

Durham Christian High School



Student Handbook



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear DCHS Students:

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year at Durham Christian High School! The Staff and I look forward to engaging you in a school experience that will prepare you very well for the future. It is our commitment to bless you with an education that is challenging, creatively presented and dynamic. As you engage, you will have opportunity to grow academically, spiritually and in strength of character.

It is important that you become familiar with this handbook. It outlines important policies and guidelines for school life. We desire to be a Christian educational community in which all members – students and staff – play integral roles. We want to enable you to develop your gifts and to be encouraged to explore ways in which you can live your lives fully as servants of the Lord.

Challenge yourselves! Get involved at Durham! There are many opportunities, in and outside of class, to develop and enjoy yourselves. In all that you do, we hope you will strive to contribute to the fulfilment of the DCHS mission. We strive,

. . . To provide an excellent Christ -centred education, which enables students to develop their sense of wonder at God's work, their awareness of humanity's role in culture, and their gifts for a life of service to God and others.

Together with the staff, I look forward to an exciting and dynamic year!

Blessings,

Ms. S. Marcus
Principal

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INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOL POLICIES

At DCHS, teachers and students carry the responsibility of living together in a Christ-centred manner. Relationships between teachers and students should reflect the biblical expectation of mutual respect and recognize the unique tasks of both teaching and learning.

The following policies and guidelines have been developed so that the DCHS community may achieve these goals.

Please consult the School Course Calendar for the academic policies of the school, program descriptions, Durham Christian program requirements and Ministry of Education requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school is a key component of both student achievement and effective evaluation. Excessive absences may jeopardize your opportunity to succeed in your studies and obtain credit for your courses. DCHS will communicate with you and your parents / guardians as concerns develop in this regard.

LATES:

Being punctual for classes is an important part of your responsibility as a student. A pattern of tardiness hinders the learning process, brings about bad habits and shows disrespect to your peers and your teachers alike. Your teachers will monitor your punctuality with the support of the Principal.

ABSENCE:

Regular attendance at school is both a privilege and a responsibility. Student absences fall into two categories:

1. **Excused Absence:** This occurs when you miss school with parental¹ or school permission. Your parents should contact the Main Office to confirm your absence.
2. **Unexcused Absence:** This occurs when you miss school without parental or school permission. Detentions will be given for double the time you missed. Frequent unexcused absences will result in further action by the Vice-Principal. In addition, you may forfeit the opportunity to make up missed work or tests.

You are responsible for any work missed during absences. Be sure to check EDSBY for missed assignments and other class news. We recommend that you do not go on vacation during the school year. If this occurs, it is solely the students' responsibility to catch up upon return. Teachers do not have to give extra tutoring or prepare extra materials because of an absence for vacation.

¹ Throughout this document, the terms "parent", "parents" and "parental" are assumed also to include legal guardians of DCHS students.

You are not to attend school sporting events or other extra-curricular activities during the school day without the permission of the Principal.

Chapels are held regularly. Missing a Chapel is considered the same as missing a class – except if you have a “spare” immediately after Chapel and choose to not come to school until your scheduled class period.

CHECK IN/OUT AT THE MAIN OFFICE

If you arrive late or leave school during the school day, you must check in/out with the Main Office so that we can maintain accurate attendance records. Also, if you arrive at school after school begins, you are responsible to read the Daily Page posted on EDSBY.

MISSING CLASS WHILE AT SCHOOL

If you must miss or leave a class, you need to consult with your teacher BEFORE missing or leaving that class. Students who need to leave the school to go home must report to the Main Office and get permission from the Principal or Vice-Principal to do so.

PLANNED LEAVE FROM SCHOOL

If you plan to be absent from school for one or more days, your parents must contact the Main Office beforehand. If you know beforehand that you will be gone for a test, assignment or class presentation, you must contact your teacher(s) beforehand and make arrangements. The responsibility in this regard is yours.

