



ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength...Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.”

Mark 12:30-31

Table of Contents

Section 1: MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES	5
1.1 Mission	
1.2 Vision	
1.3 Core Values	
1.4 Whole Student	
Section 2: SCHOOL INFORMATION	8
2.1 School Hours and Bell Schedule	
2.2 Emergency School Closures	
Section 3: HEALTH AND SAFETY	10
3.1 Health Care	
3.2 Emergency Procedures	
3.3 Safe Environment	
3.4 Visitors to the School	
3.5 Supervision of the Students	
3.6 Harassment and Bullying	
3.7 Information and Technology Safety	
3.8 Field Trip Process	
3.9 A Quick Guide to Illness	
Section 4: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	15
4.1 Routines and Procedures	
4.2 Student Conduct Expectations	
4.3 Student Policies and Process	

For simplicity in this Handbook, the word “parents” is used with the full understanding that a number of our students are under the governance and care of persons other than the birth parent(s).

Dear Parents/Guardians

Welcome to Maple Ridge Christian School,

We aim to live out our vision of providing *innovative Christian education in a mission-minded community where every student thrives* each and every day. We do this in partnership with families who choose us to educate their children. This partnership (or community as we commonly refer to it) is at the core of being able to deliver on our mission to: *Equip, train, and inspire students to lead a life worthy of God, and of their calling to transform the world for the glory of God.*

We truly believe in this transformative task of making disciples of Jesus for service in his kingdom for both today and tomorrow.

We truly hope that your experience reflects what we aspire to be and accomplish and this handbook is meant to be a reference that helps define the partnership that we share. In this handbook you will see items of significance as it pertains to the specific nuances of each program.

On behalf of the MRCS Board of Directors and the MRCS Leadership Team, thank you for your partnership and we look forward to attaining our shared mission and vision together.



Quentin Flokstra
Lead Principal

Section 1: MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES

1.1 Mission

1.2 Vision

1.3 Core Values

1.4 Whole Student

RATIONALE

To provide a clear and concise statement of why Maple Ridge Christian School exists and to outline the objectives we hope to accomplish as a school community. Our mission, vision and core values guide our major decisions and everyday activities.

PROCEDURE

1.1 MISSION

Christian education to transform the “whole” student – and the world – for the glory of God.

1.2 VISION

To provide innovative Christian education in a mission-minded community where every student thrives.

- Christian education for the “whole” student—heart, soul, mind, and strength—is one where God works through committed Christian teaching staff. Staff are equipped to integrate a Biblical worldview into all areas through the use of biblical throughlines and a deep understanding of our part in God’s story.

1.3 CORE VALUES

MRCS is:

- Christ Centered: We are rooted in the Christian faith and the Bible. We are committed to operating and teaching with a biblical world and life view.
- Forward Thinking: We pursue excellence and innovation in education. We are committed to preparing our students for today and for the future.
- Community Building: We practice community by cultivating relationships in love and grace from kindergarten to Grade 12.
- Disciple Focused: We see the whole student—heart, soul, mind, and strength. We are committed to nurturing our students, so they can discern their God-given purpose.

1.4 THE WHOLE STUDENT

The Christian education we deliver focuses on the “whole” student – heart, soul, mind, and strength. Our Christian staff works as a team to integrate:

- Academics: to challenge and develop the mind
- Arts: to recognize, create and express truth

- Athletics: to value active play and train strong, healthy bodies

We understand that we:

- Are a community: we serve one another and our global community
- Are intergenerational: provide cross-grade experiences from kindergarten to grade 12 and involve siblings, parents, grandparents, and alumni
- Are emotional: we work to foster healthy emotional intelligence based on our identity in Christ
- Are spiritual: we work to incorporate ten discipleship characteristics (also known as biblical throughlines) into the curriculum to help our students become:
 - image-reflectors – represent Jesus as His ambassadors
 - community-servers – build peace and heal brokenness
 - God-worshippers – honor the Lord our God with grateful hearts
 - justice-promoters – identify injustices and become agents of change
 - temple-keepers – care for our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit
 - beauty-creators – praise God by creating beautiful things
 - creation-caretakers – work diligently as stewards of God's creation
 - order-discoverers – find harmony and order in God's creation
 - idolatry-discerners – identify and understand the idols of our time
 - truth-seekers – seek and proclaim truth in all areas of life

By integrating these parts into the whole, we equip our students to impact our world for God's glory. The result is hearts and minds transformed.

