

THE CHILDREN
OF
ST. MARTHA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PARENT – STUDENT – STAFF
HANDBOOK

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SAINT MARTHA

Feast Day: July 29

Patroness of Hospitality



“Jesus loved Martha and Mary and Lazarus.” This unique statement in John’s gospel tells us of the special relationship Jesus had with Martha, her sister, and her brother.

Apparently Jesus was a frequent guest at Martha’s home in Bethany, a small village two miles from Jerusalem. We read of three visits in Luke 10:38-42, John 11:1-53, and John 12:1-9.

Martha is the patron saint of housewives, servants, and cooks.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if the most important thing that could be said about us is “They served”.

Prayer:

Saint Martha, pray for us that we might serve Jesus better. Help us to overcome our distractions and worries to listen to his words and be present to him this day. *Amen.*

SCHOOL MOTTO

“Growing together in Faith and Knowledge”

MISSION STATEMENT

The Children of St. Martha Elementary School inspires lifelong learning and cultivates self-worth through the integration of academic achievement and the values of our Catholic faith in partnership with home, parish, community and society.



VISION STATEMENT

In providing an education experience for our students within the context of our Catholic faith and as a Professional Learning Community, the staff at The Children of St. Martha Elementary School will maximize student learning through collaborative teaching which has as its focus: student results, continuous assessment, best practices, and professional development.

WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

At The Children of St. Martha Elementary School we are proud of our scholastic program and of our mandate to relate all aspects of our school program to the Gospel values of Jesus Christ and the doctrines and teachings of our Roman Catholic Church.

The expectation of our Catholic community is that all our children participate in the religious life of our school both in the classroom and at religious celebrations held at the school or at St. Martha's Parish church. Our community expects the parents of our children to support the religious dimension, liturgies, and celebrations in which all our students and staff must participate or be respectfully present. In addition, we also appreciate the support and cooperation of parents as we endeavour to teach our students strategies that will develop their scholastic potential, organizational skills, and respectful, charitable behaviour. Our school's primary goal is described in the mission statement of our Holy Spirit Catholic School Division's Mission Statement to: "... foster the growth of responsible citizens who will live, celebrate and proclaim their faith. The Catholic School loses its purpose without constant reference to the Gospel and a frequent encounter with Christ."

Please, if you have any questions regarding the participation of your son or daughter in the Roman Catholic life of our school or your support of our school's role in the evangelization, education and socialization of our students, discuss these concerns with the principal.

Thank you for choosing The Children of St. Martha Elementary School; we look forward to providing you and your child with support, service, affirmation, and hope.

Sincerely,

OFFICE AND BELL TIMES – MON. TO THURS.

Office Opens	8:00 a.m.
Supervision Begins	8:35 a.m.
Morning Classes Begin	8:38 a.m.
Pre-Kindergarten A.M. Classes Begin	9:00 a.m.
First Recess	10:30 – 10:45 a.m.
Pre-Kindergarten A.M. Classes End	11:30 a.m.
Lunch Time	11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Afternoon Classes Begin	12:30 p.m.
Second Recess	2:15 – 2:30 p.m.
Classes End	3:30 p.m.
Supervision Ends	3:45 p.m.
School Office Closes	4:00 p.m.

OFFICE AND BELL TIMES – FRIDAY

Office Opens	8:00 a.m.
Supervision Begins	8:35 a.m.
Morning Classes Begin	8:38 a.m.
Pre-Kindergarten A.M. Classes Begin	9:00 a.m.
First Recess	10:30 – 10:45 a.m.
Pre-Kindergarten A.M. Classes End	11:30 a.m.
Lunch Time	11:50 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Afternoon Classes End	1:15 p.m.

Early Dismissal - Staff Meeting Days

The first school Monday of each month is an early dismissal day for our students. Afternoon recess on these days is from 1:45 – 1:57 p.m. and all grades are dismissed at 2:30 p.m.

There are NO Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten classes on these days.

School Routines

Students are not to enter the school proper (carpeted area) nor go to lockers before the bell rings with the exception of obviously inclement weather. Students may use washrooms, water fountains, and leave their belongings in the boot room areas.

Lunches and required classroom books are to be kept in the classrooms; not the lockers. Students are not to use the front entrance of the school unless accompanied by their parents. If being picked up or dropped off, students should use their regular side exits. Playground areas for students do not extend to the front of the school, in the parking areas, or in the area in front of the Kindergarten room. This is to ensure our students' own safety.

After 3:30 p.m. dismissal, all students are to proceed directly home unless directed to go elsewhere by their parents or teacher. Students must not loiter in or at school

because student supervision ends at 3:45 p.m. The student phone should be used only for serious or emergent matters. Arrangements to go to a friend's place, for example, should be made prior to the start of the school day. This is important for bus students because the bus departs as soon as possible after the final bell.

