



**Elementary Student & Parent/Caregiver
Handbook
2023-2024**

Located on the traditional, unceded territory of the Lheidli T'enneh

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A. Message from the Elementary Vice-Principal

September 2023

Dear Students and Parents/Caregivers,

What a blessing it is for us to partner with you this year. We are grateful that you chose Cedars Christian School and look forward to a year of joyful learning, growth and development.

Students, we are thrilled to have you with us. We look forward to seeing what God has in store for you this coming year and trust that His plans are good and perfect. Our vision for Christian education stems from our desire to develop your unique potential, to help you learn how to internalize spiritual values and to lead you toward a life rich with service, obedience, stewardship, fellowship and discipleship. Each and everyday we want you to know more about who God created you to be and what you were called to do. It will not always be easy, but we are here to support, encourage and help you to do exciting, hard and meaningful things. We are so excited to be part of God's plan to equip you for the exciting calling that He has on your life! We know that we will learn and grow from you, too.

Parents/Caregivers, thank you for entrusting your child to us. We do not take this responsibility lightly and seek to provide nothing but the best for your child. We desire to cultivate a strong, lasting partnership with you built upon trust, communication and care. We want to come alongside you, sharing the awesome responsibility entrusted to us by God of raising, educating and equipping His precious children for the roles He has called them to now and in the future.

With blessings and anticipation for all that lies ahead.

Sincerely,



Jessica Akehurst
Elementary Vice-Principal

B. History and Purpose

Cedars' Roots

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.
Psalm 1:3

The fact that Cedars has 46 years of history is a testimony to God's faithfulness, as well as to the visionary leadership of its founding members and the many committed people who have built it into the thriving school that it is today. Their persistence and dedication was driven by the belief that all of life, including education, must fall under the lordship of Christ.

Cedars began in 1977 with 77 students in Grades 1 to 7, in rented facilities on the present site. Subsequently the school was purchased, the adjacent property was added, and the facilities were expanded and upgraded. Our most recent addition was a stunning new gym that opened in 2022. This not only blesses the Cedars community, but Prince George and beyond as well! From its inception, Cedars has been truly interdenominational. The school presently draws students from over 20 Christian churches.

C. Mission Statement

To educate and equip discerning disciples of Jesus Christ for restorative work in His Kingdom.

D. Core Values

Christian Education

The primary goal of Christian education is “the formation of a peculiar people – a people who desire the kingdom of God and thus undertake their vocations as an expression of that desire” (Smith, 2009). We believe that Jesus Christ is Lord of all of life, and that our obedience shapes all of life – not just the religious or spiritual or sacred corners of it (Walsh and Middleton, 1984). In close partnership with parents and the local church, intentional integration of Christian perspective across the curriculum is instrumental in engaging students in authentic conversations about who God is and who He has called them to be. The Bible, God’s Word, is the foundation for understanding the mandates (Gen 1:28), commands (Luke 10:27), and commissions (Matt 28) that call us toward maturity in Christ.

Developing Unique Potential

We believe that each student is created in the image of God, and is shaped uniquely for restorative work in His Kingdom. Noticing, naming and nurturing the unique gifts of our students allow the diversity in the body of Christ that leads to a flourishing Christian community. Curricular and extracurricular learning experiences provide rich opportunities to use and celebrate gifts stewarded well.

Community of Grace

Cedars Christian School creates space for students, parents, and staff to learn to live in a Christian community of grace. With hearts full of gratitude for the grace bestowed upon us, we seek to have God’s

grace flow through us toward one another by showing mercy, offering forgiveness, and sharing the gospel of peace.

Service

Following the example of Jesus, we seek to meet the real needs of our neighbors in our local community and beyond. We let our light shine so that others may see our works of service and glorify our Father in heaven (Matt 5:16). Serving one another in love is the fulfillment of the greatest commandment and the pathway to experiencing life in all its fullness. As servant-workers, we not only have the mind of Christ, but the joy of being His hands and feet in the restoration of all things to Himself.

E. Goals for Cedars Christian School

The purpose of Cedars Christian School is to assist parents and caregivers in their role of educating their children inside a Biblical worldview. Our vision is to develop the unique potential of every student, to help students internalize spiritual values and to teach our children how to live lives of service, obedience, stewardship, fellowship and discipleship to God.

Academic Development

We want our students to acquire a body of knowledge in Biblical studies, communications, social sciences, physical and biological sciences, mathematics and the arts in order to help them understand the structure of God's world, human society and our role within it.

Our students will develop a comprehensive set of skills that will enable them to communicate accurately with language, to understand and solve mathematical problems, to comprehend information and ideas presented through words, numbers and symbols, to express themselves creatively in art, music and drama and to be able to observe, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and draw conclusions. They will develop a strong sense of history, which will help them to better understand the social institutions and traditions shaping our society. Our students will be exposed to a set of Christian values and principles, which they can apply to the questions and issues, which they will face in life.

Furthermore, we strive to ensure that learning is meaningful and relevant for students. Through providing an intentional environment, opportunities, and teaching, we lead and guide students as they ask big questions, explore relevant topics, look for problems and issues in the world around them, and propose real-world solutions. We desire for students to know that they can make a difference and that working individually and collaboratively allows us to use our knowledge and skills as well as unique strengths and giftings to be the light that we are called to be.

