



PARENT HANDBOOK

2022-23

This manual reflects the current policies and procedures of the school as of : **September, 2022. This document will be a work in progress and families will be notified of updates that pertain to them.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME TO PRAIRIE CROSSROADS SCHOOL	3
MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL	3
PCS STAFF	3
MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD	4
SCHOOL SCHEDULE	4
ADMISSION POLICY	4
Steps for Admission	4
Tuition	5
SPIRITUAL INTEGRATION	5
Daily Opening	5
Chapel	5
Daily Bible Class	5
Bible Memory	5
Character Building	6
Ministry/Missions	6
Biblical Integration	6
Role Modeling	6
DRESS CODE	6
Team Effort	6
Moderation	6
Procedure for Inappropriate Dress	7
NUT-ALLERGY AWARENESS	7
SCHOOL PROGRAMMING	7
Assessment and Evaluation	7
Attendance	8
Forest Friday	8
Toys at School	8
5. Celebrations and Special Occasions	9
6. Waste Reduction: Composting and Recycling	9
COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION	9
Safe School Arrival	9
End of Day Transportation	9
Use of Telephone by Students	9
Students Excused Early From School	9
Visitors	9
Working Together	10
Parent Involvement and Volunteering	10

HEALTH AND SAFETY	10
Sensitive Issues	10
SCHOOL SAFETY	11
School Access	11
School Safety Practices	11
School Closure	11
Inclement Weather	11
SOCIAL MEDIA/CELL PHONE/INTERNET USE POLICY	12
Social Media and Internet Use	12
Computer Use Guidelines	12
Internet Safety	12
Music Players, Video Games, Cell Phones	13

WELCOME TO PRAIRIE CROSSROADS SCHOOL

Our Mission

To provide students with an education of excellence in a Christ-infused environment with the purpose of nurturing disciples of Christ who love God in every sphere of their lives.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome to Prairie Crossroads School! We are excited to embark on our third year of operation as Pembina Valley's Christian School alternative. Our faith is deepened after experiencing the many miraculous ways Jesus showed up in our daily operations over the last two years. It is this faith that continues to propel us into the sufficiencies of Christ. May we all continue to trust and join God in His activity in the lives of our school community.

On behalf of the staff at PCS, I want to thank you for entrusting your child in our care. We will work diligently at providing a Christ-centered environment which strives for academic excellence and social-emotional care for your child. We covet your prayers for wisdom, strength and physical health throughout this year as we work with your child. In turn we as a staff, commit to pray for you as parents and families. May the peace of Christ which surpasses all understanding be granted to us all.

Blessings,

Cyndie Wiebe

PCS STAFF

Mrs. Cyndie Wiebe - Principal, Resource, Co-teacher, Forest Friday Coordinator

Mr. Jordan Penner - Middle Years Teacher

Mrs. Brenna Froese – Grade 4/5 Teacher

Mr. Jonathan de Groot – Grade 2/3 Teacher

Miss Rebecca Pauls - Grade 1 Teacher, Phys. Ed. Teacher

Mrs. Michelle Reimer - Kindergarten Teacher

Mrs. Patricia Hiebert – Early Years Support Teacher

Mrs. Vanessa Klassen – Music & Drama Teacher

Mrs. Corinne Bueckert – Forest Friday Coordinator

Mrs. Almira Penner - Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Faylin Fehr – EA

Miss Joline Klassen – EA

Mrs. Kathy Froese – EA/Speech

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

It is hard to believe that we are now entering our third year of Prairie Crossroads School. As we look back and reflect on growth, not only in enrollment, but facilities, resources, furniture, etc, it is amazing to see how the Lord has provided for our every need! Speaking of enrollment, as we enter year 3, we are more than double our enrollment that we entered into with our inaugural year. What a testament to the work of our staff in creating an environment that families want to send their children to.

