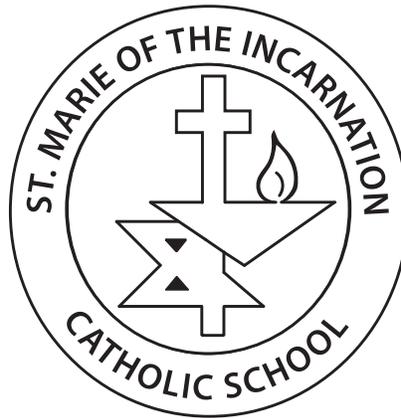


St. Marie of the Incarnation Catholic School

Name: _____

Teacher: _____



**St. Marie of the Incarnation
Catholic School**

Student Handbook

105 Colborne Street
Bradford West Gwillimbury, ON L3Z 1C4

Telephone: 905.775.3492

Fax: 905.775.1092



Welcome to a New School Year!

I would like to welcome all our families back to St. Marie of the Incarnation Catholic School for this 2019-2020 school year. I would also like to extend a special greeting to all of our new families. We are blessed to welcome many new students to our community. I am sure you will find the “St. Marie” community to be a warm and inviting one for your child to learn and grow.

Mr. Robert Harrison
Principal
smcdsb.on.ca/mai

FAITH IN OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

School Motto

“We, at St. Marie of the Incarnation Catholic School, light the way through trust and courage.”

Our Parish Partner

We believe in fostering a strong relationship between your home, our school and Holy Martyrs of Japan Church. Our parish works closely with our school community to provide your child with an education rooted in the Catholic faith. Throughout the year, there will be opportunities for our students to participate in the sacraments, Mass and prayer celebrations. You will often see our pastor, Father Joshua Roldan visiting classes within our school and celebrating special events with our community.

Sacramental Preparation

We work closely with our parish community to support students, as they get ready to receive their sacraments.

Each year, students in Grade 2 have the opportunity to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion.

Students in Grade 7 have the opportunity to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. Parents will work with Holy Martyrs of Japan Parish to prepare for these sacraments. Our school supports and complements what children are learning at the parish through classroom teaching.

POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

Promoting a Positive School Climate

Maintaining a positive school climate at St. Marie of the Incarnation Catholic School is a key

priority because it helps students feel safe, welcome and secure. Using our motto and Catholic values as a guide, we have developed procedures and guidelines to ensure that our students and staff learn and work in a positive and productive environment.

Student Behaviour

Our school has established some key statements to outline expectations around student behaviour.

Students at St. Marie of the Incarnation:

- Will be active, positive and enthusiastic participants within our Catholic community as we strive towards living the Gospel message.
- Come to school on time and prepared to work with an enthusiastic and positive attitude, while striving to achieve their academic goals.
- Will be familiar with and practise the school procedures as outlined in this school agenda in addition to any policies outlined by school staff during the school year.
- Will respect those in authority within our school community. Students will address staff and visitors to our school community in a polite and courteous manner.
- Will respect fellow students as they listen actively, speak honestly and respond positively in the classroom, on the schoolyard and as ambassadors of our school in the community.

Dress For Success

Students will be participating in a wide range of activities – both inside and outdoors – at school and so it is important that they wear comfortable, durable clothing that is suitable for the weather.

Our school is special because we model ourselves after Jesus Christ. How we present ourselves must reflect our commitment to promoting a safe, positive and respectful learning environment.

Footwear

For safety reasons and to maintain cleanliness in the classrooms, students should have shoes to wear inside their class. Outdoor footwear is not to be worn in teaching areas.

When it is necessary, there will be “pavement only” or indoor recesses when the field is too muddy. Sending appropriate footwear such as rain-boots is advised during the fall and



spring. Students must have running shoes (non-marking) for gym classes.