PROGRAMS

At The Children of St. Martha School we offer educational programs as prescribed in The Program of Studies for Elementary Schools in Alberta. Students take instruction in Language Learning, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Fine Arts, Health and Physical Education, Computer Literacy, Blackfoot Language and French as a Second Language. Since we are a Catholic Separate School, all students also receive daily religious instruction.

Throughout the year we have a number of liturgical celebrations which parents are encouraged to attend. Projects are organized during the year to raise money, food, or clothing for the poor of our community and to raise money for the children of third world countries who are in need.

Special programs include skating for Kindergarten, Outdoor Education for Grade 6, and downhill skiing for Grades 5 and 6. Other classes take at least one major field trip associated with regular class work at some time during the year. These trips are funded through our School Council.

Religious Nature of the School

"The Catholic School loses its purpose without constant reference to the Gospel and a frequent encounter with Christ."

The expectation of our Catholic community is that all our children participate or be respectfully present in the religious life of our school both in the classroom and at religious celebrations held at the school or at St. Martha Church. In addition, our community expects the parents of our children to support the religious dimension, liturgies and celebrations in which all our students participate or are respectfully present.

In order to demonstrate and celebrate our Roman Catholic identity, there are many outward, physical signs as well as planned activities and celebrations in our school.

Many visual representations appear in our school as symbols of our Roman Catholic identity such as: our name and a cross on the outside of the school, Bibles, crucifixes, our patron saint, St. Martha, nativity scene at Christmas time, Advent wreath during Advent, banners, stations of the cross during the Lenten season, books, resources and magazines in our library and staff room, white board religious themes throughout the school year.

The following events and activities demonstrate our Roman Catholic identity: prayers in classroom and staff room, religious instruction, priests' visits to classrooms, classroom visits to church, community speakers' visits to classrooms, liturgical

celebrations, music, spiritual development day and retreat for staff, missions, collection of food and money for food bank.

Alberta Initiative for School Improvement – A.I.S.I.

This project will provide teachers with different and better assessment techniques to enhance the learning skills of their students and is intended to provide these students enhanced opportunities to learn and develop their cognitive skills.

The project goals are:

- To provide enhanced opportunities for students to achieve grade level proficiency through a school wide focus on improved teaching and learning strategies.
- To achieve enhanced results in achievement tests.
- To acquire additional support and resources which address the remedial concerns of students experiencing difficulty in cognitive skills.

ALERT

Holy Spirit Schools cooperate jointly with the public school district and the City of Lethbridge Police to provide School Resource Officers for all schools. There are 6 SRO's in Lethbridge.

Leaps and Bounds Program

The Grade Six students participate in this four week program. These classes are usually taught by our School Resource Officer. This program allows the students to recognize and resist the pressures that may influence them to experiment with tobacco, alcohol, gambling, marijuana, inhalants, gambling, or other drugs. Students also learn how violence hurts everyone and avoidance strategies.

B-Smart

Grade 5 students participate in B-Smart, a program focused on anti-bullying, and making wise choices. Our School Resource Officer leads the class through role plays, discussion, and other exercises.

Affiliation with the University of Lethbridge and the Lethbridge Community College

Throughout the year, your child may have university and college students working in their classroom. The student teachers and interns that we have from the University assume a variety of teaching responsibilities, dependent upon where they are in their teacher training. The college students are working on programs that will also assist them in working with children in the future.

Achievement Tests

Alberta Learning has scheduled Provincial Achievement Tests usually in late May and mid-June for students in Grade Three and Six.

It is important that all students are motivated to do well on these government tests and that they actually write them. We would ask parents to ensure that their children attend school on these days and that they arrive at school on time and motivated to do well on these provincial examinations.

The examination schedule will be provided in the school's monthly bulletin.

Allergies

It is important for parents of children with allergies to notify the school as to the nature of these allergies. These are to be noted on the student's registration form as well as on the Student Information form that is sent out every school year to parents to be updated.

Should any student require a prescribed medical treatment in the event of an allergic reaction, parents are required to come to the office and complete the appropriate forms as per school board policy. These forms will require a doctor's signature.

We strive to make Children of St. Martha Elementary School, as much as possible, a peanut free zone as a number of our students have severe allergies to peanuts, nut, or nut products. We ask parents not to send to school with your children any food that contains these products.

Appointments

Students who are being picked up during the school day for appointments need to be signed in and out at the school office by a parent or guardian. We would ask that parents and guardians check in at the office so that we can call the student down to the office while they are signing them out.

Attendance and Absences

Regular and punctual attendance is vital to academic progress. However, should absence from class be necessary, we ask that you phone the school and inform us of the impending absence.