Section 2: SCHOOL INFORMATION

2.1 School Hours and Bell Schedule

2.2 Emergency School Closures

2.1 SCHOOL HOURS AND BELL SCHEDULE

School begins at 8:20 AM with the warning bell. Students are to be in their classes by 8:25 AM. School ends at 2:55 PM. Fridays will be an early dismissal at 2:15 PM due to teacher collaboration time. Students are expected to respect the learning community by being on time for all of their classes. Students who are arriving at any point after the morning bell must check in at the front office for a late arrival slip to ensure they are accounted for in our attendance for the day.

Students need to be picked up after school by 3:10 PM Monday to Thursday and by 2:30 PM Friday. In the case of extenuating circumstances delaying pickup, a student must be picked up no later than 4:00 PM when the office closes as there will be no adult supervision.

School office hours are 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, mid-August to early-July.

Bell Schedule (Monday to Thursday)

Warning Bell 8:20 AM
Morning Bell 8:25 AM
Recess 10:15-10:30 AM
Lunch Break 12:00-12:45 PM
End of Day 2:55 PM

Bell Schedule (Every Friday-Early Dismissal)

Warning Bell 8:20 AM
Morning Bell 8:25 AM
Recess 10:15-10:30 AM
Lunch Break 12:00-12:45 PM
End of Day 2:15 PM

2.2 EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURES

If school is to be canceled due to inclement weather conditions or other emergency purposes, we will try our best to inform parents by 7:00 AM. A message will be sent out via the MRCS app, website, and social media platforms as soon as possible to inform parents of the cancellation.

Section 3: HEALTH AND SAFETY

3.1 Health Care

3.2 Emergency Procedures

3.3 Safe Environment

3.4 Visitors to the School

3.5 Supervision of the Students

3.6 Harassment and Bullying

3.7 Information and Technology Safety

3.8 Field Trip Process

3.9 A Quick Guide to Illness

3.1 HEALTH CARE

All Public Health Nurses assigned to the local schools are Registered Nurses with additional education to qualify as Public Health Nurses with the Province of BC's Ministry of Health. All Kindergarten students are given annual dental checkups (visual only). This is not in-depth evaluations and should not replace regular care by a dentist. Visual and auditory examinations are not conducted, but regular check ups at this age are recommended.

3.2 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Maple Ridge Christian School teachers and staff have well defined emergency procedures that are updated annually to meet the needs of our community. Students and staff participate in regular safety drills (fire, earthquake and lockdown) to ensure the proper procedure can be followed should a real emergency occur. In addition, our key first aid attendants participate in regular certification updates. Our Emergency Response Team meets regularly to ensure that our emergency procedures are current. For more details about our emergency preparedness plan please contact the school office.

3.3 SAFE ENVIRONMENT

To keep our school in good condition, please observe the following guidelines:

1. Please report any damage done to school property or equipment immediately.
2. Do not write on or deface any school property.
3. Use garbage and recycling containers. Keep classrooms, hallways, and floors tidy.
4. Participate in school-wide programs and routines to ensure the fields are free of garbage.

3.4 VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

All visitors, including former students, must identify themselves at the office and may visit the school at the discretion of the administration. We ask that current students ask the administrative team for permission to bring in a visitor the day before a visit. In addition, visitors must remain with their host throughout the visit. When visitors or parents are in the school they are asked to sign in and out at the office and wear a visitor badge during their stay.