If you plan to miss school for a vacation or other trip, you should have a fellow student collect materials for you while you are gone. You should expect to complete missed work and tests within a few days of your return. Since you are able to log into EDSBY from almost anywhere, you should make every effort to stay current with class work and expectations while away from school. It is not the teacher’s responsibility to give work ahead of time or spend time tutoring upon your return.

VISITORS

You are encouraged to invite guests who have expressed an interest in learning about DCHS. Please consult with the Principal at least one day before bringing your guest to school. Please note that individual teachers reserve the right to determine whether or not your guest may attend class. Visitors from other schools who come during the day should only visit during the noon break. Visitors arriving at the school unannounced are expected to check in at the Main Office upon arrival.

SNOW DAYS

The decision to cancel buses is made by the bus service provider. When buses are cancelled due to poor driving conditions, the school is closed. When buses are cancelled because of extreme cold temperatures (but the roads are okay), the school will remain open.

The school will do its best to notify families of the closure by 7am. The information will be posted to Facebook and on Edsby.

Each teacher will post instructions for their class by 9:30am. Learning from home will be asynchronous, but students should expect to do some school work.

If you are not able to make it to school on such days, you are expected to check EDSBY to be aware of class developments.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Student Leadership plays a vital role in school life. It fosters spirit-building activities, fundraising efforts, and provides other key social experiences for you. In the past, Student-led activities have included dances, talent shows, games nights, movie nights, theme days and other activities geared toward community growth. Student Leadership also conducts activities in support of community mission efforts.

Each September staff will announce ways to be involved in student leadership opportunities. You are warmly encouraged to use your gifts as a member of Student Parliament!

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

DHCS offers a wide variety of extracurricular activities. These activities allow you to use your unique gifts and talents in special ways. These activities often contribute to improved schoolwork. We encourage you to get involved and enjoy these activities. For most sports, we participate both in LOSSAA (Lake Ontario Secondary School Athletic Association) and in tournaments involving other Ontario Christian high schools.

Occasionally, teachers become concerned about individual students whose involvement in extra-curricular activities appears to be having a negative impact on schoolwork. Before deciding to get involved in one or more extra-curricular activities, you, in conjunction with your parents and teachers (and possibly your peers), should consider the time and energy commitments required for your chosen activity. If your academic performance becomes a concern, a discussion regarding your involvement in extra-curricular activity will be initiated.

Toronto 360 & School Camping

Early in the school year, students are encouraged to attend a school camping trip at Ontario Pioneer camp. You are encouraged to make the most of this great experience.

Students in Grade 10 are involved in our Toronto 360 experience, comprising educational, social and service experiences integrated into a four-day trip to Toronto.

NOTE: Participating in the Toronto 360 and going to Pioneer Camp are privileges rather than rights. Students who have broken trust with the school community or have persistently demonstrated a lack of willingness to be co-operative may be denied the privilege to participate in these events.

LUNCH PERIOD GYM USE

During most lunch periods the gym is available for your use. Students are asked to be considerate of others while playing games, and create space for all to participate.

STUDENT PRIVILEGES LEAVING SCHOOL PROPERTY

Senior students in grades 11 and 12 may leave school property during spares or during lunch period. Senior students must either leave school or work in the library, lounge, or a designated class room. Students are not to linger in the halls or disrupt classes. Senior students who choose to leave school property are expected to respect our neighbours and be aware of safety issues associated with road traffic. You are expected to act responsibly as good neighbours.

Students in grades 9 and 10 may not leave school property during the school day. Should circumstances warrant students in grades nine or ten leaving school during noon, they are to ask for the permission of the principal.

NOTE: The conservation area beyond the soccer field is considered off school property.

CARS

If you drive to school, you are expected to drive safely and responsibly – particularly on school property. Please don't drive on school sidewalks. Also, you are not to loiter in cars during spares or lunch period.

