



Nanaimo Christian School

NCS MIDDLE SCHOOL

2020-2021

STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK

Nanaimo Christian School

www.ncsnanaimo.com

NCS Middle School is different. We're always moving, laughing, and learning in new ways. We celebrate progress over perfection and skills over content, because we love that each student is unique. We help kids discover who they are and who they're called to be. Middle school is a community. We live together, learn together, and grow together. We belong here.



BELONG



BELIEVE



ACHIEVE

NCS 2020-2021

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SECTION I: CHRISTIAN AND EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Mission Statement

BELONG - BELIEVE - ACHIEVE

In community, NCS pursues Christ-centered educational excellence that equips students to live Biblically, act responsibly, work cooperatively, communicate effectively and achieve success in who God has called them to be.

Core Values

- Nanaimo Christian School is a **Christian community** – everything that we do and teach is rooted in the Christian faith and founded upon God and His Word. We desire to partner with families in the education and spiritual growth of our students.
- Nanaimo Christian School is a **community of grace** – we go beyond just rules and consequences in order to reach the hearts of our students and inspire Christ-like transformation.
- Nanaimo Christian School is **responsive** – we recognize the uniqueness of each student and strive to exceed expectations and provide a positive school experience for all.
- Nanaimo Christian School is a **safe haven** – we commit to provide an environment where students are protected both physically and emotionally, and provide a loving atmosphere where they can safely grow into the person God has called them to be.
- Nanaimo Christian School is **forward-thinking** – we value innovation and strive to discover the best practices for student learning.
- Nanaimo Christian School is **intentional** – we lead, serve, and teach with great passion because we are confident in what God has called us to do. We work to cultivate that same passion in every one of our students.

Philosophy of Christian Education

The basis of the Society for Christian Education in Nanaimo is the infallible Word of God. The Society is committed to the following educational principles:

- The instruction and education of children in the school, as well as in the home, must be in accordance with the Word of God.
- Although the church and the state have their own peculiar interests in the school, the school is not an institution dependent on or belonging to the church or the state, but it depends on and proceeds from the home.
- Throughout the entire course of the child's education, the fundamental unity of the school and the home must be maintained through regular parental contacts.

- The child's training must be of a high standard to equip them to be all God wants them to be as caretakers and reconcilers.

We are involved in a challenging task – instructing, modelling, facilitating, enabling, directing, and nurturing God's children so that they may be equipped to face their Kingdom responsibilities. We could list many objectives. We know that without God's Spirit to guide us we could not even begin to do our work.

Statement of Principles

As teachers at a Christian school, we must share the following general commitments to our God and to the community within which we work.

OUR COMMITMENT TO GOD

We believe in the triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – and confess that this faith must find expression in all our thoughts and actions. We dedicate our work to the glory of God, to the pursuit of scholarship, recognizing that true knowledge can only be found in Jesus Christ.

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE STUDENTS

We regard every student as sacred before God, who calls every one of them to obey His law, and out of concern for their development as citizens of His Kingdom we dedicate our efforts toward a wholesome growth of their God-given potential.

More specifically:

- In God's grace, we will endeavor to deal justly and impartially with all students, and to make responsible judgments concerning their academic, physical, emotional, and other characteristics as required in our school.
- We promise to teach and to discipline each student in such a way that their own experiences become meaningful to them and that they develop a sensitivity to others' reactions.
- We promise to seek improvements in the classroom program in order to render it more conducive to the wholesome development of every student, according to the curriculum plan of our school.

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PARENTS

We acknowledge the God-given authority of the parents concerning the students' education, and consider it a privilege to teach students according to a plan of learning whose religious direction is determined and mutually accepted by the parents and by the teachers. We promise to establish a relationship of mutual confidence with the parents.

Specifically:

- We promise to cooperate with the parents in the best interest of the students and to be discreet with information about the students and their parents.
- We will endeavor to give the parents a fair appraisal of their children's progress at school.

SECTION II: MIDDLE SCHOOL INFORMATION

Teachers are employed by the Board and Education Committee. The regular staff is supplemented by part-time teachers, educational assistants, teaching assistants and volunteers.

Middle School Staff

Homeroom Teachers	Miss Hannah Taves Miss Angelina Wikkerink Mrs. Shannon Gillespie Mr. Lucas Ryvers Mr. David Hossini Mr. Nathan Johnson Mr. Ross Daugherty
Specialist Teachers	Mrs. Sandra Lindkvist (Student Support) Mr. Randy Smith (Music) Miss Hannah Taves (French)
Educational Assistants	Mrs. Cheryl Hugh Mrs. Lorraine Hurley Mrs. Susan Olson Mrs. Lara Burnham Ms. Megan Johnston
Administration	Mrs. Sue DeSchiffart (Director of Student Support) Mrs. Shannon Gillespie (Director of Learning – Middle/High School) Mr. David Hossini (Assistant Principal – Middle School) Mr. James Sijpheer (Head Principal)

Middle School Program Statement

NCS Middle School is different. We're always moving, laughing, and learning in new ways. We celebrate progress over perfection and skills over content, because we love that each student is unique. We help kids discover who they are and who they're called to be. Middle school is a community. We live together, learn together, and grow together. We belong here.

Middle School Philosophy

At Nanaimo Christian Middle School we realize that adolescence is a unique time in life and, as such, deserves a unique program. We appreciate and recognize the value of the 16 Characteristics of Successful Middle Schools, printed in *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* by The Association of Middle Level Education (2010), and plan our programming with these characteristics in mind. Our teachers don't just want to teach; they specifically want to teach Middle School and work to develop a successful Middle School program subscribing to the following philosophy.

