



# BCS Family Handbook

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Proverbs 9:10

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# Welcome to Brantford Christian School!

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Dear Parents and Guardians of BCS students,

First, thank you for making the choice of Christian education at BCS for your children! We trust that you and your family will be richly blessed as you are a part of our growing school community.

This handbook will help you navigate the school year with all its complexities as it explains the different aspects of the school—from its foundational vision and mission statements and statements of faith to its routines, policies, and practices to its overviews of annual events. While we hope that this handbook will provide answers to most of your questions, we are also available in person, by phone, and by e-mail to answer any further questions you may have.

In His Service,  
Maureen Jarvis  
Principal  
[mjarvis@bcsbrantford.ca](mailto:mjarvis@bcsbrantford.ca)

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## Introduction & History

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On September 26, 1955, a meeting was held to discuss establishing a Christian school. Thirty-nine people signed up as members, and a board was elected. A three-room school was constructed in 1963. After much hard work and many prayers, BCS opened in September of that year with 38 students enrolled. Three years later one classroom and a hallway were added as enrolment reached 100 students. In 1968 one more classroom was built as the school population increased by another 20 students. Enrolment in the following years declined mainly due to the poor economy in Brantford and its impact on the financial position of families. In 1979, that trend reversed, and enrolment grew until 1989 when the number of students reached 140. In 1989, two portables were bought and placed east of the school to accommodate the increased number of students. Plans began during that time for an expansion to the building and in 1991 four classrooms, a library, a gym, offices, a kitchen, a staff lounge, and a supply room were added. New playground equipment was also purchased and installed.

Enrolment continued to grow steadily through 2008, requiring more changes to the facility, which included two portables being added and an expansion to the library and computer lab. Following small enrolment declines in 2008 and 2009, mainly due to the economy, BCS continued to grow reaching 200 students for the first time in 2013. Growth has continued over the five years since, with most years having a record number of students and families. In 2014 BCS celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and plans for a facility expansion were developed.

A year later, the Brick-by-Brick capital campaign was officially launched. Over the years, the expansion plans evolved from a \$1 million addition to a \$2.1 million expansion to a \$3.5 million project because of successful fundraising and continued enrollment growth. At a meeting on November 16, 2017, the members of the school's society voted unanimously to move forward with the expansion project based on a budget of up to \$3.5 million. The expansion includes new junior and senior kindergarten classrooms, six new classrooms, a large multi-purpose room, and new office spaces and the building was made fully accessible with an elevator and barrier-free washrooms. Since the completion of the project, the student population has steadily increased to almost 300 students.



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## Foundations of BCS

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**VISION** - As a community of God's people, we educate our children to glorify Him in every aspect of life.

**PURPOSE** - In obedience, our purpose is to glorify God by providing a learning environment for children of parents who believe the biblical directive that they are responsible for providing a Christ-centred education. The children are taught about His world, exercising stewardship in that world, and working to restore the Kingdom of God. In all these things, we are guided by the word of God – the Bible; the Word made flesh – Jesus Christ; and God with us – the Holy Spirit.

**MISSION** - As a community entrusted with the care of God's children, Brantford Christian School endeavours to guide these children to commit themselves, academically, spiritually, emotionally, socially, and physically, to responsible service to the LORD in every area of life.

**MOTTO** - "Building Christian Students"

**THEME VERSE** - Standing in the awe of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Based on Proverbs 9:10

### BCS SOCIETY & STRUCTURE

BCS is operated by its Society, which is made up of members. All individuals must meet the eligibility requirements of a member as outlined in BCS' Membership policy to become a member. Membership carries with it the opportunity to vote at society meetings, nominate other members to serve on the Board of Directors, or participate themselves on the Board of Directors or other school committees.

There are two annual **Membership Meetings** – one in the spring and one in the fall. At these meetings, the various committees give reports on their current projects. Everyone is welcome at these meetings and there is an opportunity to respond to the presentations. Members have the opportunity to approve agenda items such as the Financial Statements, the new Board members, and reports when necessary.

### COMMITTEES

Each of the committees provides the Board of Directors (BOD) or the Administration with minutes or reports. There are also ad hoc committees that exist for a limited time and deal with an assigned topic. Ad Hoc committees provide the BOD or Administration with advice or suggest direction for the Board or Administration to take. For more information about the role of each committee and how to be involved on a committee, please contact the school office.

### ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS



Brantford Christian School is a member of the Edvance Christian Schools Association. Edvance exists to foster excellence in leadership, learning, and school operations in Christian schools in eastern Canada.



BCS is also a member of Christian Schools International (CSI) which is an international service organization providing help and leadership to more than 350 member schools. CSI provides Christian education curriculum materials, administers Christian School Pension Plans and Health and Dental Insurance Packages, and makes available a number of additional services to

interested schools.

# Community at BCS

*A full detailed list of dates can be found on Sycamore & BCS Website*

<b>BCS Events at a Glance</b>	
<b>Event</b>	<b>Date Scheduled/Time of Year</b>
Back to School Event & New Family Orientation	Thursday afternoon before 1 <sup>st</sup> day of school
First Day of School	Tuesday following Labour Day
Dessert & Discuss Evening Event	3rd week of September
Golf Tournament	On a Saturday in September
*Parent-Teacher Conferences	2nd Thursday in October
Educator's Convention	Last Thursday and Friday in October
Christmas Bazaar	On a Saturday in late November
Grandfriends' Day	2nd week of December
*Christmas Concert	2nd week of December
Christmas Break	3rd week of December - end of 1st week of January
*Student-led Conferences	1st week of March
March Break	2nd week of March
Move-a-thon	Late April
*Celebration of Learning	Term 1 - 2nd week of November Term 2 - 4th week of May
BCS Field Day	1st week of June
Graduation	3rd Wednesday of June
Last Day of School	3rd Thursday of June

*\* Indicates required student attendance. Please plan family events, vacations, and outside-school activities accordingly.*

## Special Community Events

1. **BACK TO SCHOOL EVENT:** Prior to the beginning of our school year, BCS hosts an event when students and parents are invited to the school to view the classrooms and become familiar with the space where the students will spend the rest of the year. Information regarding your child's space designation and supplies will be sent to you in advance which will allow for a more prepared start for your child.
2. **NEW FAMILY ORIENTATION:** On the same date as the Back to School Event, families who are new to BCS are invited to arrive early. They will be introduced to the way we function at BCS and have an opportunity to ask questions and mingle with other families.
3. **DESSERT & DISCOVERY EVENING:** On the third Thursday of September, BCS families are welcome to join us for an evening event designed to meet other families within our community and develop connections and relationships. This is followed by the opportunity to visit a classroom and hear from teachers as they share the story of your child's learning journey for the school year.

## Fundraising Events

1. **GOLF TOURNAMENT:** Every September, BCS hosts a golf tournament. Volunteers approach sponsors, gather prizes and organize the day to make this a very successful fundraiser. Anyone from within or from outside the community is welcome to register a team and all are welcome to the dinner following the tournament, even if you have not played in the tournament. Proceeds have been more than \$50,000.
2. **CHRISTMAS BAZAAR:** On the last Saturday of November, a Christmas Bazaar is organized by a committee of dedicated volunteers. It begins in the morning and ends by mid-afternoon. This event allows for all our school members to volunteer for a time in a variety of different ways. It is also a wonderful way in which to connect with our community and have a time of fellowship. Again, this is a major fundraiser and has generated more than \$ 50,000.
3. **MOVE-A-THON:** This event is where students collect sponsors to support getting active. The event occurs in the afternoon in the latter half of April.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:** We offer many opportunities to volunteer in our community and we do require a vulnerable sector police check. Forms can be requested from the office and must be completed to participate in any activity that involves the students. The following list represents some of these opportunities.

- **Literacy Language Centres:** This program involves working one-on-one or within the classroom with Junior Kindergarten to Grade 2 students and targets literacy skills.
- **Athletics & Coaching:** Our school participates in a number of tournaments, and we train teams for cross country, soccer, volleyball, basketball, hockey, ball hockey and track and field. Presently, we have a junior team, consisting of grade 5 & 6 students and a senior team made up of grade 7 & 8 students in some of the sports. We welcome our members to share their expertise, as a coach in any of these areas. Also, on some of our tournament days, we need people to help in a variety of ways from scorekeepers to marshalls on our cross-country course.
- **Library:** We have a library at BCS that emphasizes the importance and joy of learning through reading. Volunteers help by signing out books for the students as well as keeping the shelves organized and recommending new books.
- **Grandfriends' Day:** Each year, we invite our grandfriends to BCS to share a day with the younger generation. Volunteers are needed to help with refreshments and clean up.
- **Governance:** At BCS, a Board of Directors is the governing body that volunteers their time and skill to make decisions and delegate responsibilities. Committees or Project Teams may also require volunteers from time to time.
- **Classrooms:** Teachers may request volunteers to help with specific events, such as a chaperone on a class trip, or helping with a project in a number of ways.
- **Other Opportunities:** At times a request may be published in our weekly Nuts & Bolts for volunteers. Please let us know if you would like to help in any way.