Appropriate Dress Guidelines

- Students in Grade 4 or higher are expected to have a change of clothes for physical education classes.
- Hairstyle, make-up, jewelry, neckline and clothing in general shall be clean and neat.
- Clothing showing offensive and inappropriate illustrations, discriminatory remarks/graphics, depicts violence, profanity or is demeaning is not to be worn at school.
- Revealing clothing and bare midriffs are also considered inappropriate.
- Muscle shirts and spaghetti straps, halter-tops, tube tops, see-through mesh shirts, short-shorts/skirts are not permitted.
- When shorts are worn they must be no shorter than 15 cm above the knee (approximately mid-thigh).
- For students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 tank top straps must be at least 3 fingers wide (approximately 2 inches or 5 cm).
- Tights or leggings must be worn under long shirts or dresses to ensure proper coverage.
- For students in Grades 4 to 8, all shirts must have sleeves.
- Baseball hats, hoods and sunglasses must be removed upon entry into the school.
- Bandanas are not to be worn in the school.

If a student's clothing is deemed to be inappropriate, a number of options will be considered: students may be required to change their clothing; students may be sent home to change; or parents may be required to bring a change of clothing to the school.

SAFE SCHOOLS

Safe Arrival and Attendance

It is important that your child arrives at school safely and on time. Not only does it make things easier for our office administrator and classroom teachers, it also teaches your child the value of being punctual. Our Safe Arrival Program, which includes communicating with our office when your child is late or absent, helps ensure student safety. If a student is consistently late, a letter and a meeting with the principal will occur.

Compulsory School Attendance

Did you know that Ontario law states that children between the ages of 6 and 17 must attend school? We appreciate that sometimes there are circumstances beyond your control, such as illness, that might prevent attendance at school. However, these situations should be rare and the school principal will address prolonged absences.

If your child is away for more than 15 days consecutively due to illness, a medical note will be needed to maintain your child on the school register. There are many supports in place to encourage regular school attendance, including school counsellors, social workers, community agencies and an attendance counsellor. Please contact the school if you have questions or concerns.

Reporting Your Child Late or Absent

Please follow this simple, but critical process when reporting your child as late or absent.

Step 1 – phone our school at 905-775-3492 at any time, to inform us when your child will be absent or late. There is voicemail 24 hours per day. You can also use our Safe Arrival Form on our website smcgsb.on.ca/mai to report absents.

Step 2 – leave your child's full name, teacher's name and the reason for the absence on the school voicemail.

Step 3 – when your child returns to class, provide the teacher with a note explaining the reason for your child's absence.

Step 4 – if your child is late, please direct them to the office where they will check-in and be provided a late slip for admittance to class.

Important Note: If your child regularly walks to school, it is assumed that he/she will attend class when buses are cancelled due to inclement weather. If you decide to keep your child home during an inclement weather day, you must use the process listed above to report your child's absence.



Safe Welcome Program

All of our elementary schools have front door intercom and video technology installed as part of the Ministry of Education's Safe Welcome Program.

The intention of the program is for all elementary schools in Ontario to have doors locked throughout the school day. This means that students who are late for school or return to

school after an appointment will need to be buzzed in through the main entrance. This enhanced security measure provides us with one more way to monitor who is visiting our schools and help us ensure that all visitors sign in at the office.

Leaving Early

Students who are leaving school early must bring a note to their teacher stating the need for the early dismissal. Your child will then proceed to the office to be signed out by a parent/guardian. Parents/guardians must come into the office for early dismissal. Due to the size of our school, we cannot accommodate unscheduled early dismissals after 2:30 pm. We do not want to interrupt the learning in the classroom and last minute changes are sometimes hard to communicate with the students/staff.

Morning Drop-off

Street parking is limited so we ask that you quickly drop students off and pull away as soon as you see them enter the fenced yard. Our “Kiss and Ride” area (along the front of the school) will open for parent drop off once all buses have unloaded (approximately 8:45 am). Parents/Guardians who walk their children will need to say their good-byes everyday at the fence as only staff and students are allowed in the yard at anytime.