We believe that education for young adolescents must be:

- ★ **Developmentally responsive:** *Using the distinctive nature of young adolescents as the foundation upon which all decisions about school organization, policies, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are made.*
- ★ **Challenging:** *Ensuring that every student learns and every member of the learning community is held to high expectations.*

- ★ **Empowering:** *Providing all students with the knowledge and skills they need to take responsibility for their lives, to address life's challenges, to function successfully at all levels of society, and to be creators of knowledge.*
- ★ **Equitable:** *Advocating for and ensuring every student's right to learn and providing appropriately challenging and relevant learning opportunities for every student.*

This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents (AMLE, 2010), outlines the following 16 research-based characteristics of effective middle grades education, categorized into three areas: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Leadership and Organization; and Culture and Community.

I. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Educators value young adolescents and are prepared to teach them.
- Students and teachers are engaged in active, purposeful learning.
- Curriculum is challenging, exploratory, integrative, and relevant.
- Educators use multiple learning and teaching approaches.
- Varied and ongoing assessments advance learning as well as measure it.

II. Leadership and Organization

- A shared vision developed by all stakeholders guides every decision.
- Leaders are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group, educational research, and best practices.
- Leaders demonstrate courage and collaboration.
- Ongoing professional development reflects best educational practices.
- Organizational structures foster purposeful learning and meaningful relationships.

III. Culture and Community

- The school environment is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive of all.
- Every student's academic and personal development is guided by an adult advocate.
- Comprehensive guidance and support services meet the needs of young adolescents.
- Health and wellness are supported in curricula, school-wide programs, and related policies.
- The school actively involves families in the education of their children.
- The school includes community and business partners.

Technology Integration

At NCS Middle School, our students are part of a Bring Your Own Device program (BYOD). NCS decided to create a BYOD program in grades 6-12 as a response to the world in which our students live and to provide relevant and engaging learning experiences. Today's students are digital natives who live in a multimedia world. They are constantly connecting and collaborating with others, both near and far, and learn best through trial and error. This generation does not learn in the same ways as those before them, and they have a wealth of information at their fingertips. The province of BC recognizes this and has committed to an educational program that is "learning empowered by technology." The province is taking steps to make sure that learners, educators, and families have improved access to digital resources and that they are being used in the classroom.

Research tells us that students understand and retain more of what they learn when they are in a state of "active" learning, rather than "passive" learning. Students need to be talking, sharing, collaborating, inventing, and practicing – not just watching and listening. In response, we believe that increased use of technology will increase active learning in the classrooms. Devices will not just be used to replace handwriting with word processing. Technology will be used for projects, research, presentations, collaboration, as textbooks and binders, and to submit assignments and receive feedback. Student devices are learning tools that open the possibilities for multi-faceted and rich learning that extends beyond the classroom. Teachers will determine when the use of a

device is appropriate and necessary in the classroom. Students will be responsible for their own device and responsible to make sure their device is charged and ready to use each day.

Unique Programs and Courses

Middle School Rotations

One of the unique characteristics of our Middle School program is our MS Rotations. Students are divided into cross-graded groups depending on their band ability and experience. This allows us to offer beginner, intermediate, and advanced bands in Middle School! Students travel with their MS Rotation group to a variety of classes, including Band, PE, French, Library, Art, Outdoor Education, and ADST. These groups are fluid, allowing students to challenge themselves in order to move from beginner to advanced band throughout the year.

Exploratories

Part of our commitment to engaging middle-level education is providing an “exploratory” program. Students sign up for their choice of “Exploratories” during our Wednesday afternoon sessions, which run for approximately 4-6 weeks at a time. They have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of activities, including languages, crafts, sports, and more. We want to give students the chance to try new things and to explore their interests.

During this afternoon block, some students may be required to miss Exploratories in order to participate in Community Restoration. Students will work with a teacher and our Facilities Manager to make progress on school community projects and jobs. This is a result of students neglecting to come prepared, on time, or with a good attitude to a series of classes. No students are penalized for academic difficulties.

Leadership

In Middle School, we have a strong emphasis on leadership. One of the advantages of being part of a K-12 campus is the ability to lead and be led by others. We provide teaching around conflict resolution, leadership styles, and more in order to equip students to lead others. All students are expected to step out in leadership through service to others throughout the school community. In grade 8, a team of students are selected through an application process to serve as Middle School Ambassadors. These students will have increased responsibility and leadership expectations.

Specialist

Students in Middle School take part in a specialized learning project where they focus on an area of interest throughout grades 6-8. Each student is taught to learn about something in *depth*, rather than simply settling for breadth of knowledge. Emphasis is on learning and discovery through the inquiry process. Student projects culminate at the end of each year with a presentation of learning for fellow students and parents.

Campouts

Twice a year, the entire Middle School embarks on a camping adventure. In September, our Middle School Campout sets the stage for our entire year. The focus is to build community by immersing the students in common, team-building experiences. We go very early in the year so that the students immediately bond and get to know each other and their teachers in a relaxed, out-of-the-box environment. At the end of the year, the campout is often combined with a band trip where students are able to share their music progress and knowledge with other students on Vancouver Island. Both campouts are highlights each year and should not be missed!

SECTION III: STUDENT GUIDELINES

Within an atmosphere of love and belonging, NCS, as a Christian community of learners, encourages all students to understand and live out relationships, informed by God's word, to His honour and glory. We acknowledge the diversity within our community and the uniqueness with which God has created each of us. In love and obedience, we embrace the breadth of being a 'new creation in Christ', and this is reflected in how we treat each other.

We promote and encourage attitudes and behaviours that reflect the NCS mission statement.