**RESOURCE THRIFT SHOP:** Brantford Christian School is blessed to be supported by the re-Source Thrift Shop which was started in 2013. The Thrift Shop is located at 320 N. Park St. - a location which has one of the highest people density rates in Brantford. The shop is blessed to have about fifty volunteers who contribute to the success of the store and also is supported by families at BCS. Each BCS family is required to serve as a volunteer one Saturday throughout the school year. A board member will communicate with you about your scheduled date well in advance.



**WORSHIP ASSEMBLIES:** Every Wednesday morning at 8:35 a.m., the staff and students gather in the gym. Other members of the school community are welcome to attend the assemblies. Usually, we have a speaker present a short lesson relating to a Biblical principle, followed by a time of praise and worship. Some of our assemblies are led by students and focus on a particular theme, for example in October one of the classes leads the school in a Thanksgiving assembly. Announcements are also made at this time, and it presents an opportunity to recognize student achievements.

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## General Procedures

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### DAILY SCHEDULE:

Times	Activity- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	Activity - Wednesday
8:00 AM	Teacher/Staff Arrival	Teacher/Staff Arrival
8:15 - 8:25 AM	Bus Arrival & Drop Off - Outside Duty	Bus Arrival & Drop Off - Outside Duty
8:25 - 8:30 am	Transition Time	Transition Time
8:30 AM	School Day Begins	School Day Begins
8:30 - 9:10 AM	Period 1 - Morning Meetings/Bible	School Wide Assembly
9:10 - 9:50 AM	Period 2	Period 2
9:50 - 10:30 AM	Period 3	Period 3
10:30 - 10:45 AM	Nutrition Break	Nutrition Break
10:45 - 11:10 AM	Recess Break	Recess Break
11:10 - 11:50 PM	Period 4	Period 4
11:50 - 12:30 PM	Period 5	Period 5
12:30 - 1:10 PM	Period 6	Period 6
1:10 - 1:25 PM	Nutrition Break	Nutrition Break
1:25 - 1:50 PM	Recess Break	Recess Break
1:25 - 2:05 PM	School-Wide Quiet Time	Period 7
2:05 - 2:45 PM	Period 7	
2:45 - 3:25 PM	Period 8	Community Connection Outdoor Education
3:25 - 3:30 PM	Closing Meetings	
3:30 PM	Dismissal	Dismissal
3:40 PM	Bus Departure	Bus Departure

**OFFICE HOURS:** 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**EARLY ARRIVALS:** BCS does not offer before and after-school care. Students are not to be dropped off at school prior to 8:15 a.m. or picked up after 3:30 p.m. Should you need occasional accommodations, please contact the office well in advance.

**LATE ARRIVALS:** Students have a 10-minute window before being marked late following the 8:30 bell. When students arrive after the second bell (8:40 a.m.), parents must enter the building and sign in their child(ren) at the front desk. If students are not in their classrooms by 8:40 a.m., they will be marked as late. To avoid disruption to the class, please try to keep late arrivals to a minimum.

**SIGN-IN & SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES:** All visitors (including parents) must report to the office upon entering the building and sign in the logbook. All approved visitors should wear a "Visitor" tag. Visitors are defined as persons not enrolled or employed at BCS. (*709-Visitors to School Policy can be located in Sycamore*)

**ATTENDANCE & REPORTING ABSENCES:** Please note that only excused absences are for illness, doctor appointments, instruction out of school, or family bereavement.

*Please call the school or send an email to the office by 8:15 a.m. if your child will be absent from school.* All attendance reporting should be made to: [office@bcsbrantford.ca](mailto:office@bcsbrantford.ca). You may also leave a message on the answering machine if you cannot reach someone in the office. If your child has not arrived at school and we have not been notified, we will call home. This is a safety measure.

Students who go on extended vacations are expected to catch up on their schoolwork when they return. (*608-Attendance Policy can be located in Sycamore*)

**EARLY DISMISSAL:** Students who need to leave school property early must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. The school office and classroom teacher must be notified ahead of time by phone, note or email. Parents/guardians must also sign their child/ren out at the office when they come to pick them up.

**MORNING ROUTINE:** When the first bell rings at 8:25 a.m., students are to line up at their designated building entrances to be allowed into the school. They will then enter the building and remove their outdoor shoes. Once they have done that, they proceed to their seats in class before the second bell rings at 8:30 a.m. After the third bell rings at 8:40 a.m. students will be marked as late.

**LUNCH TIMES:** Fifteen minutes is provided at the beginning of every recess for students to eat their snacks or lunches. Food is not permitted to be taken outside so students are required to eat before going outside. Teachers will provide additional eating times for students who need more time. Students are not allowed to go outside until after the second bell at the start of each recess time.

Most students remain at school for lunch. A few students live nearby and have permission to go home for lunch. Please remember that BCS is a **nut-aware** school. To be friendly to our God-given environment, please provide reusable containers for your child's lunch as much as possible.

**DISMISSAL ROUTINE:** When the first bell rings at 3:30, students are dismissed from their classes. The bus students make their way to their respective buses. Parents/guardians pick up students who do not ride the bus outside of the building at 3:30. As safety is a priority, before leaving please check in with your child's teacher.

**ALTERNATIVE PICK-UPS:** If you plan to designate another person to pick up your child/ren from school, you must notify the office of his/her identity by phone, email, or a note prior to pick-up. Students who do not regularly take the bus home must have prior permission from their parent/guardian if they would like to take the bus for a play date or birthday celebration. Permission will be granted if there is enough space on the bus that day. The **office** must be made aware of this in advance.

**SUPERVISION:** Before, after school, and during both recesses, at least five staff members will be on duty on the playground. They can be recognized by their orange safety vests. They also carry walk-talkies and 1st aid kits. The duty supervisors have full authority and are expected to apply playground rules and guidelines. *(624-Supervision Standards Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**RECESS ACTIVITIES:** Recesses are intended for fresh air activities which are beneficial to student performance. We encourage group games and sports activities outside. If students bring their own toys or sports equipment, they need to take responsibility for their safekeeping. The school will not be held responsible for any loss or damage which may occur.

**DRESS FOR ALL WEATHER:** It is essential that students go outside daily for fresh air and movement. Students need to be dressed for all weather types. "There is no bad weather, just poor choice in clothing." Please ensure your child(ren) is/are dressed for the daily weather conditions.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER:** Students will remain inside during extreme weather. This will be determined by the administration in conjunction with Environment Canada guidelines.

**SCHOOL OR BUS CANCELLATIONS:** If school is cancelled due to inclement weather, parents will be notified of the school cancellation by way of an email and text message. The cancellation will also be posted in Sycamore and on the school website. Should a bus not be running, a text message will be sent to those on the affected route.

**SCHOOL CLOSURES:** If school must close early, you will receive a phone call, email message, and/or text message. In the event of inclement weather or any other school-related emergency, the school may be closed. School closures will also be posted in Sycamore and on the BCS website.

**ILLNESS WHILE AT SCHOOL:** When students become ill and are not well enough to continue with the program at school, every effort will be made to notify you. Please ensure that you keep your contact numbers (home, work, and cell) updated with the school office. Sick children can be picked up from the office. In the event of minor illnesses or injuries, first aid will be provided by a staff member. Over-the-counter medication can also be given if consent from the parents/guardian is given. *(617-Medication Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**ABSENTEEISM & FAMILY VACATIONS:** Frequent absenteeism hurts the child's learning process. Therefore, we urge parents to schedule vacations to coincide with school holidays as much as possible. If your child must be absent due to vacation plans, please notify the school office and classroom teacher well in advance. Please be aware that it is often difficult or impossible for the teacher to give work in advance and that missed work may be reflected in the student's evaluation. When the student returns, any assignments or assessments missed during vacation must be completed as soon as possible. *(608-Attendance Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**BICYCLES AT SCHOOL:** We welcome students to ride bikes to school. Unfortunately, we do not have bike racks at this time. Please contact the office if your child(ren) will be biking to school and we will find a designated area for bikes to be locked up. Students must walk their bicycles on the school grounds. Bikes are to be left alone by everyone else except the owner.

**PARKING:** Please park your vehicle in the marked spaces in the main parking lot. The handicapped accessible parking spaces are reserved for those with a permit. Buses and emergency vehicles must always have access to the loading and unloading zones in front of the school. For safety reasons, the loading and unloading zones are not available for parents to drop off (8:15-8:40 am) or pick up (2:45-3:45 pm) students. Parking near the fire hydrant is never permitted.