School begins at 8:50 a.m. and supervision in the schoolyard begins at 8:35 a.m. Please do not drop your child off prior to 8:35 a.m. Students will remain outside until the 8:50 a.m. bell, unless there is inclement weather. On wet mornings or when the temperatures are extremely cold (-25°C or -28°C with the wind chill or at the Principal’s discretion) students can come inside.

All students are to enter and exit the building through their designated door (the same door they use for recess). Students should only use the main doors (adjacent to the office) when they are being signed in due to lateness or signed out by a parent/guardian prior to the end of the school day.

Afternoon Pick-up

When picking up your children after school, please establish a designated meeting spot outside of our fenced yard. Students are not to leave the yard until they see their designated pick-up person/car or unless they have permission to walk home alone. Our school day ends at 3:10 p.m.

Parking

The school parking lot is for school buses and staff only during the hours of 8:30 - 9 a.m. and 3 - 3:30 p.m. This is for the safety of all of our students.

As mentioned, street parking is very limited so please drive away immediately after dropping off or picking up your child. As Colborne Street is extremely narrow, limited parking is available on the school-side only. Limited parking is permitted on the school-side of Colborne Street only. Please note there are many sections in front of the school, which are clearly marked as ‘No Parking.’ Also, you must park facing north on Colborne. Facing the wrong direction, or double parking are serious concerns for our students’ safety.

The bylaw officers may be out to address this violation. Members of the community are encouraged to contact the South Simcoe Police Service at 905-775-3311 if they see violations to the above city bylaws. Let’s work together to keep our students safe!

Bicycles

Students may ride their bicycles to school, but it is important that they are left and locked in the designated bicycle racks. Wearing a bicycle helmet is mandatory and students must walk their bikes when on school property. Please note that the school cannot accept responsibility for damaged or stolen bicycles.

Skateboards, In-line Skates, Scooters and Heelies

Skateboards, in-line skates, scooters and heelies (shoes with wheels in the heels) are not to be used on school property. Scooters must be able to be locked to the bike rack during the day.



Riding the Bus

We are committed to providing safe and reliable bus transportation for those students whose distance from home to school one way is greater than 1.6 km. Riding the bus should be an enjoyable and positive experience for our students.

In order to ensure the safety of children riding the bus we ask the following:

- Students must take their bus home in the evening unless they have a note from a parent or guardian indicating that they can remain at school or walk home.

- Occasionally, we receive requests from parents to allow their child to ride the bus in order to visit a friend's house. Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate these requests.

Ensuring Safety on the Bus

It is helpful to periodically remind your child about the rules and regulations of riding a school bus. School bus privileges can be suspended temporarily or permanently if a child doesn't respect the rules and regulations that are in place for the safety of everyone. Here are some basic guidelines to follow:

- Your child must always enter the bus in an orderly manner and immediately find a seat. The school staff or bus driver may develop a seating plan. Once on the bus, he or she must always follow the instructions of the school bus driver.
- All students must remain in their seats while the bus is in motion and sit facing forward with their backs against the seat. With children sitting quietly, the bus driver is free from distractions and able to focus on road safety.
- Parents are financially responsible for any willful damage to the bus caused by their children.
- Keeping in mind the safety of all riders, we ask that your child not bring any objects onto the bus that may hinder safe operation (sports equipment, large projects).
- Students must also refrain from eating or drinking on the bus.
- Heads and arms must stay inside the bus at all times and aisles should be kept clear.
- Students are expected to follow the St. Marie expectations for student behaviour while riding the bus.

Bus Cancellations Due to Inclement Weather

On inclement weather days we urge you to visit simcoecountyschoolbus.ca or listen to a local radio station to find out if buses are cancelled. When buses are cancelled in the morning, they are automatically cancelled in the afternoon. Please keep in mind that our school is open for student learning even when buses are cancelled.

Know Your Weather Zone

St. Marie of the Incarnation Catholic School is in the **SOUTH weather zone**. There are four weather zones and it is possible that buses will run in our zone, but be cancelled in another zone.

Custody

In some family situations, there may be custody issues, visiting rights and special instructions – it is critical that we be made aware of any such situation. Please ensure that the office staff and the classroom teacher are aware of legal agreements and copies of the current legal documents are on file in the office.

