

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL



STUDENT HANDBOOK AND AGENDA 2025-2026

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THIS AGENDA BELONGS TO:

Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL HOURS

Tuesday, September 2nd	First Day of School	PRIMARY AND JUNIOR GRADES	
Friday, October 10th	PD Day (no school)	Block One	9:15 - 10:30 AM
Monday, October 13th	Thanksgiving Day (no school)	<i>Morning Recess</i>	10:30 -10:45 AM
Friday, November 7th	PD Day (no school)	Block 2	10:45 - 12:00 PM
Friday, December 5th	PD Day (no school)		
December 22nd- January 2nd	Christmas Break	<i>Lunch</i>	12:00 - 1:00 PM
Friday, January 30th	PD Day (no school)	Block 3	1:00 - 2:15 PM
Monday, February 16th	Family Day (no school)	<i>Afternoon Recess</i>	2:15 - 2:30 PM
March 16th - March 20th	March Break	Block 4	2:30 - 3:45 PM
Friday, April 3rd	Good Friday (no school)		
Monday, April 6th	Easter Monday (no school)	KINDERGARTEN	
Monday, April 27th	PD Day (no school)	9:15 AM - 3:45 PM	
Monday, May 18th	Victoria Day (no school)		
Friday, June 5th	PD Day (no school)		
Thursday, June 25th	Last Day of School		

PLEASE NOTE: Supervision is provided in the schoolyard at **9:00** each morning. For your child's safety, please ensure that he/she **does not** arrive earlier than that time.



HUSKY PRIDE

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

Holy Cross is a vibrant learning community serving students from Kindergarten to Grade Six. We are a proud part of the St. Patrick's High School Family of Schools with deep community roots and a strong community spirit. Holy Cross promotes responsibility, respect, perseverance, and academic excellence in a safe learning environment. We recognize that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and have the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. Holy Cross School strives to develop in all a growth mindset, which values and celebrates each individual contribution based on respect, peaceful living, and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

SPIRITUAL THEME -2024-2026



This agenda is an important tool for our students and their families. In order for students to reach their full academic potential, it is essential that careful planning be a part of each school day. To help students achieve this goal, the student agenda will be used in Grades 1 through 6. It is hoped that this agenda will provide parents with a better understanding of the work that is done at school each day. This agenda will promote effective and positive two-way communication between home and school and will assist in maintaining a strong link in this shared responsibility of educating our children. Used consistently, the agenda will help your child become an organized and effective learner. Please encourage your child to show you this agenda each evening.

Please be sure to check out our school's website (hcr.ocsb.ca) and especially our X feed @HolyCrossOCSB on a regular basis. We post often about the wonderful things that happen at Holy Cross! We look forward to an enjoyable and productive school year.

Tracy Murray
Principal

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Holy Cross School provides a warm, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment for students from JK to Grade 6. The philosophy of Holy Cross is based on the mission statement of the Ottawa Catholic School Board. "At the Ottawa Catholic School Board, all of our students are inspired and guided to realize their spiritual, social, and academic potential, and to take their place in the world as thoughtful, well-rounded citizens. Our mission is to provide all of our students with quality education for the mind, body, and spirit through an emphasis on academic excellence, social responsibility, and Catholic values."

AT HOLY CROSS SCHOOL, WE STRIVE TO:

- Provide our students with a living example of life according to Catholic principles and to foster a Christian environment within the school;
- Instill in our students a sense of respect for self and others;
- Assist students in reaching their fullest potential intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and socially;
- Instill in our students a respect for God's creation;
- Prepare our students to become global citizens with a keen sense of social justice.

SCHOOL MOTTO



The Holy Cross School Motto is "The Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Matthew 7:12

For many centuries this idea has been influential among people of very diverse cultures. We encourage the students to follow “The Golden Rule” each and every day.