LOCKERS

You will be assigned a locker for personal use during each school year. If you choose to decorate the inside of your locker, do so with discretion. Please keep in mind DCHS goals for Christian expression. Nothing is to be stuck to or written on the outside of your locker. It is recommended that you lock your locker, particularly at night because the school may be rented. You must provide your own lock.

NOTE: From time to time the school is rented out during evening hours or on weekends. It is best to lock your lockers. For the sake of neatness, keep your locker door closed with your possessions on the inside. Personal articles are not to be left in the hallways or on hall benches. Items left outside of lockers may be placed in lost and found and subsequently donated to local charities. You may store items of value in the Main Office.

During Physical Education classes or athletic events, valuables should be locked in your locker or brought to the PE office. Don't leave your valuables in the change rooms.

In accordance with the Safe Schools Act, DCHS has the right to search student lockers, vehicles on school property, and school bags for illegal substances.

You are responsible for the care of your locker and you will be expected to pay for damages beyond normal wear and tear. In case of locker damage, you should alert the Principal immediately.

CHANGE ROOMS

Change rooms may be used daily during PE class or to change for a practice or game. Change rooms should be emptied regularly and are not to be used as personal storage in place of a locker. Students should not take clothing or shoes that are not theirs.

FEES & FUNDRAISING

FUNDRAISING

Sports teams, clubs and/or classes are occasionally involved with fundraising. For example, the Band may raise funds for their tour. The Principal must approve fundraising activities **AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR** to commencement of the event.

LEDGERS

The Main Office records a ledger of your debts and payments each year. **All fees, fines and dues must be paid before you can write your exams.** The details of your particular ledger is available anytime upon request. Please contact the Main Office.

FEES

Sports: In order to help pay for the high cost of transporting teams and entering tournaments and league athletics, participating students are expected to pay fees according to the guidelines stated here. Participation on school sports teams (optional) (Volleyball, Men's Basketball, Women's & Men's Soccer, Badminton, Hockey \$75. per sport Additional fees may be incurred for extra tournaments and team warm-up shirts.) Should a team progress to the OFSAA level, an additional charge to cover costs will be levied.

School Trips: Classes occasionally include field trips for which students are expected to pay transportation and/or entry fees.

Instrumental Music: In order to supplement the budget, students in full-credit instrumental music courses (Senior Wind Ensemble and Repertoire Development) will be charged \$20. In half-credit courses (Jazz Ensemble), students will be charged \$10.

These charges are limited to a maximum of \$30 per student and a maximum of \$50 per family.

Students who rent instruments will be charged \$60.

Other fees include:

- \$170 for Camping
- \$45 for Yearbook (optional)
- \$90.00 for Toronto 360 (Grade 10 only)

PHOTOCOPY SERVICE

If you wish to make personal photocopies, you will be charged ten cents per page.

POSTERS AND NOTICES

If you wish to put up notices or posters in the school you must obtain the initials of one of the administrative staff (Principal or Vice Principal) on each page. The notices and/or posters must then be taken to the Vice-Principal for posting. You **MAY NOT** post notices and posters around the school on your own.

RESPONSIBILITIES & EXPECTATIONS

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

As a DCHS student, you are expected to:

- Be in class when the bell rings for class to begin.
- Come to class prepared with the necessary materials for that class.
- Treat other people, their property, the building and the furniture with respect.
- Respect the privacy of the teacher's desk.
- Refrain from:
 - Putting feet on tables or desks
 - Bringing food or drink (except H₂O) to class
 - Sitting on desktops.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

In-class use of technology is at the discretion of your teacher with a view toward your learning.

MUSIC: Music only in classes (as directed by teachers) and in student lounge with headphones. You may not use portable speakers at school.

CELL PHONES: Individual teachers will communicate specific details about cell phone use during class. In general, cell phones should not be used during class time.