Physical Development

The physical development and overall health and well-being of our students is important to us. Through physical and health education as well as numerous opportunities for individual and group activity throughout the day, we seek to foster a love and understanding of healthy living and what it takes to stay well. Believing that our bodies are not our own, but belong to Jesus Christ and used for His service, we help students to recognize the importance of activity and respecting and being good stewards of the bodies given to us.

Emotional Development

Each student's emotional development is an important aspect of Cedars Christian School. As image-bearers of a feeling God who has deep emotions for His people and creation, we want our students to understand and harness the incredible power of the emotions God has given to us.

In this way, we desire for our students to develop a healthy sense of self and understanding of others. Students should be proud of themselves; their families, background, school, and faith; and have the confidence to pursue high goals in all areas of their lives. We believe that students must be able to accept responsibility, both for their mistakes and their accomplishments, and to be resilient when things are challenging. Furthermore, looking beyond oneself to others and loving and caring for them by being aware of and sensitive to their needs are also qualities that we want to nurture in our students.

We have both a proactive and reactive approach to helping students grow in this aspect of their lives. Students take part in weekly planned sessions based on a developmentally appropriate curriculum to help them learn about and practice these skills. Chapel, daily devotions and classroom time is also used when needed. When incidents occur, students benefit from opportunities to work with various adults at school to help them learn and grow from their experience, always with the view of better equipping them for the future.

Social Development

Our students are encouraged to develop manners appropriate to the variety of situations in which they find themselves. They are guided to develop the skills and strength to handle peer pressure with confidence and to stand up for their neighbors throughout the world. They should also be able to accept authority and be responsible when they are in positions of authority themselves. We want our graduates to be able to find their place in the church, community, and family, recognizing the legitimacy of these and other social institutions.

Resource Development

The resources of time, money, energy and abilities are gifts of God and fulfill their purpose only when they are used to honor Christ. The ability to set goals and priorities is related to the use of resources. In setting goals, we want students to be wary of the self-indulgent materialism of our time and plan to use what they have been given well to serve God and one another (1 Peter 4:10).

Spiritual Goals

We want our students to develop habits of regular spiritual discipline, both personally and in community, thus developing a hunger to know God, becoming Christ-like in all aspects of life, and being open to God's leading.

At Cedars, spiritual development is based on the commitment unifying all aspects of one's life. A student may achieve academic excellence, but if that excellence is not attained within the context of a commitment to Christ, it is ultimately meaningless. We do not see a division between spiritual and physical or secular aspects of life. All aspects of life are spiritual in the sense that they are all directed either to serving the one true God or some false imitation of God.

A relationship with Jesus Christ provides the ultimate answers to the basic questions of who and what we are, what is the meaning of life, what are the sources of sin and salvation. The answers to these questions must form the basis for everything we do at Cedars and we pray that this will be the basis on which our students live their lives. The answers provided to these questions are what make Cedars and its students uniquely Christian.

F. Elementary Program (K - 7)

At Cedars, we see all students for who they are: image bearers who are wonderfully and uniquely made, incredibly diverse, full of potential, and created for a specific purpose as kingdom builders and restorers. In this way, Cedars seeks to provide the teaching and learning experiences that will help each child develop holistically, growing in knowledge of their Creator, His world, and what He designed them to be and do.

We have designed our program for Kindergarten to Grade 7 students to be flexible, responsive and relevant to the lives and experiences of our students, while also exposing them to new and wonderful things they have not come across before. All of our learning experiences are closely linked to the BC Ministry of Education's Learning Standards which includes all of the Content, Curricular and Core Competencies expected for students in our province at each grade.

Kindergarten

The Cedars Kindergarten program provides a unique opportunity for both your child and your family to become involved in the Cedars community. It is a wonderful environment in which to connect with other parents and students as you begin your exciting elementary school journey with us.

Our program is organized around thematic units that engage and inspire our Kindergarten students. These are taught in a hands-on, experiential manner that encourages collaboration, questioning and seeking answers in fun and interactive ways. Subjects are not taught as isolated skills; rather, they are integrated into the total learning experience of the child. A strong emphasis on Numeracy and Literacy is maintained throughout the course of the year to ensure that the foundational skills and understandings needed for Grade 1 and beyond are in place. In addition, the students take part in Library, Physical Education, Music, Chapel and a 'Big Buddies' program with our Grade 7 students. Our desire is to expand your child's horizons academically as well as socially, emotionally, and spiritually and set them up for a lifetime of loving being a learner!

Primary (Grades 1-3)

The primary years are pivotal as students this age begin forming their attitude towards school and who they are as learners. These years also lay the foundational skills and understandings needed for future learning and growth in all areas, but particularly in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics as competency in these areas underpin learning in all other areas.

By capitalizing on young students' innate curiosity and eagerness to explore and learn about the world around them, we seek to provide learning experiences that are challenging, motivating and engaging as students ask questions, seek answers and build their understanding both individually and collaboratively.

Intermediate (Grades 4-7)

The intermediate years add to the foundation laid in the Primary Program and helps students further develop the self-discipline and skills needed to function independently in junior and senior high school. These are important character-building years and frequently the time of developing a meaningful personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Experiences at these grade levels have great bearing on how students perform in high school and how well they hold up under pressures of teenage life. As in the primary years, staff seek to provide authentic learning experiences but with the increasing voice, choice and autonomy that this age group requires.

