

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
II Peter 3:18

Parent Handbook



ABBOTSFORD CHRISTIAN ELEMENTARY (K-5)

Roy van Eerden – Principal

3939 Old Clayburn Road

Abbotsford, B.C. V3G 1J9

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MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS (6-8)

Tym Berger – Principal

35011 Old Clayburn Road

Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 3Y2

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SECONDARY CAMPUS (9-12)

Gerry Goertzen - Principal

35011 Old Clayburn Road

Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 7L7

(604 755-1891)



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the Abbotsford Christian Elementary School community. Welcome back to all of those returning and a warm welcome to all of those who have recently joined our learning community. It is our desire that you will feel at home with us and be blessed by the community as well as be a blessing to the community.

At ACS Elementary we strive to live out community. We work together to educate children in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. “Together” is one of the key words—it implies you. Please involve yourself in our school. There are many opportunities, from the library to the classroom, from the parent support group to the board room. Your involvement helps make our school a faithful learning community.

This handbook briefly tells you a little about who we are and what we do here. Please read through it carefully and keep it handy for future reference. Many of our programs, policies and procedures are outlined within it. We hope you find this information useful. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at the school.

So, welcome to another school year, and welcome to our community! Please join us in making this school the best place it can be for your children.

Yours in Christ,

Roy van Eerden
Principal

ABBOTSFORD CHRISTIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Parent Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Welcome Letter	i
Table of Contents	ii & iii
Staff List	1
School Hours	1
School Calendar	1
<u>Student Life</u>	2-5
- Attendance Policies and School Cancellation	2
- Illness and Injury at School	2
- Devotions/Assemblies/Chapels	2
- Buddy Classes	2
- Intramural Sports	3
- Athletics	3
- Running Club	3
- Recesses/Supervision Times	3
- Discipline	3
- Student Dress	4
- Indoor Shoes	4
- Telephone	4
- Lost and Found	4
- Snacks	4
- Earthquake Preparedness	5
<u>Educational Program</u>	
- Goals of Christian Education	6
- Instructional Program	6-9
- Art	7
- Bible	7
- Computer Studies	7
- Fine Arts	7
- French	8
- Language Arts	8
- Library	8
- Music	8
- Physical Education	8
- Science & Mathematics	9
- Social Studies	9

	<u>Page</u>
- Homework	10
- Home Folders & Agendas	10
- Evaluation & Reporting	10
- Library	11
- Field Trips	11
- Skating/Swimming	11
<u>Links Between Home & School</u>	12
- Homeroom Newsletters	12
- ACES Newsletter: The Express	12
- ACS Newsletter: The Messenger	12
- Parent Info. Bulletin Board	12
- School Directory	12
- Christian Home & School Magazine	12
- Volunteering	13
- Complaint Procedure	13
<u>Transportation</u>	13, 14
- Bus	13
- Car Pool	13
- Map of School	14
<u>All About Abbotsford Christian School</u>	15
- History	15,16
- Governance	16
- Teams and their Chairs	16
<u>Policies of Special Interest</u>	17,18
- Membership	17
- Tuition	17
- Additional Expenses	17
- Enrolment	17
- Child Abuse	18

Abbotsford Christian Elementary School

Staff List

An updated staff list with phone numbers is published in our ACS phone directory, which is distributed early in the Fall.



School Hours

Mon, Tues, Wed., Fri.	Thursdays only	
7:55	8:40	Playground / parking lot supervision begins
8:10	8:45	Additional parking lot supervision
8:25	8:55	Warning bell
8:30	9:00	School begins
10:45	10:45	Recess begins
10:58	10:58	Warning bell
11:00	11:00	Recess ends
12:30-1:15	12:30-1:15	Lunch Break
12:40	12:40	Students may go outside
12:45	12:45	Students must be outside
1:10	1:10	Warning bell
1:15	1:15	Lunch Break ends
2:45	2:45	Warning – Clean-up – Premier agenda
2:50	2:50	DISMISSAL
3:05	3:05	Playground / parking lot supervision ends

* Please note that students have only 10-15 minutes to eat so consider this when packing a lunch.

School Calendar

Abbotsford Christian School publishes an annual calendar of events. All major school events are set well in advance. A copy of this calendar is published in our school newsletter, and additional copies are available in the office. The ACS Messenger and ACS Elementary Express will also publish all of the relevant dates and events as they approach.