**END-OF-DAY PARKING FOR PICK-UP AND PARKING FOR EVENTS:** All parents and visitors to BCS must use proper, legal parking spots at the school or park on the street (Clara Crescent) and follow all parking regulations. Should Off-site locations be necessary, we will provide information in advance.

## DRESS CODE:

1. Students require two pairs of shoes – one for outdoor, and one for indoor use. Indoor shoes should be non-marking and appropriate for physical education classes. We recommend close-toed shoes outdoors for safety reasons.
2. Wear clothing that reflects Christian modesty:
  - Shirt length needs to be longer than your waist
  - Clothing should be free of inappropriate language and graphics
3. Gym Clothing for Grade 5-8 ONLY – Grade 5-8 students are expected to wear separate gym clothing as part of the Physical Education program. Students can wear the blue Bolts shirts that each student is provided with or a athletic t-shirt from home. Athletic shorts should be worn with the T-shirt. The cost of shirts is \$15.

**LOST AND FOUND:** All items collected can be found in a bin located in the lobby outside the gymnasium. Several times throughout the school year, items are laid out in the foyer for students and parents to look through and identify their belongings. All unclaimed items are donated to charity. Please label all your child's belongings.



**PERSONAL EQUIPMENT – ELECTRONICS:** No cell phone or other Personal Electronic Devices (PED) may be used in the school during regular hours unless the teacher grants consent to use the device(s) for specific educational purposes. If these items are brought to school, they must remain in the student's backpack and if found during school hours, they will be confiscated. All confiscated items will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. Should there be repeated incidents further consequences will occur and parents will be notified.

Parents are not to text/call students on personal devices during the day. All communication must be directed through the office.

Students may not take pictures without the teacher's permission and without the permission of those being photographed. Pictures may not be posted on the internet without permission of those who were photographed. *(615-Personal Electronics Cell Phone Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**PERSONAL EQUIPMENT – SPORTS EQUIPMENT & PROTECTIVE GEAR:** Hockey sticks for road hockey are allowed all year round. Students participating in road hockey must wear a helmet with a face shield. Students who bring in personal equipment such as basketballs, baseball gloves, etc. should have their items clearly labelled with their names and keep their items in their backpacks. Hardballs are not permitted. Students may use tennis or softballs. The equipment must only be used in the designated areas for which they are intended.

**SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS:** Most of the supplies students need will be provided by the school. If any additional items are required, teachers will request them before the start of the school year. Textbooks and other materials are expensive and need to be reused. Students must treat all school materials with respect. Failure to do so may mean that the item is replaced at the expense of the student.

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## Communication

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**SYCAMORE EDUCATION:** Sycamore is a student information system and our primary communication platform for families. It will be used to communicate school-wide information such as newsletters, text messages, and individual classroom information. It will also be used to track attendance, manage enrollment, and much more. School calendars, and school-wide policies can also be found in Sycamore. Login information for the parent portal will be available in the fall.



**NUTS & BOLTS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER:** On the first day of the week, the Nuts & Bolts Newsletter will be posted in Sycamore. This newsletter contains a calendar of upcoming events, school announcements, and important information. Parents are strongly encouraged to read the newsletter each week to be kept up to date about school and class events.

**EMAIL AND CONTACT BETWEEN STAFF & PARENTS:** Staff email addresses are located in Sycamore. Parents may contact BCS staff using their work email addresses. Contacting staff on their personal cell phones via text or other apps is not permitted when communicating about school-related activities.

**PHONE CALLS BETWEEN STUDENTS & PARENTS:** If parents need to contact their child/ren at school during school hours, it is always best if these calls can be timed during breaks like recess or lunch hour. However, in the event of an emergency, the office can be contacted and will ensure that the call is transferred to the classroom. It should be noted that students are not allowed to use cell phones on school property unless they are permitted by the Administration.

Parents are not to text/call students on personal devices during the day. All communication must be directed through the office.

**SCHOOL WEBSITE:** The Brantford Christian School website is a source of information about the school. The website is found at [www.bcsbrantford.ca](http://www.bcsbrantford.ca).

**SCHOOL DIRECTORY:** A directory of family information will be located in Sycamore. The directory contains the phone number(s) and email addresses of families in the school. Families are asked to give consent to the information that is shared in the directory. It also has the name(s) and grade(s) of the child/ren in each family.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES:** If a parent wishes to express a concern or complaint about a situation, the procedure is:

1. Talk to the teacher first about the issue at hand; get all the facts directly from the staff member involved. This should occur before other students, parents, the administration, or the Board of Directors is approached.
2. If the problem cannot be resolved by talking with your child's teacher, even after a second attempt to discuss the issue with the actual teacher, the Principal or Vice Principals may be asked to join a meeting with the teacher and the parent to further discuss the issue.
3. If no resolution is reached after a final discussion with an Administrator regarding the situation, parents can then send a letter of concern to the Board of Trustees in an attempt to find a resolution.

**PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES:** Formal parent-teacher conferences are scheduled after the 1st six weeks of school. All parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to attend and should sign up for a conference time. At the request of staff and/or parents, conferences may be arranged after subsequent learning reports. Close contact with parents and teachers is essential for good education. If you wish to talk informally there are opportunities before and after school, or call and set up an appointment to visit.

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## Education & Curriculum

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### Curriculum

At BCS, we provide education for the whole child. We believe that students' spiritual, emotional, and physical development is as important as their intellectual growth. We use a variety of materials from various publishers to meet the diverse and unique needs of our JK to Grade 8 students. Beginning with the Ontario Ministry of Education Expectations, our teaching faculty designs Christ-centred learning experiences that invite our students into God's Story through *real and meaningful work*.



Our faculty has been trained within the framework of *Teaching for Transformation*. This framework equips our staff to design learning to lead students to become responsive disciples. Each classroom has a *Storyline* which *invites* students into God's story, by connecting the teacher's purpose and passion as a Christian Educator to the content that is taught. Students are *nurtured* to discover and engage with real people and real needs in the world. As active participants in the restoration act of God's story, students are *empowered* to respond through *real work*.

We believe how we teach is as important as what we teach. Our teaching faculty are becoming trained in Responsive Classroom, which is a student-centred, social and emotional learning approach to teaching and discipline. Using evidence-based practices, this approach helps to create safe, joyful and engaging classrooms and school communities for both students and teachers. Currently, the whole school incorporates some Responsive Classroom practices, such as morning meetings, quiet time and closing circles as a part of our daily routines.

We provide foundational learning in core subjects like math and integrated language arts and are working towards ensuring that our teaching practices and curriculum selections are research-aligned and evidence-informed so that our instruction and resources benefit all students.

Through the use of projects, called *Formational Learning Experiences (FLEx)*, our students are impacting our community and the world through their learning. Our teaching faculty designs cross-curricular FLExs that incorporate subjects like Bible, social studies, science, and the arts. FLEx allows our students to identify *real needs*, interact with and learn from *real people* and do authentic *real work* that helps shape themselves and the world. These deeper learning opportunities allow our students to learn and practice 21st-century learning skills like critical thinking, communication, creative problem-solving, perseverance, collaboration, information literacy, technology skills, digital literacy, global awareness, self-direction, social skills, innovation, social responsibility and more.

## **CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

BCS offers a full curriculum for students from Kindergarten to Grade 8. We use the Ontario Ministry of Expectations as a guide for the subject matter and meet or exceed expectations in terms of subject-based instructional minutes. Our students' progress in comparison to other schools is monitored using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth Tests which is administered to students in Grades 1-8 two times each school year. BCS compares very well with other Christian schools and is ahead of the national average of public and separate schools across the country.

### **CORE SUBJECTS:**

#### **Bible:**

The purpose of teaching Bible is to impart knowledge of the Bible, open up ways for children to know and love their Lord, and move children to a deeper faith. The curriculum focuses on the story of God and His people in every lesson at every grade level. The stories are presented chronologically to emphasize the relationship between individual stories and the overall theme of the Bible. Students are given the opportunity to retell the story in a variety of ways helping students to remember the stories and share them with others. Students who complete all levels of the Bible program will have studied the Bible stories three times in different ways.

### **Language Arts:**

Since God's gift of language is intended for communication, enjoyment, and praise, we affirm that students need reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, and thus develop their gifts to God's honour.

In response to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the *Right to Read Inquiry*, which was released in Ontario in 2022, our Kindergarten to Grade 2 classrooms have shifted their literacy instruction from balanced literacy to structured literacy which is research-based and evidence-aligned. Our instruction is data-driven and engaging to help our students become and remain excited about reading. Daily lessons cover the five big components of Scarborough's Reading Rope: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary.

