

**GEORGES VANIER CATHOLIC
FINE ARTS SCHOOL**

PARENT HANDBOOK

2022 - 2023



Principal's Message

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

At Georges Vanier Catholic Fine Arts School, we offer extensive opportunities for students to explore learning through the arts. Our specialized teachers in Art, Drama, Dance and Music are passionate and dedicated to creating a program where students can excel.

At our school, we focus on faith, learning and reaching out to make a difference for others. We strive to see your child grow in all ways: spiritually, academically, physically and socially. To grow in faith, staff and students see and learn about God not only in religion class, but throughout every school day. Academically, we are committed to helping students discover and develop their God-given talents. We believe every child can be a successful learner.

Georges Vanier Catholic Fine Arts School is located in the wonderful community of Avalon. We attract students throughout the city because we are a designated Fine Arts school. Through the arts, we live our Catholic faith and bring to life our God given talents. Finally, our faith-based program teaches students they have the skills, talents and responsibility to reach out and make a difference in the world, to transform it by their actions. Our school is ready to welcome you and your child on this journey of learning and growth.

Principal
Laura Cey

Mission Statement of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools

We love because He first loved us. – 1 John 4:19

At Georges Vanier School we strive to live our division mission statement where we nurture faith, encourage excellence and inspire students to serve others, making the world a better place. We do this daily through prayer and our interactions with others. As we carry out our daily work we are reminded of our call to serve others. We will model this and encourage others to do the same through our focus on the gospel virtues and our attention to Georges Vanier's mission statement.

Mission Statement of Georges Vanier Catholic Fine Arts School

Georges Vanier is a faith filled community guided by God; we inspire to create, grow and make the world a better place.

Georges Vanier School Creed

We believe:

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools assist students to interpret social and human relationships in the light of the social teachings of the Catholic Church.

With God as our creator, advisor, and friend, Georges Vanier School provides a nurturing atmosphere where we as a faith community can grow academically secure, socially just, and spiritually fulfilled.

Families, who are the primary educators for their children's academic, spiritual, and social growth, appreciate the gift of the schools, and in partnership strive to instill a healthy self-concept and encourage their children to achieve towards their full potential.

Our school encourages mutual respect, fosters independent and cooperative learning, and models strong Christian values.

The church proclaims God's greatness. As children of God, we are nourished and sustained, and we are to go forth to love and serve the Lord and one another.

In a nurturing atmosphere with Jesus as our strength and guide, our goal is to promote our inner desire to learn, to become contributing members of communities and to develop our talents for God's service.

Rooted Growing Reaching Transforming

Fine Arts

Georges Vanier is a designated Fine Arts School in the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division. The school offers the core curriculum as well as the four main strands that make up the fine arts—music, art, drama and dance.

The fine arts components are incorporated into the teaching strategies of the core curriculum and are also offered as separate components in the weekly timetable.

Specialized professional educators teach the four fine arts strands. Members of the staff are also blessed with fine arts talents that enrich our school to create a unique and interesting learning environment.

- **Music Program**

The music program at Georges Vanier consists of an Orff/Kodaly approach to music education in the early years, incorporating movement, rhythm instruments, singing skills and rhythm reading and writing skills. Older students are introduced to instrument playing (recorders, ukulele, guitars and drums) and theory. Singing and performance skills are also components of the music program. There are opportunities for students to join the Junior or Senior Choir.

A comprehensive band program is also offered for grade 6 to 8 students. The students may choose from a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument. The students learn how to play their instrument, how to be part of an ensemble, music theory, and much more. The band program also allows performance opportunities within the year as well.

- **Visual Arts**

Students learn about the elements of art (line, shape, colour, space, value, form, texture) and the principles of design (pattern, balance, contrast, movement, emphasis, rhythm, unity) through project-based learning so they can experience these abstract concepts through a hands-on method. The students are exposed to many styles of art through viewing the works of Canadian and international artists. The understanding of art history and the exploration of ideas are as important as the production of art. Art History is a large component in each unit studied. The children view slides and discuss mediums, ideas and artists. The students work in many different mediums each year and are encouraged to express their ideas through art, not just reproduce the world that is around them. They are encouraged to really see what they are drawing, to look carefully, both as image and how it fits into the world around them. Art can make change in the world.