A Day in the Life of NCS

Getting Ready

For much of your life you will be required to dress appropriately for your place of work; this is true for school as well. Although we understand that clothing choices are a way in which many of us express our tastes, attitudes and individuality, it is important to respect those around us and keep the objective of education in front of us. Not all casual clothing is suitable for school; therefore these guidelines will help you determine what is appropriate to wear on school days: clothing that typically works well for sleep, the beach, dance clubs, exercise sessions, and sporting events may not be suitable, appropriate, or comfortable in a school environment.

In general, students are expected to dress in a manner that does not detract from the learning environment while participating in school and school-related activities. In other words, keep it neat, clean and modest.

Student Dress Code

General Expectations

- Students are required to wear neat, clean, modest attire, appropriate to a Christian School (i.e. no beachwear, beer (or substance use) shirts, offensive slogans, or images); no bare midriffs; not inappropriately tight; no pyjamas (unless on a designated day); and no bare feet.
- Jeans, pants, and shorts must be appropriately worn (at least waist level) and of appropriate length. Shorts must not be shorter than mid-thigh and skirts may not be more than a hand-width above the knees, or mid-thigh if worn with leggings.
- When wearing leggings, the buttocks and front need to be fully covered by a top. When wearing jeggings or yoga pants, the buttocks needs to be covered by a top.
- Undergarments must not be seen (boxers, bra straps, etc.). No spaghetti straps or strapless tops and torso/chest needs to be fully covered (no cleavage or midriff).
- Eyes & face need to be clearly visible to teachers at all times. Students may be asked to remove a hat/hoodie if this is not the case. Hats are expected to be removed during devotions, chapel, and prayer as well as in certain classes, at the discretion of the teacher.
- If it is unclear if a student's dress meets the general expectations, an Assistant Principal or the Principal will have the final say.
- These expectations apply to regular school hours (including lunch) and school functions (school trips, dances, etc.). Exceptions may be made for athletic activities.
- Certain students may be spoken to on an individual basis if clothing is not modest enough to account for different stages of physical development.
- If clothing is not suitable for school, students may be asked to phone home for a change of clothes or alternate clothing may be provided.

MS 2020-2021 (Sem 1)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:25-9:00	Devotions	Bible	Bible	Bible	Devotions
	8:45-9:30				8:45-9:30
9:00-10:00	6/7R Out Ed 6/7W French 6/7D Music 6/7T Library 8J PE 8GH PE	Theme	Theme	Theme	6/7R Library 6/7W Music 6/7D French 6/7T PE 8J Out Ed 8GH ADST
	9:30-10:15				9:30-10:15
10:00-10:45	6/7R Out Ed 6/7W ADST 6/7D ADST 6/7T Music 8J French 8GH Library	Math	Math	Math	6/7R ADST 6/7W Library 6/7D PE 6/7T French 8J Out Ed 8GH Music
	10:15 RECESS				10:15 RECESS
10:45-11:00		10:45 RECESS	10:45 RECESS	10:45 RECESS	
	Math				Math
11:00-11:45		6/7R PE 6/7W Out Ed 6/7D Library 6/7T French 8J ADST 8GH Music	6/7R Music 6/7W PE 6/7D Out Ed 6/7T Art 8J French 8GH Art	6/7R French 6/7W ADST 6/7D ADST 6/7T Out Ed 8J Music 8GH ADST	
11:45-12:30	Inquiry	6/7R Music 6/7W Out Ed 6/7D PE 6/7T ADST 8J Library 8GH French	6/7R French 6/7W Art 6/7D Out Ed 6/7T Music 8J Art 8GH PE	6/7R PE 6/7W PE 6/7D Music 6/7T Out Ed 8J ADST 8GH French	Theme
12:30-1:10	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	
1:10-1:40	Feed & Read	Feed & Read	Feed & Read	Feed & Read	
1:40-2:25		6/7R Art 6/7W Music 6/7D French 6/7T ADST 8J PE 8GH Out Ed		Chapel (1:30-2:15)	
2:25-3:10	Theme	6/7R ADST 6/7W French 6/7D Art 6/7T PE 8J Music 8GH Out Ed	Exploratories	Theme	

Running a little late?

Being on time is an important life skill; however, we recognize that there will be times when students are late. If students arrive late, they are to report to the Middle/High School office to sign-in and pick up a late slip. Excessive lates will be dealt with by administration.

Have to leave early?

Students leaving during school hours must sign out at the school office. Parents who need to pick up early can do so using the FetchKids App (our preferred method), or by a note or phone call from a parent or guardian to the office.

Not coming at all?

Regular attendance is important for successful school life. Students are expected to attend school except when sick or, occasionally, due to unavoidable causes. If a student can't make it to school, please observe the following:

- A parent or guardian should contact the school office before 9:00 AM.
- As soon as reasonable, students should speak to their teachers about missed work.
- Ordinarily, students who are absent from school should not participate in any extracurricular activities.

Other expectations?

Students are to act orderly and respectfully, maintaining Christian standards of courtesy, kindness, language, morality, and honesty. This section provides specific instructions on campus behaviors which students are expected to support with their attitudes and actions.

Illegal Activities

Behaviors which are illegal or unsafe are never permitted on campus. Any behavior which violates the law will be addressed in consultation with any appropriate law enforcement personnel. Any behavior which threatens someone's safety will be grounds for potential suspension or expulsion. Smoking, vaping, fighting, gambling, alcoholic beverages, and the use of narcotics and tobacco are not permitted on campus or at school functions.

Respectful Speech

Cursing, swearing, or using language that is sexual creates a disrespectful atmosphere where people do not care for their neighbors enough to use pleasant language. For this reason, this language is not acceptable in the NCS community. Students will be spoken to about their language on an individual basis, and parents will be informed of any recurring issues.