As we continue to grow at a rapid pace, our desire for each student remains the same. We pray Colossians 2:7 for each of them, 'Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.' At PCS, our goal is to work alongside parents in nurturing your child's spiritual growth that they might be deeply rooted in Him.

Welcome back, or to, PCS! As a board, we are thrilled that you have chosen this school and we look forward to seeing your child grow over this next year.

Travis Penner
PCS Board Chairperson

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

8:30am - 10:10am	Instructional Block A (100 min.)
10:10am - 10:40am	Nutrition/Outdoor Recess Break
10:40am - 12:20pm	Instructional Block B (100 min.)
12:20pm - 1:10pm	Nutrition/Outdoor Recess Break
1:10pm - 2:50pm	Instructional Block C (100 min.)

ADMISSION POLICY

1. Steps for Admission

- a. Contact administration for a tour, if desired. Read through the Statement of Faith and School Parent Handbook.
- b. Submit an application for admission with a \$100 application fee.
- c. An interview with both parents, the student and the principal and/or teacher will be conducted.
- d. Administration will notify the family once a decision has been made, and if accepted, a tuition deposit of \$500 will be required.

2. Tuition

- a. For first year students, a \$500 deposit needs to be made at time of acceptance to guarantee enrollment. The remainder of the tuition amount can either be paid in full on or before August 5, 2022, or split into 2 equal payments; the first one due on August 5, and the second one due on or before January 13, 2023. If an alternate payment plan is needed, contact administration.
- b. Payments can be made by cheque or e-transfer. Returned cheques will be subject to a \$35.00 charge.
- c. Tuition fees are determined on an annual basis by the School Board. The upcoming year's fee schedule will be available by April 1, 2023.
- d. New registrations will be accepted beginning in mid-January for enrollment in September. For mid-year enrollment, applications are accepted at any time.
- e. Returning students: Re-registration for students currently enrolled takes place in April. Re-registration reserves the student's place in the school for the following academic year. A non-refundable deposit of \$500 is required.
- f. For students commencing after September 30th, or withdrawing before June 30th, tuition will be calculated based on the number of months enrolled plus one additional month. The \$500 deposit is non-refundable and will not be used to calculate the monthly tuition.
- g. Tuition does not include field trips, hot lunch and school photos.
- h. Donation receipts are issued for a percentage of tuition paid during the calendar year. The percentage varies year to year and is calculated using a formula provided by the Canada Revenue Agency. Receipts are issued to the individual/s paying the tuition, not necessarily the family whose student is enrolled.

SPIRITUAL INTEGRATION

The heart of Christian education at Prairie Crossroads School is to infuse Biblical principles into all we do, giving a spiritual emphasis to the daily routine of school. Bible and chapel curriculum and memory passages are determined by the Spiritual Formation committee. This committee is appointed by the Board.

1. Daily Opening

- a. Each school day is opened with Scripture reading and/or prayer.
- b. The order of opening is as follows: 'O Canada', staff prayer, Bible story, announcements, Birthday Box, memory verses, and The Lord's Prayer.
- c. Students who can read take turns reading Scripture, and leading in the Lord's Prayer daily.

2. Chapel

Weekly Chapels will be held Thursday afternoons, the school holds either outdoors or in the multipurpose room. Parents are welcome to join chapels, please contact the office if you plan to attend.

3. Daily Bible Class

All students enrolled at PCS will have Bible class daily. Each class has a specific curriculum relevant to students at that age. Students will be challenged to grow in their faith as they find out more about God and who they are in Christ. PCS will be using the curriculum designed by: Deep Roots and New City.

4. Bible Memory

Whole school Bible memory passages will be practiced in class and communicated with parents on the newsletter.

5. Character Building

We desire to develop godly character in each student according to the word of God. We want to ensure that the fruit of the Spirit –love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control –is exhibited in every student. Biblical standards will be used to guide behaviours. Exercises of Grace and Courtesy are practiced and upheld in the school.