To apply “The Golden Rule” consistently, the students are encouraged to use their knowledge and imagination. Students need to know that their actions have an impact on the lives of others. Students need to be able to imagine themselves in the other person’s place on the receiving end of the action.

OUR CATHOLIC FAITH

Holy Cross School is a community of faith. We are blessed to have students of diverse cultural and faith backgrounds. As a catholic school, Christ is at our heart and in everything we do. In addition to our Religion and Family Life program, we nurture our faith in many ways. Through our prayers, liturgies, assemblies, and masses we follow our faith traditions; through our words and our actions, we define who we are. Students and staff are expected to be respectful of everyone and be courageous in doing the right thing. Our work towards social justice both locally and globally and our seeking of peaceful resolutions in all conflicts, and our inclusivity all demonstrate our commitment to be kind, do good, and make change.

SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Students in Grade 2 will be preparing for the Holy Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Students in Grade 6 will be receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. An information session for parents of students in a sacramental year will take place at Holy Cross Church and notification will come home from the school regarding registration and church contacts.

As a school, we support the catechism provided by the Church. We are happy to assist your family in any way. If you have any questions,

please contact your child’s teacher, principal, or your parish office.

Opportunities for prayer, retreats and liturgical celebrations are provided throughout the school year in which students, staff, clergy, and parents participate actively in preparation, presentation, and worship.

SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from school is provided to students depending on the distance between their home or caregiver and the school within the boundary. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) is responsible for the management and



administration of all home-school transportation on behalf of the Ottawa Catholic School Board and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board. Parents can access bus stop information for their children using OSTA's online Stop Finder. The online tool gives bus stop and route information for eligible students who are assigned to regular yellow bus service.

If you have questions concerning transportation, please phone the OSTA at 613.224-8800.

Parents are responsible for the safety and supervision of children traveling to and from bus stops, they are also responsible for their children AT the bus stop which is located within a reasonable distance from the student’s home/caregiver location. Your child’s eligibility for transportation can be confirmed by contacting OSTA.

ROUTE CHANGES

OSTA normally requires at least 3 days notice in order to respond to changes to student pick-up and/or drop-off locations. For safety reasons, we

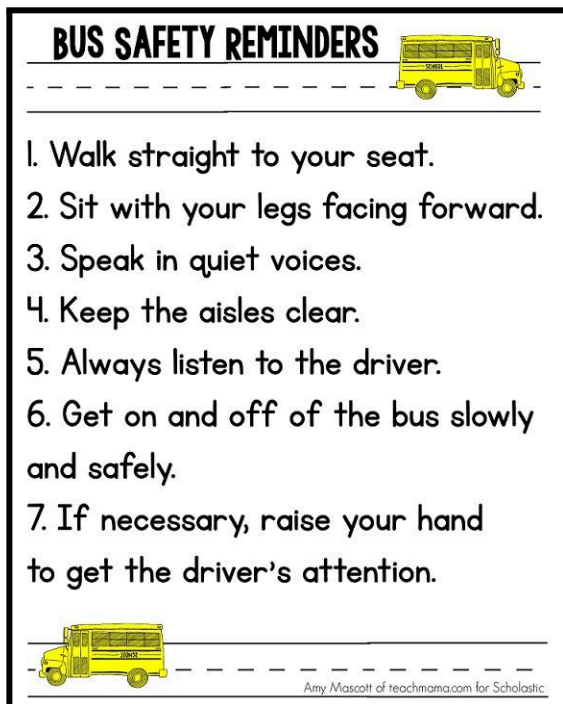
are unable to accommodate a schedule of varying pick up and drop-off locations. School bus drivers are NOT permitted to alter bus routes without the prior knowledge and approval from OSTA. This is important for maintaining a database of bus stops and student pick-up and drop-off locations.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE BUS

- 1) Students must be seated at all times.
- 2) Respectful and courteous behaviour towards the bus driver and each other is expected.
- 3) Eating food is not allowed on the bus.
- 4) Quiet talking will ensure that the bus driver will not be distracted and everyone has a safe trip.