Emergency Situations

At St. Marie of the Incarnation, procedures are in place so that we are fully prepared for an emergency situation. Staff and students routinely practise these procedures. If it is necessary to evacuate the school, our students will be relocated to Holy Martyrs of Japan Church. In any emergency situation, our school would work closely with the school board and emergency personnel to provide updates via websites and the media.

In very rare circumstances, for example a power outage or loss of heat in the winter, we may be required to close the school early. In emergency situations or early school closures, your child may be picked-up by you or an authorized designate.

Major Incidents

We know that being proactive and preparing for the potential of a major incident is a key way to keep our students and staff safe. As part of our safe schools initiative, we have worked with the local police service to develop a response plan should a violent incident occur. This involves immediate contact with the police and a lockdown of the premises. Your child may mention to you that they were involved in a “Lock Down” drill because that is what our response plan is referred to within the school.

GETTING INVOLVED

Communicating With You

Establishing a positive and open relationship between parents, teachers and students is a critical part of achieving excellence in education.

One of our strategies is to send out weekly updates in the form of an “e-Blast.” This is basically a mass email sent to any of our families who have signed up on our website. The weekly update will include school happenings and reminders for the upcoming week. If you haven't already done so, go to our website: smcgsb.on.ca/mai and click on e-Newsletter in the

quick links section to subscribe to these weekly updates.

Online Payment Using School Day

Our school is excited to offer online payment through a program called School-Day.

The system will enable parents to:

- Approve permission forms and pay online instantly
- Register your child for extracurricular activities
- Order and pay for hot lunches
- Reduce the amount of paper sent home in backpacks

If you haven't done so already, please obtain your family's secure key code from the school and visit www.school-day.com to register. Once you have registered you can pay for items and approve permission forms by clicking on the "School Day" quick link on our school website or logging in directly on the school day website www.school-day.com.

Contact Information

Please inform the school office if your address or any other pertinent information such as home or work telephone numbers change throughout the year. We need to make certain that our records are accurate.

Making the Most of the School Day

In order to promote the best learning environment possible, we ask that parents keep school day interruptions to a minimum. Planning in advance and maintaining regular communication through this agenda will help maintain a harmonious and smooth day at school.

- **Dropping off items** – parents are not permitted to go to their child's classroom to drop off items, check-in, etc. If you need to see your child for some reason or would like to drop something off during the school day, you must check-in at the office.
- **Speaking with the teacher** – if you have questions, we encourage you to speak to your child's teacher, but we recommend that you arrange discussion for either before or after school hours. In addition, if you are making a change to your child's regular routine, please make these arrangements well in advance and communicate changes with your child's teacher in writing.

- **Last minute messages** – our office is quite busy during the day and so we urge you not to rely on us to get last minute messages to your child, unless it is an emergency.
- **Using the telephone** – students will not be permitted to use the office telephone unless they have permission from their teacher. If a phone call is necessary, it will be made by the teacher or another adult (this includes calls regarding illness or injury).

Catholic School Community Council

Our Catholic School Community Council is composed of parents, a teaching staff representative, a non-teaching staff representative, a parish representative, a representative from the community and the principal. Members are elected each fall and serve as an advisory body to the principal on many significant school issues throughout the year. Anyone is welcome to attend the meetings. Dates will be sent out in our school newsletter and are available on our website. Please join us!

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

We know that parents want us to promote a healthy environment at school. This includes promoting healthy food options, opportunities for physical activity as well as minimizing exposure to illness – all of these contribute to better learning.

Scent-Safe Schools

Please be advised that a Scent-Safe Schools program is now in place for all schools and board office locations. This means that we are asking for the cooperation of students, staff and visitors in not using scented products in our working and learning environments.

We know that allergies and sensitivities to scents can have severe health implications and so we must do everything possible to make sure that all students, staff and visitors with scent allergies and sensitivities are safe and fully included.