STUDENT LIFE

Attendance Policies and School Cancellation

It is imperative that the school be informed if your child is late or absent. Please phone the school secretary (604-755-1891) between 8:00 and 8:20 am if this is the case. Students arriving late or leaving school early should always check in to the school office on their way. This procedure will insure the students' safety and help us to maintain accurate records of attendance.

School cancellation, emergency closings or other urgent announcements will be made by 6:30 am, on the following (in order of notification): www.abbotsfordchristian.com, phone message on 604-755-1891, Global Television, KWPZ (Praise FM 106.5), and STAR FM (107.1). Parents should instruct their children on procedures to be followed when parents are not home to receive them.

Illness and Injury at School

The school secretary will phone your home in the case of illness or injury at school. If no one answers at home, we try cell numbers and work numbers. If that also fails, we move to the emergency contact numbers which have been listed on the registration form. Once again, the office must always be informed when students leave the school or arrive later in the day.

Devotions/Assemblies/Chapels

Each homeroom holds devotions on a daily basis. The entire school gathers for a chapel/devotional time at least once a month. Special chapels are held coinciding with holidays in the Christian calendar such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Good Friday and Easter. Each grade level also leads one curriculum chapel during the year. This is an opportunity to worship through sharing the learning that goes on in the classroom. Each month the entire school community of staff and students also learns a new "Song of the Month" which we often sing in our worship/praise times.

Buddy Classes

Abbotsford Christian Elementary runs a buddy class program aimed at building a sense of community across the grade levels in the school.

In the buddy class program each primary homeroom is paired with an intermediate homeroom class. These buddy classes meet together from time to time to share activities such as planning a school chapel, becoming reading and writing partners, going swimming/skating, being playground buddies, and sharing a number of other curricular and school activities.



Intramural Sports

All intermediate students in grades four and five are encouraged to participate in the noon hour intramural program that takes place at different times throughout the year. Examples include volleyball, soccer and scooter hockey.

Athletics

The school's extra-curricular athletic program emphasizes participation, teamwork and skill building. We involve as many students as possible in the various sports. Participation on school teams is contingent upon effort, commitment and attitude both on and off the court/field.

We offer the following extra curricular sports. Cross-Country (Sept.& Oct.), and Track and Field (April & May) are open to students in grades four and five.

Recesses/Supervision Times

Teachers supervise students outside before and after school and during recesses. Teachers begin their supervision at 7:55 a.m. (for bus students) and end it around 3:05 p.m. Please make sure your child is **not** brought to school before 8:00 a.m. and is picked up by 3:05 p.m.

Supervision Times

Mon., Tues., Wed., Fri.	7:55 - 8:25 a.m.
Thursdays (late start)	8:30 - 8:55 a.m.
	10:45 - 11:00 a.m.
	12:30 - 1:15 p.m.
	2:45 - 3:05 p.m. (parking lot only)



The rules established for playground behaviour encourage good fun and promote safety.

Students may not leave the school grounds at recesses unless special permission has been granted.

Discipline

In a Biblical sense, discipline means nurturing in the ways of the Lord, both in the positive sense of instruction, and in the corrective sense of chastening disobedience. The most significant discipline in school is the leading, nudging and instruction which takes place constantly in a school day.

When correction is necessary, the teachers and administrators will attempt to deal with a student just as a judicious and responsible parent would. Parents will

be contacted as appropriate, depending on the seriousness of the situation. Consequences may include recess or after school detentions, in school suspensions, at-home suspensions or, in extreme cases, a recommendation to the Board for expulsion.

Student Dress

Abbotsford Christian School expects its parents to use good taste and judgement in student dress. We encourage clothes which are sensible and appropriate for the weather or activity. Please take care not to wear clothing which may be offensive to others.

Indoor Shoes

All students need **non-marking** inside running shoes which can also be used in the gymnasium.

Telephone

Students are discouraged from using the school telephone and we request your cooperation in this matter. If a call is absolutely necessary, your child must first receive the teacher's permission to use the phone. Cell phones are not permitted for use during the school day.

Parents, we request your discretion in phoning messages to your child at school. Also, please try to make arrangements for after-school activities before your child leaves home in the morning. **It is difficult to deliver numerous messages that are phoned in during the last five minutes of the school day.** Please reserve this for emergencies only!