Core Curriculum and Additional Support for Success

Our students benefit from a wide and varied curriculum. They receive instruction in Bible, English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Career Education, Physical and Health Education, Applied

Design, Skills and Technologies, Arts Education, Library, and Core French (from Grade 4 onwards) from a variety of classroom and specialist teachers. Throughout all of these subject areas, there is a focus on Christian perspective and discovering the beautiful and intricate order that God created and intended for all things and how we partner with God to be part of His plan of restoration.

While we know that students learn in different ways and at different rates, we also firmly believe that every child can learn and should benefit from the correct level of challenge and high expectations for his/her success. All students benefit from universal supports (Tier 1 intervention) and ways of teaching that scaffold and support their continuous development. For those who require more than this, we have Learning Assistance programs both within class and as a pull-out (Tier 2 intervention) service, classroom Educational Assistants, and a team of support professionals who work together with students, parents/caregivers and Cedars staff to provide a program that meets every child's needs. These are outlined in a Learner Support Plan (LSP) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that lead and guide educational decisions and programming. We also have a Child and Youth Care Worker on staff who supports students with social-emotional needs and helps support those who need it with any struggles that they may be facing.

Second Language Education Policy

"In accordance with Ministerial Order 295/95, the Required Areas of Study in an Educational Program Order, Boards of Education must offer a second language in Grades 5 to 8 to all students, except those students exempted in the Order.

Boards of education decide which second languages will be offered. [Core French](#) will be the language offered if the board does not offer an alternative.

Boards of education should attempt to coordinate the second languages offered to ensure there is continuity of instruction in the same language for a student in Grades 5 to 8. Curricula for second languages offered in Grades 5 to 8 must be provincially approved. School boards may choose to submit a locally developed language course to the Ministry of Education and Child Care for approval as a provincial course.

All students must take a second language as part of the curriculum in Grades 5 to 8, except in the following two situations:

- A student has been identified as having special needs* or is receiving English Language Learner (ELL) services and is unable to demonstrate learning in relation to the expected learning outcomes of the [second language course](#).
- A student is enrolled in late [French Immersion](#) in Grade 6."

*Note: A "student with special needs" means a student who: (a) has a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, (b) has a learning disability or (c) has exceptional gifts or talents.

Core French Exemptions

At Cedars, students are generally enrolled in Core French from Grade 4 to 8. Educational Support Service Coordinators grant exemptions for students with special needs in consultation with classroom teachers and parents/caregivers. Parent/Caregiver exemption consent is granted at the beginning of each school year and filed in the main office. Parents/Caregivers may appeal the school decision to exempt (or not) their child in writing to the Educational Support Services Director or school Principal.

References:

[Language Education Policy](#), *BC Ministry of Education and Child Care*. Accessed: September 14, 2023
[Independent School Act, Section 4\(1\)](#). Accessed: September 23, 2022

Academic Expectations and Homework

Cedars Christian School has high expectations for students. That does not mean that only academically gifted students can do well at Cedars and that only results are valued. It does mean, however, that all students are expected to apply themselves to their studies at school and in homework assignments to the best of their ability. While it becomes increasingly important for students to take on this responsibility, parent/caregiver support in this area is key for the elementary years and regular communication between home and school will be vital to set students up for success.

We recognize that school is only part of a child's life and that opportunities for extra-curricular activities, time with family and friends, and rest are important. However, daily practice and review of concepts helps students to consolidate their learning and approach new concepts with confidence. Furthermore, children enjoy sharing what they are learning about with their parents/caregivers. We encourage parents/caregivers to find a good, quiet time in the day that works for both you and your child (not when children are tired or hungry) and make this a positive time together.

It is expected that students begin establishing the routine of learning at home in Kindergarten and continuing on throughout their elementary years. As students move up in grade level, the amount of time and complexity of tasks expected for homework increases. While each teacher sets the tasks that they feel are appropriate for their students, some students take longer or struggle to work at home. In this case, we ask that parents/caregivers contact their child's teacher if homework seems unmanageable or overwhelming for their child. We can then make a plan with you for what can be done to make homework a positive, learning experience.

School Attendance

It goes without saying that school attendance is vital to a child's success and growth. However, we do understand that students will have to miss school on occasion due to sickness or other reasons. When your child is/will be absent, please notify their class teacher as well as the office by phone, email or by submitting our online absentee form with as much advance notice as possible.

As part of student care, school attendance is monitored and followed up on. As a community of grace and care and with a view of supporting students and their parents/caregivers, you can expect the following actions:

Five days missed per term – the class teacher will call home and ascertain if there are any concerns and/or barriers to school attendance that can be addressed at a school level. Any concerns that require further action or support will be passed on to the Vice Principal or school Child and Youth Worker for their input.

Ten days missed per term – a school based team (comprised of the class teacher, Vice Principal, and any other relevant staff members) will be assembled and parents/caregivers will be asked to attend a meeting with this team to plan for how to address the issue. This plan will be agreed to by all in attendance.