VIDEO GAMES/MOVIES/SHOWS: No video games/movies/shows – unless as part of class work during class

It is expected that you will use iPods, tablets and laptops for learning-related purposes. Your use of such devices is always at the discretion of your teachers.

Outside of classes you are expected to use technology in a responsible, considerate manner.

DCHS has a 1 to 1 laptop use policy. Please ask for a copy of this from the office.

CARE FOR PROPERTY

School or student property is sometimes damaged, either by accident or by deliberate or careless action. Please report damage to the Main Office when you see it. If you cause damage, you are responsible for any necessary restitution or restoration. If you damage property wilfully or carelessly, other penalties may also result.

DISCIPLINE ISSUES/POLICIES

DETENTIONS

You may be assigned a detention by the principal or by a teacher. Detentions may be assigned for discipline issues or for academic reasons such as incomplete homework or missing assignments. Detentions will take place during lunch period. Teachers may ask you to attend their classroom for detention. For discipline situations, you may be referred to the Principal.

NOTE: The above process is intended to deal with discipline infractions considered relatively minor. More serious discipline matters will be dealt with as the circumstances warrant at the discretion of the school Administration. (Principal and Vice Principal).

ENFORCEMENT OF THE CRIMINAL CODE (INCLUDING BULLYING, HARASSMENT, THREATENING, DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE)

DCHS has a legal and moral obligation uphold the laws of Ontario and Canada, and to draw upon the assistance of appropriate authorities as necessary in order to do so.

Circumstances into which legal authorities may be called include (but are not limited to): bullying, threatening, harassment, abuse, illegal drugs, alcohol, theft, break and enter, and wilful damage to property.

Specifically, students who possess, or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs will be suspended for a period of time depending on the situation. Second offenses could result in lengthier suspension or expulsion from the school.

Cannabis (marijuana) was legalized in Canada in October 2018. The use or possession of cannabis on school property remains prohibited and students who are in possession or are under the influence at school will be suspended for two weeks.

HARASSMENT POLICY

In order to fulfil our both our legal and biblical responsibilities, DCHS strives to provide a safe, stable, and harassment-free environment for both students and staff. Mutual respect must be the basis of interaction between all members of our community. Our school community will not tolerate behaviour that undermines self-esteem, intimidates, antagonizes or otherwise fosters a hostile or offensive environment.

If you witness physical and/or verbal behaviour that is threatening, humiliating, insulting, harassing, intimidating or degrading (even if it is not directed toward yourself), you are encouraged to speak with the Principal, Vice Principal or any staff member as soon as possible.

A detailed Harassment Policy entitled Child Welfare Manual - DCHS is available on our web site, in the Main Office, Library, Guidance Office and Vice Principal's Office.

This manual and relevant issues will be reviewed with you and your peers early in the school year.

INTERNET COMMUNICATIONS

In our effort to provide a stable, harassment-free environment, you and your parents are to note that threatening, insulting, humiliating, harassing, intimidating or degrading messages posted online will be dealt with as public communications and will be subject to school disciplinary actions.

NOTE: This policy is operative even when the communications take place outside of school hours.

LANGUAGE

At DCHS, we believe that language (in all its forms) is a gift from God and should be treated as such. It should not be debased by careless or inappropriate usage. Therefore, you are encouraged to exercise a healthy respect for language through proper use in and around the school. This includes classrooms, hallways, the gym, and outside areas. Vulgarity and profanity are considered to be inappropriate uses of language. The use of vulgar language or profanity will not be tolerated and students will be subject to disciplinary action.

DRESS

Our school uniform has been adopted in recognition that DCHS has a focused and particular educational purpose. We embrace our identity as a Christian school and we acknowledge that our attire impacts our presence in the larger community. We seek to honour Christ in our dress. To that end, our school uniform, when properly worn, demonstrates respect for our God-given sexuality. Our dress should not create discomfort among our peers or the teaching staff. Expectations for school uniforms are listed on the school web site under "Uniforms". Please take the time to familiarize yourself with these guidelines.