Lost and Found

A lost and found box is located in the main hallway near the library. Lost jewellery is kept at the office. Many items of clothing and jewellery are never claimed each school year. We encourage students and their parents to check the lost and found box and ask at the office if something is missing. Unclaimed items are donated to local thrift stores.

Snacks

Please be advised that this is a **NUT-FREE** school. We have several students who are either mildly or extremely allergic to nuts and therefore this policy is in place. Please provide nutritious snacks and lunches for your children. We have a milk program in place and order forms are sent home three times per year.

Earthquake Preparedness

Because of the earthquake-prone geographical area we live in, all children and teachers are required to have an earthquake preparedness kit assembled. This kit will contain non-perishable food items, bottled water, rain poncho, emergency blanket and an identification tag containing personal information and out-of-area emergency contact information. More details will be given to you in September.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Goals of Christian Education

Christian parents established and maintain Abbotsford Christian school because they believe that the religious direction of a child's education is the responsibility of that child's parents. Our parents want schools which will nurture their children in the fear of the Lord. They hire Christian teachers who want to open students' eyes to the wonder of God's world and to the effects of human sin and rebellion. They want to point students to the redemption offered in Christ and to the new creation which is coming. They want to help students prepare themselves for a life of faith and service.

Abbotsford Christian School believes that its students should be faithful servants of God, who in some fashion, by the grace of God, have a share in influencing the culture in which they live. Our teaching must enable students to play an effective role in the Lord's service through the insights, knowledge, and skills they have gained.

The students who are called to faithful service are unique individuals, each with differences in abilities and in ways of learning. The instructional program aims to respect each student's individuality and to help students recognize and use their gifts.

Christian schools are also communities where part of the learning is learning to live together in ways which reflect the love that Christ has shown for us.

Instructional Program

Christian education is based on the conviction that knowledge of the Bible and of Jesus Christ is essential to the development and growth of the child. This belief calls for the integration of faith and learning. Every subject area is seen as part of the total truth of God in Christ. Every aspect of truth finds its unity in the God of all truth. Christian education renounces the false separation between secular and sacred truth. Truth in music and language and mathematics is presented so that one area of life is related to another and the wholeness of human experience is realized. In this way we help the student develop a Christian world view by integrating life and studies with the Biblical principles.

Abbotsford Christian School meets the provincial requirements set by the Ministry of Education and plans its own program with reference to recommendations and resources which are made available by the Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia.

The Education Team is delegated responsibility by the Board for the instructional program of the school.

Art:

For the most part, Art is taught by the homeroom teacher and integrated within the curriculum. The art curriculum is built upon the introduction of the various components of art such as line, shape, color, form, composition, texture, value and perspective.



Bible:

Although a Biblical perspective is integrated within all subjects of the curriculum, Bible is also taught as a separate subject to all students in K-5. Biblical studies introduces children to the most significant insights and ideas of our Biblical, Christian heritage. Students explore the drama of covenant history as it moves from Genesis through Revelations. They study the promises of the Old Testament and the fulfillment in Christ of the New Testament. They learn to see the Biblical view of man, woman, and child created as images of God, both as sinners and saints. They develop the central Biblical themes of covenant, kingdom, church, world, salvation, judgment, law and gospel. They see that Biblical norms and guidelines apply to knowledge, love, human relationships, government, family, war and peace, and justice. For Biblical studies the Bible (N.I.V. translation) is the main textbook. The Bible curriculum, *The Story of God and His People* published by Christian Schools International is also used extensively.

Computer Studies:

Computers are viewed as a technological tool that should be used to support and serve the learning that takes place within the curriculum. All grades three to five students are taught keyboarding skills using *All the Right Type* software. A goal for students is that they become proficient on the keyboard and build up accuracy and speed that will eventually surpass their cursive writing. Computers are also used for closely monitored research and creating presentations.

Fine Arts: Choir, Drama, Graphic Art.

"The fine arts program gives students opportunity to express their joy and delight, as well as their struggles. It seeks to open up to children the worlds of the arts, to teach techniques, and to help them to see how these are affected by the spirit of the age in which the art was produced."

There is a strong emphasis on music with both grade level and whole school performances each year (see Music next page).