In and Around School

Students are to refrain from:

- Marking or damaging school property (Students are expected to pay for damaged property)
- Bringing items that may cause injury (matches, knives, etc)
- Public displays of affection
- Making excessive noise or disruptions throughout the hallways, especially during class times
- Tampering with fire extinguishers, thermostats, or lights
- Touching or removing materials in or on the teacher's desk or another student's desk without permission

Library

- There is not to be any eating or drinking in the library
- A schedule will be provided as to when students can access the library.

- Should a book be late, students will be given written and verbal reminders to return the book. Lost books will be charged and students will be asked to pay the replacement fee.
- Students who repeatedly lose or damage books may have their library privileges revoked.
- If there is a scheduled class in the library, other students may only enter with permission of the teacher/librarian and ONLY on the understanding that they are quiet (failure to do so will result in their being asked to leave immediately).
- Reference books and materials should not be taken out of the library.

Gymnasium

- Students are not to play in the gym unless under the direction and supervision of a teacher or unless in possession of a Gym Pass.
- Equipment rooms are out of bounds to students unless they are under the direction and supervision of a teacher.
- Eating is not allowed in the gym unless supervised.
- Good audience/spectator behavior is expected during assemblies, performances or sports events. Cheering is appropriate at sports events; negative expressions, booing, whistling, stamping feet, etc. are not appropriate.
- Students must wear clean, indoor shoes with non-marking soles. **NO OUTDOOR SHOES.**
- Students waiting after school for extra-curricular events to start (ie. sports teams) are required to wait in the lobby outside of the gymnasium or at the tables in the gym hallway. Younger siblings not involved in the extra-curricular activity may not wait at school. Students waiting for sport practices will not be under direct supervision of a teacher or coach until practice begins.

Recess and Play Spaces

- All students will be expected to go outside for recess (even if it is raining!) in order to get some much needed fresh air and a brain break. An indoor recess will be called in cases of extreme inclement weather.
- Students may play only in approved and supervised areas.
- Throwing snowballs, stones, dirt, sticks, etc. is prohibited.
- Fighting is prohibited.
- Students are expected to follow the direction of those on supervision and may be asked to take a break from a game if it is becoming heated, aggressive, or they are not listening.
- Students are not to leave the school grounds unless they have permission from a teacher (ie. for play equipment retrieval).
- Bicycles are to be parked at the bicycle stands on arrival at school; riding on the playgrounds or on the grass field is not allowed.

Acceptable Use of Technology

Nanaimo Christian School's information technology resources, including email and internet access, are provided for educational and administrative purposes. Our use of technology is designed to increase the feeling of collaboration and global community. Use of devices or programs that disrupt or take away from our middle school community will not be permitted. Each year, students will receive an Acceptable Use Policy to take home, read, and return, signed, to their home room teacher.

NCS is a Google Apps for Education Environment which means that a personal device is required for your studies. All students are given a username and password and will be required to sign an Acceptable Use Policy which describes the expectations for using the technology the school provides (ie. WiFi, Google) and expectations on using your device responsibly at school.

Students' accounts are monitored periodically and it is important to keep passwords safe. Students who choose to create a personal gmail account on their device will have access to features that are not monitored by NCS.

The following guidelines will be applied to Middle School technology use:

General Guidelines:

- Devices should not open during devotions and/or feed & read time.
- Devices are not permitted before or after school, unsupervised, in hallways and/or classrooms.
- Devices are not permitted to be used during breaks (recess).
- Devices should be opened with teacher instructions.
- Devices need to be charged and ready to use. Those without a device will be considered “unprepared for class” and will be expected to use paper.
- Device privileges can be revoked. In this case, students would complete the required work on paper. Parents will be informed if a device is “revoked” and the reasons why.
- Texting or messaging shouldn’t happen throughout the day, even to parents. If students need to communicate home, they are expected to ask.
- Smart watches should not be connected to a cell phone during school hours, providing the opportunity to text and access a cellular network outside our school wifi.

Music & YouTube:

- Listening to music while working is a privilege and needs permission.
- No ear buds during discussions/instructions.
- No Apple air pods (as they require connection to a bluetooth device, usually a phone)
- No streaming of music – music must be downloaded to the computer.
- No sharing of ear buds/music.
- No YouTube video streaming by students will be allowed. Occasionally, specific links may be provided by a teacher for educational purposes.
- If rules aren’t followed or privilege is abused, it will be revoked.

Gaming:

- No gaming will be allowed on school property, unless it has been assigned for a specific class.
- Occasionally, specific sites and/or games may be assigned for learning purposes.
- Students working on special projects may request specific permission to work on a “game” for educational purposes.

Cell Phones

NCS Middle School’s one-to-one device policy provides students with all the technology they need *without* the use of their cell phones at school. Students must keep their cell phones in their lockers and turned off during the school day, unless they have been granted special permission from a teacher to use it as a learning tool (ex. filming). Using a cell phone as a calculator will not be seen as an acceptable use of a cell phone. Students using their cell phones to make calls, send text messages, access social media, or any other function without a teacher granting explicit permission will have their cell phone confiscated. Parents will be required to pick up the cell phone from the Middle School Assistant Principal the following Friday.

SECTION IV: STUDIES AT NCS

Homework

Homework is a sampling of schoolwork that reinforces concepts taught and allows students the opportunity to practice for mastery. Homework also provides teachers with a tool to evaluate the level of student learning as well as gives the teacher a way to determine group and individual performance so that re-teaching can be done before testing time. It is not for teaching new concepts, nor introducing information that has not been covered in class previously.