School uniform T-shirts and mesh shorts are required wear for your Physical and Health Education classes.

In addition, we ask that you adhere to the following expectations:

- The school uniform is to be worn from the time you arrive at school until you leave at the end of the day.
- The school uniform must be worn on school trips and to away games for sports teams.
- School uniforms must not be torn, have holes, or fit poorly (either too loosely or too tightly).
- All headwear must be removed upon entering the school building.

- Footwear must be worn at all times.
- PE clothing is for PE classes and team practices. It is NOT to be worn outside of these times.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Personal affection and romantic love is another of God's great gifts to us. DCHS embraces this. However, you are expected to participate in romantic relationships in a responsible, Godly and socially sensitive manner. Please limit the public expression of your romantic affection at school to holding hands. Staff will address any concerns that arise.

AWARDS

RECOGNITION AWARDS

To recognize student participation in school life, the following awards are presented to students in Grade 10 for participation in Grades 9 and 10, and to students in Grade 12 for participation in Grade 11 and 12. Plaques are presented at a school assembly at the end of the year. More detailed information is available from the Main Office.

- Award of Academic Excellence: Given to students with an average of 85% or greater.
- Certificate of Academic Achievement: Given to students with an average of 80-84%.
- Extracurricular Award: In recognition of outstanding contribution in athletics, arts, and/or leadership.
- Citizenship Award: The student in each grade who best exemplifies the principles and values of DCHS as determined by staff.
- School Spirit Award: A student in each grade who best shows enthusiastic participation in school-spirit events as chosen by the Student Body Executive.
- Geoffrey Dykstra Memorial Award: The student in grades 9 or 10 who exhibits a joy for living and an ability to make many students feel accepted and welcome. Recipients help set a positive atmosphere at the school and demonstrate a love and concern for others, as determined by staff. This award is also available to senior students upon graduation (see below).

GRADUATION AWARDS

A number of awards are available for graduating students:

- Governor General's Gold Medal: Given to the student with the highest average in grade 11 and 12 courses.
- Ontario Scholar: Students with an 80% or higher average in six 4U, 4M or 4C courses.
- Group of Ten Award - University: The student with the highest average in six 4U credits.
- Group of Ten Award - College: The student with the highest average in five 4M or 4C credits.

- Walter deVries Memorial Scholarship for the Arts: In recognition of the student who, throughout his/her years at DCHS, demonstrates a genuine commitment to serving the Lord and others through their gift in instrumental music.
- Wilma VanGinhoven Music Scholarship: The student who demonstrates a genuine commitment to serving the Lord and others through gifts in Instrumental Music.
- Snoek Athletic Award: The student who demonstrates leadership, sportsmanship, and ability in athletics over four years.
- Ezra Award: The student who demonstrates a disciplined, committed and well-articulated understanding of the Christian Faith.
- Geoffrey Dykstra Memorial Award: The senior student who exhibits a joy for living and an ability to make many students feel accepted and welcome. Recipients help set a positive atmosphere at the school and demonstrate a love and concern for others as determined by staff.
- Rachel VanHartingsveldt Memorial Award: The student who has shown leadership in DCHS athletics AND is pursuing further education in the area of social services.
- Municipality of Clarington Award: The student who demonstrates superior contribution to academics, leadership and community service as determined by the Administration.
- Rotary Club Scholarships: One award is given to a DCHS student who demonstrates financial need, and facility in both academics and community service. Students are invited to apply for this generous scholarship. The DCHS administrative team determines the recipient.

NOTE: Many community groups, businesses, colleges and universities offer awards and scholarships. Visit www.studentawards.com for many more awards and scholarships. Don't wait until grade 12 to visit these sites and register!

Student Handbook 2021-22



DURHAM CHRISTIAN
HIGH SCHOOL

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Developing Minds, Strengthening Hearts, Changing Lives

Revised July 2021