6. Ministry/Missions

Throughout the year, students will participate in a variety of ministry opportunities. Classes may collect money and gifts for various organizations.

7. Biblical Integration

Biblical truth is infused into all classes, and all subject matter at every grade level. Our teaching staff is adept at Biblical integration. When teachers plan their lessons and units, taken from the Manitoba Curriculum, they purposely plan how they can integrate God's Word in a relevant way into their course material.

8. Role Modeling

Students spend a large portion of their day in school. One of the most important elements PCS can offer are excellent role models for your children. While no one is perfect, each staff member your child encounters at school has a Christian testimony and is committed to their local church. Staff use "teachable moments" to share what God is doing in their own life, to encourage or to correct students.

DRESS CODE

"Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight." 1 Peter 3:3-4

The Bible tells us that people look at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). We know that our attitudes and motives and how we are viewed by God is of primary consideration, nevertheless, we are aware that people do look at our outward appearance. With this in mind, the underlying principles of godliness, modesty, moderation, appropriateness, neatness and cleanliness should be the basis for choices regarding dress and appearance.

1. Team Effort

- a. PCS staff, students and parents work together to see that students exhibit respect for their own self-image and learn the importance of being a good witness for the Lord in this area, wherever they go. The purpose of the dress code is to give staff, parents and students guidelines for appropriate school clothing and appearance. Parents have the responsibility of determining what their children wear to school, being mindful of what could be a possible distraction or stumbling block to others.
- b. Clothing and accessories should not disrupt the teaching and learning process or encourage attention to be drawn to a particular student. PCS leadership recommends godly wisdom and discernment when preparing for school.

2. Moderation

- a. Style must be in moderation. Extreme dress styles, hairstyles, hair colour, piercings, makeup, or accessories are to be avoided.
- b. Shirts must be modest and cover all undergarments.
 - i. Avoid transparent shirts, midriff revealing shirts, spaghetti straps, tube tops and low-cut tops.
 - ii. Shirt graphics must be in keeping with Christian values. Graphic T-shirts which promote pop culture such as gaming or media idols are discouraged.

- c. Skirts & Dresses: Girls wearing dresses or skirts are encouraged to have hemlines close to the knee.
 - i. We encourage (younger) girls to wear cartwheel shorts or leggings underneath skirts.
- d. Pants/shorts should be modest.
 - i. Jeans that were purchased with style related holes, should have leggings underneath.
 - ii. We understand that early year students often wear out the knees on their pants. If the holes become too large, please choose other pants to wear to school.
- e. Shorts must be of a modest length, reaching mid-thigh or longer.
 - i. This includes attire for Phys Ed and athletic events.
- f. Footwear must be worn at all times.
 - i. Students are required to have indoor shoes that are only to be worn in class and for Phys Ed. They may be required to remove their outdoor footwear upon entering the building.
- g. When bathing suit attire is appropriate, girls are to wear a modest one-piece or tankini. Any other type of bathing suit will require a t-shirt overtop. Boys are to wear modest swim trunks. No shirt is required for the boys.

3. Procedure for Inappropriate Dress

- a. A staff member may use their discretion at any time and ask a student to change his/her clothing to something more appropriate. If they do not have appropriate clothing at school, they will be asked to call home.
- b. A student dressed inappropriately will not be allowed back into class until the clothing is deemed appropriate.

NUT-ALLERGY AWARENESS

There are some food allergies at PCS. If an allergy is identified, the school will notify parents regarding any adjustments required.

SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

1. Assessment and Evaluation

- a. Student Promotion

The decision to promote students will be made by the teacher(s) of the student, together with the Administration and parents. Students will advance to the next grade, but adaptations may be necessary according to student needs.
- b. Reporting to families/students

The School year is divided into 3 terms. Report cards are issued at the end of the first two terms with the final report card issued at the end of the school year. Below level achievement is monitored and communicated to parents. Parents are encouraged to contact the teachers at any time to inquire as to their child(ren)'s progress , and are encouraged to attend September's Welcome and Meet The Teacher and Parent/Teacher Conferences at the end of Term 1 and 2. Teachers are available to discuss your child's progress through email, scheduled appointments or informal visits.