A scent is a smell or odour from products and it can be natural such as flowers or synthetic such as perfume. Examples of products that may have scents include shampoos, deodorant, hairspray, soap, detergents, perfumes, lotions, candles and cleaning products.

Not using scented products is a simple thing to do and it will help ensure a safe and comfortable environment for all of our students and staff.

Accident or Illness

If your child becomes sick or gets seriously injured while at school, we will contact you as soon as possible. If you are not available, or unable to be contacted, we will call the emergency contacts that you have listed in your child's record.

Communicable Diseases

The *Health Promotion and Protection Act* requires that children with certain communicable diseases must remain at home. Unfortunately, we do not have the space or staff supervision for children who are not well enough to go outside at recess to remain indoors. Therefore, students sent to school are expected to participate in outdoor recesses.

The following list defines some of the more common childhood diseases and how long your child should stay home if he/she becomes ill with one of these illnesses:

- **Chickenpox** – for 5 days after the rash begins or until all blisters have crusted. Please contact the school immediately if your child is suspected of having chickenpox.
- **Impetigo** – until the antibiotic prescribed by the doctor has been taken for at least one full day.
- **Pink-eye** – until the antibiotic prescribed by the doctor has been taken for at least one full day.
- **Scabies** – until treatment has been given.
- **Scarlet Fever** – until the antibiotic prescribed by the doctor has been taken for at least one full day.
- **Strep Throat** – until the antibiotic prescribed by the doctor has been taken for at least one full day.
- **Fifth Disease** – even though this is not a communicable disease, it should be reported to the office because there is a risk posed to pregnant women.

Head Lice (Pediculosis)

Any situation related to head lice will be dealt with in a discreet manner, which protects the dignity of the children and privacy of families. If a child is suspected/identified as having head lice/pediculosis:

- The school will contact the parent/guardian and request that the student be treated as soon as possible. The parent/guardian should pick up the child and commence treatment.

- The principal will send home information about pediculosis to educate families about preventative measures. We will also send current information from the Health Unit home to parents.
- The parent/guardian is to contact the principal or designate to confirm that treatment has been administered and that the pupil is free of pediculosis.
- The student will only be readmitted to class once treatment has been administered and the student is free of lice.

We are asking parents and guardians to help us prevent incidents or the spread of head lice by doing the following:

- Examine your child's head for possible infestations at regular intervals.
- Notify the school of any infestations
- Ensure that proper and full de-infestation takes place within a reasonable length of time.

Immunizations

In Ontario, under the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*, you must provide proof that your child's vaccinations are current. When you register your child for school for the first time, you will be asked for a record of your child's immunization. Students, who don't have up-to-date immunization or a valid exemption on file at the Health Unit, may be suspended from school.

Administering Medication

There are some students who require regular or special medication. We all want to be sure that your child receives any medication that he or she needs. Our board has a medication administration policy, which states that no medication can be administered by staff without written permission from parents. Students may not carry medication with them at any time, with the exception of an EpiPen and/or inhaler. Informed consent must be provided from parents should a child be required to carry it with them. If a child requires medication we will gladly administer it, but only by assigned staff.

For medication to be administered, a consent and instruction form must be filled out. These forms and our board's policy are available at our office or on the board's website at smcdsb.on.ca.

HEALTHY FOOD & BEVERAGE

Lunch

St. Marie of the Incarnation Catholic School is on a balanced school day schedule as follows:

- First Nutrition Break & Recess:
10:50 - 11:30 a.m.
- Second Nutrition Break & Recess:
1:10 - 1:50 p.m.

Students will remain on school property, unless special permission has been granted. Students who walk to school may go home for lunch if they have written permission from a parent/guardian. For the safety of your child, we ask that a consistent routine be established with regards to staying at school or walking home during lunch. Students are not permitted to walk to local restaurants without adult supervision. They must be signed out at the office and accompanied by a parent/guardian while in the restaurant.

Chewing Gum

Our school also has a no gum policy, which means that absolutely no gum will be allowed inside the school or outside on school property.