For Grades 1-8, our Language Arts curriculum includes literature (reading and comprehension of poetry, short stories, and novels), phonics, grammar, spelling, vocabulary studies, creative writing, journaling, silent reading, and read-aloud times.

### **Mathematics:**

The mathematics program emphasizes knowledge of the basic skills at all levels. Continuous reinforcement and drills of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division skills at the lower grade levels provide good building blocks for mathematical work throughout Grades 5-8. The math curriculum teaches from a "problem-solving" point of view. Concepts are introduced and reviewed from grade to grade. Students learn new skills by making practical and logical applications of those skills previously learned.

### **French as Second Language:**

French as a second language is taught daily to students in Grades 4-8. The purpose of our French instruction is to help our students learn to speak and understand the French language and to appreciate French culture. French is taught primarily through a conversational method. Vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical structures are developed mainly through dialogue.

## **FLEx - FORMATIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES: CROSS-CURRICULAR SUBJECTS**

### **Social Studies/History & Geography:**

The Gr. 1-6 Social Studies program develops students' understanding of their unique place in God's story and helps them understand these questions: where do I come from, where do I belong, and how can I contribute to society? Through a cross-curricular framework, using FLEx (formational learning experience) projects, our students make real connections to past and present local, national and global communities. Students also learn about natural and built environments and how they can become socially and environmentally responsible citizens and caretakers.

Grades 7 and 8 students participate in studies of history and geography. History instruction is focused on Canadian history from the early eighteenth century to pre-World War I. Students learn that Canada has many stories and that each one needs consideration. The geography program provides opportunities for students to explore various topics in physical and human geography. Our students investigate the communities around them, analyze how people and environments affect one another and develop their ability to become environmentally responsible citizens.

### **Science**

Each grade unfolds different parts of God’s creation and explores them within five science strands: STEM Skills and Connections, Life Systems, Matter and Energy, Structures and Mechanisms, and Earth and Space Systems. Science instruction through cross-curricular FLEx projects provides authentic opportunities for students to participate in scientific processes, like research and experiments, while learning more about the world God has created and how students can be creation caretakers.

## **The Arts:**

### ***Visual Art***

Visual artwork enables children to recognize, explore, and develop creative talents. Students learn to use different media skillfully and apply the concepts of line, colour, shape, form, space, and value. In all grades, art is integrated within cross-curricular FLEx projects.

### ***Music***

In the primary grades, we concentrate on singing, rhythm and beat, using some percussion and rhythm instruments. Beginning in the junior grades, students will also learn how to play the recorder, the ukulele, and the guitar. In addition, students learn music theory, history, and music appreciation.

### ***Drama & Dance***

Drama and dance are also included in cross-curricular FLEx projects. Students learn to participate in and make personal connections to imagined contexts, communicate their thoughts and feelings uniquely and express their ideas creatively.

## **Physical Education:**

### ***Health***

Students will learn skills and knowledge that will help them to lead healthy, active lives and make healthy and safe choices as they understand themselves as temples of the Holy Spirit. Topics within the healthy living strand are healthy eating; safety at home, school, online and in the community; substances and habits; human development; and mental health.

### ***Physical Education***

The emphasis in Physical Education is activity as a development medium, in which the prime goal is not the activity itself, but rather the achievement of personal potential. In the primary and junior grades, the focus is the development of motor coordination and muscle tone, creative movement, and early sports skills. The intermediate grades continue to develop these skills and focus on sport-specific skills in soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton, and track and field.

**ONTARIO STUDENT RECORDS (OSR) – COLLECTION OF STUDENT INFORMATION:** The Education Act requires a principal of a school to “collect information for the inclusion in a record in respect of each pupil enrolled in the school and to establish, maintain, retain, transfer, and dispose of the record.” The information of each student will be gathered in an Ontario Student Record (OSR) and will be maintained in accordance with the guidelines proposed in the OSR Manual of the Edvance Christian Schools. The Education Act also regulates access to an OSR and states that the OSR is “privileged for the information and use of supervisory officers and the principal and teachers of the school for the improvement of instruction” of the student. Each student and the parent(s) of a student (who is not an adult) must be made aware of the purpose and content of, and have access to, the information contained in the OSR. A fundamental principle of the policy is to make certain that personal information is protected to ensure privacy. When a student enrolls at BCS and does not

have an existing OSR on file, parents will be asked to provide a copy of a birth certificate, certificate of baptism, or passport to include in the OSR file. (622 - Ontario Student Record Policy can be located in Sycamore)

**PERSONAL PRIVACY POLICY:** BCS is committed to maintaining the confidentiality, accuracy, and security of your personal information, as well as that of your children, in line with principles established by the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). Information provided at registration is used to connect with our constituents and strengthen our school community by informing them of school news, events, issues, and opportunities. (902-Privacy Policy can be located in Sycamore)

**PHOTOGRAPHS OF STUDENTS:** Photographs of our students are used for our website, newsletters, social media platforms, and brochures. On occasion, a student's or a group of students' photos may appear in a local newspaper. In most cases, a student's name is not included in the photograph. A "Permission Slip" is distributed to each family when they register at BCS. This sheet has a section where parents can give their permission or prohibit the use of their child's pictures for these purposes. Such decisions may, of course, be made at any time during the school year.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** God calls us to do our work with honesty and integrity. We are to take responsibility for the tasks that are laid before us and complete the work that has been assigned. We are to also give credit to others for their work and honour God in all we do. By following these guidelines, teachers, parents, and students get an accurate representation of the student's abilities and it allows fair and honest assessment and evaluation of work. While we encourage parents to support and assist students in their learning, the role of parents is one of guidance and facilitation while the student completes the work. As the student grows in ability and maturity, the role of parents lessens.

Daily work is any assignment given in class that is to be completed in that class or for homework the following class. Each student is required to complete his/her own work. This means that a student may not copy another's work to complete his/her own, plagiarize, or allow someone else to do his/her work. Moreover, when students complete assignments using secondary sources like the internet, books, or magazines, they need to understand that information taken from any source must be referenced and specific quotes must be credited to the author. All work must be referenced (orally or in written format) as prescribed by the teacher.

Any student who chooses to plagiarize or copy another's work to complete their own, including during tests, will be addressed on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the teacher and/or administration of the school. This could include the student repeating the assignment, receiving no credit for the assignment, or having the student supply sources for their information before the assignment is handed in or evaluated. (907-Plagiarism & Copyright Policy can be located in Sycamore)

**USE OF COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY:** BCS is equipped with class and student computers and tablets that are used as teaching enhancement tools. The use of technology within the classroom is done purposefully and acts to enhance the learning experiences of the learning. Teachers will communicate with parents ahead of time when a movie will be shown in class that is a part of the learning experience. Parents have the opportunity to communicate with the teacher should they prefer for their child to have an alternative learning experience.

Misuse or inappropriate use of technology may result in privileges being revoked. Should a chrome book or tablet be damaged and is no longer covered by the purchase warranty, the cost of repair or replacement becomes the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

**LIBRARY:** Our students are given class time to access the library to sign out books once a week. Books may be borrowed for a two-week period. Volunteers assist in signing out books, tracking books and renewing inventory. The library is also used at other times as breakout spaces for collaboration, research, and quiet study activities.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION - STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES:** At BCS, we recognize that God is the Creator of all people and as such we are to treat one another fairly and show respect to each other. For this reason, our Student Support Services team looks for ways to meet the needs of students whose learning is outside the scope of the regular classroom. A process is in place to make referrals to this program and to receive the diagnostic testing that allows for the best development of individualized education plans (IEP). The student's progress is monitored on a frequent basis to make necessary changes that will benefit the student. Professional agencies are also available for our use as are several different approaches. *(632-Student Support Services Policy & Manual can be located in Sycamore)*

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:** Students who are new to Canada and for whom, English is not their first language, are given direct language instruction to assist in making a transition to BCS. An assessment will determine the extent of instruction to be given and progress is continually monitored. Additional fees may be required.

**FIELD TRIPS:** We recognize that learning outside of the classroom in the context of real-life experience is a valuable tool in a child's education. Every year, our teachers plan various trips to provide ways to supplement and enhance the curriculum. Some trips involve local events that emphasize the role Brantford has in the Canadian economy, such as Bite of Brant, and others provide cultural exposure such as the Brantford Symphony Orchestra. Expenses for these trips are built into tuition costs.

Major class trips take place in grades 7 & 8 and involve overnight stays. Our grade 7 class participates in an outdoor camp and our grade 8 class explores Ottawa for 3 days. Expenses for these trips are typically covered by fundraising efforts, any expenses not covered by this will be an additional cost to parents. Volunteers are needed on these occasions and their assistance contributes to good memories and lasting friendships.