It is a reality that some students find it difficult to manage their time effectively, resulting in incomplete homework. Students who have a pattern of late homework (2 or more late assignments at one time) will be required to attend Homework Club. Homework Club consists of 4 drop-in sessions at lunch where students can receive additional

one-on-one teacher support. Students who demonstrate a pattern of late or incomplete homework may be assigned to a Homework Club Exploratory where they will receive additional one-on-one support from a staff member to help them get caught up and back on track. Students with a significant amount of late or missing homework will have their parents notified by homeroom teachers on Friday afternoons. A follow-up meeting may be requested if a student is falling significantly behind in their work.

Parents can receive updates on their child's homework through Google Classroom and our Middle School homework spreadsheet, Smartsheet. Homework will be tracked by all teachers through Smartsheet and students will have access to view their list from any device. Smartsheet utilizes student numbers to protect the privacy of students. Student numbers can be obtained from your child or from their homeroom teacher.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means that students are expected to maintain integrity in their studies. This means presenting their own work for assessment with appropriate citations when referencing the work of others.

Academic dishonesty includes:

- Copying another student's work
- Bringing unauthorized material into the testing environment
- Copying and pasting from web sources
- All other forms of plagiarism which is presenting any other person's work as your own

Students should consult with their teachers regarding appropriate referencing when completing research assignments. In the event of academic dishonesty, the following actions will be taken:

- The work or an equivalent assignment must be completed honestly within a timeframe determined by the teacher and administration.
- The student will be referred to the administration for discipline and parents will be contacted.

Assessment and Progress Reports

Leading research on best practice in education demonstrates that providing frequent feedback on how students are meeting the learning outcomes of the grade level is more effective than report cards with letter grades or percentages and brief comments. One of the areas in which we seek to make improvements is to track student progress through subject specific learning outcomes, rather than letter grades. This gives students the opportunity to show growth throughout the year without being penalized through the averaging of letter grades. We would rather give students the opportunity to show evidence of their learning at the end of the year, and this be the basis of their final letter grade.

We believe there is more value in placing greater emphasis on parent-teacher discussion, rather than written comments. The partnership between parents and teachers is most alive through discussion and allows the opportunity for interaction between the home and school. This gives parents the chance to ask for clarification and to have valuable input in their child's learning.

Progress reports will follow the schedule and guidelines below:

1. Five opportunities to receive feedback on how a child is meeting the prescribed grade-level learning outcomes and personal work habits
 - a. October (Interim report - focus on basic skills and work habits)
 - b. November (focus on subject specific skills and work habits)
 - c. February (focus on subject specific skills and work habits)
 - d. April (focus on subject specific skills and work habits)
 - e. June (final report card with letter grades)
2. Two opportunities for in-depth parent-teacher conferences (November & February)

3. A final report card will be issued at the end of the school year. This report card will be more “traditional” in format, including comments, letter grades, and outcomes. This will be the report card that is documented on a student’s permanent record and placed in their permanent file.
4. Each term, a rubric will be shaded to show growth in character and spiritual development.
5. A five point scale for academic achievement will be used:

1	2	3	4	5
BECOMING AWARE	DEVELOPING	MEETING	ACHIEVING	EXCELLING
<i>Beginning achievement, shows incomplete understanding</i>	<i>Demonstrates basic achievement, shows weak understanding and application</i>	<i>Demonstrates basic achievement, shows required understanding and achievement</i>	<i>Demonstrates strong achievement, shows solid understanding and application</i>	<i>Demonstrates outstanding achievement, in-depth understanding and insightful application</i>

Awards

The awards listed below may be given at the discretion of the Middle School staff. As appropriate, other awards may be given.

- **Leadership Award** – Given to the student who consistently develops their leadership potential through school-wide clubs, events, and regular day-to-day activities.
- **Service Award** – Given to the student who demonstrates selfless thought and the sacrifice of personal time to put others’ needs above their own.
- **Athletic Award** – Given to the student who best exemplifies good sportsmanship, leadership, skill, and excellence in athletics.
- **Academic Award** – Given to the student who works above the minimum expectations to pursue excellence in the creativity of presentation and the quality of thought in all academic areas.
- **True Grit Award** – Given to the student who demonstrates perseverance and resilience in all areas of his or her schooling.
- **Most Improved Award** – Given to the student who has demonstrated the most improvement throughout their time in Middle School (academic, maturity, emotional, social).

SECTION V: RELATIONSHIPS AT NCS

One of the great things about being part of a school community is the opportunity to form relationships with peers and staff. Living in community means considering the needs and feelings of those around you.

Relationships with Staff Members

A good learning environment will exist best in an atmosphere of mutual cooperation and respect between staff and students. Staff will work towards a discipline system that is consistent, shows love and concern for students and is firm, yet fair.

Relationships with Other Students

Discretion, as well as sensitivity to others, is the order of the day when it comes to expressing fondness between students. Public displays of affection are out of place at school.

NCS students are expected to show respect towards one another and refrain from harassing behaviours. Harassment can range from mild to severe and is usually about power, control and domination. While we don’t always like each other, we have a responsibility to treat each other with courtesy and respect. Consequently, any attempt to berate, mock, aggravate or otherwise harass others verbally, physically, or sexually is a very serious

offence, with consequences ranging from detentions to possible suspensions/expulsions. Additionally, the school may contact and involve police as necessary.

Harassment includes:

- physical and verbal aggression/teasing
- intentional social alienation of other students, eg, shunning
- intimidation
- cyber bullying using phones, social media, texting, etc.
- making sexual advances
- engaging in improper physical contact
- making inappropriate comments

Procedure for dealing with harassment

Students are encouraged to report any conduct that makes them feel uncomfortable, is bothersome, and is contrary to a healthy community. All reports are handled with discretion in consultation with those involved.