2. Attendance

- a. Regular attendance is essential for success. If your child is unable to attend school, we ask that you notify the school with the reason for their absence. If the school does not receive notice prior to the commencement of classes, the following policy will be applied:
 - i. If a student is absent and the school has not been contacted, a phone call home will be made to verify the location of the student.
- b. Parents taking their child(ren) off the school ground during school hours are required to **report to the school office.**
- c. If a student misses class for any reason (example: a trip, out of school event, appointment, etc.), it is the students responsibility to make up for work missed during their absence.
- d. If you are needing to pick up your child during the

3. Forest Friday

On Forest Fridays we will take our learning outdoors in an off site location (RD. 26W, 2.5 miles North of Hwy #3). The purpose of this is to provide children with extended time in nature throughout the seasons to foster rich play and learning experiences to increase their ecological literacy and healthy living. This place-based education also allows students to increase their observational skills, resilience and love of God’s creation. Kindergarten students will participate in Forest Friday the last Friday of the month unless otherwise indicated. The school will provide a monthly calendar for specific dates.

Should the weather be prohibitive for us to gather at the site, a decision will be made by dismissal on Thursday via email.

Please refer to the *Forest Friday Parent Handbook* for more details.

TIP: Dressing for the Weather

Spring/Summer/Fall Recommendations	Winter Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rain gear (waterproof boots, pants, jacket) ‘ ● Woolen socks for colder days (they insulate even when wet) ● Sneakers or running shoes (no open toe shoes even in summer) ● Sun Hat (for warmer months) ● Warmer sweater or jacket for colder days ● Lightweight long pants and long sleeved shirt ● Bug jacket 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two winter hats (must cover ears and stay on the head) ● Balaclava or neck warmer (no scarves please due to risk of strangulation) ● Two pairs of warm, waterproof mitts ● One warm, waterproof snowsuit ● One set of warm, waterproof boots (when purchasing boots, it is recommended to buy a size bigger to allow for some wiggle room and an extra pair of socks) ● Woolen socks ● Three base layers: thermal shirt and pants, middle layer woolen/fleece sweater (cotton is not recommended for cold weather conditions)
<p>The Key to Layering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Insulation: Natural fabrics such as wool or silk work well as an inner layer, as does fleece. Polyester pajamas are another good option. The key for this layer is to wick moisture away from the skin and insulate it with a breathable layer. 2) Middle Layer: This is another insulation layer that creates “dead-air space” between skin and the elements. This airspace helps in keeping warm. Woolen sweaters (Merino wool is exceptionally warm and soft on sensitive skin) and fleece tend to work well. 3) Outer Shell: This layer should be waterproof and windproof, as well as breathable. 	

4. Toys at School

Toys are often a source of distraction and potential conflict. There may be specific occasions when toys are permitted in class. These times will be communicated with students and families.

5. Celebrations and Special Occasions

a. **Birthday book donation**

To celebrate your child's birthday, he/she is invited to donate a favorite book to our school library in honor of their birthday. A certificate will be placed in the book and a special announcement of their contribution will be given.

b. **Treats**

If you are considering treats to share with your child's class, consider items which are healthy and kind to the environment.

6. Waste Reduction: Composting and Recycling

The Parent Advisory Committee has initiated a composting and recycling program to help reduce lunch waste and to facilitate the practice of good stewardship. We encourage natural wrappers and reusable containers to be used as much as possible.

Win-Win Tip:

Foods with natural wrappers, like banana and orange peels are healthier choices for humans and the earth. We have also found that whole food snacks such as muffins and real fruit or vegetables give students more sustenance than packaged snacks which contain a lot of sugar and modified ingredients.

COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

1. Safe School Arrival

The Safe School Arrival ensures that all students arrive safely to our school each morning. If a child is going to be late or absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of the absence, before 8:30 a.m. (A message may be left on the school's voicemail, 24 hours a day). However, if we do not hear from you, the school office administrator will call you, at work if necessary, to ensure your child's safety.

2. End of Day Transportation

Students will only be permitted to leave with a pre-authorized person. The best way to notify the school of a change to pick up is to email the teacher AND the office.

3. Use of Telephone by Students

The school telephones are reserved for school business use. The school will phone home in case of emergency or illness. We ask that all students make after school arrangements before coming to school.

4. Students Excused Early From School

Pupils may leave from school at any time during the day, at the written request of the parent/guardian and with the consent of the principal. Please report to the office to pick up your child and the office administrator will call him/her. Please do not go directly to the hut or classroom. Any person other than the parent/guardian requesting early dismissal of a student is to be referred to the Principal.

5. Visitors

All parents, visitors and volunteers must sign in at the office and wear an identification tag and mask at this current time. Visitors will not be allowed to attend classes, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by administration. This applies to all school events that happen

during the school day. If required, the Administration reserves the right to ask anyone to leave the school property.

6. Working Together

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

All parents and guardians are welcome to attend monthly PAC meetings. The PAC works cooperatively with school staff to expand and enrich the educational experiences of students by providing increased and effective opportunities. They also promote involvement and dialogue between home and school. Parents and guardians may run for executive positions – Co-chair, Vice-chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Elections are held annually at a council meeting in early fall. A student representative(s) will also become involved in the council.

7. Parent Involvement and Volunteering

- a. Parents will be very active in our school community, supporting learning and enriching school events and activities. If possible, parents volunteer a minimum of two hours per month. On site volunteer supervisors offer a critical component for the function of our school. There are some requirements in fulfilling this role, such as:
 - i. Criminal/child abuse registry check with vulnerable sector
 - ii. Volunteer application package
- b. When in the building all visitors and volunteers are required to sign in/out at the office and wear an identification tag at all times.
- c. There are other ways parents can volunteer. They are:
 - i. Become a member of the Parent Advisory Council.
 - ii. Assist on *Forest Fridays* and excursions.
 - iii. Participate in helping with fundraising for events.
 - iv. Offer assistance for capital projects, grounds and building maintenance.
 - v. Laundry
 - vi. Set up and take down classrooms for church use.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. Sensitive Issues

Prairie Crossroads School teaches all curriculums in accordance with Manitoba Education requirements. Specific to potentially sensitive issues in the curriculum, our School Board and PAC will be assisting us in adjusting these topics so they align with our local community values and context. Parents will be provided with an outline of these topics in the new year. Parents will then be given the choice whether they wish to address these topics at home or in school. Instruction will then take place in the third term.

SCHOOL SAFETY

To ensure security of all staff and students at PCS, the following measures will be practiced:

1. School Access

The main entrance of the school is on the NORTH side of the church building. This entrance will remain unlocked to allow students from the huts to go in and out. Upon arrival, please report to the office. All other doors will remain locked throughout the school day. The hallway doors separating the school rooms from the main church lobby will be locked during school hours as well. During recess, the West door will be unlocked and the adult on duty will re-lock the door when students return to the building.

2. School Safety Practices

- a. Fire Drill- The school is required to practice 10 drills throughout the school year to achieve confidence of staff and students in the case of an emergency.
- b. Evacuation- used in the event that students and staff must leave the school building due to some environmental concern in the school. Example: fire or gas leak in the school. Our designated safe place is Christian Life Center.
- c. Shelter in Place - used for an environmental or severe weather related situation where it is necessary to keep all occupants within the school (protecting them from an external situation). Examples include chemical spills, blackouts, explosions, or extreme weather.
- d. Hold and Secure – used when it is desirable to secure the building due to a threat outside the building but not related to the school. For example a bank robbery occurring near school but not on school property. School functions normally with all exterior doors locked until the situation is resolved.
- e. Lockdown- used only when there is a major incident or threat of violence within the school. One of the responsibilities of the PAC is to advise the principal on safe school protocol.