When children are absent, and we are not informed of their whereabouts, we make every effort to ensure that the child is safe by attempting to make phone contact ourselves. It takes considerable time each morning for the school office staff to make these calls. It is the parent's responsibility to contact us. Please assist us by phoning the school. You can leave a message on our voice messaging system at 381-8110 any time, day or night.

Please make sure your child attends school regularly and arrives at school on time. The more effort and energy a child puts into learning, the more likely he or she will succeed. If a child is arriving late to school, they often miss important lessons or tests and may not catch up with their classmates.

Bicycles, In-Line Skates, Skateboards, Scooters

Bicycle racks have been provided for those students who wish to ride their bicycles to school. The school is not responsible for theft or damage caused to the bicycles and students are encouraged to **lock** their bicycles in the appropriate bicycle racks upon arrival at school. Students are not allowed to play on bikes (their own or others) during the school day. It is advisable for parents to record the serial number of the bicycle in case of loss or theft.

In-line skates, rollerblades, skateboards, or scooters, etc., may be used for traveling to and from school. These are not allowed to be used on school property or inside the school during the school day and must be stored in the student's locker after the bell has gone. We do not have secure storage space available to keep these items for students during the school day.

We would remind parents that children under 18 years of age are required by law to wear helmets when riding their bikes. Also children should wear protective gear, i.e., helmets, wrist guards, elbow and knee pads, when using in-line skates, rollerblades, skateboards, or scooters to and from school.

Bus Service and Behaviour

The Holy Spirit Catholic School Division provides bus service to students of The Children of St. Martha Elementary School who live more than 1.2 km from the school. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis and some routes may be cancelled or altered if the need for service is no longer required.

All students who ride the bus are expected to cooperate with the driver for the safety of all passengers. Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion and they are to keep all objects as well their heads and arms inside the bus. Disorderly conduct, rowdiness, foul language, bullying, and lack of cooperation may result in bus privileges being suspended or removed.

The City of Lethbridge School Bus Rules and Regulations only allow for eligible students to ride the school buses to and from school. This means that other students who wish to travel on the bus to their friend's home for a birthday party, play date, etc. are not allowed.

For information on bus routes and behaviour expectations, please contact the school office or the City of Lethbridge Transit Department (320-3885).

Canteen

Limited canteen service is provided for students during noon hour. Items such as milk, juice boxes, beef jerky, cheese and fruit snacks may be purchased. No "junk food" is served from the canteen. The canteen is closed on Hot Lunch days.

Changes at Home

If either parent changes their place of employment, address, telephone number, or if there has been a change in the contact person in case of emergency, please let us know as soon as possible so we can update our files.

Should other changes happen on the home front that could affect your child's behaviour or learning, please contact the homeroom teacher or our office. Working together, we can help make any adjustments easier for your child.

Co-Curricular

Apart from classroom instruction, The Children of St. Martha Elementary School offers a wide variety of activities, We encourage students to take part in as many areas of interest as possible.

Parent volunteers wishing to help with these activities are also welcome. It is our hope that in offering a wide variety of activities, we provide a better all-around education to our students.

Damage to School Property

Should any student cause damage to school property either intentionally or accidentally, the parents of the child will be required to pay the amount assessed. In all cases, parents will be informed of the circumstances and costs.

Discipline

Students are expected to behave in a courteous and responsible manner while in school. Should their behaviour be lacking in respect towards peers, staff, or school property, they will be disciplined by staff members or administration. All offenses will be dealt with in keeping with the philosophy of a Catholic school. Should disciplinary procedures be required, parents will be contacted and informed what action will be carried out.

Discipline Guidelines

The School Act (Part 1, Section 12), states the following with regard to the responsibilities of students:

A student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- be diligent in pursuing the student's studies;
- attend school regularly and punctually;
- cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services;
- comply with the rules of the school;
- account to the student's teacher for the student's conduct;
- respect the rights of others.

Most students are capable of developing intelligent self-control under the

guidance of the caring and capable adults in their lives. For these children, most of the time, there is little need for any sort of overt disciplinary sanctions. It is necessary, however, at times to take disciplinary action in an attempt to help children develop self-control.

Student Behaviour

The vast majority of our students are well behaved, and this is something of which we can all be proud. There are, however, some students who have not adopted appropriate school behaviour that is acceptable and require some assistance in developing the necessary behaviours. The assistance that we provide comes in the form of a set of procedures that are progressive in nature and somewhat personalized to the age of the child, the repetitive nature of the concern, and the severity of the behaviour.

Acceptable Behaviour

The best discipline is self-initiated through respect for others and an understanding of the reasonableness of regulations and procedures. It is important to reinforce the courteous and considerate behaviour of the majority of students. Positive reinforcement through verbal commendation will assist students to understand that acceptable behaviour is appreciated. To encourage acceptable behaviour, teachers will recognize hard work and good effort with praise and commendation to the individual students concerned. There will be a conscious effort by the staff to establish as positive an atmosphere as possible.