Allergies

Many children have allergies, but for some students an allergy can be life threatening. If your child has a severe allergy, it is absolutely critical that you let us know. With your help, we will do our best to reduce risk and make sure all our students are safe, healthy, and able to concentrate on learning.

Our staff is instructed on how to deal with anaphylactic shock. However, our best course of action is to prevent exposure to potentially life-threatening allergies. As a school community, we must work together to ensure the safety of our students. Here is what we are doing to reduce the risk of allergic exposure:

- We are striving to reduce the risk of allergic reactions to peanuts and tree nuts. Please do not bring any foods containing these products to school.
- All food and beverage must be consumed inside the classroom – under no circumstances are students allowed to have snacks in the schoolyard.
- Your child's teacher will inform you if there are other allergies in your child's classroom. We ask that you please understand and appreciate the health and safety of every student by not sending food and beverage items that may be a cause for concern.

- Please check with your child's classroom teacher before providing treats for the classroom for special occasions.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Recess

Getting some fresh air and participating in physical activity at recess is important. Unless the weather is unsuitable, students are expected to be outside during recess. We cannot leave children unsupervised inside the classroom and so they must go out to the yard where supervision is provided.

Dressing for the Weather

We ask that students dress in clothing that is suitable for the weather – this is especially important during the winter months. Durable and warm clothing will help ensure that your child's outdoor experiences are enjoyable. It is also advisable to label clothing, i.e., mitts, hats and indoor shoes with your child's first and last name.

Yard Safety

While outside at recess, we expect students to play safely and respect the rules of the schoolyard at all times. During the winter months, it is essential to leave all snow on the ground. Throwing snowballs or kicking snow is not acceptable.

Bringing Personal Property to School

We request students not bring valued personal property to school including mobile devices, trading cards, etc. These items can easily be lost or damaged. Please note that the school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

If it is necessary for your child to bring a cell phone to school, we ask that it be brought to the office or handed to the classroom teacher at the beginning of the day. Cell phones are not to be left in student backpacks/bags or on their person as they may go missing. Your child can come to the office if they need to call home or we can get urgent messages to them through the office. Your child can pick up their cell phone after the last bell of the day.

Cameras are not permitted at school unless authorized by office staff.

Field Trips and Volunteers

Students enjoy going on trips outside of the school. Field trips are a fun and informative way of providing your child with a new learning

experience. Our board has a field trip policy, which you can find in the policy and procedures section of the website at smcdsb.on.ca.

The classroom teacher will inform parent volunteers of responsibilities and expectations as well as appropriate strategies for dealing with misbehaviour.

All classroom and field trip volunteers must have an up-to-date Criminal Background Check on file in the office. This often takes several weeks so it is advised to get this early in the year if you plan on getting involved at St. Marie of the Incarnation.

Co-curricular Activities

There are various clubs and sport teams offered at the school. Many take place during the lunch breaks, as well as before or after school. These co-curricular activities provide opportunities for students to learn new skills and form friendships. They help to teach teamwork, co-operation and demonstrate school spirit.

In order to participate in co-curricular activities, students must make a sincere effort in their academic endeavours, and demonstrate acceptable levels of trustworthiness. Students must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner both in and out of the school. We also expect students to be courteous, respectful and show appreciation to the people organizing the events and activities. It is important for students to represent our school community by showing good sportsmanlike qualities and by dressing appropriately for the event.

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

Homework

Homework is an integral part of a student's learning experience. In order to get the most out of school, students will be required, at times, to finish or continue their studies outside of the classroom. Research clearly shows that students who successfully complete homework achieve greater academic success in school.

On occasion, parents become concerned with the amount or content of homework assigned by the classroom teacher. If this is the case, please take the time to contact your child's teacher. It is recommended that all students take the time to read each night, and if possible, be read to by a parent or older sibling.

Wishing You a Successful Year

We hope you found the information in this agenda informative and useful. If at any time throughout the school year, you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or our office staff. We know that each child will grow tremendously – both in learning and in faith. We look forward to working with you to provide your child with a fulfilling year.