

# Welcome to Meet the Teacher

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**Teacher: Miss Charlene Francis**

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Grade 6! The first week of the school year has swiftly gone by. The students and I have adjusted well to the beginning of the new academic year. I greatly appreciate the students' cooperative disposition. We are already off and running...I can only imagine what heights we will soar to this year.

As your child's teacher, I will offer encouragement and assistance. I strongly believe that every student is capable of learning and of achieving his or her personal best. My role is to make this a reality for each student. I hope to help your child to develop strong work habits that will form a firm foundation for his or her future academic success. As a class, we will work hard towards creating a learning environment in which all students feel welcomed, safe, and eager to share their knowledge. Additionally, as senior members of our school community, the students will be given many new responsibilities and opportunities to be leaders in our school.

This evening, I value the opportunity to meet with you and to highlight expectations for the upcoming year. It is very important for us to work together as a team to provide an atmosphere for the children which encourages active learning, comfort, and success. I am eager to work with you and your children to help them reach their goals and do the best they possibly can.

## **Philosophy**

My primary aim as an educator is to help your child develop a healthy and positive self-concept as part of the educational and growing process. Every child is a unique gift from God, each possessing his / her own special talents. I wish to instill in all of my students the values of responsibility and perseverance in all aspects of their lives. Working together, the students and I hope to create a Christ-centered atmosphere within which each child will be challenged, respected, and loved.

## **Expectations of Students**

- to treat others with respect and consideration
- to be active participants in the faith community, within and outside of school
- to demonstrate increasing independence and to be responsible for themselves
- to self-advocate
- to demonstrate good leadership
- to work diligently and quietly during independent seat work making productive use of class time
- to work cooperatively with others and offer assistance when the need is perceived
- to submit all work in a neat and legible manner to write their name, number and date on all work, and format their work according to the expectations outlined in class
- to maintain organized notebooks and binders
- to complete assignments without simple spelling and grammatical errors
- to read-over and edit their written work
- to hand in all assignments on time, or bring a note (written by the student, but signed by the parent to explain a valid reason for incomplete work)
- to accept consequences for incomplete work.
- to resubmit assignments which are handed in incomplete or have not met criteria
- to complete corrections for their assignments and submit them to their teacher
- to take pride in their work and perform it to the best of their abilities

As a class, we will be working together to create a classroom constitution. This is a series of promises that the children will make to themselves, to each other, and to God. These rules and expectations will provide a safe, successful, and creative learning environment. Above all, students are expected to take full responsibility, put their best effort into all that they do, and ensure that their work is always representative of their best effort.

This year, in grade 6, your child will be given increased independence, both inside and outside of school. He or she will be encouraged and expected to accept responsibility for his or her choices, actions, words, and yes, acts of omission!

## **Communication**

Open communication between parents and teachers is extremely important as we both work together for the benefit of your child. Please feel free to contact me by phone or email if there is something that concerns you. You are also welcome to schedule an appointment with me at any time if you have any questions regarding your child. Always remember that we are working as a team: teacher, parent, and child!

## **Medical Issues**

Please ensure that the office is informed in writing and kept up-to-date of any medical changes in your child's health.

*Since we are a "nut-aware" school and do have students in our classroom who have sensitivities to nuts, we kindly request that any treats sent to school for birthday celebrations are in fact free of nuts and nut-products.*

## **Agendas**

The planner is intended to assist your child with developing time management skills and responsibility. Your child will record his / her homework and responsibilities for a particular day, including assignments that were completed during class time. If an assignment was already completed in class, the student is to put a checkmark beside it. Please check your child's planner each night to ensure all work is completed. If the work has been completed (accuracy and quality), please sign / initial your child's planner. Planners are checked *periodically (spot checks)* by the teacher.

Assignments are recorded in two columns in the agenda: one for assignments that are due the next day, the other for reminders of upcoming assignments or responsibilities. In the "Reminder" column, due dates are recorded in brackets.

## **Homework**

Intermediate students should be completing approximately 30 to 60 minutes of homework each night. However, homework will vary according to the amount of class time that your child chooses to use wisely and productively. The purpose of homework assignments is three-fold:

1. to complete work not completed during the school day
2. to provide extension and/or reinforcement of concepts
3. to help the children continue to develop successful study habits

Thirty (30) minutes of reading should be completed on a daily basis (and recorded onto a reading log which is collected every two weeks). Generally, students are provided time in class for silent reading which may count towards this time.

Individual and group projects will be assigned throughout the year (long-term projects). Criteria sheets that identify due dates will be sent home for parent signature.

\* If a situation arises where homework cannot be completed, please send a note with your child explaining the reason as to why it could not be completed. Your child should give me the note before the start of classes. If possible, your child may report to school early the next day to complete the unfinished work prior to the start of the school day.