- Harassment may be reported verbally or in writing to teachers, educational assistants, and administrators. Students may also choose to use our “Heads Up” online reporting form, where they may remain anonymous if desired.
- The report will be investigated by the administration and counsellors. A course of action will be determined by those involved. Ideally, the situation will be mediated by counsellors or administration. If mediation is not successful, further disciplinary measures may be taken ranging from detention to suspension or expulsion.

It is our goal to create and nurture a safe environment at NCS. We expect students and staff to treat everyone with respect and dignity.

SECTION VI: GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Curriculum

NCS offers a full range of programs, offering an education that satisfies and goes beyond the requirements of the BC Ministry of Education. As a funded, fully accredited Group 1 Independent school, we are regularly inspected by external evaluation committees appointed by the Ministry of Education, and have always satisfied their requirements in such inspections.

While we teach the range of subjects required in the Ministry of Education guidelines, all courses are taught from the perspective of a Biblical worldview. All of our teachers are professionally qualified and certified through the Ministry of Education, and all teach as committed Christians.

In Middle School, we run a 3-year cyclical curriculum for all Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science. Each year is organized around an overarching theme, connecting students’ academics with their faith and life. Students are able to work on a broad range of skills at their specific ability level, both equipping and challenging them in all academic areas. A differentiated, cross-graded approach is applied in all subject areas.

Communication

Teachers are eager to maintain clear communication between home and school. Teachers regularly communicate with students and are happy to communicate progress to parents in a variety of formal and informal ways.

Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences

Throughout the year scheduled Parent-Teacher Interviews are held to formally discuss the progress of each student. These conferences are held in November and February each year; specific dates can be found on the school calendar. In Middle School, students are encouraged to be a part of these conferences and, in fact, are

expected to take a leading role in the February conference each year. If at any time you wish to discuss the progress of your child, call the school or drop by to talk it over with your child's teachers.

Student/Parent/Teacher Communication

Open, honest communication is one of the most important facets of any Christian community. Parents are encouraged to keep communication lines open between home and school. Communication should be frequent, focused and constructive. Email is an effective way to communicate between the home and school and is the preferred method of teachers. If you wish to meet with a teacher, please arrange a time with them that does not conflict with their teaching schedule.

Newsletters/Websites

We will inform parents through monthly Middle School newsletters and regular communication from the NCS office. Your greatest source of information is your child, and we encourage you to ask them for information about their classes and teachers regularly. Because we understand that not all middle schoolers are effective communicators, we will regularly update our Middle School website in addition to sending time-sensitive and important information directly to parents through email communication. You can access our website at <https://sites.google.com/ncsnanaimo.com/middleschool>

On-Campus Supervision

Teachers, volunteer parents, or a combination of the two will supervise the students on campus. Supervision will cover the school property during all school breaks (recess and lunch hour), including in the school parking lot for fifteen minutes prior to school opening and fifteen minutes after closing. Students will be made aware of the boundaries of the campus and asked to remain inside the supervision areas at all times.

Field Trips

There are three basic types of field trips that require different types of supervision standards. The three types of trips include: trips within walking distance of the school, day trips that require the use of transportation, and overnight field trips.

Local Field Trips

For those trips that are within walking distance or within the greater Nanaimo area, the teacher in charge will ensure that there is adequate supervision along the following ratios:

- For grades 6 to 8 there will be 1 adult per 15 students

Vancouver Island Field Trips

For trips outside of the greater Nanaimo area, but still on Vancouver Island, the teacher in charge will ensure that there is adequate supervision along the following ratios:

- For grades 6 to 8 there will be 1 adult per 15 students

Field Trips to the Mainland

For trips off of Vancouver Island, but still in Canada, the teacher in charge will ensure that there is adequate supervision along the following ratios:

- For grades 6 to 8 there will be 1 adult per 13 students if in BC
- For grades 6 to 8 there will be 1 adult per 10 students if outside of BC, but still in Canada
- For grades 6 to 7, field trips outside of Canada are not allowed
- For grade 8, field trips outside of Canada are allowed when participating with a high school group (ie. Band Trip)

Overnight field trips

For those grades that may go on overnight field trips, the teacher in charge will ensure that there is male and female supervision in addition to the ratio requirements set out above.

Bussing

Currently NCS is offering a school bus service from the northern area of the regional district of Nanaimo, North Nanaimo, Parksville/Qualicum and South Nanaimo, Ladysmith route. The bus is supervised and administered by the board through the transportation committee, an approved bus policy, and administration. Please contact the office if you are interested in making use of the service.

With the bussing of students Nanaimo Christian School will take the following measures to ensure the safety of the students.

- 1) The driver is equipped with a cell phone in good working order at all times.
- 2) The driver will be supplied with a student list with home and emergency numbers for every student, and with the B.C. medical number and any pertinent medical information on each student.
- 3) Students will only be let off at the school campus, their regular home stop, or at another regular stop if previous arrangements have been made.

In the event of a mechanical breakdown or unexpected schedule changes (road detour, traffic concerns, etc.) the driver will initiate a phone fan-out list in order to communicate new arrangements (rearrangements). The NCS school office will be the communication center for such concerns.

Student Illness

In most situations the school prefers students come to school and if they become ill at school, the parent/guardian will be notified. However, here are a few guidelines to help in deciding when to keep your child home from school.

