

Our Story

The story of Abbotsford Christian School (ACS) begins in 1950. That's when a group of immigrant parents, already familiar with Christian education in the Netherlands, boldly determined to start a Christian school in Abbotsford.

These founders had a vision. Their school would be a shining light. It would proclaim that **Christ is King**. Its

students would be taught to see how every part of life should be lived in service to God. These founders wanted

their Christian school to support the beliefs and values taught in their homes and churches.

The founders faced many challenges with rock solid conviction. Christian schooling of their children was a must,

and they believed that God would bless their efforts.

That's exactly what happened. Abbotsford Christian school opened in 1953 with 75 students in a grade 1-8

program. Today ACS has grown to a full preschool to grade 12 program, encompassing three campuses and serving one of the largest student bodies of its kind.

The school grew in other ways too. It added programs and excellent facilities. Most significantly, the schools

supporting community expanded from its original ethnic base to embrace parents from many backgrounds and

Christian denominations.

Why we teach....

What are schools for? The answer seems obvious. Schools are meant to teach students to read and write and to

add and subtract. Graduates should know something about science, about history, and as much as possible about the ways we govern ourselves. Most schools do at least these things.

While the purpose of schools may seem obvious, people still disagree about what it should be.

Some want

students to become effective citizens. Others want students to become successful workers. Some focus on

academic strength. Others would like students to appreciate and participate in the arts. Very often, individual

schools are made up of people with differing visions of what children should be and become.

People differ about the purpose of schools because they differ about the purpose of human life.

Schools develop

programs on the basis of their beliefs about what matters most in human life.

ACS wants its students to be effective citizens, knowledgeable adults, and capable workers. In fact, Abbotsford Christian School wants its students to be these things as disciples of Jesus Christ. Disciplining is the goal that provides a focus for all our programs.

Discipleship is first a relationship between the students and Jesus Christ. ACS invites students to commit themselves to that relationship and then to the life of service of Christian discipleship.

ACS enables students to hear and to do God's will. We wish to play a part in preparing the students to live full Christian lives as husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, doctors and farmers, scientists and artists, business people and tradespersons.

Our students' lives should bring blessings to those around them and to the creation we have been given. In a world of suffering from wrong choices, from the distortions caused everywhere by sin, our students should bring the healing of God's grace to His world.

What we teach . . .

All education tells some kind of story about the past, the future and the present. The story that most schools tell is a story of human progress. According to that story, students study the past to learn how people have improved their situation by learning to control their environment. Education in math and the sciences helps students understand the tools that have made human progress possible. Courses in language arts and social studies provide students with skills for exchanging ideas and participating in wise self-government. Schools that tell this story approach the future by equipping students with the skills and knowledge they need to take their place in a society that is obsessed with its own progress.

ACS teaches the Ministry of Education approved BC Curriculum, but we do so with a difference. In keeping with the historic Christian faith, ACS believes that the true story about the past, the future and the meaning of the present is revealed in the Bible. Our curriculum is designed to show that creation is the Lord's, that people have sinned, and that Christ has come to redeem and restore.

Our curriculum invites students to take their place in that story and to become faithful Christians who bring restoration to the creation and to people, including their relationships and the institutions around them.

No curriculum area is outside this story of creation, its fall and its redemption. For example, the sciences uncover the marvels of a creation designed by God. In science classes students also learn about methods that people have developed to understand the physical, chemical and biological parts of creation. Students learn about the technology that uses this understanding to shape our environment. Students prepare themselves to think and act as Christians in a society that has a misplaced faith in the possibilities that science and technology offer.

Social Studies teachers help students to appreciate and evaluate the ways in which people have developed human societies. Students learn to interpret the basic beliefs that shape societies. They are guided toward a sympathetic understanding of whatever they study, but also toward discernment based on the high standards for justice and mercy taught by the scriptures. Social studies classes call students to make their social, cultural and political choices on the basis of the Christian faith.

Math classes are part of the grand biblical story. The mathematical concepts and skills that students learn are a testimonial to the wonderful order, precision and complexity of God's handiwork.