All homework assignments are expected to be handed in the morning of the due date by 9:10 am. Any assignments turned in after I have collected the class' work are considered late. Therefore late penalties will apply, particularly to major assignments:

- - 1% if the assignment is handed in later that day
- - 5% for each additional day after the due date

Without a justifiable, written excuse from the parent, your child's final mark for any assignment submitted past the deadline will be subject to late penalties.

Homework notices are issued for "work owing" to the teacher. Students are expected to complete any outstanding assignments / corrections and submit them to the teacher along with the signed homework notice by 9:00 am the next morning.

### **Extra Assistance**

I am always available to help your child. In addition to recess and lunch, I am willing to make time before school (between 7:45 am and 8:25 am) or after school, as long as the student/parent have made prior arrangements with me. At times throughout the year, I will also schedule sessions for extra help (tutorials on specific concepts) which students are invited to attend.

### **Missed Classes**

If for some reason your child is away from school, he / she is responsible for completing the work they have missed, collecting notices and asking for clarification on any new lessons. In order to support your child, a student in the class (a study buddy) will be assigned the job of recording missed work, notices, etc. and gathering all of the necessary materials. An extension of due dates may be provided depending on the circumstances.

### **Calls Home**

Students may ask for permission to use the phone to make necessary calls home, for instance to report illness, but not to ask if they can go to another student's house after school or because they have forgotten their homework or gym strip at home, for example.

### **Enrichment in the Classroom**

An enrichment center is located in the classroom. Students who have completed daily class assignments will be encouraged to earn bonus credit by completing activities in the core subject areas. Assignments will be checked for accuracy and quality and then placed in the student's file.

Referral to the Enrichment Program led by Mrs. de Jager will be based on ability and merit (willingness to take on extra work, enthusiasm for the subject matter), as well as space availability. Students will have to earn a spot and will be required to "apply" for a position in the program.

### **Extended Learning Opportunities**

Many opportunities for learning such as outside of school and in-class field trips, as well as guest speakers, will be arranged throughout the year. This year, among the field trips will be a visit to the Planetarium.

In addition, the students of Grade 6 will have the opportunity to participate in a Babysitters / First Aid Course, as well as participate in the Street Smarts (a set of lessons to teach your child about the dangers of drug addiction).

### **Curriculum-based In class Programs**

Mrs. de Jager will work with the students once a week during a Language Arts block to teach **reading skills**. Mrs. de Jager's program will focus on a variety of reading-related skills in the non-fiction genre and will include novel studies and book report projects. As for myself, I will work with the students to teach them reading skills in the non-fiction genre.

On most Fridays (except when there is a Spelling test), there will be a **weekly quiz** based on concepts that have been covered in the week(s) before. Generally, the quiz will cover concepts from the core subject areas.

**Spelling and vocabulary development** will be integrated into the children's assignments. Specific word lists that the children will be responsible for learning will be distributed at least twice a month. A spelling test based on the word list will take place on the Friday of the week in which a word list was distributed. Generally, there will be 18 Core words on the list that the students will need to study, as well as an additional 2 Challenge/Bonus words.

Parents will receive notice for major **tests**. Students will also receive / create a study guide to assist them in their test preparation.

*All tests and project evaluations must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to me. If a student has errors on a test, he or she will be required to complete the corrections on a separate piece of paper. These corrections should be stapled to the original test when returned to the teacher. Once the tests (or project evaluations) have been checked for parent signatures (and corrections), they will be returned to the students to file in their portfolios.*

Other in-class programs:

- Daily Reading Log
- the Classroom Reading Challenge (completion of book profiles)
- Current Events
- Student of the Week
- Class Meetings

### **The Editing Process**

Students are expected to read over and edit their written work in green pen.

Significance of ink colours used in Grade 6:

Blue – for day to day work Green – for self-editing written work Red – for student (self / peer) marking Purple / Pink - designated for the teacher
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Please note: When editing a written assignment done on the computer, students are asked to print off the draft of their assignment (which is to be double-spaced), edit it in green ink and submit for their teacher's review.

## Criteria-based Grading

The letter grades that your child receives will reflect to what degree he or she has met specific criteria, as stipulated by the Provincial Learning Outcomes. Whenever possible, Ministry created performance standards will be used to grade student work. These standards will be reviewed with the students.