Inappropriate Behaviour

When behaviour becomes unacceptable, it must be dealt with appropriately and meaningfully, but in fair and just consideration of the child and the action. A number of factors must also be taken into account. One consideration is the age and experience of the child since a younger child is less aware of the seriousness of various actions, of appropriate responses towards adults and peers, and has to be taught what constitutes acceptable behaviour. Another consideration is the seriousness of the action. It must be determined if the act was a prank or pre-planned provocation or retaliation, intentional or a misunderstanding. A third consideration is the repetitive nature of the misbehaviour.

Disciplinary procedures that deal with inappropriate behaviour will progress in reasonable steps that gradually emphasize the seriousness or severity of the actions. Pranks, teasing, thoughtless action will usually be dealt with by warnings from staff on supervision. Normally no further action would be necessary unless the child persists after being warned, has hurt someone or has damaged someone else's property. Further action, when needed, might include an additional warning from the classroom teacher or school administration, loss of recess privileges, or a phone call home. Parents will not normally be contacted for minor offences or problems. However, whenever inappropriate behaviour is persistent, hurts other people or causes damage, parents will be contacted.

If the behaviour of a child warrants it, he or she may be referred to the administration immediately. In most cases, however, the administration becomes involved when the

various attempts on the part of the classroom teacher to bring about the required changes in student behaviour have not been productive.

To emphasize to a child that certain actions cannot be tolerated, it may be necessary to take away certain rights or privileges. This could be the loss of recess time for a set number of times, restriction from the playground, loss of bussing privileges, or restriction from bringing a bicycle, skateboard, or rollerblades to school. An additional consequence might be the assignment of chores (with parental approval) to be completed at the school. Before any disciplinary action is taken, parents will be contacted and informed.

If student misbehaviour is serious or persistent, or has caused serious hurt or damage, parents will be requested by the teacher or principal to come to the school to discuss the behaviour, its causes, and appropriate courses of action. While these requests usually originate with the school, parents should feel very welcome to request a meeting with the teacher or school administration when they have a concern regarding behaviour or discipline.

Should a child's behaviour become entirely inappropriate or disruptive, it may be necessary to remove the child from the classroom or from the school. Such action is a school suspension. A teacher or the administration may suspend a student from one period to a maximum of five school days if, in their opinion, the student's behaviour is detrimental to the good conduct and climate of the class or the school. In some cases, the student is not sent out of the school, but provided an alternate location to complete his or her school work. This is an 'in-school' suspension.

The school administration may also suspend a student from attending school for up to five school days. In this situation, the parents will be contacted and the student will be supervised until the parent arrives at the school to take the child home. School work will be provided for the student during the time they are away from school. Parents will be informed in writing of the situation leading to the suspension, and a parent conference will be held prior to the student returning to the school. Parents will have the right to appeal all suspension decisions to the Superintendent of Schools.

Dress Guidelines

It is our objective to teach children that, just as many adults must comply with a dress code in their place of work, certain apparel is inappropriate in school. Clothing chosen for school should reflect respect for the dignity of self and others. Students are expected to dress appropriately for all school occasions. Revealing tank tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, muscle shirts, shirts that expose the midriff area of the body and very short shorts or short skirts are not appropriate wear for the classroom. Shirts that depict violence and inappropriate subject matter or with suggestive slogans or graphics are not appropriate wear for school.

Parents are asked to monitor their children's dress so we don't have to debate or phone home to talk about who should be wearing what. What may be appropriate in Kindergarten or Grade One may not be appropriate in Grade 4, 5, and 6. What is appropriate for Physical Education class or Sports Day is not appropriate for regular classroom wear or special occasions, such as liturgical celebrations.

Children should have a good pair of running shoes for all Physical Education classes. Proper footwear must be worn at all times inside the school.

The weather changes often and very quickly. What appears to be a beautiful morning at 8:30 a.m. could be very nasty by noon or 3:30 p.m. Some children come to school with very light jackets, no boots, and bare legs in the morning yet by lunch, when the temperature may have dropped, they do not have proper clothing to bear the outside weather. It is easier to remove extra clothing than not to have the proper clothing here at school.

Listen to the radio in the morning to make sure your children have the appropriate clothing for the season and that they come dressed for the weather since they will be going out for recesses in the winter as well. Children are expected to go outside for each recess period unless the weather is particularly unpleasant and may present a danger to the children.

Evaluation of Student Progress

Evaluation of student progress is conducted on a continual basis. Our first parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for mid-September. The goal of this first meeting is to enable the homeroom teacher to learn about your child. Please let us know about your child's interests, health concerns, and any strengths and weaknesses in regard to your child's learning or social interaction.