- **Drama**

Drama encourages students to learn many ways to communicate, collaborate and express themselves using their body, voice, and imagination. The students think and act creatively, thus developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills that can be applied in all areas of learning. The students at Georges Vanier have a unique opportunity to develop their own distinctive voice while building interpersonal skills through a variety of different drama games, activities, and our school theatre productions. Students develop their own approach to dramatic storytelling through puppetry, mime, tableau and improv. The children come to drama class excited to share their stories, to share the same passion, to build confidence, and to work together to become their best self!

- **Dance**

The Dance program is designed to introduce students to Dance as both an art and an active sport. Dance can offer both creative artistic expression and an athletic challenge. The primary grades are focused on body awareness, musicality and developing a love and/or appreciation for dance. As students move into the upper years, there is a greater focus on self-expression, exploring a wider range of disciplines, and developing their ability. Overall, the Dance Program is intended to assist the students' artistic growth and love of the arts.

Georges Vanier Code of Conduct

Love one another as I have loved you. ~ John 13:34

Members of the Georges Vanier community are called to live in God's love. Our mission is to develop the whole person in the Catholic tradition. We endeavor to instill Christian values by instructing the mind, inspiring the heart and fostering character in each child entrusted to us by God.

Christ-centered learning is our goal.

Respectful and responsible behavior is shown toward individuals and their property.

Everyone needs to work together to create a positive learning environment.

Active participation, self-expression and creativity are celebrated.

Teachers have the right and responsibility to teach, students have the right and responsibility to learn.

Entrusted by parents and community, the staff of Georges Vanier has been empowered to uphold the principles of our code of conduct.

Protocol for Resolving Conflict

We in Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division recognize there is nothing in life more important to parents or guardians than the well-being of their children. We strive to provide a safe respectful environment for our staff and students. We believe that the best outcomes for all students occur when parents, guardians and the school staff work together. Conflict is part of all human relationships. We do not view conflict as something negative. When handled appropriately, conflict can lead to growth, personal development and positive change.

Our Code of Conduct states that:

A Code of Conduct defines the values and vision of the school division in which all relationships are conducted in a respectful and dignified manner. Catholic Schools share with parents or guardians the responsibility to develop students' personal and social skills to achieve this vision; consequently,

- each person within a school has the right to feel emotionally and physically safe; and
- each person has the responsibility to contribute to a safe, positive learning environment.

George Vanier School Anti-Bullying

Georges Vanier School will not tolerate bullying behavior. Guided by our Gospel values and our Division Code of Conduct, bullying behavior will be dealt with in a serious and timely manner.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying happens when someone is significantly hurt emotionally or psychologically by the actions of one or more student, fears it will happen again and feels powerless to prevent this. These negative actions are intentional and hurtful. Bullying can be verbal, physical, relational or reactive. Bullying involves an imbalance of power, and is not gender specific.

Parental Concerns

We believe that communication is the cornerstone of building a strong school and community. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your teacher or call the school to set up an appointment with the school administration.

General Information

First Bell: 8:42 am

Classes Start: 8:45 am

Recess 10:30-10:45

Lunch Break: 11:45-12:30

11:45-12:08 pm

Lunch: K-Gr.4

Recess: Gr. 5-8

12:08-12:30 pm

Lunch: Gr. 5-8

Recess: K-Gr.4

Recess 2:00-2:15

Classes End: 3:15 pm

School Hours

Students normally do not have to come to school before 8:30 in the morning. Students are to remain in the front foyer until the glass doors open at 8:25 am. For students who arrive at school early or stay late, we ask parents to enroll their child in the Boys and Girls Club Before/After program for proper supervision and safety.

School Attendance - Safe Arrival

Attendance Line (toll free) 1-844-425-7221 or go.schoolmessenger.com to report absences on the website or download the app. If you are having trouble with the program please contact the school (*Perhaps your school information needs updating*).

Regular attendance is necessary if a student hopes to get the best results from their schoolwork. To ensure your child's safety we request that parents call the attendance line (access website/use app) if their child will be absent/late for any reason prior to the absence. If you miss the Safe Arrival Attendance deadline of 8:45am on the day your child is absent or going to be late, please call the school directly.

Our automated system calls parents who have not reported the absence before 8:45am. Please follow the prompts on the call. If you are clearing a late student on the automated call back, the arrival time needs to be a time that is after the call received.

Late Arrivals

Students are expected to be in their classrooms and ready to start the day at 8:45 a.m. Students who come late have a tendency to disrupt classes, miss announcements and lessons being taught. Students who arrive late must check in at the office even if the attendance has been reported. Parents will be notified if their child is continually late.