CONSEQUENCES

- 1) The driver shall warn any student who misbehaves on the bus.
- 2) If misbehaviour is repeated the driver shall notify the principal in writing. Parents will be notified.
- 3) Persistent misbehaviour could result in the loss of riding privileges.



** Please note that the above "Bus Safety Reminders" are not exhaustive. Please ensure*

your child understands that the driver and school staff set expectations for the bus and students to respect those expectations.

GENERAL INFORMATION

STUDENT INFORMATION VERIFICATION

Parents are expected to ensure that all information in the Parent Portal is up to date. They can change it in the Portal or contact the school with the changes.

This information is very important in case of an emergency during school hours. Should there be any changes during the year, please notify the school.

STUDENTS REQUIRING ANTIBIOTICS, OTC MEDICATION OR OTHER MEDICATION

If the medication is to be kept in the school, it must be accompanied by clear written instructions, signed and dated by the parents and the child's doctor. Forms for this purpose must be obtained from the school, completed and returned to the school before any medication can be administered. All medications must be kept in the office. This policy is for both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications like Children's Tylenol. It also applies to antibiotics that might only be for a few days. Please ensure that you send medication in its original bottle. The information on the medical form must match the information on the medication's packaging.

LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES

While it is impossible to create a completely risk-free environment, school staff and parents work collaboratively to minimize potentially fatal allergic reactions. Parents of children with life-threatening allergies are asked to communicate with the school and administration on this important matter as soon as possible. A detailed procedure outlined by the OCSB Policy: Students with Life-Threatening Allergies will be implemented for such students.

ATTENDANCE/ILLNESS/ACCIDENTS

If your child is going to be late or absent from school, please inform the school before 9:00 a.m. If your child is absent without prior notice, you will be contacted by phone. Students having doctor, dental, or other appointments during school hours must bring a note from home. Students who arrive at school late must have a parent sign them in. Parents who are picking up a child during the day are asked to report to the office and the office administrator will call your child.

Any accident occurring during school hours will be dealt with immediately by a teacher, ensuring the well-being of the child. In most cases, minor first aid (ice, Band-Aid) is applied and the child is able to resume normal activities.

In more severe cases, parents are contacted and asked to secure further assistance for their child. In a few cases, emergency assistance is summoned, and the child is taken to hospital at the same time as parents are being called.

In cases where a child becomes ill at school and is unable to participate in normal class activity, parents will be contacted by the office. In situations where a parent is unable to pick up their child, alternate arrangements should be made.

Upon your child's return to school, it is expected that your child will be able to take part fully in all school activities, including recess.

Parents will be notified in the case of any reported accident that involves a bump to the head, face, or eye.

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS SICK

When a child is sick at school the parents are notified. We sometimes ask that the parents speak to the child to determine the degree of illness. Outdoor play is part of the school day and supervision is not provided for children who must remain indoors due to illness. In the event that there is an injury or condition that does not permit outdoor or indoor physical activity, a note from

the parent accompanied by a doctor's certificate is required.

If your child has a fever, we ask that they do not come to school - even if the fever is controlled by Tylenol or Advil. When they are sick, their bodies need rest.

Parents are asked to contact the school immediately if their child is at home due to a highly contagious disease such as pink eye, chicken pox, fifth disease or pediculosis (head lice).

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

- BICYCLES are to be walked on and off school property to avoid injury to other students. Helmets are mandatory by law. Bicycles are to be locked to the bicycle racks at all times.
- SKATEBOARDS and SCOOTERS are to be carried while on school property.
- SNOWBALL AND STONE throwing is prohibited.
- PLAY STRUCTURE schedules should be followed.
- ELECTRONIC DEVICES, PHONES, APPLE WATCHES, TRADING CARDS, AND TOYS are not permitted at school. Certain devices are allowed for educational purposes when requested by the teacher.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Parent (Catholic School) Council plays an important role in a school. It is there to act as a channel for communication among parents, teachers, and the school community, as well as to keep parents informed about Board policies and decisions that affect our school and the education of our children.