School Absences and Missed Assignments

Teachers care deeply about the learning of all of their students and will provide tasks for absent students to complete as best they reasonably can. While nothing can replace in-person learning experiences at school, teachers will do the following to support the continued learning and development of their students when they are away for the following reasons:

1. **Student Sickness:** Depending on the grade of the student and length of absence due to sickness, teachers will provide key tasks for students to do to ensure that they do not miss out on valuable revision or new learning. Parents/Caregivers are asked to contact their child's class teacher for details regarding what needs to be done and how these will be sent home and returned to school (pick up/drop off from school or via Class Dojo/Google Classroom).
2. **Extended Absences Due to Other Circumstances:** Parents/Caregivers are asked to contact class teachers regarding their child's absence, providing as much advance notice as possible. Teachers will then discuss with parents/caregivers what is to be completed as well as how and when these will be shared. It is the student and/or parent/caregiver's responsibility to ensure they are staying caught up on the tasks assigned by the classroom teacher. Please note that teachers may not be able to provide assignments for an extended period of time in advance.
3. **Holidays:** When students go on vacation during regularly scheduled school days, class teachers will provide guidance for a holiday journal/diary and any other readily accessible tasks that they feel will be beneficial for the student. It is the parent's/caregiver's responsibility to request these with one week's notice at minimum.

Student Assessment and Reporting

Assessment and evaluation of learning with clear communication of next steps is integral to supporting the growth and development of each student. This happens through many different informal and formal types of assessment, with clear feedback and opportunities to try again. This looks slightly different throughout the elementary school, as ensuring that developmentally appropriate practices for students is had.

Feedback to parents/caregivers occurs on an ongoing basis throughout the year both informally through interim reports and parent meetings/conferences and formally through Learning Updates issued in November and March and a final Summary of Learning issued in June. These Learning Updates and Final Summary of Learning are new names for 'Report Card' and communicate to students and parents/caregivers how students are progressing and what next steps for them will be.

A summative self-assessment of Core Competencies is a requirement in the BC curriculum. Both students and teachers name, notice, and nurture these competencies (*Communication, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Positive Personal and Cultural Identity, Personal Awareness and Responsibility, and Social Responsibility*) throughout the year in the context of different lessons. Students use these conversations and "data" to provide evidence in their summative self-assessments. When teachers do not attach this directly to student report cards, they are available upon request.

Conferences

There are many different formats that conferences can have, but all have the dual purpose of ensuring that parents/caregivers are fully informed and equipped to support their child's learning and growth at

home and teachers can better understand the unique needs and backgrounds of each child so they can best support the child at school. While there are many different forms of conferences that teachers can choose from, the ultimate goal of any conference is to build relationships and better understand how we can work together to support each child's flourishing.

While there are set conference times throughout the year (please see the school calendar for specific dates), we strongly encourage parents/caregivers to reach out to teachers with questions, concerns or important information to share at any point throughout the year.

Chapels

Chapels are held with elementary students each Wednesday. While we like to meet as a complete elementary school as much as possible, we find that this makes it challenging to ensure the message is meaningful and relevant to all students. To address this, Chapels are often divided into primary and intermediate groups, with each class leading a Chapel approximately twice per year. Whether together or in smaller groups, all students are encouraged to actively participate in the chapel services through worship and prayer.

We have a schedule of whole school, special Chapels, and when each class will have their turn to lead a Chapel. Parents and caregivers are welcome and warmly invited to attend. Teachers usually communicate the dates of when their class will lead a Chapel, but please do not hesitate to ask as we love to have members of the community present.

G. Elementary Discipline Process and Code of Conduct

General Expectations

At Cedars, a student is expected to:

- a) Perform to the best of his/her ability in all parts of the school program.
- b) Attend school regularly and be punctual.
- c) Take responsibility for completion of all work missed during absences.
- d) Be cooperative and considerate in day-to-day relationships with others.
- e) Be honest.
- f) Refrain from activities which may be dangerous or cause harm to self or others.
- g) Respect the property of others and take responsibility for any damage he/she may cause.
- h) Cooperate with and show respect to teachers, students and other adults.
- i) Be courteous and well-mannered, cheerful and in service to others.

At Cedars, parents/caregivers are expected to:

- a) Ensure their child comes to school each day, on time, ready to learn and with an adequate lunch.
- b) Inform the school in advance of any absences.
- c) Support their child with any homework or missed assignments.
- d) Be cooperative and considerate in day-to-day relationships and communication with others.
- e) Share important information with the school that might impact their child's learning, behaviour and development.
- f) Attend conferences and any other important meetings that pertains specifically to their child.
- g) Share any concerns or grievances specifically with the staff member concerned, and escalate to the Vice Principal, Principal or Board if needed.
- h) Be actively involved in your child's education. Your child wants you to be part of their learning journey and your involvement will make a significant difference.

Positive Behavior Supports - ROCK

Positive behaviors are reinforced in all areas of the school through our ROCK acronym. Students are encouraged to “Be **R**espectful”, “Take **O**wnership”, “Build **C**ommunity”, and “Be **K**ind” in the hallways, classroom, on the playground, and in their virtual interactions. Posters outlining what these behaviors in various contexts are posted throughout the school building.

Specific Rules In and Around the School

Students are to refrain from:

- a) Marking or damaging school property. (Students are expected to pay for lost or damaged school property.)
- b) Bringing items which may cause injury (matches, knives, sticks, etc.).
- c) Wearing clothing with obscene, suggestive or offensive words, pictures or slogans which do not represent a shared value in our Christian community.
- d) Wearing hats in class.
- e) Using the Lord's name in vain; crude language.