Noon Lunch

If it is impractical for students to go home for lunch, students may stay for lunch. Students who stay for lunch may not leave the school grounds for any reason unless the parents notify their teacher. Students going home for lunch are the exception. Students who stay will eat in their classrooms. Those students will be supervised and they must follow the expectations that we have set out for them (for example: sitting quietly and respectfully in their desks). If the expectations are not followed, the parents of the student will be notified and alternate lunch arrangements may be necessary.

Telephone Policy

The school telephones are business telephones that are constantly in demand. It is for this reason that students must first seek permission from their classroom teacher in order to use them. Making after school play arrangements is not considered suitable use of the telephone.

Newsletters

Newsletters are sent out every second Wednesday by email. Families who do not have access to a computer may pick up a paper copy at the office.

School Pictures

Individual pictures and classroom group pictures usually occur in early September. The purchase of school photographs is optional.

Indoor/Outdoor Recess Policy

Please be advised that we will follow the recess weather policy during the winter months.

-25 degrees and warmer - all are outside. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather.

School Exterior Doors

All outside doors (with the exception of the main doors) will be locked and remain locked during instructional time. This will help to ensure that all visitors enter through the front doors of the school and report their arrival.

Learning Resources Centre (Library)

This center will assist student learning. It plays an important role in the development of research concepts as well as resource and inquiry based learning skills.

Learning Assistance Room (LAT)

The Learning Resource Room teachers are part of a team of professionals whose task is to assist the classroom teacher in providing support. They work collaboratively with school staff and parents to meet the needs of our students.

School Field Trips

Our primary objective is to provide each student the opportunity to plan and participate in activities where the emphasis is on participation and enjoyment. Activities are planned around and related to curriculum.

Band

Our band program is open to students from Grades 6-8. Performances will take place through the year in our school and community.

Religion

Religion is an integral part of the Catholic School Program. Each grade level receives the equivalent of 150 minutes per week of religious instruction. Our school is served by St. Francis Xavier Parish. Parish staff will be visiting our school on a regular basis this year. We shall celebrate mass at the parish throughout the year and many other liturgies take place here at the school. Parents are most welcome to attend. Our faith permeates all that we do in all areas. Our religion programs are taught separate but the principles of our faith are a part of all we do and how we interact within the world and those around us. Social justice projects give the children an opportunity to create hope, and make the world a better place.

Families of Other Faiths:

Georges Vanier School is inclusive and welcomes families of other religious faiths. All children enrolled in Georges Vanier are required to take classroom religion instruction. Parents must complete the Declaration Status form upon registering their child.

Physical Education

Desirable health practices and participation in recreational activities are an important priority in our school. Each child is to receive the equivalent of 30 minutes per day of physical activity, with some activities scheduled indoors and some outdoors. Appropriate clothing and shoes are needed for all activities. **Our school has a “two shoe” policy: Outdoor shoes and “Non-marking” indoor running shoes** are required. Students will participate in a host of activities throughout the year and must come to school prepared to participate in physical education activities.

Extra-curricular Sports

Listed below are some of the activities that may be available to students.

Cross Country	Grades 3 – 8	Volleyball	Grade 8	Indoor Track	Grades 4 – 8
Basketball	Grade 8	Track & Field	Grades 4 – 8	Ski Trip	Grades 5 – 8

Student Technology - Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Georges Vanier School promotes the use and integration of technology into student learning. As a Catholic school we treat everyone with respect and kindness. Our actions, our words and our use of technology should always be a reflection of God’s love for us. Our students use technology to learn and it is essential to facilitate creative problem solving, new media literacy and collaboration. While we want our students to be active contributors in our connected world, we also want them to be safe, legal, responsible and to behave in ways consistent with our Catholic teachings. The acceptable use policy (AUP) supports our vision of technology use and promotes a strong sense of digital citizenship. Students found to be in violation of the Georges Vanier AUP will be subject to regular classroom and school disciplinary procedures. The AUP form is required to be filled out so your child can have access and use technology at the school.

Parents as Partner

Georges Vanier School creates many opportunities for parents and community members to share talents, skills and abilities within our school. Should you be interested, we would be pleased to receive your assistance. Georges Vanier prides itself on its large degree of parental and community involvement. We appreciate your support in maintaining this tradition. We would also encourage you to join the CSCC (Parent Council) as we are always in need of extra support. Everyone is welcome to all meetings. Our staff appreciates the volunteerism that is offered each year. Details about library and classroom assistance can be obtained from the staff involved or the office.