3.5 SUPERVISION OF THE STUDENTS

There will be staff supervision of the students during the following times:

Drop Off	8:10-8:20 AM
Recess	10:15-10:30 AM
Lunch Break	12:00-12:45 PM
Pick Up (Monday - Thursday)	2:55-3:00 PM
Pick Up (Friday)	2:15-2:20 PM

Arrangements will be made for supervision of students who may need to stay indoors due to an injury or health concern. All students must remain on the property during school hours unless properly supervised by a staff member in charge of the event.

Students must be picked up after school by 3:15 PM Monday to Thursday and by 2:30 PM Friday. In an unusual circumstance, no later than 4:00 PM when the office closes.

3.6 HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Rationale

Maple Ridge Christian School uses a school-wide approach to safety and belonging to the community. This policy is intended to send a strong message to all individuals in our school that we do not tolerate bullying in any form under any circumstances.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is an intentional act of aggression that is repeated over time and occurs in relationships where there is a real or perceived imbalance of power. Bullying includes verbal harassment through verbal actions and cyber bullying, physical assault and other more subtle methods of coercion such as manipulation and social exclusion.

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 a teacher or an administrator. Students are encouraged to report any conduct or contact that makes them feel uncomfortable or is contrary to a stable learning environment.

Students must refrain from all forms of harassment. Parents will be notified and the offending student(s) will receive consequences as set out in the MRCS Discipline Policy.

3.7 INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SAFETY

Our computer system at Maple Ridge Christian School is on a network that has filters that prevent certain inappropriate images and sites from appearing on our student's screen. Unfortunately, not all inappropriate images or sites are caught even with our filtering system and a word or misspelling can lead to something popping up that we would not deem appropriate.

Choosing to be proactive, we will educate students about proper ways to use the technology and information found on computers. We will also be diligent in researching and using child friendly approaches to using technology and Internet resources.

Should an incident occur at school where a student is exposed to inappropriate web content or images the student is expected to immediately press the backspace bar to remove the image or site from the screen. He/she is not to draw attention to the image or site to the other students but to raise his/her hand to inform the teacher about what had occurred. The teacher will inform you, should this have happened while at school.

Realizing the accidental nature of what has occurred; your child will be applauded for handling the situation in a mature fashion. Should your child, however, deliberately seek out inappropriate sites or images by typing in inappropriate words, he/she will be dealt with seriously.

3.8 FIELD TRIP PROCESS

Field trips are an important part of the educational experience at Maple Ridge Christian School. Students are expected to attend the classroom field trips as a part of their learning. Teachers will notify the parents prior to a field trip.

During a field trip all participants are expected to follow the provincial laws and rules established. Students under the age of 9 that are not yet 4'9" tall must be in a booster seat. All occupants of the vehicle need to wear their seatbelts. While on the field trip parents should not make unscheduled stops or deviate from the teacher's instructions. As a general rule, when you drive for a field trip, the group should leave together, drive together, and arrive together.

We are always in need of parent drivers for school field trips and we appreciate parents who are able to help out in this way. In order for parents to drive for field trips, they must fill out a 'Volunteer Driver Registration Form' and submit it to the office along with a Driving Abstract (British Columbia Driving Record Search) and a Criminal Record Check. No parent may

drive students, other than their own, if these forms have not been done. It is the responsibility of the staff member in charge to confirm that the drivers volunteering for the field trip have met the above criteria.

All drivers must carry a minimum of \$3,000,000 Third Party Liability, be at least 25 years of age, and have a minimum of five years of driving experience.

Driving Abstracts (British Columbia Driving Record Search), can be obtained free of charge at ICBC online by visiting:
<https://www.icbc.com/driver-licensing/getting-licensed/Pages/Your-driving-record.aspx>,
from any Motor Vehicle Branch, or by phoning 604.661.2255.

A Criminal Record Check is required for all volunteer drivers. This can be done online and is free of charge. See link on “Volunteer Driver Registration Form” on our parent portal.

A new Driving Abstract must be submitted every 5 years. A new ‘Volunteer Driver Registration Form’ need only be re-submitted if there is a change in the vehicles used. A Criminal Record Check must be submitted every 5 years.