- f) Showing lack of respect to adults or fellow students through actions, words, gestures, tone of voice.
- g) Using electronic devices such as cell phones, iPods and MP3 players during the school day.

Hallways, Washrooms and Entryways:

- a) Students are to walk quietly through the hallways.
- b) Students are not to tamper with fire extinguishers, thermostats or lights.
- c) Students are not to loiter in hallways, washroom, and entryways.
- d) Outdoor shoes/boots are to be removed in the boot room.
- e) Indoor shoes are to be either gym runners or other appropriate footwear.

Classrooms:

- a) Students are not to touch or remove materials in or on the teacher's desk or another student's desk without permission.
- b) Students are to comply with the individual rules and expectations specific to each classroom teacher.
- c) Students are not to be in any classroom but their own unless they are directed to be there.
- d) Students are responsible for keeping their classroom and school tidy.
- e) Unregistered students are not to enter the classroom without prior permission. Only those students who are considering registering may visit classrooms. Former students may visit at lunch or after school, when permission is granted beforehand.

Dress Code

Cedars Christian school believes that the identity of a person is not primarily based on what one chooses to wear but is fundamentally grounded in the fact that both male and female staff and students are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Since God is the Creator of the human body (Psalm 139:14) we recognize the beauty, dignity, and intrinsic worth of our human bodies. We affirm that every staff member and student is not their own but solely belongs to God and should seek to honor Him with their bodies (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

We live in a highly sexualized culture that objectifies human beings made in the image of God. This over-sexualization is manifest in many ways, but specifically in the way that we dress. Dress codes and/or guidelines are challenging for any organization to establish and enforce. Dress guidelines for schools vary depending on the learning activity (classroom vs. gym or field, for example). We recognize that dress codes predominantly target what females wear. Historically, women have been wrongly held responsible for the lustful thoughts and actions of men because of the way a woman chooses to dress. We uphold that both male and female staff and students are responsible for their thoughts, words, and actions towards others regardless of what a person may be wearing (Matthew 5:27-28).

The application of a dress code requires the cooperation of parents, students, and staff. We expect parents to make themselves aware of the school's dress guidelines and be the primary monitors of what their children wear to school. A brief inspection before children leave for school will avoid phone calls home to have parents bring a change of clothes to school.

Although there may not always be agreement, ultimately, it will be the responsibility of the administration, teachers, and support staff to determine the acceptability of the clothing worn by students. The guidelines are listed below to provide clarity around our school dress code guidelines.

Specifically, student dress must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Shirts must touch the waistline of pants, leggings, skirts and shorts while standing.
- Exposed cleavage is not permitted.
- Pants, leggings, skirts, dresses, and shorts (minimum 3" inseam) must cover the buttocks when standing.
- Tops and bottoms must be thick enough to not see through.
- Clothing, hats, tattoos, and jewelry that refer to alcohol, drugs, or bear offensive phrases are not permitted.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times; non-marking and appropriate for the given situation.

In gym classes, all students are expected to wear proper attire. This includes short or sweat pants, t-shirts or sweatshirts, and non-marking shoes. Uniforms will be worn by school teams and special music groups in order to present a sharp image to the community. Students may be asked to dress more formally on days their sports team plays a game.

Library and Computer Lab

- a) Appropriate classroom rules apply in the library and the computer lab.
- b) Candy, food and drink is not allowed in the library, computer lab or the gym.
- c) Noise and talking is to be suitable to the task at hand.
- d) Students are not to handle audio/visual or other electronic equipment without the permission and supervision of a staff member.
- e) No students are to be watching TV or using computers in the library before or after school, unless supervised by a teacher.

Gymnasium

- a) Students are not to play in the gym unless under the direction and supervision of a teacher.
- b) Equipment rooms are out of bounds to students unless they are under the direction and supervision of a teacher.
- c) Eating is not allowed in the gym unless supervised.
- d) Good audience/spectator behaviour is expected during assemblies, performances or sports events. Students are expected to wear non-marking shoes only!

Playground

- a) Students must play only in approved areas. These will be communicated clearly to students and monitored by Cedars staff on duty. Primary children are not permitted to play in the big field across the road from the main campus during regular playtimes.
- b) Students are to use all playground equipment in a safe manner.
- c) Throwing snowballs, stones, dirt, sticks, etc., is prohibited.
- d) Fighting is prohibited and is usually the result of a child not being able to properly understand and handle their big emotions in a given situation. All fighting will be dealt with by teachers and/or administration, consequences will be determined (including the possibility of an immediate one-day suspension), restorative practices between students will be considered, and parents/caregivers will be informed. All of this will be done in love and with the view of helping the student learn from the incident and thus being better prepared to make better choices in the

future. Repeated incidences of fighting will be cause for further action, consequences and support.

- e) Bullying and any other form of intimidation or harassment is prohibited. Like fighting, all incidents will be dealt with by teachers and administration and parents/caregivers with a view of helping students understand the cause of their behaviour/actions and what can be done to restore the relationship. Parents/caregivers will be notified for their support and follow-up at home.
- f) Students are not to leave the school grounds unless they have permission from a teacher.
- g) Bicycles are to be parked at the bicycle stands upon arrival at school; riding on the playgrounds is not permitted.
- h) Cedars requires students to wear a helmet when riding to and from school.
- i) Litter and recycling is to be placed in the appropriate receptacles throughout the school.
- j) Skateboards and Heelies are not allowed at school.

