

# Pope Francis Elementary School



Parent and Student Handbook  
2019-20



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

## Contact Information:

Address: Pope Francis Elementary School  
387 Balsam St. North  
Timmins, ON  
P4N 6H5

Telephone #: (705) 264-5869  
Fax #: (705) 267-5565  
Website: [www.ncdsb.on.ca](http://www.ncdsb.on.ca)



## Northeastern Catholic District School Board Information:

Director of Education Mrs. Tricia Weltz  
School Superintendents Mrs. Daphne Brumwell  
Mrs. Jennifer Dunkley

Contact information: 383 Birch Street North  
Timmins, ON  
P4N 6E8

Telephone (705) 268-7443  
Website: [www.ncdsb.on.ca](http://www.ncdsb.on.ca)





# Pope Francis Elementary School

387 Balsam St. North  
Timmins, ON  
P4N 6H5



Welcome!

Let me begin by expressing how blessed I feel to be the principal of Pope Francis Elementary School! I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to our family. I hope that you will take a look at our school site regularly, and sign up for our email service in which you will receive monthly newsletters and other important information as needed. Pope Francis Elementary School is fortunate to inherit a rich history from Sacred Heart and St. Paul and we look forward to celebrating our 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary during the 2019-20 school year.

The entire staff considers it a privilege to educate your children in our Catholic School system. As such, we know that your support as parents is integral to your child's success. For the benefit of your child, we need to work collaboratively together.

We are very fortunate to work with the staff of Sacred Heart Parish. This relationship allows our students to connect directly with the church and our faith. We are looking forward to working under the guidance and direction of Father John Lemire, as our school priest. Our students at Pope Francis Elementary School will have many opportunities to realize their full potential to transform God's world.

Our goal at Pope Francis Elementary School is to ensure the highest levels of achievement for all of our students (academically, spiritually, socially and physically) by working and learning together. We look forward to an exciting year at Pope Francis, enriching our partnership with the church, the home and the community. Please do not hesitate to contact the school should you have any questions or concerns throughout the school year.

Yours in faith and education,

Mr. D. Berthier,  
Principal

# Pope Francis Elementary School Staff for 2019 – 2020

*Success for each and a place for all!*

**Principal** - Mr. Berthier

## **Teaching and Classroom Staff**

English Program

FDK – Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Kirkland

Grade 1 – Mrs. Levesque

Grade 1/2 – Mrs. Doyle

Grade 2/3 – Mrs. Kernick

Grade 3 – Mrs. Collins

Grade 4/5 – Mrs. Beyer-Mascioli

Grade 4/5 – Mr. Pressault

Resource Teacher – Miss Young

Itinerant teachers – Mr. Garon, Mr. Hudon and Miss Kos

French Immersion Program

FDK 1 – Mme Guevremont

FDK 2 – Mme Vetter and Mme Koops

Grade 1 – Mme Vallier

Grade 1/2 – Mme Baker

Grade 2/3 – Mme Demerall

Grade 3/4 – Mme Saudino

Grade 5 – Mrs. Vachon and Mrs. Byberg

Resource Teacher – Mme Savard

## **Secretary**

Mrs. Cheff

## **Custodians**

Mr. Bernard

Mr. Rudolf

## **A Safe and Secure Learning Environment**

### **Safe Arrival Program:**

Safety is always a priority for us at Pope Francis Elementary School and we need your help to keep our students safe. If your child is going to be late or away from school, please call the school before 8:30 a.m. to speak to the secretary or leave a message on the answering machine (anytime – day or night) to let us know you are aware of your child's absence. If you leave a message, please clearly say your child's name, the grade and the reason for the absence. If your child is away and we have received no word from you, **our school secretary will call your home, cell or work.** Please help us to avoid making unnecessary calls by letting us know about your child's absence before 8:30 a.m. If your child will be leaving the school property any time during the school day (e.g. appointments), please remember that a note is required. Students without a note will not be allowed to leave the property until confirmation with a parent has been made. Students who come to school late in the morning and/or after lunch, MUST report to the office before returning to class. Please help your child be on time, as classes are disrupted when students arrive late.

### **Secure Entrances:**

As mandated by the Ministry of Education as an additional measure to keep our students safe, all outside doors will be locked. Visitors to the school are asked to come to the main entrance and ring the buzzer for assistance.

### **Pickups and drop offs:**

To ensure that the office is aware of all visitors to the school and to relieve congestion in hallways at the beginning and end of the day, **we ask that parents and caregivers remain at the office when picking up or dropping off students during the school day.** We will be happy to call the classroom and have your child meet you at the office.

If you are dropping off or picking up your child at the beginning or end of the day, please stop at the front of the school, away from the bus loading areas. When picking your child up at the end of the day, please wait outside of Door J. Once the door is opened by a staff member, you are asked to come in and sign your child out. Thank you in advance for your cooperation on this.

### **Scent Free Zone**

Due to allergies and sensitivities, our school is a scent free zone. Please refrain from wearing cologne or perfume while visiting the school. Body sprays (e.g. Axe) are also not allowed at school.