Our Catholic School Council, through various activities, raises funds for equipment and resource materials for students as well as, organizes special events and supports various other educational initiatives. All parents are invited and encouraged to attend the meetings and to share their time and talents.

LOST AND FOUND

We ask parents to label their child's clothing. This makes it easier for staff to find the rightful owner of lost articles. At the end of each term all items in our Lost and Found box are displayed for students and parents to view. Unclaimed items are then donated to charity.

DRESS CODE

Although Holy Cross School does not have a specific dress code, parents and students are asked to use good taste and consider the need to protect children from the sun when choosing clothing to wear to school. Age appropriateness should be considered a standard in dressing for school. Shoulder straps should be at least two fingers thick, the chest and belly areas should not be visible and shorts should be as long as the person's hand when fully extended down the person's side. Boys tanks or basketball tank shirts should not be worn without a t-shirt. The large arm holes are inappropriate for school. Undergarments should not be visible. Further, tee shirts and other tops with inappropriate or disrespectful wording on them will not be tolerated.

Please remember, we dress differently for school than we would for the beach, even when it is hot. Wearing clothing with culturally insensitive messages or images is not in keeping with our Catholic value of promoting a safe, caring and inclusive school community. All students are encouraged to wear respectful clothing at all times when on school property or on a school-related activity. In order for your child to benefit fully from the Physical Education program and in the interests of safety and comfort, it is imperative that children be dressed appropriately for gym class - running shoes are an expectation at school.

For safety reasons, shoes should be worn inside at all times. During the winter and muddy seasons, we ask children to have a pair of shoes for the classroom. This will help keep the school and classroom dry, clean, and safe.

HOMEWORK

The staff at Holy Cross School supports the assignment of homework when appropriate, as a means of reinforcing and furthering classroom instruction and learning. Students are expected to do homework or other activities suggested by the teacher on a regular basis. If there is no work assigned for the evening, then students may use the time to review or work on assignments due at a later date. Another good use of time on evenings where no assigned homework is provided is for students to practice their math facts and/or read. It is our expectation that students read every night.

HOMEWORK TIME ALLOTMENT (MAXIMUM)

JK/SK provide opportunities for the child to share their favourite books or other readiness activities such as counting and printing with a parent or older sibling.

Grades 1 to 3 up to 1/2 hour

Grades 4 to 6 up to 60 minutes

A generally accepted time allotment for each grade level is 10 minutes per grade level. Some evenings may be heavier than others and if they reach the maximum allotment frequently, please let the teacher know. This may indicate that the student needs additional support.

What is Homework?

Homework is teacher-assigned and teacher-monitored learning experiences that take place outside the classroom. Homework is a planned part of the education process designed to enhance student learning and is directly connected to the Ontario Curriculum Learning Expectations, Learning Skills, and Ministry of Education Reporting Guidelines. Homework is also a means of demonstrating and building the partnership between home and school that leads to more consistent success in all aspects of school life.

There are different types of homework such as:

1. Completion (anything not completed in class)

2. Practice (review and reinforcement of material presented in class)
 3. Preparation (home preparation for the next day's class work)
 4. Extension/Creation (creative applications that integrate and/or expand upon classroom learning)
- Good study and work habits involve the ability to organize and use time productively. These skills are taught at school and should be reinforced at home.

Homework reinforces classroom instruction; however, if a child is having difficulties or if parents have concerns, they are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher. Older children may wish to contact their teachers and or their classmates. It is beneficial to share concerns, ideas, talents, as well as frustrations.

NUTRITIONAL LUNCH SNACKS

Children in Grades 1 through 6 will have 20 minutes to eat their lunch in a classroom. Students in Kindergarten have the opportunity for two snacks and one lunchtime. Outdoor playtime comes just before lunch and again later in the afternoon.

