths and achievements; discuss next steps.
- Give moral guidance. Know your values and demonstrate them clearly, both in what you say and in what you do.



SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The School Advisory Council is comprised of parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, and parish community residents.

1. The purpose of the school council is, through active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.
2. A school council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations in accordance with this Regulation to the principal of the school and the Board that established the council.

Each year, a council executive with a minimum of five (5) Catholic parent representatives, is chosen. One of these must act as council chairperson. Sub-committees of the council offer opportunities for all parents to get involved in specific school functions. All council meetings are open to all parents. The council executive has voting privileges on recommendations, but consensus is generally used to reach a decision.

Your attendance at council meetings is encouraged, which allows you to be involved and informed about your child's school. Notices of meetings will be posted in the monthly newsletters.



PARENT CONSENT FORMS

These forms are to be signed by the parent(s) for every school event that takes place outside the school. They are to be sent into the school prior to the activity. If the consent forms are not brought in, the student(s) cannot attend the event. We are not allowing students to phone home to get permission. Please make special efforts to return all permission slips promptly.