Volunteers are required to have a valid police check with the vulnerable sector on file at BCS before attending the trip. *(604-Field Trip Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** BCS values the importance of students developing leadership qualities that help share their character and 21st-century skills for the future. Students in grades 4-8 have the opportunity to sign up and participate in various leadership teams where they lead and serve our BCS community in various ways.

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## Special Events & Activities

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**BIRTHDAYS:** Student birthdays at school are often recognized through a song, allowing the child to share a treat with their classmates at a suitable time, and/or thanksgiving in prayer. Class parties, full meals, and other extravagant celebrations are not appropriate in the classroom. A healthy, ready-to-serve, nut-free choice is ideal if students wish to bring a snack to share with the class. **Invitations to birthday parties are not permitted to be delivered at school.** The potential for hurt feelings is too great. If party invitations need to be delivered, please send them via email, regular mail, or telephone. *(611-Party Invitation Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**HALLOWEEN:** While some families participate in Halloween activities at home, it is not celebrated at BCS.

**REMEMBRANCE DAY:** Remembrance Day is generally observed in the assembly scheduled closest to November 11. When November 11 falls on a school day, BCS sends students, typically from Grade 8, to the Brantford cenotaph to lay a wreath to remember those who participated in various freedom efforts. Also, a student from an intermediate grade presents a speech at the cenotaph on a rotating basis with other schools in the city.

**GRANDFRIENDS' DAY:** Grandfriends' Day is the time we honour grandparents and special older friends as being an important part of the BCS community. Grandfriends are invited to visit the classrooms, are served refreshments, and are presented with a special assembly by our students.

**VALENTINE'S DAY:** Valentine's Day is celebrated in BCS classrooms. Before the day, teachers send home a class list of students to prevent inadvertent hurt feelings through omissions or name misspellings. Students are encouraged to distribute Valentine's cards to all their classmates.

**EASTER:** The school celebrates Easter through assemblies about Good Friday and Easter Sunday. At some grade levels, the Bible curriculum includes units that focus on this important Christian celebration. Teachers review the events of Lent and Easter with their students during this time of year. The school is closed on Good Friday and Easter Monday.

**MOTHER'S DAY & FATHER'S DAY:** In the Primary grades, children are very eager to create cards and gifts for their mothers and fathers to celebrate their love for them. The creation of handmade cards or crafts to send home is part of this celebration. In the Junior and Intermediate grades, children may be more inclined to keep their expressions of appreciation for mothers and fathers more private and so gifts and cards are not typically prepared at school.

**MARCH BREAK:** BCS typically takes off one full week plus the Friday before March break. The full week of March break coincides with the public/Catholic schools' break so children may participate in camps and activities during that time.

**PHOTO DAYS:** Class and individual photos are taken early in the school year, usually in September.

**FIELD DAY:** BCS hosts its field day during the week first week of June. Students in grades 1-8 compete in their age categories in these events: running long jump, ball throw/shot put, high jump, standing long jump/triple jump and dashes. Students in grades 5-8 may also compete in the 400m and 1500m which are not held on Field Day. The top achieving athletes in each age category qualify for the District Field Day which is held in June.

**SPRING OR CHRISTMAS MUSICALS:** Musical abilities are celebrated through the production of musicals. The theme of the musical will determine if it is a Christmas or a Spring performance, and a production is planned for every other year. Participation of all students is encouraged from working in the technical areas to singing a solo as well as many other roles. Parent volunteers to help with costumes and set design may also be needed.

**CELEBRATIONS OF LEARNING:** A Celebration of Learning is a school-wide event where student work is displayed and presented to family, friends, and members of the greater community. Student work is centred on FLEx presentations which can include dramatic productions, public speaking, art displays, and musical performances. This event enables students to express their learning and demonstrate skills leading to future growth. Attendance at the Celebration of Learning is required for all students.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ACTIVITY DAYS:** Professional development (PD) is crucial for teachers to stay up-to-date with educational trends, improve their teaching methods, and foster a more engaging and effective learning environment. By participating in professional development activities, teachers can acquire new knowledge and skills, collaborate with colleagues, and gain fresh perspectives that enhance their classroom practice. This ongoing learning process ultimately benefits students by providing them with a more dynamic and stimulating educational experience. There is one PD day per month throughout the school year, excluding December, March, and May. There are two PD days in October when the teachers attend the Edvance Annual Gathering with fellow Christian educators from across Ontario. Teachers participate in professional activity (PA) days throughout the school year, including preparation days at the beginning and end of the year, as well as dedicated days for writing learning reports.

BCS aligns these PD and PA days with various school calendars, such as Edvance, the Grand Erie District School Board, and Hamilton District Christian High School. While some PA days coincide with these external calendars, others are scheduled independently to address specific needs or priorities.

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## Sports

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### SPORTS TEAMS:

We are part of the Guelph District Christian School Athletic Association which has eight participating schools.

These schools include:

Guelph Community Christian School	Guelph
Providence Christian School	Dundas
Laurentian Hills Christian School	Kitchener
Community Christian School	Drayton
Listowel Christian School	Listowel
Trinity Christian School	Burlington
Cambridge Christian School	Cambridge

These schools participate in numerous interscholastic sporting events throughout the school year. These events include soccer, cross country, volleyball, basketball, hockey, softball, and track and field. Various tournaments are held throughout the year both at home and away. Except for cross country and track and field, participants at these tournaments are mainly students in grades 6-8.

Representing BCS at a sporting event is considered to be a privilege. If a team member's academic performance is falling behind or if his/her behaviour is unacceptable, the classroom teacher will speak to the coach to determine whether the student will be allowed to remain on the team.

Often, students are required to practice or participate in sporting events outside of school hours.

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## Extra-Curricular Activities

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BCS offers a variety of opportunities to be involved in activities that enable the development of the whole child. These activities happen outside the regular curriculum. Many of the activities result in competition with other Christian schools in alternate locations, while some are activities that happen directly at BCS with peers. Some activities require student practice or participation outside school hours. Parents are asked to provide transportation to and from these activities. It is important that when you agree for your child to participate in an extra-curricular activity, you are making a commitment to provide your own transportation as well. Communication for these activities is done through the staff member responsible for the related activity.



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# Discipline

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## DISCIPLINE AT SCHOOL

*Please see the full policies located in Sycamore (606-Progressive Discipline Policy, 613-Bullying & Intervention Policy, 630 -Suspension & Expulsion Policy, 631-Code of Conduct Policy)*

### Definition and Purpose

The purpose of discipline at Brantford Christian School (BCS) is to encourage the sincere desire to walk obediently in the ways of the Lord. The word “discipline” is derived from “disciple” which means “follower.” Part of following Christ is demonstrated by respect for God, others and property.

At BCS discipline is intended to produce that state of order which is most conducive to teaching and learning. It is not intended to restrict students in their development, but rather to provide a structure within which openness of expression and freedom of thought may thrive. Within this environment, the child is encouraged to achieve the best academic performance that is consistent with his or her God-given abilities.

The Bible teaches that we and our children are image bearers of God, the crown of His creation, and therefore have an inherent dignity which must be respected. The Bible also teaches that we are born in sin. Our sinful nature would have us reject God, His commandments and principles. In spite of this, the nature of God is such that He extends His hand to us, accepting us as we are, if we come to Him in faith and claim the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins.

The discipline God administers is rooted in the love He has for us, His children. The purpose of His discipline is “that we may share in His holiness.” Its goal is to produce a “harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” (Hebrews 12:10,11).

We are in turn commanded to discipline the children God has entrusted to us and to do so in the same spirit of love (Proverbs 3:11, 12). Our love for our children must be, as God’s love for us, unconditional and not dependent on behaviour. Within this environment, children are expected to heed the discipline of their parents on the grounds that it will make them wise (Proverbs 4).

### Discipline in the School

Within our BCS school community, parents authorize the Board of Directors to employ the disciplinary methods necessary to accomplish its goals. The administration and teachers are then authorized by the Board of Directors to apply these methods with sound professional judgment. They may in turn delegate certain aspects of their authority to other approved helpers such as Educational Assistants or Personal Support Care Workers.

Staff, administration, and parents are encouraged to communicate together concerning matters of discipline. When serious disciplinary measures have to be taken, the home will be involved as soon as possible. Such measures are taken when there is persistent inappropriate behaviour in the classroom, halls, or on the playground, such as bullying, violence, blasphemous and/or vulgar language, and going off property without permission. Depending on the severity of the offense, consequences could include a suspension (in school or at home). The parents of all students involved in a discipline issue will be informed promptly. If matters do not improve, expulsion may be necessary.