Remember that nutritious snacks (i.e. fresh fruit, yogurt, veggies and hummus) not only fill tummies, but they help to create the optimal condition for learning. Packaged snacks (fruit roll-ups, gummy fruit chews, and lunchables) are often void of nutritional value or filled with sugar and preservatives making it more difficult to focus and learn.

There are no microwave ovens in our classrooms, students do not have the opportunity to heat lunches while at school.

PARENTS/VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Visitors are always welcome at Holy Cross. To ensure maximum safety for our students, parents, and visitors are required to report to the office upon arrival and sign in and out.

We would ask that if parents are removing their child from school for appointments, they inform

the teacher beforehand by note. Notes will be forwarded to the office. Upon your arrival at the office, your child will be called down to meet you.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

It is always our preference to have our students outside in the fresh air at the designated times; however, if it is raining, too icy, or below -25 Celsius, students will remain inside.

SPORTS EVENTS

The Ottawa Catholic School Board sponsors tournaments throughout the year in which children have the opportunity to travel and compete against other schools. Tryouts are held for the different teams for students in Grades 5 and 6. Occasionally, there is an opportunity for Grade 4 students to try out.

REPORT CARDS

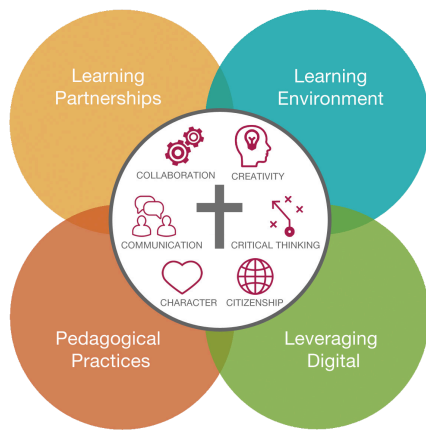
Each child in Grades 1 through 6 will receive a progress report and two written reports during each academic year, as follows:

- a) Late October or early November - written progress report followed by interview
- b) Early February – first written report card
- c) June – written report card and placement notice for September

Children in Kindergarten will receive an Initial Observations Report in the late Fall and two Communications of Learning: one in February and one June.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE

The school will contact a parent/guardian or emergency contact number if the school must close early due to weather or physical plant problems. It is crucial that the school has an emergency phone number other than the home/work number. No child will be allowed to leave the school or alternate site until either a parent/guardian or emergency contact person has been notified. In order to keep parents and communities informed of details of school closures, or cancellation of transportation, public announcements will be broadcast on local electronic media (radio and television).



DEEP LEARNING

Deep Learning is defined as creating and using new knowledge in the world. This goes beyond the mastery of existing content knowledge. Deep learning is characterised by exploration, connectedness and broader, real-world purposes.

The goals of deep learning are that our Catholic graduates will develop the competencies and dispositions that will prepare them to be creative, connected, and collaborative life-long problem solvers and to be healthy, holistic human beings who not only contribute to but also create the common good in today's knowledge-based creative, interdependent world. (Adapted from A Rich Seam by Fullan & Langworthy, 2014)

GLOBAL COMPETENCIES: THE 6 CS

Research tells us that our students need to be globally competent to achieve success and well being in their lives. The 6'Cs have been identified as: Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Creativity, Communication, Citizenship and Character.

Critical Thinking

Reflecting as a discerning believer, critically evaluating information and arguments, seeing patterns and connections, constructing meaningful knowledge and apply it in the real world in light of the common good.

Collaboration

Working interdependently and synergistically in teams with strong interpersonal and team-related skills including effective management of team dynamics and challenges, respecting the dignity and rights and contributions of others, making substantive decisions together, and learning from and contributing to the learning of others.