Please contact the office for the full Field Trip Policy.

3.9 ILLNESS IN CHILD CARE – A QUICK GUIDE

We work to ensure that staff, other adults entering the school, parents, caregivers, and students are aware that they should not come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities. Parents whose children exhibit symptoms that impact their ability to participate in these activities may be called to pick their child up.

Performing a regular health check with your child is the best way to prevent illness from spreading in our school setting. A health check means a person regularly checking to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing symptoms of illness that would limit their ability to participate fully in regular activities before coming to school to prevent spread of communicable diseases within the school settings.

Any staff, students, or other persons in the school setting who are exhibiting symptoms of illness, such as influenza, COVID-19 or gastrointestinal illness, should stay home until they are well enough to participate in regular activities. If your child is vomiting, it's best to keep them at home until at least 24 hours after their last bout of vomiting. The most common cause of vomiting in children, gastroenteritis, which is contagious, so keeping your little one at home will help to protect his classmates. Staff, children, or other persons can attend school if their

symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g., seasonal allergies) or symptoms have improved enough to where they feel well enough to return to regular activities and any fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g., acetaminophen, ibuprofen). Please refer to the BC Centre for Disease Control's Quick Guide to Common Childhood Diseases for further information:

http://www.bccdc.ca/schools/Documents/EN_Guide_Childhood_Diseases.pdf

Section 4: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

4.1 Routines and Procedures

4.2 Student Conduct Expectations

4.3 Student Policies and Process

4.1 ROUTINES AND PROCEDURES

4.1.1 Late Arrivals and Attendance

Students are expected to attend school for the full school day, unless they have officially been excused by a parent. Consistent attendance plays an important role in a student's overall learning and ability to thrive. Absences create extra stress for students, teachers, and administration staff, and should be avoided whenever possible. Parents are requested to consider keeping vacation plans to scheduled holiday times in an effort to support the educational development of their children.

Late Arrivals

School starts at 8:25 AM and students are expected to be in their classrooms at that time. A student arriving any time after the 8:25 AM bell must report to the school office and receive a late slip to ensure that he/she is accounted for in our attendance for that day. The late slip must be given to the teacher whose class he/she enters.

If the student has a reason for being late that can be communicated in advance (such as a doctor or dentist appointment), please notify the office using the app or through a phone call or email to mrcs.office@mrcs.ca.

Attendance

In the event that a student is absent from school, the parent/guardian should phone, email, or text the school before 8:45 AM and state the reason for the absence, as required by the Ministry of Education. For absences that are known beforehand, a parent/guardian should notify the school office well before the absence date.

Students and parents are responsible for communicating with their teachers before a planned absence so the teachers can outline the required work if they are able. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance for an absence due to vacation plans.

If a student takes ill during the course of the day he/she must inform the teacher of the class that he/she is leaving and report to the office. The office staff will inform parents/guardian of the illness and request they make arrangements for the student to go home. Students are not allowed to be in the health room without the permission of the office staff.

Regular attendance is essential for success in school. Excessive absence has the potential to severely inhibit the learning process. It is important for students to be present in the

classroom to participate in the discussions, activities and interactions. Illness and serious family crises should be the primary reasons for absenteeism.

Students who miss classes for vacation-related reasons cannot expect help or tutoring during class time or upon their return. It will be the responsibility of the family to support the student in making up work. If a work is missed due to sickness or pre-arranged absence for appointments, it must be completed outside of class time, with support of the family and teacher in collaboration with the student.

4.1.2 Parking Lot Procedures

Please enter the parking lot from the south entrance, utilize the drop off lane for quick drop off and pick up procedures, and exit from the north exit. When you enter the school parking lot please only stop briefly in the drop off lane when dropping off children and leave the left lane open for cars to drive through the parking lot and park. Do not leave your vehicle unattended and/or park in either lane. If you must accompany your child to the drop off or pick up lines, we ask that you park your vehicle in a designated parking spot.