Please note that letter grades are based on a number of factors:

- Student performance in class (discussion, group work, class activities)
- Student's daily homework
- Student-teacher conferencing
- Student self-evaluation / peer-evaluation
- Tests and quizzes
- Assignments and project work

## Schedule of Specialty Classes

Daily Physical Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Formal Phys. Ed classes (<i>full gym strip required</i>)</li><li>• DPA Fitness Blocks (<i>running shoes required</i>)</li></ul>	Monday, Tuesday, Friday  Wednesday, Thursday	with Miss Campbell
French	Monday, Friday	with Mdme. Ponis
Music	Wednesday	with Ms. Ranallo
Reading Block (Novel Study)	Wednesday	with Mrs. de Jager
Library Skills	Thursday	with Ms. Ripoli
Book Exchange	Friday (Library books are due back at school on Thursday)	
Technology Block	Friday	with Ms. Ranallo

### **Other Important Information**

- ❖ **Immunizations:** Immunizations take place in the Grade 6 year (co-ordinated by the local health authority).
- ❖ **Kindergarten & Grade 6 Buddies:** As you may know, the Grade 6 students are paired with students from Kindergarten. Every two weeks, the buddies gather together to engage in fun learning activities.

Please note that although our Holy Cross Community is a very generous one, we want to prevent families from feeling the pressure to exchange gifts between the K & 6 buddies at different times during the school year (such as birthdays, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, end of the year, etc.) To this end, the Kindergarten teachers and I will plan for just one formal gift-exchange between the K & 6 buddy classes in the school year: at Christmas. Details regarding this gift-exchange will be forth-coming once we approach that season.

- ❖ **Preparation for High-School:** Next year in Grade 7, your child will be required to make a decision as to where he / she would like to attend high-school. In light of this, you and your child are strongly encouraged to attend as many "Open Houses" hosted by local high schools within (or outside of) our system this year in order to familiarize yourselves with what the different high-schools have to offer.

Please note that many of the high-schools may require copies of your child's report card(s) / Communicating Student Learning Progress Report(s) from Grade 6, in addition to those from Grade 7, as part of the application process.

### **Dates to Note...**

Grade 6 Masses: September 19, 2019  
February 26, 2020

Immunizations: November 13, 2019 (tentative)  
June 10, 2020 (tentative)

Thank you in advance for your time, cooperation, and support. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns throughout the year, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to a positive and productive school year.

Sincerely,

Miss Charlene Francis  
Grade 6 Teacher & Vice Principal

## Curriculum Overview

### Christian Education (Religion)

Our overall Archdiocesan theme for the year is: “I Can Do All Things Through Christ”

The textbook that we will be using is from the *Christ Our Life Series*: God Calls a People

Focus: Old Testament

### Health Education (part of the “Physical and Health Education Curriculum”)

\* Generally integrated into the other subject areas

Focus: healthy living, mental health well-being, substance abuse prevention, safety and injury prevention, puberty

Students will participate in the following two courses:

- *St. John’s Ambulance* baby-sitting and first aid course
- Street Smarts (drug abuse resistance education)

### Career Education

\* Generally integrated into the other subject areas

Focus: effective work habits and study skills, goal-setting and decision-making, interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, and career development

### Language Arts

#### Reading:

Reading is an important part of all subject areas. A variety of literature will be used to complement various themes: anthologies, grade-level appropriate picture books, short stories, novels and, of course, textbooks and reference material for content reading.

The students will be engaged in learning the Reading Power strategies as we explore various types of literature.

The novels studied this year include: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Artemis Fowl, Number the Stars

30 minutes of daily reading is required. Parents are asked to initial entries in their child’s reading log.

Writing: The overall writing process (pre-writing, drafting, editing, proofreading, publishing and presenting) will be explored. Students will learn more about good sentence and paragraph construction, as well as various styles of writing: narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository. Some types of writing that your child will be engaged in this year include anecdotes, short stories, opinion / persuasive writing, and research reports.

Listening and Speaking: Various listening and speaking experiences will be provided. Students will also be involved in choral reading, oral reading, discussions, presentations and drama.



## Math

The *Math Makes Sense* Program will be used, as well as *Journeys 6* and additional handouts to supplement lessons.

Some concepts that will be covered are: patterns, number concepts, number operations (addition, subtraction, division, multiplication), decimals, fractions, probability, measurement, geometry, graphing, estimation, problem solving, and financial literacy

## Social Studies

Some units that will be covered include: Mapping, Global Citizenship, Protection of Human Rights, the United Nations and international cooperation, Global Poverty and Inequality, Government Systems, Ways of Life in Other Countries, Globalization, Economic Interdependence, Natural Resource Management & other Challenges Facing the World Today

## Science

Some units that will be covered include: Exploring Extreme Environments (Space), Human Body Systems (excretory, hormonal, and nervous), Forces & Motion

## Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies

\* Integrated across the curriculum, particularly in Science and Technology

Topics explored: Digital Literacy; Media Arts, Robotics

Students will be creating digital portfolios this year to help showcase their learning.

## Art

A variety of mediums and artists will be explored. Art will also be incorporated into the other subjects.

## Drama

A variety of drama-related learning opportunities will be integrated across the curriculum.

\* Exploration of the First Peoples' Principles and Perspectives will be explored throughout the entire curriculum, as will the Principles of Catholic Education.