## Use of Restorative Practices

At BCS we use Restorative Practices when dealing with any student behaviour issues. Our procedure is to involve any, and all, students and staff members who may have been involved in an issue, or affected by the issue; taking part in discussions so as to determine what actually happened, who has been affected and how, and how each participant will work to correct the problem and make it right, and what they may do differently the next time. Consequences, if necessary, will be fair, progressive and natural to the situation, and may be determined by the group. The goal of discipline is always for reconciliation, restoration, and renewal.

**BULLYING:** Brantford Christian School does not tolerate bullying in any form. All members of the school community are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment which promotes positive personal growth and development for all.

### What do we do to prevent bullying at Brantford Christian School?

(This includes on the bus, class trips, and school-sponsored activities)

As a school community, we will not allow cases of bullying to go unreported but will speak up, even at risk to ourselves.

- This requires **staff** to:
  1. Be role models in word and action at all times.
  2. Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
  3. Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by purposeful patrolling during supervision duty.
  4. Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons.
  5. Take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk.
  6. Report suspected incidents to the appropriate staff member, such as the homeroom class teacher, or Principal.
- This requires **students** to:
  1. Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation. If you are present when bullying occurs:
    - a) if appropriate, take some form of preventative action.
    - b) report the incident or suspected incident and help break down the code of secrecy.
    - c) show empathy and sensitivity toward both bullies as well as the victims.

If students who are being bullied have the courage to speak out, they may help to reduce pain for themselves and other potential victims.

- The Board of Directors recommends that **parents**:
  1. Watch for signs of distress in their child, e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising.
  2. Take an active interest in your child's social life and acquaintances.
  3. Advise your child to tell a staff member about the incident. If possible, allow children to report and deal with the problem themselves. They can gain much respect through taking the initiative and dealing with the problem without parental involvement.
  4. Inform a member of the administration if bullying is suspected. He/she will do the follow-up work in collaboration with you.
  5. Keep a written record (who, what, when, where, why, how).
  6. Do not encourage your child to retaliate.
  7. Communicate to your child that parental involvement, if necessary, will be appropriate for the situation.
  8. Be willing to attend interviews/meetings if your child is involved in any bullying incident.

9. Be willing to inform the administration of the school of any cases of suspected bullying even if your own child is not directly affected.

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## Student Progress

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**PROGRESS REPORTS:** Progress reports are sent home in November. A Progress Report is an opportunity to focus on the growth and the progress students are making toward the overall expectations in a classroom. These documents are not kept in the student's OSR (Ontario Student Record) file. Parents are encouraged to meet with their child's teacher for parent-teacher conferences to discuss their child's progress. Conferences are held in November.

**LEARNING REPORTS:** Learning Reports are sent out in January and June. The form of the report varies from an anecdotal style in Kindergarten to letter grades in the Primary and Junior levels, to numeric grades in the Intermediate level. Learning Reports are kept in the student's OSR file.

**PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES:** Communication between school and home is essential in a successful year for students. All parents are encouraged to attend the first set of conferences which are held in October. Typically, the conferences are held in the gym and are 10 minutes in length. The purpose of these conferences is to encourage parents to discuss their child's progress in learning, share insights about the individual child and learn from one another. We recognize that this time is limited due to the number of parents signing up. Should you desire to have a longer time with the teacher, please reach out to the teacher directly to set up an alternate date and time. The classroom teacher will be in contact with the parents on a regular basis if additional student problems or concerns arise. Similarly, if parents have a concern about their child's performance at school, they are encouraged to contact the teacher as soon as possible.

**STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES:** At Student-led Conferences, your child(ren) will be the host of the conference time as they present and guide you through their learning journey. This requires students to be in attendance. They will highlight the areas they are most proud of, the areas they had difficulty with, and share some goals they would like to achieve by the end of the year. As a parent, you will be invited into the learning experience as you actively engage in the process through offering reflections, and questions, and to help set goals for future success. Student-led Conferences are held in March after the first Learning Reports have been sent home.

**MAP TESTING (INDIVIDUALIZED TESTING):** Each year, students from Grades 1-8 participate in the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) assessment. These online assessments are conducted two times per school year and consist of 2 tests (Reading and Math) for Grades 1-2 and 3 tests (Reading, Language Usage, and Math) for students in Grades 3-8. MAP provides a personalized assessment for each student that adapts to their learning level while they are taking the "test." The information from MAP provides the teachers with information showing the growth of each student over the year(s) regardless of what level they are working at. We use the information from the tests to adjust the teaching in the classroom and proactively provide support for students who may require more focus on a specific skill. The results of the student's test are emailed to the parents.

### HOMework & Studying

**HOMework:** We encourage families to set aside some time each evening of a school day for home study. During this time, children can study, read, review, complete assignments or engage in other school-related work. Students benefit from effective home study habits by learning how to work and study effectively and independently. With effective home study habits, the student is reinforced in how to solve problems, do a review, and do independent reading, research, and summaries.

Homework may be a part of homestudy (homework being prescribed assignments from the child's teacher with due dates). The amount of homework varies from child to child based on need and the amount of work not completed during class time. As a guideline, the amount of homework for each grade level is based on up to 10 minutes per grade (i.e. a student in Grade 3 may have up to 30 minutes). There will be times when your child's homework load will exceed these guidelines because of projects and tests that need completion and study. **Please write a note to the teacher if for some reason homework cannot be completed.** Also, if a child is receiving homework beyond these guidelines regularly, discussion with the classroom teacher is recommended. Some classroom modifications may be required.

When there is little or no homework, parents are encouraged to have their children do math drills, spelling drills, reading, educational apps, etc.

**STUDYING:** The following are suggestions for developing good study habits:

1. Have a regular time and place to study.
2. Do the most difficult subject first.
3. Take short breaks between periods of study.
4. Put away distractions such as cell phones, tablets; turn off the TV
5. Oral drill is excellent for most subjects. Ask someone at home to hear your work.
6. Form the habit of asking for help whenever you do not understand some part of your work.
7. Do your work thoroughly and well.

*(629-Homework Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**MEMORY WORK:** Memory work is assigned as homework, but it is also reinforced and practiced during class time in the younger grades. It is based on the Bible Curriculum studied in each grade and supports the concepts and themes taught in each unit. The number of verses is dependent upon the grade level and is modified at the teacher's discretion.

**GRADE EIGHT GRADUATION:** At the end of grade 8, our students graduate from elementary school. This occasion is a very special event in our community and is marked by a dinner to which the grade 8 students and their parents, as well as present teachers, are invited. Our grade 7 student's parents are responsible for dinner arrangements and clean up. The grade 8 class decorates the gym and plans the ceremony to be held at a church. Everyone is welcome to the ceremony.

#### **GRADUATION PROFILE:**

A student who graduates from BCS demonstrates the following in their lives:

#### **Loving Changemakers**

*We share God's love with others.*

- ❖ I understand more deeply the Biblical story and my place within it.
- ❖ I recognize Christ's call on my life to love others and that my response to this will make a difference in the world as I address real needs and help real people.
- ❖ I am growing in my knowledge and understanding of the Bible.

#### **Curious Thinkers**

*We are creative, critical, and humble.*

- ❖ I recognize my God-given gifts and am working at developing and celebrating them to share with others.
- ❖ I display love, peace, patience, joy, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control in my daily life.
- ❖ I demonstrate curiosity in learning I am interested in and am open to new ideas.

- ❖ I ask good and important questions.
- ❖ I use reflection to help improve my learning and mindset.
- ❖ I am humble and can change my thinking to be more inclusive of others and differing opinions.

### **Gracious Communicators**

*We are respectful, kind, and helpful*

- ❖ *Respect* - I want everyone to be successful. I don't have to put others down to get what I want. It makes me happy to see other people happy. I like to do nice things for others. When a conflict arrives, I help brainstorm a solution. We can all win!
- ❖ *Kindness & Courage* - I listen to other people's ideas, feelings and needs. I try to see things from their viewpoints. I listen to others without interrupting. I can identify my God-given gifts and talents and am willing to share them to help others. I am confident in voicing my ideas.

### **Joy-filled Collaborators**

*We are grateful, playful, and reflective.*

- ❖ *Working Well with Others* - I value other people's strengths and learn from them. I get along well with others, even people who are different from me. I work well with groups. I seek out other people's ideas to solve problems. I know that "two heads are better than one." I am a better person when I let other people into my life and work.