French:

French as a second language is taught to all students in grades one to five. The emphasis of the curriculum is on oral French. Students in grades one to three receive 60 minutes a week of "formal" French instruction from a bilingual French specialist, and students in grades four and five receive 90 minutes of formal instruction in French. The *Images* curriculum is used as a support in grades one to three while much of the learning is based on themes of the grade level classrooms. The *Visages* curriculum is used in grades four and five and is supported by basic grammar and comprehension strategies.

Language Arts:

"Christian schools foster the development and effective use of language so that students learn to express themselves clearly and honestly in serving God and others. Literature allows children to experience delight in the varied nature of human beings." The language arts curriculum is built upon the four components of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. A literature based reading program is used in which phonetic principles are integrated within a whole language curriculum approach. A *Writer's Workshop* approach focussing on the *6 + 1 Writing Traits* to writing encourages students to develop their spelling, writing and editing skills in a variety of different kinds of writing.

Music:

All students in grades one to five have a separate music curriculum taught by a music specialist. Our choral program begins in the intermediate grades with a four/five choir. Recorders are introduced into the curriculum in grade four and expanded in grade five as a strong foundation for the band program introduced in grade seven. Singing is an important component of praise in a Christian's life, and music is certainly an important part of the school's curriculum. A volunteer, noon-hour choir is also offered for grades three to five.

Physical Education:

"Physical education in Christian schools teaches children that to value and take care of their bodies is an integral part of serving God and others in the Christian community." Students are encouraged to develop the skills and habits that will adopt this approach to fitness as well as individual and team sports. All students receive daily Physical Education and participate in at least 30 minutes of daily physical activity.

Science and Mathematics:

The study of science and mathematics should enable students to be better stewards of God's creation in daily living. They must learn that physical and living things are part of God's plan, created by Him and not just a product of our environment. Science and math are cultural activities through which God must be glorified, activities that have been used to shape (and misshape) society. Through a study of the sciences, students gain a deepened understanding of how they too are the caretakers of creation and responsible to God for maintaining and developing it.

Mathematics is taught in a hands-on manipulative approach using *Math to the Max* (K-5) as the main math resource. The math scope and sequence and the course outlines closely match the learning outcomes in the Ministry of Education guidelines.

Social Studies:

In Social Studies children learn about human interaction in the context of people's relationship with God. Students learn that all people are called to exercise dominion over creation by using its riches in a harmonious and fruitful way. They learn that all the various aspects of life are interrelated within any given culture. They learn about the role that God's people have played in history. They learn about their present place and task through a study of western civilization both past and present. Often social studies is taught from a thematic approach, whereby several subjects are integrated in a unit study on topics such as family, community, Canada, space, government, and multiculturalism. The subject outlines in social studies follow the curriculum content areas as outlined by the Ministry of Education and the Society of Christian Schools in B.C.



Note: All quotes in this section are taken from the promotional booklet: *For the Love of Your Child*. This booklet is published by the Society of Christian Schools in B.C. and is available free upon request from the school office.

For further information about our educational program, please read our ACS brochure available from the school office.

Homework

The ACES school-wide homework policy states that elementary students will not receive more than 30 minutes of homework per night. This includes participation in our school's "Home Reading Program", as well as a variety of other tasks such as: a review of math facts, memory work and other meaningful activities that connect to the curriculum.

If you find that your child is spending more than 30 minutes per night on homework, or is unable to complete the homework independently, please contact the teacher. We do not want homework to become a burden or to cause stress in the home! As a staff, we see great value in regular reading practice, so please promote the "Home Reading Program" in your home.

Home Folders and Agendas

Students in grades one to three receive a home folder. Students in grades four and five receive a student agenda. These are valuable tools for students, teachers and parents. If used consistently, the home folder or agenda is an excellent communication device. Each day, important information, reminders, and homework will be included.

All students in grades four & five will be issued an agenda book, in which all required homework and the corresponding due dates for assignments, tests and quizzes will be recorded.

This book will serve a two-fold purpose.

1. It will help students to be organized and plan the time required for the completion of homework on a daily and weekly basis.
2. It will inform all parents on a daily basis, as to what homework their child should be completing, and assist parents in monitoring their child's school work.

Be sure to ask for your child's agenda so that you will become familiar with how it works as an organizing tool for both students and parents.