Creativity

Having an 'entrepreneurial eye' for economic and social opportunities, asking the right inquiry questions to create and adapt novel ideas, evaluating them with an informed moral conscience and leadership to make responsible decisions and turn them into action.

Communication

Communicating effectively, honestly and with sensitivity to others, using a variety of styles, modes and tools (including digital), and able to respond critically in light of gospel values.

Citizenship

Giving witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice and the sacredness of human life, considering global issues based on a deep understanding of diverse values and worldviews, and with a genuine interest and ability to solve ambiguous and complex real-world problems that impact human and environmental sustainability.

Character

Developing and demonstrating their God-given potential as a self-directed, responsible lifelong learner, formed in the Catholic faith community and armed with the essential character traits of grit, tenacity, perseverance, resilience and hope.

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

Holy Cross School is a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. We recognize that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and as such, all people have the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

Our School Code of Conduct exists to ensure:

- all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity;
- to promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community;

- to maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility;
- to encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict;
- to promote the safety of people in the school.

The Code of Conduct for Holy Cross School sets clear standards of behaviour that apply to our students as well as all individuals involved in our school community. These standards apply whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school related events or activities, or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

SAFETY

All members of the school community must not:

- engage in bullying behaviours or be in possession of any weapon;
- use any object to threaten or intimidate or physically hurt another person;
- commit an act of vandalism that causes damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school;
- engage in any act that creates an unsafe situation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal: Under the direction of the OCSB, the principal takes a leadership role in the daily operation of a school. The principal provides this leadership by:

- demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to academic excellence in a safe teaching and learning environment;
- holding everyone under their authority accountable for his or her behaviour and actions;
- empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community.

Teachers and Other School Staff: Under the leadership of the principal, teachers and other school staff members maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour.

As role models, teachers and school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth;
- empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community;
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
- maintain consistent standards of behaviour for all students;
- demonstrate respect for all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the members of the school community;
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship.

Students: Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. 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.

Parents/Guardians: 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;
- check their child's school bag and agenda regularly;
- 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;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;

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

Responsibilities of Volunteers: Volunteers are an integral part of the school community. Their support and involvement is valued and appreciated. Volunteers fulfill their responsibilities when they:

- sign-in at the office upon arrival;
- respect the confidentiality of the students and staff;
- follow the direction of staff they are supporting.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Progressive Discipline is a whole-school approach, which involves all members of the school community in maintaining respectful relationships throughout the school community. This involves the use of a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences that include learning opportunities for students to promote positive behaviour and healthy relationships. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, our disciplinary measures will be applied within a framework that shifts the focus from one that is punitive to one that is both corrective and supportive. Holy Cross has adopted a school-wide progressive discipline strategy, “W.I.T.S. (Walk Away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help). Our “Bucket-Filling theme” also supports this philosophy. Promoting and Supporting Positive Student Behaviour: Holy Cross School acknowledges the need to provide a safe and caring school environment, maximizing the learning potential and ensuring a positive school climate for all members of the school community through the implementation of the following proactive, positive practices:

- positive encouragement and reinforcement;
- individual, peer and group mediation;
- various character building programs such as Bucket Filling, Stop Think, and Choose; W.I.T.S. (Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help)
- conflict resolution;
- Religion and Fully Alive Programs with a focus on character formation according to the Gospel Values.

FAILURE TO MAINTAIN THE CODE

When a student fails to maintain the Code of Conduct and inappropriate behaviour occurs, disciplinary measures are applied within a framework that is both corrective and supportive. The range of interventions, supports, and consequences that are developmentally appropriate and provide opportunities for the student to focus on improving his/her/their behaviour. Disciplinary action and consequences will reflect consideration of a number of factors, including mitigating and other factors, specific to the student involved in the misbehaviour.

Please visit the school's website (<https://hcr.ocsb.ca>) for further information on specific interventions related to the Code of Conduct, Progressive Discipline Plan, and Bullying Prevention and Intervention.