Georges Vanier Catholic Fine Arts School Community Council (CSCC)

Cherie Kornelsen - Chairperson	(306) 371-8337	cherieandben@sasktel.net
Heather Hickey- Vice-Chairperson	(306) 373-5360	heathershep@gmail.com
Jana Bassingthwaite - Secretary	(306) 652-2006	bassingthwaite@mac.com
Shari Wyatt - Treasurer	(306) 715-4363	wytts@sasktel.net

All parents are invited and welcome to attend any of the CSCC meetings. Dates and times can be found in the newsletter. If you are interested in joining the CSCC please e-mail Laura Cey at lcey@gscs.ca or call the school office at 306-659-7220 should you have any questions.

Volunteer Policy – Criminal Record Check

Our school division policy around volunteers has recently been reviewed and will have an impact on parent volunteers on fieldtrips, especially fieldtrips that are out of town, as well as volunteering to drive students. With all out-of-city field trips, a criminal occurrence security check is required, if the volunteer is a direct independent supervisor. There is no cost for this document, as long as the request is accompanied by a school letter. Criminal Record Checks are good for one year. If you have already completed a police record check for other volunteering with other organizations, a new one does not need to be reissued. Parents volunteering to drive students must provide a valid driver's license, have a good driving record and preferably a package insurance policy. If driving extends outside city limits, again a current criminal occurrence security check will be required. Forms are available at the office. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call the school at 306-659-7220.

Dress Code

The criteria to be used in discussing Student Dress Guidelines include dignity and respect for all; age of the students; ability to identify students (i.e., any coverings that obscure the face); safety consideration.

Example of Dress Guidelines that are inappropriate:

- clothing or other accessories that promote or symbolize drugs, alcohol, tobacco, illegal activity, racism, violence, sexualized slogans or images, pornography, obscene designs or words.
- wearing undergarments as outerwear.
- gang-related styles or symbols.

When there are differences in opinions in terms of student dress appropriateness, all involved have a duty to ensure dignity and respect is maintained.

In the case where a student is required to remedy inappropriate dress, a variety of options will be presented that maintains the dignity of the student.

Homework

Homework is an extension of the student's daily activities. The amount of time each student will spend on homework may vary according to grade, ability and study habits. Communicate with your child's teacher in regard to expectations and focus.

Student Assessment

Assessment is an on-going process which helps the growth and the progress of each student. Students are active participants in goal setting, self-assessment and have a key role in the three-way conferences. It is our expectation students will participate in the three-way conferences. Assessment reporting periods occur three times a year followed by three-way conferences in November and March. The assessment also includes a showcase portfolio of student work and a report card where progress measures skill development, effort and achievement.

Nutrition Positive School

Georges Vanier is striving to be a nutrition positive school. We teach The Canadian Food Guide and focus on eating a balanced diet. Suggestions for healthy snacks sent to school could include fruit and vegetables

**Georges Vanier is a NUT, FRAGRANCE & ANIMAL ALERT SCHOOL
due to severe allergies of some of our students and staff.
Thank you for making Georges Vanier a healthy workplace for everyone.**

Lockdown Procedures/ Fire Drills

Throughout the year our school will be practicing lockdown and fire drills. We ask for student cooperation to ensure that all students understand the procedures and ensure student safety. Students are expected to wear footwear at all times.

Emergency/Evacuation

There are a number of causes that could potentially lead to the evacuation of the school building, for example: a major gas leak, fire or total loss of utility services. In the event of an evacuation, the students and staff would relocate to John Lake School. In the event that an out of area evacuation were required we would evacuate to St. Joseph's High School. We would then proceed to allow students to go home provided that a parent or responsible sibling was at home. This would be verified by telephone.

Medication Policy

Saskatoon Catholic Schools attempt to provide a safe and secure school environment for all students. There are policies which outline appropriate procedures dealing with a variety of emergency situations. This includes administration of emergency medical assistance or medication. As well, there are policies which govern administration of medications on a regular basis. Parents should contact their principal when their children require medication. Appropriate forms and paper work will need to be completed.

Community Health

Our Community Health Nurse is Nicki Woolley. She will perform immunizations and acts as resource person in Health, AIDS Education, and Family Life. Nicki can be reached at the Saskatoon Health Unit (306)655-4165.