Evaluation and Reporting

Evaluation of student work is based on the broadest possible sample of achievement. Teachers record information from daily observations of work habits, assignments, quizzes and test scores, check lists of skills, and samples of student work - to mention only some of the sources of assessment data.

Teachers hold their first conference with parents several weeks before the first progress report is issued. Written progress reports are distributed at the end of each of the three terms. Parents are also invited to schedule conferences with the teachers after the reports have been distributed.

All classes will also plan for some type of “student-centered” conference in the Spring.

Library



The Library is an invaluable resource in the Christian school. Classes visit the Library on a weekly basis both for instruction and for an opportunity to withdraw books.

We are grateful for the responsible attitude that the vast majority of students show toward library materials. Sometimes, however, library books are lost, damaged or not returned. Students are not allowed to check out new books if their old ones have not been returned. Fees for damages may also be charged for lost or damaged books.

From time to time parents find that a book in the library collection disturbs them. The Library has a board-approved policy for these situations. Parents are encouraged to speak with the Librarian about the book and to request a copy of a Book Reconsideration Form.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of education. Teachers plan them carefully with specific educational goals in mind. Parents will be notified when field trips are planned. Most field trips take place within school hours. On rare occasions, parents may be asked to arrange transportation home for their children.

Skating/Swimming

Arrangements with the Matsqui-Abbotsford Recreation Commission allow us to make rental-free use of the ARC arena and pool. As part of our physical education program all students go swimming once a year and skating several times each year. Students may rent skates at the arena. Students in grades two and three also receive swimming lessons. Students in swimming lessons will be charged a nominal fee for seven sessions of instruction.



LINKS BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Homeroom Newsletters

Teachers regularly send home newsletters from their classroom. These newsletters describe the units the class is studying and serve as a way for the teachers to inform their parents of special events, needs or concerns.

The Express

The *Express* is the campus' informal newsletter. It shares information which directly concerns the parents of ACS Elementary School.

ACS Newsletter

The Abbotsford Christian School Society regularly publishes *The Messenger* which shares news from all three campuses with our parents.

Parent Information Bulletin Board

A Parent Information Bulletin Board is located just to the right of the main foyer as you enter the school building. Copies of recent homeroom letters and newsletters are posted to the left of the main office and brochures from other organizations and other items of interest to parents are posted across from that.

School Directory

A phone directory which includes the phone numbers of the families, board and committee members, and staff is published as quickly as possible in the fall. **Please note that this directory is to be used solely for the personal use of our society members and is not to be used for business contacts or soliciting.**

Christian Home and School Magazine

We distribute copies of *Christian Home and School* to all parents. The magazine subscription is provided at no additional cost to parents through our school membership in Christian Schools International.

Volunteering

Many parents volunteer in a wide variety of ways at the elementary campus. We encourage you to join us when requests for volunteers are made. We have a good time together and we enjoy sharing the work and the fun with our parents.

Complaint Procedure

At Abbotsford Christian School we try to follow Matthew 18 in dealing with complaints or grievances. We want concerns to be brought honestly to the person who is involved. If no satisfaction follows, it would be reasonable to take the matter to the Principal or an Assistant Principal. If this is not satisfactory, parents may approach the Education Committee to share their concern.