### **Courageous Learners**

*We are responsible, resilient and rigorous.*

- ❖ I take responsibility for and value my own learning.
- ❖ I can demonstrate a good and growing understanding of the things we have studied and learned in class.
- ❖ I have created important real work that required me to try my best.
- ❖ I am growing in skills and abilities that will help me now and in the future, such as creativity, working with others, leadership, communicating, creative use of technology, asking good questions, taking responsibility, and getting things done.
- ❖ *Integrity & Perseverance* - I have a "can do" attitude. I choose my actions, attitudes and moods. I don't blame others. I stick with something even when it is hard. I have a Growth Mindset. I do the right thing without being asked, even if no one is looking.
- ❖ *Good Judgment* - I plan and set goals. I do things that have meaning and make a difference. I am an important part of my school. I look for ways to be a good person.
- ❖ *Responsibility* - I spend my time on the most important things. This means I say no to things I should not do. I set priorities, make a schedule and follow my plan. I am organized.

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## **Health & Safety**

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**ALLERGIES:** BCS strives to provide a safe school environment for all students. Please inform the school if your child has a severe allergy or medical condition. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to always ensure that the most up-to-date information is given to the school for the safety of the students. A Medical Alert/Student Information Form, along with a recent photo, must be completed annually. This form will be sent home for review and updates each year. The form can also be found in Sycamore. This information will be posted and any changes need to be communicated to the school immediately. (618-Prevalent Medical Conditions/Plan of Care Policy & 616-Asthma Policy can be located in Sycamore)

**ANAPHYLAXIS:** Anaphylaxis, sometimes called “allergic shock”, is a potentially fatal allergic reaction to a specific substance (i.e. insect sting, latex, certain foods, medications, etc.). BCS strives to reduce the risks to all students by taking preventative measures so that a student is not in danger. Please be aware that BCS is a “nut-aware” school. Parents should only send in foods that are labelled as being “nut-free”. We ask that students do not trade or share food, utensils, or food containers. Only safe “treats” should be brought to school for special occasions, i.e. birthday celebrations. All children in danger of suffering an anaphylactic event should eat only lunches and snacks that have been prepared at home, or foods that have been approved by the parents.



An **EpiPen** with a valid expiration date and labelled with a student’s name must be kept at the school for all students who have an anaphylactic reaction to substances. Teachers are trained in the administration of an EpiPen. (*601-Anaphylactic Policy can be located in Sycamore*)

**ACCIDENTS AT SCHOOL:** Accidents do happen at school. Minor accidents will be treated by simple first aid at the school and reported to parents as deemed appropriate. In the case of a more serious injury, staff will attempt to contact the parents or emergency contact persons immediately. In extreme circumstances, a student may be taken to the hospital for medical treatment. Please ensure that the school has the current medical information, Health Card Number, and emergency contact numbers. (*614-Emergency Response Policy & 620-Concussion & Head Injury Policy & 621-CPR & First Aid Policy can be located in Sycamore*)

**ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:** If any student needs to take medication during school hours, the parent must complete an “Administration of Medication Form” and submit it to the office. All medication needs to be properly labelled with the following information: the student’s name, the name of the medication, the dosage, and the frequency and method of administration. All medications, including non-prescription medications, should be kept in the office and distributed to the student as needed. Please ensure that the office is informed about your child’s medication and that you have filled in the necessary forms for medication to be taken during school hours. A supply of acetaminophen and ibuprofen is kept at the school, but staff will not dispense any to students without prior written consent from a parent or guardian. (*617- Medication Policy can be located in Sycamore*)

**CHILD WELFARE POLICY AND MANUAL:** Brantford Christian School is committed to providing a safe and welcoming school environment for all children and adults. The school has an important role to play in the prevention of child abuse and is responsible for the safety of everyone within its walls. Because of the amount of time a child spends here, the school, with its delegated custodial role, is in a special position to become aware of indicators of abuse or neglect. It also can offer safety and security to the child who is the victim of abuse at home or elsewhere. The protection of the child is paramount. If there is any doubt regarding the reporting or management<sup>1</sup> of child abuse, always err on the side of protecting the child. It is designed to ensure that:

1. Children enrolled in Brantford Christian School are protected and safe in a caring environment that promotes their growth and development.
2. All employees and volunteers are alert to the early recognition and identification of a student at Brantford Christian School who may be in need of protection.
3. All employees and volunteers of the school are aware of and fulfil their legal responsibilities with respect to the *Act* and understand how to respond to suspicions, disclosures of abuse or neglect.
4. All employees and volunteers know and follow the appropriate protocols and shall cooperate with Children’s Aid workers and the police.

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<sup>1</sup> Even if a report has already been made about a child, a further report must be made to the CAS if there are additional reasonable grounds to suspect the child is or may be in need of protection ([Act s.125\(2\)](#))

*(801 - Child Welfare Policy & Procedures Manual can be located in Sycamore)*

**CONTAGIOUS DISEASES:** When students are ill with contagious diseases, such as conjunctivitis (pink eye), chickenpox, pertussis, pediculosis (head lice), strep throat, rubella, pinworms, flu, etc., they must be kept at home and away from others to prevent the spread of infection. The Brant County Health Unit determines the period of time students should be away from school. Please check their website or call the health unit for information. If you suspect your child of having a contagious disease, please contact your family doctor. In the event of a positive diagnosis, keep the child at home and follow the doctor's instructions regarding the care and treatment of the illness. For the safety of other children in the classroom and throughout the school, please inform the school about the nature of the illness, and share information about the appropriate care, treatment, and incubation procedures. Students should not share food, hats, brushes/combs, and other personal items to stop the spread of infection. Proper handwashing is also effective at preventing the spreading of disease. *(627-Communicable Disease & Pandemic Response Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**IMMUNIZATIONS:** BCS receives the services of the Public Health Department which include Hepatitis B immunization, meningococcal C immunization, the human papillomavirus (HPV) immunization, and a review of the immunization records of all students. The Principal may exclude students and/or personnel from school who are suspected or diagnosed with a communicable disease, or whose exposure to a communicable disease may threaten the well-being of others.

Grade seven students receive Hepatitis B shots on two occasions during the year – this is optional. The meningococcal C immunization and the human papillomavirus (HPV) are also offered to grade seven students at the school.

*(619-Immunization Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**HEAD LICE:** If you discover that your child has head lice, *please notify the school at once* and treat it with an effective remedy. *(612-Head Lice Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

- **WHAT ARE HEAD LICE?** Head lice are very small wingless insects (about 1/16" to 3/16") that live on the human scalp and in the hair. They are more commonly found on young children than on adults. They are generally tan in colour but since they feed by sucking blood, they may turn a brown or reddish colour after feeding. They move by crawling; they can't fly or jump like fleas. They're light sensitive, so if you look for them by parting the hair they'll try to keep out of the light in the thicker parts of the hair. An adult female may lay 3-5 nits (egg casings) per day, which are glued so strongly to hair shafts that only fingernails or a specially designed "nit" comb will remove them (normal brushing or washing won't get it!). These nits hatch after 7-10 days. It is not unusual for hundreds of nits to be found in the hair of an infested child.

- **HOW DO YOU GET RID OF THEM?**

There are four things to consider:

1. Inspect everyone else in the home (if one child has it, other family members may also)
2. Apply a treatment to kill live lice. Treating lice usually requires two treatments of special shampoo, one week apart as specified.
3. Remove the nits. The students should be free of nits before returning to school. Use a bright light and even a magnifying glass.
4. Deal with issues in the home environment that may have contributed to the lice infestation (i.e. wash bedding, towels, vacuum upholstery thoroughly).

Children should not share hats, combs, or brushes at school to reduce the likelihood of spreading head lice.



**LUNCHES AND SNACKS:** Nutritious lunches and snacks provide children with many of the essential vitamins and minerals they require for healthy growth and development. Healthy snacks keep children from feeling famished by mealtime and help prevent poor food choices and overeating. Providing healthy lunches and snacks helps children form healthy eating habits that can last a lifetime.

To protect our students who have food allergies, the following policy has been implemented: BCS is a “**Nut-Aware**” school. Students, staff, parents, and volunteers are **not** permitted to bring peanut or other nut products into the school or onto the school bus. This includes peanut butter, Nutella or other hazelnut spreads, granola bars, or any other foods that contain nuts, or state that they “may contain traces of nuts”. These items are not to be included in lunches or snacks or brought to school because even a small amount of these products could be life-threatening to those with allergies.

For the safety of all students, there will be no trading or sharing of food, utensils, or food containers. Only safe “treats” are to be brought to school for special occasions. All children in danger of suffering an anaphylactic event should only eat lunches and snacks that have been prepared at home, or foods that have been approved by the parents.

BCS offers a Pizza Lunch program once a week. This program is a fundraiser for the Grade 8 class trip and graduation. Order forms for the pizza are sent home 3-4 times a year. Lunches are pre ordered and prepaid. Other hot lunch programs may be offered throughout the school year.

Students will remain in their classrooms to eat their snacks and lunch. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds for lunch unless accompanied by an adult with the expressed written or verbal confirmation of the parents and communicated to the classroom teacher in advance.