If you are parking, please remember to back in when you park if you are able, as it makes it easier and safer to pull out with children around.

4.1.3 Medication

The school office is able to administer necessary medication to students. Teachers do not give medication. However, the office cannot dispense any kind of medication, including pain relief for headaches, etc., without a “permission for administering medical information” form, signed by a parent or guardian, and medication that has been brought from home, clearly marked with the child’s name. Please contact the school office team to make proper arrangements.

4.1.4 Student Clothing Needs

Gym Strip

Grade 4 and 5 students are expected to wear proper athletic wear during their Physical Education classes. MRCS gym shirts are available for purchase through the office if parents wish to purchase one. The MRCS shirts are also helpful for students who participate in events such as cross country to have for school identification in these races and we strongly recommend purchasing one if your child plans to be a part of these events. Please wash the gym clothes regularly and ensure that students have them at school on the days they participate in physical education.

Indoor/Outdoor Shoes

The students in the primary (K-3) grades need to keep a pair of “inside” shoes at school. They are expected to wear these shoes in the classroom and hallways throughout the year. Indoor shoes must have non-marking soles.

4.2 STUDENT CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

4.2.1 General Behaviour Expectations

Students at Maple Ridge Christian School are expected to treat other students and the staff at MRCS with dignity and respect, seek to work out conflict in age appropriate ways, adhere to the standards established by the school, and strive to develop their skills and talents to the best of their abilities.

Attitude

It is important that students strive to live a consistent Christian lifestyle. Consideration, courtesy, and respect must be shown to all staff, fellow students, and visitors to the school. All students are expected to contribute positively, in actions and attitudes, to the classroom and school community.

Intervention from teaching staff and/or the administrative team may occur when students are at risk in this area. Support services are available for students and will be recommended or required if students are unable to make significant changes on their own.

Inappropriate Language

Use of abusive talk, swearing or offensive language is not tolerated.

Verbal threats will be treated seriously and consequences will be measured against the comments made.

Fighting

Fighting may result in an in or out of school suspension and possible probationary status.

Cheating and Plagiarism

We are called to be people of integrity and honesty. Producing work that is not your own and/or not giving appropriate credit (ie. ‘citing’) is a serious offence. Cheating on a test or an assignment and/or plagiarism will result in an automatic zero. In addition, parents will be notified of the incident. Teachers may or may not allow for the opportunity of a ‘re-write’ depending upon the nature of the offence and whether or not this has occurred

in the past. The use of AI technology to support student evidence of learning should occur only with permission and instruction for the use of such technology by the teacher.

Vandalism/Respect for Property

In addition to disciplinary action when students are involved in vandalism, students will be responsible for paying the cost to repair or replace any property damaged as a result of their actions.

Theft

Theft may result in a suspension and appropriate restitution must be made.

Weapons

Any item construed as a weapon may not be brought to school. Bringing such an item will result in immediate and permanent confiscation. This category includes items that may not normally be seen as a weapon, such as Swiss army knives, lighters, or nerf guns.

Students bringing weapons to school or having weapons at school will not be tolerated and may result in an immediate suspension.

Students who are aware that weapons are at the school should notify a staff member they trust immediately to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

Dress Code

Our choice of clothing is one of the ways we live out our faith at MRCS. As temple-keepers, we care for our bodies. As image-reflectors, we care about what our clothing communicates.

At MRCS, we expect all staff and students to dress in a way that is appropriate for school activities, and with the understanding that our individual choice of dress contributes towards each person in our community thriving. Since the word “appropriate” can be subjective, the following are some guidelines to help inform how to dress appropriately at school:

- Staff and students need to consider the words and graphics on their clothing when dressing for school. For example, drug/alcohol, sexually explicit/suggestive designs, profanity, and discriminating and/or offensive language are not appropriate.
- Similarly, students and staff should recognize that clothing which is too revealing does not nurture an environment of mutual respect that a community needs in order to thrive. For example, clothing for both boys and girls should cover the chest, bottom, and the midriff both front and back.