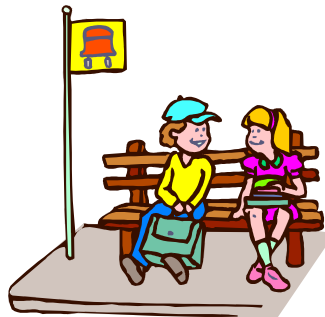
TRANSPORTATION

Bus Transportation

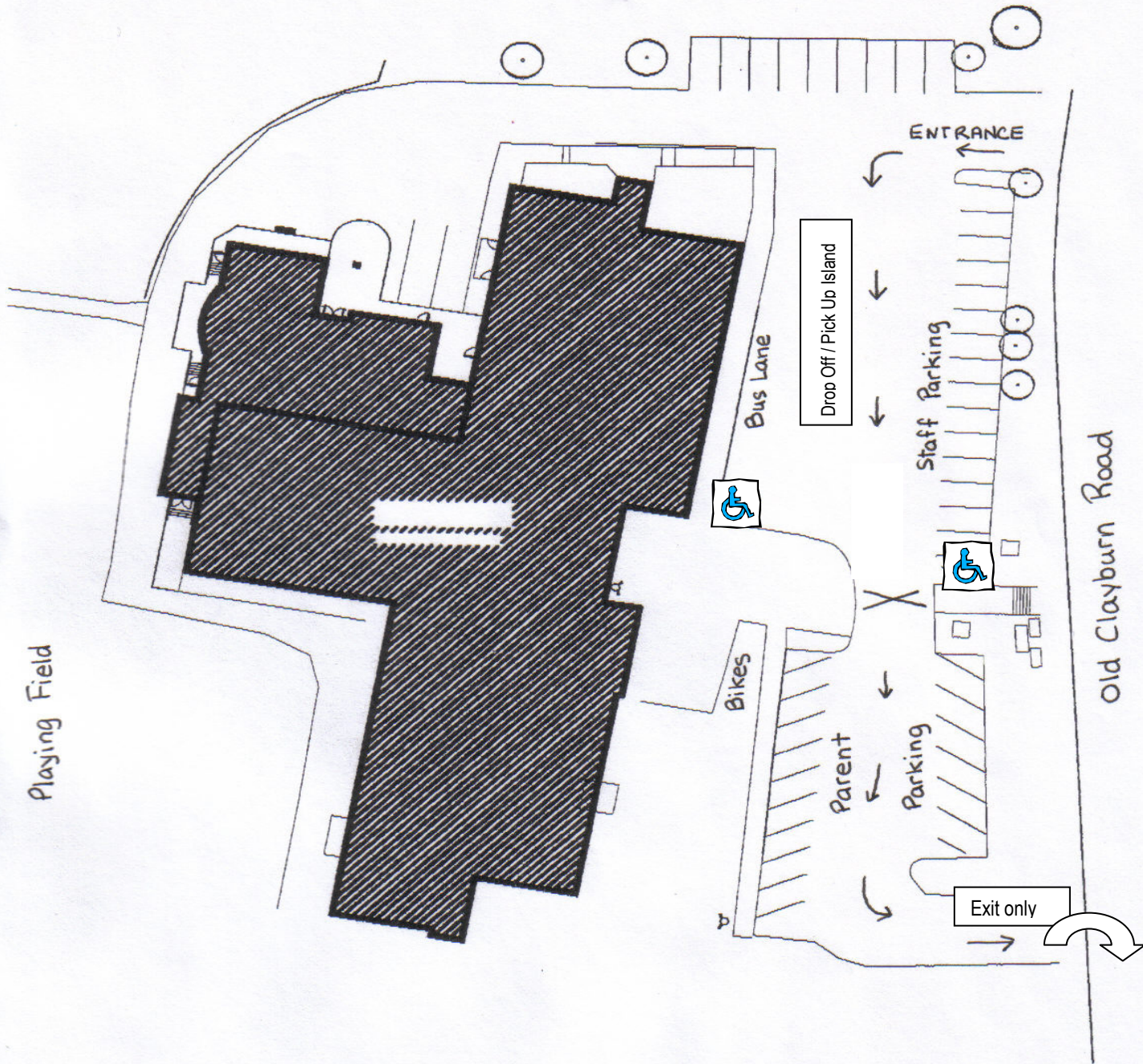
Parents wishing to use a bus or shuttle bus should phone the contact person of the bus society. Names and numbers of the bus society contact person and drivers are listed in the ACS phone directory and are available from the office.

Car Pool

Parents who drive their children to and from school are asked to be very careful in the parking lot. Be sure to keep the bus lane open. See the map on the following page for an explanation of where to drive and where to park in coming and going from the campus.



Abbotsford Christian Elementary School



All About Abbotsford Christian School

History

Abbotsford Christian School opened its doors for the first time in September 1953. The school began in improvised rooms in the basement of the First Christian Reformed Church in Abbotsford and then in 1960 a school with four classrooms was built on the Abbotsford-Mission Highway. It was completed in 1967 with twelve classrooms, offices and other facilities.

In 1973 a new facility on Old Clayburn Road - the beginning of the present Secondary School Campus - was opened for the students in the primary grades. It had four classrooms. In 1976 the junior high grades which had been housed at the Abbotsford-Mission campus moved up to the campus on Old Clayburn Road. A gym and four additional classrooms were completed for the junior high in December of that year. Since 1976 the Secondary campus has had several additions including a new wing started in 1978 and a band room and four new classrooms since that time. The senior secondary program began in 1979 with grade 11. Abbotsford Christian School graduated its first grade 12 class in 1981.