Progress reports (report cards) are issued in November and March in order to inform parents of their child's scholastic and social progress. These are followed by parent-teacher conferences to discuss your child's educational standing and progress and any concerns or questions. Final reports are issued on the last day of school.

Parents are encouraged not only to attend the parent-teacher conferences, but also to maintain regular contact with the child's teacher. Since the conferences are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis, parents may request to meet with the teacher at any time during the year.

Since evaluation is looked upon as providing a sense of hope and success for the student, we hope that continued support and contact will be maintained between the school and the home.

Fees – Textbook Rental

The school system charges an annual fee. Students are provided with the necessary textbooks and some other resources needed for classroom instruction. Should a student lose or damage a text, the parents of the child will be asked to reimburse the school for the purchase of a replacement book.

A schedule of school fees will be published in our September bulletin and fees are due when school begins. Payment of these school fees should be made to our school office, and we would ask parents to exercise extra caution if sending cash with their child. Prompt payment prior to December 31 of the school year would be greatly appreciated.

The majority of this school fee goes to the School Board as a textbook rental fee and the rest is used by the school to help defray photocopying and mailing costs for monthly bulletins, notices to parents, etc.

Fire Drills and Lock-Down Procedures

Fire drills and lock-down procedures are held periodically throughout the school year. For this reason, students must wear footwear inside the school at all times in case they must exit quickly into wet, cold or snowy weather. All students and staff will be taught and become familiar with the formal routines for our fire drills and lock-down procedures. These drills are simply a rehearsal of safety procedures and should be seen in that light.

Reasons for a lockdown are varied, but the primary reason is always to ensure the safety of your children. All visitors to the school must comply with fire drills and lock-down procedures.

Homework

In order to foster good study skills, we encourage students to spend some time each day on homework. Even though homework may not be formally assigned each day, we encourage students to spend some time at home reading, reviewing material studied, or studying notes. According to research on good learning, student achievement rises significantly when students conscientiously and regularly do homework or review.

Hot Lunch Days

The School Council periodically sponsors days for purchasing hot lunch items, such as, pizza, hot dogs, etc. Notes will be sent home in advance so that these may be pre-ordered. Please remember that **no late orders** are accepted after the deadline indicated on the order forms.

Intramurals

Students in Kindergarten to Grade Six are divided into one of six possible colour teams. These teams are the Blue Jays, Green Giants, Grey Tornados, Red Barons, White Knights, and Yellow Cheetahs. Family groups are placed on the same colour team together.

Students can earn points for their respective colour teams by participating in the intramural programs or special intramural days indicated below.

Intramural programs such as floor hockey, badminton, basketball, etc. are scheduled about once a week throughout the school year during the lunch time recess. Special intramural days such as Team Logo Day, Bad Hair Day, Turkey Trot, etc. are scheduled for all grades approximately once per month.

The culmination of the intramural program is Sports Day which is generally held in June. All students participate in various sporting events throughout the day and gain points for their individual colour teams.

See also Co-Curricular.

Illness

All children who are not feeling well should stay home from school. When a child becomes ill at school, the office will contact the parent to make arrangements for the child to be picked up. We do not have the facilities to have children remain at school when they are sick.

Children that have communicable diseases must not attend school until there is no risk of spreading their illness. The school is required to report outbreaks of certain communicable diseases to the school's health nurse.

During normal recess and lunch hour, the norm is that children go outside for recess. At the school, we are unable to supervise or "baby-sit" students who are sick and whose parents request that they stay inside for recess or lunch hour for many varied reasons. It is our expectation at the school, that children who are too ill or too injured to participate in the normal routine of the school, including recess, should be kept at home for their own good and recovery and for the good of others; so, they don't spread infectious illnesses. The exception will be if a doctor's note directs that the child should be kept in. In this case, we will honour the doctor's directive and special arrangements will be made through the principal to care for the child during the time he or she is not in class.

Please do not phone the school or send a note to request that your child remain inside at recess and lunch. We are not set up to provide care, supervision, or babysitting for children who are sick and who should be at home recuperating.

Lice

The school will notify the parents of children in classes where lice have been detected. A Head Lice Information Sheet provided by the Public Health Unit will be sent home with students.

We assure you that this condition is not due to poor hygiene. Teach your child not to share personal items such as combs, brushes, hair clips, scarves, hats, or any hair care items. Head lice spread from one person to another person by direct head to head contact (lice cannot jump). Head lice do not live on animals.

It is recommended that parents check their child's hair every week and if any head lice or nits are identified that they treat their child immediately. Once the head lice have been treated, the child may return to school. Parents can call the Community Health Nurse at 388-6655 if further information is needed.

Library and Textbooks

At today's cost of books, every effort must be made to return textbooks at the end of each school year and to return any library books borrowed from the classrooms or from the school's library.

Should any textbooks or library books be lost, the parent or guardian is required to reimburse the school for the cost of replacing the lost item.