Symptom	Student must be at home?
Diarrhea Frequent, loose or watery stools compared to child's normal pattern: not caused by diet or medication.	Yes – If your child looks or acts ill, or if the child has diarrhea with a fever and/or vomiting. Make sure your sick child stays well hydrated. Student can return when he/she has not had diarrhea during the last 24 hours.
Fever Fever is the body's way of destroying the germs making it sick, and it's a common symptom of infections.	Yes – When fever > 101 is accompanied by other symptoms of illness, such as rash, sore throat, vomiting, headache, muscle aches, loss of appetite, etc. Student can return when fever has been gone for 24 hours without medication and the child's appetite and energy level returned to normal.
Flu The flu can be serious. Symptoms of the flu typically come on suddenly and can include: fever, chills, headache, body aches, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, dry cough.	Yes – If your child has a fever > 101 or will be unable to participate in class. Student can return when fever has been gone for 24 hours without medication and energy level has returned to normal.
Coughing Severe, uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, rapid or difficulty breathing. Note: Children with asthma may be cared for in school with a written health care plan and authorization for medication/treatment.	Yes – Medical attention is necessary

Mild Respiratory or Cold Symptoms Stuffy nose with clear drainage, sneezing, mild cough.	No – Child may attend school if able to participate in class.
Rash	No – Body rash without fever or other symptoms usually does not require student to remain at home Yes – Seek medical advice for rash with fever, open and weeping wounds, or quickly spreading rash.
Vomiting Vomiting is another way for the body to rid itself of the germs making it sick and is usually caused by a stomach virus or infection.	Yes – Keep students home if they have vomited 2 or more times in the last 24 hours. Student can return when he/she has not had vomiting during the last 24 hours.
Pinkeye (conjunctivitis) Symptoms of pinkeye include eye redness, itchiness, discharge that forms a crust during the night that may prevent your eye or eyes from opening in the morning.	Yes – If given antibiotics, please keep at home until he/she has taken antibiotics for at least 24 hours. If your health provider decides not to treat your child, a note is needed.

Lice

As with many schools, occasionally our students find themselves in the middle of a lice infestation. Though head lice are a nuisance, they are not dangerous and have not been shown to spread disease. If you detect head lice on your child, we ask that you notify the school immediately and treat as soon as possible. Students diagnosed with live head lice at school will not be sent home; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. Students with live lice may be asked to tie their hair back in a ponytail until the end of the day to help prevent spreading.

Unfortunately, lice are becoming more difficult to treat and the only proven, safe, effective treatment is regular and vigilant wet combing. After lice detection, to prevent further spreading, hair should be checked every 2-3 days for the following two weeks. As a preventative measure and early detection process, we encourage wet combing once a week throughout the year. More information on wet combing is available from the school office.

Allergies

There are several students attending NCS who have various allergies, ranging from minor irritations to life threatening responses if they come in contact with the allergen.

Scents and perfumes

Strong perfumes and body sprays should be avoided.

Nuts

NCS has several students with life threatening life allergies. Middle School is a **NUT-SAFE** zone, including peanuts and all tree nuts. We ask that no students bring food made with any nuts to school. If students are seen with food that endangers another student, they will be asked to put them in their lockers and take them home.

Emergency Protocols

Students will be trained each year for the following specific emergencies: fire, earthquake and lockdown. Emergency response plans are in place and will be reviewed annually.

Snow Days

Due to the large geographical area that NCS students travel to get to and from school, school closures due to snow will be based on the following considerations:

- The decision of SD 68 to close their school
- The decision of VIU to close (their catchment area most closely reflects that of NCS)

The decision to close will be made by the Principal, in consultation with the Transportation Manager, and will be communicated to the school community through the school website, Facebook page, and on The Wave 102.3 FM.

Bus transportation will not be provided on the North bus route when SD 69 (Parksville-Qualicum) schools are closed. The Transportation Manager will consult with the bus drivers to determine the safety of the routes in winter weather conditions.

Middle School Athletics

The actions of a student-athlete are a reflection of themselves, their team, their school, and their community. A student's involvement in school sports provides opportunities and experiences that are important to the development of a well-rounded student; however, student athletes must remember that their participation in school sports is a privilege, not a right.

Middle school students have the opportunity to participate in school district 68 league games and tournaments. Students in grade 6-7 compete against local elementary schools, and students in grade 8 are eligible to tryout for our high school teams.

- Students need to be committed. If they do not show up for practices, they may not be allowed to participate in the activities/games.
- All students are responsible for their actions as a representative of the school and image bearers of God.
- Students must be in good academic standing and may be required to miss practices and games if their schoolwork is not up to date.
- All students participating in school athletics, and their parents, will be required to complete player/parent contracts outlining their commitment to and understanding of the expectations.
- Additional athletic fees may be required, depending on the sport.

Physical Education

Proper gym strip is needed by all students. They must have **clean, indoor runners** for use in the gym, a school gym shirt, sweats or shorts, and deodorant. Please be sure to label all clothing and provide a "gym bag" for easy transportation to/from student lockers. Students are advised to bring their PE clothing home periodically for washing as they can become smelly! Valuables such as headphones, electronics, necklaces, rings, watches, etc. are not to be worn in PE and students are advised to keep these items locked safely in their lockers.

Student Visitors

In special circumstances, students may be permitted to have visitors attend school with them for the day. Permission for a student visitor must be requested and approved by administration and the homeroom teacher at least 2 days prior to the visit.

NOTE: Students having time off from other schools does not constitute special circumstances. Public School District professional development days are not grounds for student visits.

School Fees

There are a small number of additional fees that may be expected from time to time as the operational budget is carefully managed and does not account for “incidental” items. In addition to school supplies, campout fees, school locks, hot lunches, sports fees, classroom gifts, etc. may be requested. Most Middle School field trips and activities are paid for through each student’s “student activity fee,” which is now included in tuition; however, extra-curricular and large-scale events may require additional funding.