Calamity followed a few years later. A fire destroyed the greater part of the campus on the Abbotsford-Mission Highway on May 1, 1985. Immediate rebuilding started, and on April 19, 1986 the new and improved Abbotsford Christian Elementary Campus was opened.

In September 1991 Abbotsford Christian Elementary School opened as two campuses, the Heritage campus on the original elementary school site, and the Clayburn Hills campus temporarily housed in portables on the Heritage site. Ground breaking for the new Clayburn Hills campus was held on September 24, 1991 and the new campus moved into its home a year later in September 1992.

September 2001 saw the first preschool classes opened at Abbotsford Christian School. This program has become a huge success and many of these children enrol in the regular K-12 program after preschool.

Most recently, ACS decided to restructure the school system from two K-7 elementary campuses and one 8-12 high school to a preK-5 elementary school, a 6-8 middle school, and a 9-12 secondary school. The middle school is located adjacent to the secondary campus and the site of the former Heritage campus was sold. This represents a major shift Abbotsford Christian School in its desire to be creative in best meeting the needs of all of its students. This restructuring also brings us more in line with most other independent schools as well as our local public school district.

The founding members of the Abbotsford Christian School Society were largely Dutch immigrants, members of the Christian Reformed Church, and deeply committed to the Christian education they had supported in the Netherlands.

God blessed the commitment of these founders well past their wildest dreams. The original student body of 75 has become more than 1,000 and it continues to grow. As the years have passed the vision which burned so brightly in the founders has attracted Christians of many other denominations and ethnic backgrounds. Abbotsford Christian School has become a school which includes students from many Christian churches.



Governance

Authority for governance of Abbotsford Christian School lies with the Board of Directors elected by the Abbotsford Christian School Society. Responsibility for school operations is delegated to the executive director in concert with campus principals. This constitutes the Leadership Team. The administration of each campus is delegated to the principals who carry out their administrative functions in accord with policies adopted by the board with power to delegate the execution of their decisions.

Teams and their Chairs

Education Team

The Education Team is a standing committee of the Leadership Team and meets at least once every two months. The team's primary function is to develop and maintain, in consultation with principals and teachers, a Christian course of studies for our students. The team members make timely visits to classrooms to become better acquainted with the teachers, teaching methods and the curriculum being followed.

Other committees appointed by the School Board are the following:

Community Relations Team
Human Resources Team

Board members are listed in the ACS phone directory. All teams are chaired by an administrator.

POLICIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Membership in the School Society

Membership in the Abbotsford Christian School Society is contingent upon agreement with the Society's constitution and attendance at an orientation session organized at each campus in September. Upon completion of the session, individuals are accepted as members in the ACS Society. Full membership allows for full voting privileges at all society meetings and qualifies individuals to serve on any of the standing committees of the school.

Tuition

Tuition schedules are available from the ACES office or the Business Office.

Tuition is payable by the following options:

1. by automatic bank withdrawal payments over either 10 months or 12 months. Please call the business office at 604-755-1891 for more information.
2. by one full payment or in two installments (September 1 and February 1). Please call the business office for the discounted amount.

The tuition fee schedule for the following school year will be determined prior to the May Annual Society Meeting.

Additional Expenses for the School Year

- a) Elementary School Supply Fee (K-5)
Primary (K-3) - No additional fee for school supplies.
Intermediate (4-5) - Students are responsible for their own basic school supplies. A school supply list will be provided in June.
- b) Individual Fees
School pictures, year books, field trips, special lunch days, recorders, etc. as required.

Enrolment

Kindergarten children must reach the age of five years on or before December 31st to be admitted.

Registration for the new school year will usually take place in February and March. Should a waiting list occur, admission will be governed by the school's Admission Policy.

Child Abuse

We hope and pray that all children attending our school are growing up in a secure and loving environment. Unfortunately the statistics show that Christian communities are not immune to problems with child abuse. Should a situation arise in which a staff member has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is suffering in an abusive situation, that staff member is morally and legally obligated to file a report immediately with the principal of the school, and/or the Ministry of Children and Families.

In these matters, we follow a protocol published by the Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia and consistent with the Ministry of Children and Families guidelines.