Scent Aware

Cedars Christian School is a **scent-aware school**. As many people have significant reactions to strong scents, we ask that students not wear strong perfumes or colognes, or apply strong smelling, spray deodorants.

Healthy, Nut Free Lunches

Nutrition is integral to well-being and a student's overall ability to self-regulate and learn well. To ensure that students have the opportunity to eat, we have a morning recess and lunch break for all students. Please ensure that your child brings a bottle of water and a healthy snack and lunch that is well-balanced and low in refined sugars. We know that packing lunches can be a challenge, but if you encourage your child to make their lunch with you (until they are able to do it themselves) they will be more likely to eat the foods that they have chosen and prepared.

As there are students in our school who have severe anaphylactic reactions to nuts, we must all be diligent to **refrain from sending any nut products to school** with your child.

In-Days/Out-Days

Students should come to school with appropriate clothing for the weather and are expected to spend non-class time outside unless an in-day is declared. In-days are declared when the temperature reaches -20 C or colder or when there is significant wind chill.

Students who are not well and bring a note from home to stay in will be asked to sit in their classrooms at recess and lunch. However, we prefer students stay home until they are completely recovered.

Cannabis, Tobacco, Alcohol, Drugs, Vapour Products, and Other Intoxicating Substances

Cedars does not permit the use of cannabis (marijuana), tobacco products, vapour products, alcoholic beverages, non-prescribed drugs, and any other intoxicating substances on campus or on any school related functions. These policies also relate to any activities, such as off campus lunch times and breaks, when students are in any way associated with Cedars. Students under the influence of, or in the

possession of alcohol or drugs or other intoxicating substances while under the school's supervision will be immediately suspended and could be recommended for expulsion.

The Cedars Christian School supporting community is committed to encouraging a smoke-free lifestyle for students and staff. Therefore, smoking is not permitted during school hours or at any school related function. Any student caught smoking or in the possession of cigarettes will serve a one day suspension for the first offence. A second offence may result in expulsion.

Vaping: "to inhale and exhale the vapor produced by an electronic cigarette or similar device"

With the rise of e-cigarettes and the like, the BC Ministry of Health has finalized and implemented new regulations (September 2016) regarding vapour products. All e-substances are covered by the new legislation and it does not matter if the e-substance contains nicotine or is nicotine-free. Both the device and e-substance are subject to restrictions on sale, display, promotion and use. The following aspects of this legislation are of particular importance for our Cedars' context:

No vapour products may be used any time on our school site.

Although vapour products may be purchased by adults over the age of 19, it is important to note that it is illegal to give or provide any vapour products to someone under the age of 19.

The use of vapour products before or during school hours is considered to be a serious offense that will result in an immediate Discipline Notice and suspension. The possession or distribution of vaping products or equipment will be dealt with in a similar manner.

Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy

The safety and well-being of children in schools is of paramount consideration. Children deserve to be protected from abuse, neglect, bullying, harm or threat of harm. Therefore, BC independent schools will ensure that children attending these schools will experience a learning environment that enables every child to feel safe, accepted and respected.

Independent schools (and Cedars in particular) will continuously develop strategies to make students feel valued, respected and connected within the school community. This will include the protection of the students' physical safety, social connectedness, inclusiveness as well as protection from all forms of bullying, regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity and expression, while remaining consistent with our school's faith-values, cultural perspectives and philosophical values.

Harassment and bullying are unacceptable behaviors at Cedars.

Cedars Christian School staff is committed to leading and teaching students in a bully-free environment. Our goal is to build a Christian Community where biblical standards for relationships are both taught and upheld. All students will be taught what bullying is and that if they are being bullied or see someone being bullied they need to feel safe to tell the bully to stop and then report it to an adult (parent, teacher, administrator). Teachers will educate students yearly on this issue through class devotions, chapels and Health Education lessons using a variety of resources.

a. Harassment refers to behaviors, gestures, comments, or displayed materials of a sexual, racial, gender-based, religious or personal nature that create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational

learning environment. Harassment can be verbal or physical – but can also occur in the virtual, digital realms as well. Harassment through social media will be taken as seriously as verbal and physical harassment. The issue of sexual harassment, more particularly, refers to any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that detrimentally affects the learning environment or leads to adverse consequences for the person being harassed.

b. Bullying is a pattern of repeated aggressive behaviour with negative intent, directed from one student to another where there is a power imbalance. Examples of bullying may include: physical aggression, inflicting bodily harm, threatening with a weapon, gossiping, spreading rumors, abuse over social media and/or texting, maliciously excluding, mocking, name calling, defacing clothing, teasing about appearance, verbal threats, intimidation and taking possessions. Claiming that an action was unintentional is no excuse, either legally or in our school setting. Harassment is discriminatory and disrupts the environment of mutual respect, cooperation and trust, which is crucial for ensuring a healthy and productive school community. All students and school employees are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others.