- If a student or staff member is wearing something inappropriate, they will be engaged in a conversation and expected to reconsider their choice. Everyone plays a role in building our community through how they choose to dress.

The dress code applies to all school functions, on or off campus.

If a student is not in compliance with the dress code, s/he will be asked to change into clothing that meets code requirements.

Use of Personal Electronic Devices

Phones and other electronic devices may be used by students only at the teacher's discretion. If a cell phone is determined as necessary, it must remain in the student's backpack and used only with the teacher's permission.

Bicycles, Skateboards, Scooters, etc.

Bicycles are to be placed in the bicycle racks provided and left there until they are needed for the return home. They are not to be used throughout the school day unless as a part of a staff sponsored activity. Please provide your child with an adequate lock for his/her bicycle. The school will not be responsible for bikes that are not locked up.

Students are not allowed to skateboard, rollerblade, scooter, roller-skate etc. on school property. These items must also be kept in a secure location that has been arranged with an administrative team member or teacher. These items may not be stored in the public hallways or foyers. Doing so may result in it being confiscated.

Hallway Etiquette

Students are expected to practice consideration of others when in the halls. Basic good manners are required (i.e., making room for people to pass, no running, pushing etc.). Students are expected to walk quietly and keep noise to a minimum in the hallways during school hours. Loitering or hanging out in the hallways during school hours, including after school, is inconsiderate and may result in a negative consequence.

Snow Days

Snowball throwing is not permitted on the school grounds for safety reasons.

4.3 STUDENT POLICIES AND PROCESSES

4.3.1 Discipline Policy

Philosophy

Discipline relates to “disciple” or follower. As disciples of Jesus Christ, Maple Ridge Christian School upholds the Christ like characteristics that demonstrate how we live out our faith within our school community (such as image-reflectors, community-servers, God-worshippers, justice-promoters, etc.) Discipline encourages students to live out their calling as followers of Jesus.

The aim of the *Discipline Policy* is to maintain an atmosphere conducive to the safe and effective operation of the MRCS community, as well as to encourage the growth of self-discipline in each student. Furthermore, effective discipline is used to guide people into a healthy relationship with God and community. Discipline is a process of instruction, correction and admonition, which leads toward responsive and responsible discipleship.

***This is an overview of the discipline policy. Please see the office for a full copy of the current discipline policy.**

Rules and guidelines exist to help remind the various groupings that make up MRCS (staff, students, and parents), that they each make up merely one part of the community, and must always take this into consideration:

- Students need to recognize that each one is an important part of the school community and individual behaviour and attitudes affect everyone.
- Students and parents agree to the *Statement of Commitment* to abide by and support school policy and regulations.
- Parents need to respect consistency of school policies and partner with staff and administration when discipline guidelines are being upheld.
- Teachers in their professional roles are responsible for implementing policies fairly and consistently.

Types of Discipline

Generally, discipline will begin with mild interventions to more serious interventions as listed and indicated below. However, the school reserves the right to use any of the following types of discipline at any time, as deemed appropriate or situations warrant.

1. Verbal Warning
2. Detentions
3. Community Service
4. Discipline Notice
5. Behaviour Plan
6. Suspension
7. Probation
8. Expulsion

4.3.2 MRCS Fair Notice: Student Threat Assessment Protocol

To keep Maple Ridge Christian School community safe, staff, parents, students and community members must report all threat-related behaviours. A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be verbal, written, drawn, posted on the Internet or made by gesture. Threats must be taken seriously, investigated and responded to. All threat making behaviour by a student shall be reported to the lead principal and the assessment protocol process shall then be initiated and acted upon by the school's Threat Assessment Team, consisting of staff and administration. This process involves the monitoring and gathering of information where there is reason to believe that a risk of violence may exist, including by conducting limited monitoring of online activity to identify threats before violence occurs. MRCS will not collect information as part of a threat assessment unless there is reason to believe that a risk exists.

MRCS is responsible for the safety and security of students while they are in attendance at school and having a student threat assessment protocol helps to ensure that happens.