Lockers

Lockers will be assigned to each student at the beginning of the school year. Each student is expected to keep his/her space in a neat and clean condition. Students are expected to provide a lock for their own locker. **Students are strongly advised to keep their lockers locked at all times.** Periodic inspections are held and students may be asked to show their locker contents to a teacher or administrator.

Intramurals & Lunch Clubs

During lunch breaks, students will be able to participate in occasional intramural sports programs and lunch clubs. The activities may include recreational sports as well as board games and common interest areas. These planned activities are helpful in creating a healthy atmosphere and friendly recreational time among the students.

Chapels and Assemblies

Chapels are held once a week in Middle School and monthly for K-12. Middle School chapel involves a variety of activities, including worship, guest speakers, videos, discussion, and cooperative and team building activities and games. Additional assemblies are scheduled throughout the year in honour of special dates and holidays. Dates and times will be published through the school office and parents are always invited to attend.

Student Use of Office Phone

Students must have teacher permission to make use of the office telephone. Personal student use is for emergency only and students may not make long distance calls. Students may not use their personal cell phones to make calls during the day. Parents are asked to communicate with students via the office or a teacher during school hours.

SECTION VII: APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE

Philosophy

Because we believe that each student is made in the image of God and made for a relationship with God, discipline at Nanaimo Christian School is viewed within the context of discipleship. Hebrews 12:10-11 states, “Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

All discipline has the goal of helping students grow in their walk with Jesus or to guide them towards a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Because each child has been created to uniquely reflect the image of God, discipline and discipleship must be done on an individual level and will often look different from child to child.

Core Beliefs about Staff/Student Relationships

The following list articulates the foundational beliefs that guide staff/student relationships and interactions and inform the discipline process when problems arise. All students and teachers are created by God, in His image. We are His creation, yet we are sinful by nature and redeemed and transformed by His grace. In this context, we believe that:

1. Every attempt should be made to nurture the dignity of both the student and the adult as a unique bearer of God's image.
2. Misbehavior should be viewed as an opportunity for individual discipleship, problem-solving, and development of life skills as opposed to a personal attack on the school or staff.
3. Students should be given the opportunity to make decisions and live with the results, whether the consequences are good or bad.
4. Students should be guided and expected to solve their problems and the ones they create without making problems for anyone else.
5. Misbehavior should be handled with natural consequences instead of punishments whenever possible.
6. Students should have the opportunity to be heard (at an appropriate time) when consequences are necessary.

School Guidelines

Rather than spell out a list of mandates for every area of school life, we ask students to demonstrate respect for God, their neighbor, and themselves (Matthew 22:37-40). When we (students and staff) fail to do this, we hold each other accountable for solving the problem.

Treat others with respect. Because each person is created in the image of God and is loved and valued by their Creator, students must treat each other with dignity and respect.

1. Your actions, dress, possessions, etc. may not cause a problem for yourself or anyone else.
2. If your actions, dress, or possessions cause a problem, you will be asked to solve that problem.
3. If you cannot solve the problem, or choose not to, staff members will impose upon you an appropriate consequence. This consequence will depend upon the situation and the person or persons involved. Staff members will use their best judgment based upon the information they have at the time.
4. If students and/or parents feel that the consequences are unfair, they should request a hearing.

Classroom Guidelines

Teachers frequently develop additional classroom guidelines and/or procedures related to their own classroom. Students are to comply with the individual rules and expectations specific to each classroom and are asked to respect the school property, buildings, and each other.

SECTION VIII: ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Absences

Research shows that regular attendance and school success go 'hand in hand' and that excessive absenteeism is directly related to students dropping out of school. Our objective is to help students achieve success throughout their high school years by encouraging regular school attendance. Not all classroom work can be made up. Explanations, clarifications, discussions, opportunities for feedback, and group learning activities are invaluable components of an effective learning environment.

An absence is an absence, regardless of the reason. Each absence results in a lost learning opportunity in the classroom, which may not be regained.

Communication between parents, students, and teachers is critical when a student is absent from class. Students are ultimately responsible for this direct communication and for any work they missed during an absence.

Parents/Guardians are requested to call the school or provide a written explanation to the school office if their child is going to be absent from class(es).

Excused Absences

- May include illness, bereavement, or special circumstances
- Students will be allowed to make up their work for excused absences.

Unexcused Absences

- Unexcused absences are absences where the office was not contacted by parent or absences were for reasons not specified as excused.
- Students will be required to make up the work missed within a reasonable time frame provided by the teacher.
- If there is a question as to whether an absence is to be excused or not, the principal will decide.

Extended Absences

Each year we are approached by parents or guardians who wish to take their child out of school for an extended period of time (3 school days or more). Usually this is for reasons associated with family travel or family business. If a child misses school for an extended period of time, he or she will be behind in classroom work and will be expected to complete any missed work within a reasonable time frame provided by the teacher.

Teachers are not expected or required to provide the work in advance; rather, the student is expected to get caught up when they return.

Tardiness

Punctuality is an important expectation of student behavior. Punctual students show respect for the learning of others by not disrupting a class in session, and punctual students hear important instruction that is usually given at the start of class.

NCS will attempt to provide a balance between clear consequences for numerous unexcused lates with a “second chance” so that punctuality becomes a habit for students, recognizing that sometimes being late is unavoidable. A medical (or other professional) appointment is considered an excused late.

Students who are late for any reason must check in at the office for a late slip. Students with subsequent unexcused lates will be referred to the Assistant Principal of their respective division for follow-up.