**CUSTODY AND ACCESS RIGHTS:** There are times when we learn of relational difficulties between a husband and a wife. Sometimes, the difficulties result in court agreements which affect the custody and access rights of both parents. The school office should be informed of the particulars which pertain to the education and well-being of the child while at school. A Custody Form is available at the office and it must be completed. With respect to education, information, and access, the school will communicate with the student’s home address unless it has been properly advised otherwise. *(605-Custody Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**POLICE CHECKS FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:** Brantford Christian School is committed to providing a safe place for children and other vulnerable persons within our school. Accordingly, any new hire or volunteer who works with children directly will be required to have a police record check and vulnerable sector screening before being offered a position, paid or unpaid, at Brantford Christian School.

All volunteers who will be working directly with children, including drivers for field trips, will be required to provide a satisfactory police record check and vulnerable sector screening before beginning volunteer work. Some police stations will waive fees associated with police record checks if the applicant is a volunteer. If required, BCS will provide a letter of proof of volunteering. Volunteers obtain their own police checks. Police checks and vulnerable sector screenings need to be renewed every three years and submitted to the office. *(903-Police Records Checks can be located in Sycamore)*

**FIELD TRIPS – CHAPERONES & BOOSTER SEATS:** *(604-Field Trip Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

Parents who volunteer to drive and/or be chaperones on a field trip are greatly appreciated! We do, however, have guidelines to ensure everyone’s safety, and we ask our parent volunteers to remember the following:

1. Teachers count on volunteers to always supervise the students unless otherwise stated.
2. Bringing siblings or other children is discouraged.
3. Drivers must complete a “Private Vehicle and Volunteer Driver Form” and provide proof of \$2 million dollars insurance coverage.
4. A cell phone in each vehicle is encouraged, and all drivers should be notified of all drivers’ cell phone numbers.

5. Smoking is prohibited on class trips and in vehicles.
6. A Police Check with Vulnerable Sector Screening must be on file in the school office prior to the trip date.
7. Parents are required to have adequate liability insurance (minimum of \$2,000,000).
8. All drivers must have a valid driver's license and obey all rules of the road, including speed limits.
9. Money for parking and/or gas mileage will be made available if requested.
10. Please comply with Brantford Christian School's dress code.

**Booster Seats and Seatbelt Requirements:** Provincial legislation is in effect which requires the use of booster seats for children who have outgrown a car seat but are too small for a regular seat belt. Children who are under 8 years of age, weigh between 18-36 kg (40-80 lbs) and have a standing height of less than 145cm (4'9") must be restrained in an approved booster seat in a motor vehicle. Seat belt restraints must include both a lap belt and shoulder strap for adequate protection. Please check [www.mto.gov.on.ca](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca) for detailed information. All students in vehicles MUST be wearing seatbelts. No exceptions. Please carry only the number of passengers for which your vehicle has seatbelts. Never place a child under 12 years of age in the front passenger seat with an operating airbag.

**SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS:** The school has surveillance cameras at each entrance, in stairwells and hallways, and on the exterior of the building/parking lot. These cameras are operational 24 hours a day. The footage is recorded and stored on a unit in the supply room.

**FIRE DRILLS/SECURE SCHOOL DRILLS:** Fire drills are held a minimum of six times a year, typically three in the fall and three in the spring. Fire drills are held without warning. Early in the school year, staff members will practice proper safe exiting strategies with their students. Each class has an assigned meeting place on the playground. Students and staff are allowed back in the building when the "all clear" bell has been rung. *(Fire Safety Plan can be located in Sycamore)*

**Lockdown Drills:** Lockdown drills will be practiced during the school year. During the drill, all the doors will be locked and the windows on the doors will be covered. Students will remain silently in their classrooms until an announcement is made over the intercom announcing the end of the drill. Communication will be provided in advance of this drill to parents and staff to review with students at home. *(623-Secure School Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

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## Transportation

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**BUS ROUTES:** BCS has six buses that cover much of the city of Brantford and parts of Brant County, including St. George, Paris, and Onondaga. Each year, the routes are reassessed based on the addresses of our families and the need for transportation in a given area. *(1002-Service Parameter Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**SCHEDULED PICK-UP/DROP-OFF TIMES:** The times indicated for your child(ren)'s morning pick-up and afternoon drop-off are approximate and are based on the average day. In order to ensure that the bus can operate in an efficient and timely fashion, Brantford Christian School requires families to be present at their scheduled stops ten (10) minutes before their scheduled pick-up and drop-off times. As inclement weather, traffic volume, accidents, and other delays can occur without notice. Please allow some flexibility in your personal schedules to take into consideration these service delays which may arise throughout the school year. *(1003-Allowances for Scheduled Pick-up/Drop-off Times Policy can be located in Sycamore)*

**BUS RULES:** A "Transportation Code of Conduct" will be sent home in August which must be reviewed with your child(ren). The form must be submitted to the office with parent and child(ren)'s signatures yearly. *(Student Code of Conduct can be located in Sycamore)*



Failure to follow the rules may result in a “Bus Misconduct Form” being sent home. Multiple misconduct forms or serious infractions may result in a suspension from the bus for a given length of time. A student’s right to travel on the bus can be suspended indefinitely if his or her behaviour is detrimental to the safety and enjoyable operation of the bus.

**CHANGE IN ASSIGNED BUS:** Students must get off at their regular stop unless parents have notified the school of other arrangements. Should there be a change of buses or a change in the stop, an administrator will send a note to the bus driver(s) to make him/her aware of the change(s).

**NOT USING THE BUS:** Should you not be using the bus on a regularly scheduled day, please text your bus driver before 7:00 a.m. so they can adjust the route accordingly. Please avoid texting or calling the driver while they are driving the bus as this is a major distraction. All other changes to bus arrangements should be made through the school office. Please email changes to [office@bcsbrantford.ca](mailto:office@bcsbrantford.ca).

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# Transportation Code of Conduct

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1. The driver of the school bus is responsible for the safety of all the students riding the bus and has the same responsibility as a teacher in controlling discipline.
2. Obey the directions and instructions of the driver and/or bus patroller promptly.
3. Arrive at your pickup location **ten minutes** before the bus arrival time and be prepared to wait **ten minutes** after the bus arrival time.
4. Wait by the sidewalk or driveway until the bus comes to a complete stop with the crossing gate and stop sign fully extended. Board in single file, take your seat promptly and remain seated until you arrive at your destination.
5. Backpacks and other objects should be kept on students' laps or on the floor by student's feet. The aisle must be kept free of feet, bags, etc. at all times.
6. Skates, when carried on the bus, must have skate guards in place. Large sports equipment such as hockey gear must be kept in a bag and stored in an open seat. Hockey sticks must be kept under seats. Musical instruments are permitted if they can be kept on a student's lap or stored on the floor. Other bulky items (school projects, etc.) must be properly contained and are permitted on the bus at the discretion of the driver. Pets and animals are not permitted on the bus.
7. No food or drink will be consumed on the bus without the permission of the bus driver.
8. Students are not to put any part of their body outside the bus window at any time.
9. No objects of any kind shall be thrown on the bus or out bus windows.
10. Never interfere with emergency doors or exits unless directed by the bus driver.
11. Do not cause damage to the bus or seats. Students will be held responsible for any damage to the bus.
12. Students are expected to act in a Christian manner towards others. Refrain from being noisy, swearing, gossiping, and abusive language. Refrain from getting into physical altercations with other students.
13. Students are not permitted to exit the bus at any stop other than that predetermined by the school (such as birthday parties, etc.). Parents must notify the BCS office of any changes, and a BCS office bus note will notify bus drivers.
14. **Personal electronic device use:** Students are permitted to use cell phones or electronic devices for individual use only – music, games, etc., and are not to be shared with other students.  
**Students are not permitted to take photos or videos on the bus with any type of device.**  
Students must use headphones when listening to music, games, etc. on the bus.  
Phone calls by students are permitted for emergency use only due to noise distractions.  
If not used properly, devices will be confiscated by the bus driver for the remainder of the bus ride.  
**Please note that lost or damaged electronics are your family's responsibility.**

Riding the bus is a privilege, and this privilege can be withdrawn if a student repeatedly does not follow this code of conduct. Please see the Bus Discipline Procedures below, all disciplinary action will be decided by the principal.

**First offence:** letter to parents to be signed and returned to office, appropriate consequences will be given. **Second offence:** letter to parents to be signed and returned to office, appropriate consequences will be given. **Third offence:** temporary suspension of bus riding privileges.

**Any consecutive offences:** may result in a suspension from the bus for the remainder of the school year.

Parents, we trust that you share our concerns for student safety and conduct. Please sign to acknowledge that you have read and discussed the Code of Conduct with your child(ren) and return to the school office.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent (Guardian): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_