Reporting: If a student has concerns about the nature of any physical contact by an adult employed by the school, fellow student, or by a member of the public, the student should immediately report this to the principal, vice principal, or school counselor. Students are encouraged to report any conduct or contact that makes them feel uncomfortable, is bothersome, or is contrary to a stable learning environment. Depending on the circumstances, consequences range from suspensions to expulsion.

Self-questioning: If you ever wonder whether your behaviour or comments are appropriate, consider these questions: How would you feel if the behaviour was directed towards you, a family member, or a close friend? What would someone you respect think if they witnessed your behavior?

Discipline Process

At Cedars, discipline is part of the process of Christian discipleship. It is part of Cedars' task to teach towards certain attitudes and behaviour. Preventative discipline consists of wise and clear expectations laid out by parents and teachers as to acceptable behaviour within the school. It is our hope that all students will respond favorably to these expectations. For the few non-responsive students there is a due process that can lead to removal from the school.

The following key points are considered in the process of discipline at Cedars. Discipline of children at Cedars Christian School:

- is inseparable from the process of Christian discipleship.
- always includes the commitment of involved families.
- follows a consistent, stated process, understood and adhered to by students, families, school staff and the school administration.
- is based on respect for the dignity of the child as a creation of God.
- In accordance with school policy, a student who is accused of breaching a rule should be notified of that which he/she is accused, with the essential facts of what he/she is alleged to have done. (NOTE: In more serious cases, notification should also be given to a student's parents.)
- An accused student should be given an opportunity to tell his/her side of the story. The right to be heard is a fundamental element of procedural fairness. Where the stakes are minor, this can be satisfied by the teacher or administrator asking the student to explain her/his actions. More serious matters require more formal investigation and documentation.

Violations of the Code of Conduct

Discipline must be considered as a process consisting of the following stages

1. The teacher attempts to resolve the disciplinary situations with the student. Consequences are to be imposed by the teacher. Documentation and advising the parents/caregivers takes place. If the teacher is unable to resolve the matter, or if the student is involved in repeated incidents, then it is referred to the vice-principal and/or principal and the parent/caregiver. The administrator then has the following sanctions available to her/him:
 - loss of in-school privileges
 - detentions
 - extra work assignments
 - in-school suspension
 - temporary suspension from school (1 to 5 days)
 - behavioural contract set-up between home & school
 - recommendation for expulsion from principal to the Board

2. Repeated Incidents/Lack of Responsiveness
 - counseling regarding Code of Conduct violation
 - a discipline notice is sent home, outlining circumstances, consequences and outcomes
 - letter to be signed by parent/caregiver and returned to school prior to student's return to class.
 - child is removed from the school
 - following a meeting between the parent/caregiver, student and administrator, administrator will establish a plan for corrective action.

Under certain circumstances, to be determined by the principal, an immediate suspension from the school may be required. Parents/Caregivers have the right of appeal to the principal or to the Board if they feel their child has been dealt with unfairly.

Parental Concerns and Appeal Procedures

If a parent has a concern regarding their child please follow the procedure below.

1. Talk to the teacher.
2. If you still feel the situation has not been solved, talk to the vice-principal or principal.
3. If after following Step 1 and Step 2, you still feel your concerns have not been fairly dealt with; you may contact the Board, attention to the Education Committee representative. A convenient time will be arranged for the parent to receive a hearing by the board.
4. The Board's ruling after the appeal is final.

There should be an assurance of no retribution for pursuing an appeal or review.

Authorities and board members will follow the following guidelines to avoid bias or the appearance of bias:

Don't prejudge the evidence of the particular circumstances of the student's case, or give the appearance (e.g., in public statements) of having done so, even if you have strong convictions on such matters.

When selecting persons to hear a case or an appeal of a decision, avoid those who have a close out-of-school relationship, family ties or adversarial relationship with the student or student's family, or a staff member who is closely involved in the incident.

(NOTE: In small communities it may be difficult to find persons who do not have an appearance of bias regarding a particular case or an appeal of a decision. In such situations, it is advisable that the school's procedures allow for the appointment of a person(s) from outside the school community to handle the case or appeal.)

If a person (e.g., principal, staff member or committee member) has made a previous decision, or has been a member of a committee that has made a previous decision, that now is under appeal, such a person should only participate in the appeal for the purpose of providing testimony. Such a person should not participate in decision-making at appeal levels.

An appeal-hearing committee should not hear or receive evidence that will not be shared with the other party in the dispute. Do not receive evidence or representations from administrators or staff in the absence of the person appealing, and avoid the appearance of doing so.

Field Trip Form and Policy

All classroom rules will apply on outings. A staff member will be responsible for carrying a first-aid kit (supplied by the office) on all outings. The staff member will also secure a class list complete with care card numbers, emergency phone numbers, and medical alert information and equipment (medications, epipens, etc.) for each of their students. This information must be made available to volunteer / chaperones / drivers – including medical alert orientation, where applicable and approved by parents/guardians ahead of time. All volunteers (chaperones, drivers or otherwise) must have: valid criminal record check, child abuse and neglect training, two character references, and (if driving) evidence of vehicle insurance and a clean driving record.

In the event of a life-threatening emergency or the safety of students or adults, the lead staff member or volunteer chaperone / driver should call 911, and then the school or school administrator. In the situations where there has been a significant breach of the school's code of conduct, injury, or other emergency, the lead staff member or volunteer chaperone must contact the school or school administrator immediately. The Principal or administrator designate will then coordinate response to parents/caregivers, staff, community and authorities, as deemed necessary.