Lockers

All students in Grades One to Six are issued lockers at the beginning of the school year. Although not mandatory, combinations locks are strongly recommended for the

students in Grades Four to Six. Please remind your child not to write on or to glue stickers or pictures to the inside or outside of their locker. These are difficult to remove and clean.

Lost and Found

All items of clothing, footwear, lunch boxes, etc., are to be clearly marked with your child's name so they can be easily identified. We have a large, wooden "Lost and Found" box located at student entrances next to the boot rack. Please check these boxes from time to time for any lost items.

Lunch Donation Items

The purpose of this is for students to donate food items that they will not eat and will not take home. Items placed in the sharing box may be taken by other students who:

- have forgotten their lunches
- have a large appetite that day and are still hungry

Please check with your child to see how often food items are not consumed but donated to this program.

Lunchroom Guidelines

Students staying for lunch are expected to eat in their classrooms as assigned. Students are expected to use their good manners and act appropriately while eating. Our canteen provides only snacks for sale.

Medication

Staff is not allowed to administer any form of medication. If absolutely no other arrangements can be made at home for administration of medication, parents are asked to come to the office and fill out the appropriate forms as required by School Board Policy. These forms will require a doctor's signature.

There are no medications such as cough drops, Aspirin, Tylenol, or Advil available from the school for headaches, earaches, colds, etc.

Medical/Allergies/Learning Problems

Parents should indicate on the registration form and the Student Information sheet, any allergies, medical or learning problems that may affect the learning process for their children.

With this information we can provide your child with the most appropriate program for successful learning.

Messages to Students

We understand that when you have a problem, you want us to get a message to your child right away. But our office staff is small, so please ask us to relay messages only in serious situations. We will not call children out of their classes to the phone unless in the case of emergency. We will communicate messages from parents to their children during recess breaks or after the final bell.

Noon Hour

Supervision is provided at noon for students who remain at school. Students staying at school during the noon hour are not to leave the school grounds. Any child who ordinarily stays for lunch and is planning to go to the store, friend's home for lunch, or a nearby restaurant, MUST have signed and dated written permission from home.

Students are expected to go outside for the noon hour unless the weather is inclement or severe. Unless the student has a signed doctor's note and special arrangements have been made with the principal, it is our expectation that students will be outside. If your child is too ill or injured to participate in the normal school routine, he or she should be kept at home for their own good and recovery. Remember: if your child is to remain in the school for recess or lunch hour, please provide us with a signed doctor's note.

Parent Classroom Representatives

Each class is asked to submit the name of a parent who would act as the representative for the class on School Council as well as acting as a liaison person for the other parents of the class.

Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers are an important component of the educational program at our school. We appreciate all the assistance that is provided by parents, either in the classrooms or the library. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact your child's teacher or the school office. We can always use the help!!

Parking Lot

Use McMaster Boulevard for parking, drop off and pick-up of your children particularly for the older students. If you drive into the parking lot, please obey the "One Way" sign and the "No Parking" signs. Use the lane behind the staff parking stalls for pick-up and drop off only. Pull ahead as much as possible allowing others to pull in behind. Keep circling in the parking lot until your child is ready to be picked up. Use a parking stall when available and walk with your child in the parking lot.

Don't angle park in front of the dumpster and don't leave your vehicle unattended in the drop off lane. Do not block or park in the driveways.

Children are not to ride their bikes through the parking lot or walk in the parking lot unless accompanied by a parent or staff member.

Refer to the parking lot map and please be aware of designated NO PARKING areas.

Pre-Kindergarten Program

All Holy Spirit Catholic Schools Pre-Kindergarten programs are designed to meet the unique developmental needs of children through a play-based approach permeated by our Catholic faith and Gospel values. The developmental needs of the children in our program will be met through celebrations and daily prayer, a center-based approach including block, art, dramatic play, exploration, manipulatives, playdough, sand and water centers, language and literacy activities, indoor and outdoor gross motor

activities, and music. The program has daily access to the gymnasium and other school facilities.

The Pre-Kindergarten children become a part of the school family as they attend school celebrations and participate in school fun days wherever possible.

Children must be 4 years of age on or before December 31st of that year to attend Pre-Kindergarten starting in September. Registrations for this program start at the beginning of January. Contact our school office for more information on monthly costs, dates, and times.