3. School Closure

- a. If inclement weather causes road closures and/or Western or Garden Valley School Division has closed their schools due to severe temperatures, PCS will also be closed.
- b. If severe weather or any other emergency (i.e. power outage, lack of water, sewer) necessitates school closure, it will be posted on the school website and on our facebook page. We will announce the closure and send an email and text message to parents by 7:00 am, (or as soon as we are aware) to advise of the closure.
- c. If EMM Church requires their facilities on a school day, classes may be held at an alternate location. This will be communicated by email and text message to parents. We will likely have a day or more notice in this situation.

4. Inclement Weather

"There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes." (Scandinavian saying)

A part of PCS is teaching students how to be prepared for all types of weather. Learning how to dress in accordance with the weather is just as important as learning to count. See dress suggestions.

Indoor Recess:

During inclement weather, the administration may choose to shorten or have a indoor recess break. **[Students should always be dressed appropriately for the season as they will be outdoors each day unless extreme conditions prevent this.](#)** Typically, if the temperature is -28 C or lower with wind chill, recess may be shortened or held indoors. *Temp guideline based on https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/activeliving/tools_resources/school/recess_toolkit.pdf

SOCIAL MEDIA/CELL PHONE/INTERNET USE POLICY

1. Social Media and Internet Use

Based on faith principles along with recommendations from The Canadian Teachers Federation (<https://www.ctf-fce.ca/en/Pages/Issues/Cybertips-for-teachers.aspx>), PCS has the following guidelines:

- a. Parents:
 - i. Are asked to refrain from posting any school photos, videos of any PCS students on any social media platform.
 - ii. Are asked to communicate questions, concerns or complaints directly with the school rather than posting or communicating on social media.
 - iii. Are asked to contact the teacher via. email or the school phone and not personal cell number.
- b. Students:
 - i. Are not permitted to access social media on school devices, or on their own devices while they are at school. **School internet is to be used for educational purposes only.**
 - ii. PCS encourages parents to have conversations with their children to understand that social media safety is a matter of safety. Many excellent resources are available from organizations such as Focus on the Family to facilitate conversations.
- c. School:
 - i. Photos on the password protected pages of the website will only include students whose parents have signed the consent form.

2. Computer Use Guidelines

- a. Students must have teacher permission and supervision in order to use the computers.
- b. Students have access to technology for educational purposes that include:
 - i. Achieving the learner outcomes of the Manitoba curriculum
 - ii. Participating in learning activities selected by the teacher
- c. Non-educational activities, chat rooms, social media or personal emails are not permitted on school computers.
- d. Failure to Obey: Failing to follow these rules may result in a loss of privilege.

3. Internet Safety

There are several ways the school has mitigated the potential risks that students may encounter through the use of the internet. They are hardware-based (subscription to digital security and parental control through the Eeros router) and software-based (ScreenTime on iPads). Additionally, internet safety is taught as a part of the Manitoba Social Studies curriculum.

In spite of these safety measures we have taken as a school, we encourage you as parents to have discussions with your child about internet safety and determine safe measures in your home with installation of hardware and software to mitigate risks at home.

Parents can learn about steps they can take to support their child's safe use of technology.

Sites such as this also provide links to a variety of parental controls:

<https://www.safewise.com/resources/internet-safety-kids/>

4. Music Players, Video Games, Cell Phones

- a. Teachers cannot control the content of music played, so students are asked to leave music players at home.
- b. Handheld gaming devices and other portable video games are to be left at home.
- c. Cell phones are not needed at school. If a student has a cell phone, it will be kept in a basket on the teacher's desk and be used only under teacher supervision for specific purposes.