Permission Slips

- a) All teachers must use the Cedars Field Trip Permission and waiver form each time they go on a school outing. All Permission Forms must be signed and returned by parents before the outing. NO VERBAL PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED, however an email is acceptable.
- b) Permission slips should be sent to parents/guardians with particulars of activities. These must be returned, with the parent/guardian's signature before the outing.

Medical Alert Information

- a) Teachers will take a copy of all students' Emergency Contact Forms (ECF) with them. The main office Admin Assistants will print and provide a copy. The teacher will provide copies of these for her parent drivers.
- b) Parent Drivers will be given a copy of ECFs and will be informed by the teacher if any of the students in their vehicle has a life threatening allergy and if so will be given any necessary

medical supplies. (The forms and supplies must be returned to the teacher at the end of the field trip)

Financing

Extensive Trips (for which funds are raised):

- a) All financing should be estimated at least two months prior to the time in which the field trip is to take place.
- b) All fundraising should be raised by two weeks prior to the trip.
- c) Expenses incurred during fund raising may be refunded totally or partially with discretion.
- d) A general ledger account will be set up through the Business Office.
- e) Moneys remaining at the end of the trip shall be reimbursed to the individual student accounts.

Long Distance Trips

Fees charged to the student:

- are to include coverage of activities as well as a traveling charge.
- are to be predetermined and fees collected BEFORE attendance on the trip

Parents/caregivers are to be notified if the students will be eating out and therefore require money for a meal.

Transportation for all School Related Activities

Students and staff will often travel by bus to their destination. Cedars owns two buses and maintains a list of certified drivers. At times we do need to contract a larger bus and this is done through Diversified Transportation BC or another suitable provider.

Parent drivers are also a common means of getting to and from our destination. The School's policy includes liability clauses covering parents and children in any private vehicle designated by the school: note -- all private vehicles have insurance; it is recommended that such private vehicles carry \$2,000,000.00 liability (photocopy to be filed in the office).

- a) The law states that each child travelling in a vehicle must wear a seat belt. Doubling up is not legal.
- b) All vehicles should be in sound mechanical state.
- c) Parent drivers are volunteers and thus must have undergone a criminal record check before driving for school trips.
- d) Booster seats are required for all children under the age of 9 or are 4'9" and smaller.

Pupil/Adult Ratio On All Trips

There shall be a recommended ratio of students to adults on all outings:

- a) In Grades K - 6 the ratio minimum for supervision is to be 1 adult to 6 students.
- b) In Grades 7 - 10 the ratio minimum for supervision is to be 1 adult to 10 students or regular teacher/student class ratios.
- c) In a vehicle there will be a maximum of 6 students if there is only one adult. For seven or more students, another adult needs to be present.
- d) This includes overnight trips which shall be limited to Grades 5 - 12, with special permission to be granted in advance by administration.

Chaperone Responsibilities

Chaperones play an important role at our school functions and trips. In conjunction with Cedars staff, they are responsible for the safety and well-being of our students and to help ensure appropriate behaviour fitting of Cedars students. To ensure that chaperones are prepared for this role, they will be given specific instructions and guidance from the teacher leading the trip/event. There are very specific guidelines for overnight trips and specific guidelines will be shared and discussed prior to leaving.

We are very grateful for chaperones and rely on their support to take students on wonderful and exciting trips. Please note that all chaperones must have a criminal record check on file to serve in this capacity.

G. School Services

CERT (Cedars Emergency Response Team)

As a Christian community, we realize that we belong to Jesus and that His grace and peace will sustain us in all circumstances. However, we do not always understand how God works, and accidents and tragic events do occur. In order to help students cope with a death or an accident, administration has a team of individuals in place to deal with the practical aspects of the situation and to provide support for the staff and students.

Child Safety

Cedars' staff is directed to respond promptly to issues of child safety and protection. All staff follow the guidelines from the Ministry of Education document: - *Supporting our Students: A Guide for Independent School Personnel Responding to Child Abuse*.

Newsletters

The Cedars Shake newsletter is sent out to each family via email. The newsletter is the official source of information for the school and includes up-to-date information on events, plans, activities, needs, and student work. The Cedars Shake is sent home by e-mail. A printed copy of the newsletter can be provided upon request.

School Calendar

The calendar is approved by the Board and published prior to the beginning of the school year. It is accompanied by various significant dates throughout the school term. In the event that dates are changed, notification will be sent home via the school newsletter. At the beginning of the year a calendar will be published which is to be inserted in the newsletter.

Cedars Christian School Auxiliary (PAC)

PAC is a committee open to any Cedars parent/caregiver. It consists of a group of dedicated individuals who have made it their priority to enhance the educational climate of the school through volunteering in a variety of capacities as well as holding fundraisers. Some events PAC oversees are the hot lunch program and concession for the Elementary Sports Day. Any funds raised are used by PAC to purchase items not provided for by the general budget and of which will benefit Cedars and its students.

Gymnasium Rentals

From time to time people inquire about renting the gym for various activities. For bookings or more information, contact the school office or visit our website. Please note that school functions supersede all other gym usage.