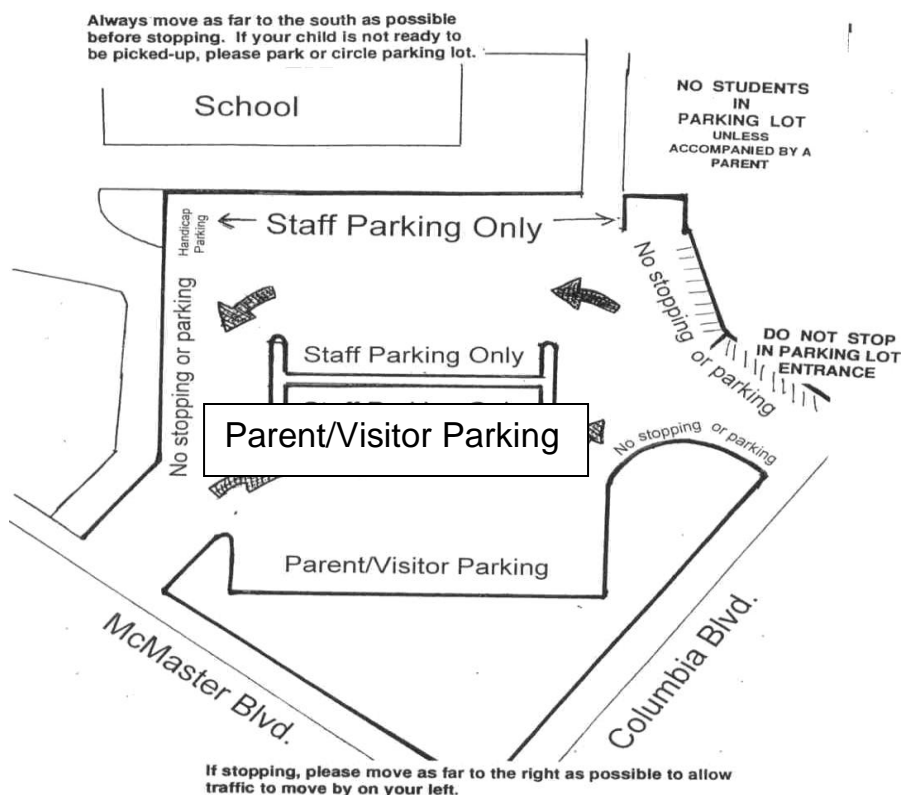
Professional Development Days

The staff of The Children of St. Martha Elementary School uses professional development days to meet together for presentations and workshops, in order for us to further increase our teaching skills and to find out about new programs that will be included in our educational program. Each year we develop a plan for the coming school year that identifies the workshops and topics that we will be attending on our school's professional development days.

There is no school for students on these professional development days. The City of Lethbridge operates a child care program in our school's gym for those parents who require supervision for their children while they are at work. For further information or to register, please call the BLAST Program office at 320-3988.

Parking Lot Plan

The Children of St. Martha Elementary School



Parking Lot Plan

Recess

As a school staff, we spend a significant amount of our time supervising your children before and after school, at both recesses and at lunch hour. It is our hope and intent to provide for all our children a safe and caring environment in which to learn and play.

Children are expected to go outside for each recess period unless the weather is particularly unpleasant and may present a danger to the children. Many factors such as temperature, wind, wind chill, rain, snow, sunshine or its absence determine how appropriate it may be to send children outside or to have them remain inside.

During recess and lunch hour, the norm is that children go outside for recess. At the school, we are unable to supervise students who are sick and whose parents request that they stay inside for recess or lunch hour for many varied reasons. It is our expectation at the school, that children who are too ill or too injured to participate in the normal routine of the school, including recess, should be kept at home for their own good and recovery and for the good of others; so, they don't spread infectious illnesses. The exception will be if a doctor's note directs that the child should be kept in. In this case, we will honour the doctor's directive and special arrangements will be made through the principal to care for the child during the time he or she is not in class.

Please do not phone the school or send a note to request that your child remain inside at recess and lunch. We are not set up to provide care, supervision, or babysitting for children who are sick and who should be at home recuperating.

Sacramental Preparation

Students in Grade 2 receive instruction in preparation for receiving the Eucharist for the first time and those in Grade 3 are prepared to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation through programs in their own parishes.

Registration for the sacraments of First Communion, First Reconciliation, and Confirmation is very early in the school year and takes place at the parish you regularly attend.

There is generally a registration fee per child per sacrament. This fee helps cover the costs of the text and the supplies each family will need. For further information or to register your child, call your "home" parish.

School Council

Objective: To develop a cooperative Christian relationship between home and school by:

- becoming an important vehicle for communication between parents, teachers, and school administration;
- promoting community support and participation in school activities;
- making recommendations to the staff and receiving recommendations from the staff to promote effective home/school relations;
- enabling parents to become partners with the professionals in the Catholic education of our children.

All parents and staff are invited to attend the monthly meetings held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the school library.

School Front Entry

Students are not to use the front entry when entering or leaving the school. They are to use the side entries. Students may use the front entry only when accompanied by their parent/guardian.

School Phone

School telephones are for school related business only and students are not allowed to use the telephone in the office.

Students will not be called from their classes to take telephone calls unless it is an emergency and not from anyone but his/her parent or guardian.