Communicable Diseases

Communicable diseases can spread rapidly through a classroom. To control the spread of these diseases, children who have fever, diarrhea or rashes should not attend school until they are well and/or have been treated by a doctor.

Children with the following should not attend school until they have been treated: **Scabies, Ringworm, Impetigo, Sore Throat (Strep Throat), Scarlet Fever, Eye Infections.**

Children who have the following diseases: **Red Measles, German Measles, Mumps, Whooping Cough** must contact the Saskatoon Community Health Unit at 655-4167 and obtain a Release Slip before they are allowed to return to school.

If you have any questions regarding Communicable Diseases and their control, call your Nicki Woolley at: **South-East Health Centre, 3006 Taylor Street East, S7H 4J2. Telephone: 655-4167.**

Lost and Found

Small items such as keys, rings, pens, etc., should be returned to the main desk at the office. Articles of clothing may be deposited in a lost and found box. Parents are urged to label all student belongings.

Bicycles, Scooters & Skateboards

Bike racks are provided next to the school. This area is out of bounds, except when getting or parking bikes. All bikes should be locked. We cannot assume financial responsibility for damaged or stolen bikes.

Students must dismount their scooter boards/skateboards outside the school. Scooters must be folded outside before entering the school. These items must be safely stored in student locker or classroom and are not be used at recesses or noon hour.

Caretaking Staff

The caretaking staff is responsible for maintaining the school in good order—that is, the maintenance of temperature, cleanliness and repair. These duties can be best fulfilled if the caretakers have the cooperation and assistance of all students and staff.

Personal Belongings and Damage

Students who damage school equipment and/or facilities either deliberately or because of “horseplay” will be required to pay for the repairs or replacement. The cost of books lost or deliberately damaged may also be charged to the student.

Personal belongings such as games, personal listening devices and trading cards should not be brought to school without the consent of the classroom teacher. **The school is not responsible for damage or loss.** We encourage parents to discourage your child(ren) from bringing items of value to school.

Cell Phones

Technology and busy families have increased the need for some children to bring cell phones to school. This is understandable; however, we do need you and your child to be aware:

- Mobile devices must be on **“silent” mode** while students are at school.
- Mobile devices **may not be used** during class time, unless directed by a staff member.
Students who inappropriately use their mobile device during class time will have it taken to the Main Office and have to retrieve at the end of the day and will have loss of privilege of phone use for a 1 week period of time as communicated to parents.
- Mobile devices **shall not be used** to bully. **This a criminal offence.** In these instances, the school’s processes for dealing with incidents of bullying may be put into effect. Other consequences will be considered as necessary.
- Video, pictures, and audio recordings are not allowed in or out of the classrooms unless approved by the teacher.
- Mobile devices may not be used in washrooms, change rooms or the gymnasium.

We will permit phones to be used appropriately over the lunch portion of noon hour. Students using cell phones inappropriately will be addressed by the school administrators and parents will be informed.

Before and After School Program - (306) 665-1450 – www.bgcsaskatoon.ca

The Boys and Girls Club of Saskatoon have set up a before and after school childcare program. The program uses the school facilities and is held in the gymnasium. The program provides children with a safe, challenging, and creative start and end to their school day allowing parents to rest assured that their children are being well looked after. The time of operation is from 7:15 to 8:40 am. and 3:15 pm. to 6:00 pm., as well as at times when the children are dismissed early or during a common day dismissal. The charges are modest and are arranged through the club. **Students arriving at school more than 15 minutes ahead of time or remaining longer than 15 minutes after school will need to be registered in this program to ensure proper supervision and safety.**

The History behind the School Name

CHRIST THE KING SCHOOL opened in September 1958 with – 130 students in Grades 1 – 8 in four classrooms. The official opening was held October 26, 1958, with Bishop F.J. Klein blessing the school, assisted by Fr. H. Corbett and Fr. Bernard Dunn. One of the highlights of the school’s history was the change of name in 1967 to Georges Vanier, in honor of Canada’s Governor General who was an exemplary Catholic.

Due to decreasing student population, the school decided to focus on becoming a specialized school of Fine Arts which occurred in the fall of 1979. The school offers a full curriculum program with expertise in areas of the fine arts – music, art, drama and dance.

In 2014, Georges Vanier officially changed the school's name to Georges Vanier Catholic Fine Arts School. In September 2015, the new facility was officially open and celebrated.