The curriculum taught at ACS is intended to be a connected curriculum because it is designed to tell the grand biblical story. Each subject area is linked to others and all are led by the goals of the school. To make that possible, teachers often work together to unite learning from a variety of curriculum areas. Abbotsford Christian School is committed to developing a comprehensive and integrated Christian curriculum.

On the basis of the Scriptures, Abbotsford Christian School understands that learning must go beyond the facts. The facts alone will not generate the wisdom that the Scriptures require of believers. We are wise, the Bible tells us, when we both hear and do God's will.

That's why ACS aims at knowledge that leads to committed action. By providing a rich curriculum that discloses the wonders of God's creation, discerns the direction of human endeavors, and displays the marvel of Christ's redemption before our students, we extend a call to commitment and service each day.

How we teach....

Abbotsford Christian School recognizes that, by itself, Christian curriculum will not make a Christian school. The

process of teaching itself must be touched by the regenerating spirit of Christ. That's why
Abbotsford Christian
School aspires to a more faithful way than "simply teaching."

Because Abbotsford Christian school wants Christian teaching, its staff is made up of Christians
who strive to
model faithful Christian lives. Love, joy, gentleness, patience, and self-control help teachers to
transform
classrooms into caring communities.

Classrooms are made up of individual students, and not every student is the same. Some are gifted
in math; some
in reading and writing. Some learn quickly; some need more time to learn the same thing. Some
students are
Confident of their abilities; some are unsure and afraid of failure. Yet, each student is uniquely
valuable in God's
eyes. Each needs an opportunity to develop his or her gifts in response to God's call to serve him.

The Christian teacher also requires skills to establish a healthy learning environment within a
classroom, the
ability to design lessons which invite students to learn, the ability to provide a variety of ways to
learn, the ability
to instill in students the confidence they need to learn, and the ability to move a classroom of
individuals toward
the mutual respect and care required in Christian communities.

In obedience to Christ we have high expectations both for students and teachers. It is also teaching
with grace.
Our Christian teachers strive to handle students with love and acceptance that is modeled on the
love with which
Christ has accepted them.

ACS in Community with Others

Abbotsford Christian school sets high goals for itself, but it does not work alone. It relies on the
support of other
Christians and of other Christian organizations.

Our students' parents are the first lines of support for ACS. Our school believes that parents have
the prime
responsibility for the education of their children. That's why Abbotsford Christian school is
operated, not by a
church, but by the Abbotsford Christian School Society, an organization of parents, grandparents
and friends of
the school.

Our School Society elects a Board of Directors from its own membership. The parents and other society members who serve on our Board and its committees are only one example of the parental support that Abbotsford Christian School enjoys. Many parents also volunteer in our classrooms, libraries and offices.

The most important support that parents provide, however, is daily support for their children's learning. That support has depth because Abbotsford Christian School parents share a common vision for Christian education, one that the school is designed to deliver.

The Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia (SCSBC) links Abbotsford Christian School to other Christian schools and their teachers and administrators. The SCSBC employs three coordinators who assist member schools with Christian curriculum development, administrative improvement, and financial stewardship. The SCSBC is an energetic arm of the body of Christ, focused on Christian education. Member schools are linked to a community for mutual support and advice.

Abbotsford Christian School also partners with churches. Our school values the unity of vision and lifestyle that a partnership between church, home and school offers students. Some churches have made this relationship formal by becoming Abbotsford Christian School supporting churches.

A school's graduates are its gift to the community it serves. Abbotsford Christian school wishes to play a part in preparing its students to live full Christian lives. Whatever they become, we want our graduates to be a blessing. Abbotsford Christian School wants to educate students for Christian service that is as wide as life.

High goals of Christian service cannot be born alone. An institution like ACS cherishes its community of vision and support.

Joining the ACS Community...

Parents from a wide variety of churches in the Abbotsford-Mission area have chosen Abbotsford Christian School for their children.

Please contact any one of our three campuses or our Community Development Office if you would like to find out more about our school.

Our website will also answer many of your questions: www.abbotsfordchristian.com

Acknowledgements:

Although this book is the collective effort of many people, its primary author is Lloyd den Boer, former principal of Abbotsford Christian School – Heritage Campus.