Students have access to a telephone here at school to make personal calls to their parents. We ask that the children who are using the phone follow this procedure:

- the student should ask their teacher or a supervisor to use the phone.
- the student should report their intention to use the phone to the office.
- we ask students to keep their calls to a minimum and restrict them to important matters that require their parents' attention. This does not include making arrangements to visit a friend after school or calling friends/family to chat.
- the student phone is toll restricted and has a maximum time limit of 3 minutes per call before it becomes disconnected. The student is able to phone the same number only after a 15 minute duration has elapsed.

Special Programs and Services

In addition to our regular educational programs, The Children of St. Martha Elementary School offers the following special programs and services to help meet the needs of students and parents:

Native Liaison – at our school we have a Native Education Program Assistant who works with our native students and their parents. This Assistant is at our school about three days per week to assist students with their learning experience. Presently, this Assistant is teaching a Blackfoot Language Program to Grade Four to Six Native students who have expressed an interest in the program.

Resource Room – we have on staff a Special Education teacher who provides assistance to students who require extra help in core subjects.

School Counselor – our school has the services of a trained Counselor once a week to work with children who have been identified as requiring assistance in such areas as behaviour modification, bullying situations, grief counseling, family breakup or crisis, communication/social interaction concerns, etc.

Speech Language Pathologist – our school has the services of a Speech Language Pathologist once a week to work with children who have delays/disorders in the following areas:

- language (e.g. grammar errors, understanding stories),
- fluency (stuttering),

- speech (pronunciation errors) and
- voice (e.g. hoarseness, nasal sounding)

Treatment may consist of individual or group sessions at school, home programs, Parent-Child evening groups, consultation to the school and/or parent. Parents are invited to attend testing, an information meeting following the testing, as well as treatment sessions. Referrals to the Speech Language Pathologist can be made by the parent or teacher. For more information, contact the school office or call Children's C.A.R.E. Services (381-5255).

Special Needs Assistants – these people are assigned to classrooms with students requiring special assistance.

School Resource Officer

Our school has access to a City of Lethbridge police officer assigned to our school. The SRO assists families in crisis, helps with threat assessments, and teaches the B-SMART and Leaps and Bounds Programs.

Supervision

Children are supervised 15 minutes prior to the start of classes, during class time, during recesses and lunch break, and 15 minutes after dismissal. Anyone arriving before or after these times is not supervised. Parents are requested to make personal arrangements for before and after school supervision times.

The City of Lethbridge operates a before and after school program in our school's gym for those parents who require supervision for their children while they are at work. For further information or to register, please call the BLAST Program office at 320-3988.

Valuables

We ask students not to bring toys, cards, games, game systems, CDs, CD players, MP3 players, stereos, or any cherished jewelry to school and most students leave their collections and treasured items at home. There are some students, however, who cannot resist the temptation in spite of our and their parents' efforts. The result is that expensive, electronics, games, and treasured items are lost. Please instruct your child to leave his or her electronics, collections, jewelry, and toys at home as we cannot be responsible for any loss or damage. These also cause distractions in class and possible problems on the playground during recess.

Visitors to the School

Occasionally there are persons in our school who cannot be readily identified. Unfortunately, we don't yet know all of our parents by sight. The concern is primarily for the safety of students, but extends beyond that to the security of the building.

It is for these reasons that parents and other visitors to the school are being asked to check in at the office when delivering forgotten items such as lunches, homework, shoes, etc.

When picking up children for appointments or other reasons, please make sure that you sign your children out at the office and subsequently, sign them back in as they return to class later in the school day.

Volunteers

The school staff is most grateful for the assistance provided by parent volunteers during the school year. With your help we are able to provide a better program for your children. Volunteers are required in the following areas as well as School Council work and classroom representatives:

Field Trips	Special activity days
Working in the classroom	Sharing talents and programs
Assisting individual children	Library
School and fundraising events	Computer Lab
School lunch, Canteen	Noon hour activities
Basketball	Sports
School Council fundraisers	Classroom Representative

If you are interested, please stop in at the school office or speak with your child's teacher.

See also Parent Volunteers.

Volunteer Drivers

If you wish to volunteer to drive a student or students (including your own child) for field trips, etc., you must complete a "Volunteer Driver Form". These forms are available in the office. Those parents who have filled out a form previously, please stop by the office at the beginning of each school year and initial your original form as confirmation that nothing on the form has changed. Our School Board Policy states that these forms require annual approval.

Webpage

We have a site on the worldwide web. We can be reached through the Holy Spirit web site at www.holyspirit.ab.ca. Then click on schools and The Children of St. Martha. There you will find us.

We have posted on our school's site our yearly school calendar as well as our bulletin and calendar for each month. Please be sure to "surf by" and browse through the information provided.