***Thank you for your cooperation and care to keep our students and school environment safe!***

## Virtue Program at Pope Francis Elementary School

Growing our FAITH through virtues

### Virtues Program 2019-2020

September/October	Faith
November/December	Love
January/February	Forgiveness
March/April	Hope
May/June	Prudence (wisdom)



Virtues are the foundation of who we are as Catholics. In our Catholic schools, virtues are woven and embedded throughout the Ministry of Education's curriculum. We are thrilled to announce changes to our virtues program. Instead of covering one virtue each month, we will be covering one every two months with the idea that the first month will be used to explicitly teach the virtue while the second month will be used to bring the virtue to life.

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Theological Virtues: Faith, Hope, Love.

Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance

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- ✚ Bringing our Catholic Faith to life
- ✚ Lead person in each school community
- ✚ Resource package (print & electronic) for each school
- ✚ Opportunity to add resources over time
- ✚ Connections to areas of the curriculum
- ✚ Yearly board-wide contests (poster, essay, video, etc.)
- ✚ Elementary & Secondary materials & resources
- ✚ French & English materials & resources
- ✚ Every staff member has a responsibility to teach across the curriculum
- ✚ Links to social justice & living our faith



## Health School and Students

### Illness

We understand that sometimes it is necessary to contact parents during the school day to come to the school and pick up a child who has become ill at school. However, parents are asked to show and teach respect for other children and school staff by keeping children at home if they are not well enough to participate fully in the day's activities. Children are expected to go outside at regular nutrition breaks and participate in gym.

Children who are suffering from communicable diseases (e.g. chickenpox, impetigo, measles, mumps, pink eye, ring worm, rubella, scarlet fever, strep throat, whooping cough) are not to be at school until a medical professional deems it is safe for the child to return.

### Head Lice (Pediculosis)

If there is a suspected case of pediculosis in your child's class, a letter will be sent home to alert parents of a potential outbreak. Please check your child's head carefully. If you suspect that your child has head lice, please contact the school immediately.

Sensitivity to your child's feelings and his/her privacy will be respected.

### Allergies and Asthma

If your child suffers from an allergy, anaphylaxis, asthma or other medical condition, please ensure that the office and your child's teacher are notified in writing. **Due to legislation in Sabrina's Law and Ryan's Law, students who require an EPI-pen or an inhaler (puffer) MUST carry their medication with them at all times.**

**These medications will no longer be kept in the office.**



### Medication

If your child requires prescribed medication for any length of time during the school year, please be sure to come to the office to complete the authorization forms, indicating the amount of medication to be given and the times it is to be administered. Please bring the medication to the school in the original container with your child's name clearly marked. Please note, school staff are not permitted to administer non-prescription over-the-counter medication, including Tylenol, aspirin, or cough medicine.

*Regular hand washing is the best prevention for spreading germs. Please remind your child about washing his/her hands after using the washroom and before eating.*

## Nutrition Corner

We know that it is very important that our bodies are healthy, well-rested and well-fed to do our best work. At Pope Francis Elementary School, our focus is on providing and encouraging healthy eating opportunities. For this reason, junk food (i.e. candy, chips) and pop are not allowed at school for lunches or snacks. Foods containing high amounts of sugar or salt are also discouraged as they have limited nutritional benefits.

### [Milk Program](#)

Students have the opportunity to purchase white or chocolate milk to have as a drink for lunch. Orders are taken every 3<sup>rd</sup> month, starting in October. Look for the order form at the beginning of each month.

### [Hot Lunch Program](#)

We will be partnering with various community businesses to provide a hot lunch option for your child once or twice a week. If you would like to participate in these hot lunches, please look for the menu and the order forms. This option will again start in October and orders will be made once a term.

### [Lunch Routines and Reminders](#)

- all students will eat lunch and snack in their homeroom classrooms (proper behaviour expected)
- due to allergies, students are not to trade or give away food
- pack the appropriate amount of lunch for your child – try to separate snack and lunch items
- healthy food makes for healthier bodies and better results
- remember to pack the appropriate cutlery in your child's lunch – they will not be provided



## Home and School Communication

*Effective communication between home and school is very important so that we can all work together to make your child's school year a success.*

At Pope Francis Elementary School, these are some of the ways we will communicate with you to help you be informed:

- monthly school newsletters - school-wide events, parent information, reminders ...
- phone calls - good news and updates
- notes in the agenda
- memos and reminders of upcoming school events

Daily agendas or communication logs are a great way to pass along information between school and home. Please check your child's agenda or communication book daily for notes from the teacher and encourage your child to bring to the teacher's attention any notes that you may have written as well.

If you would like to speak to a teacher or the Principal, please try to call the school before 8:45 or after 3:30 as it is not always easy to get away from the classroom or school activities during the day. If the person is unavailable, please leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as it is possible.

If you wish to meet with a teacher or the Principal, please call to set up an appointment at a mutually agreeable time so that there is sufficient time to have a discussion without interruptions.

## Reporting to Parents

*By keeping you informed of your child's progress, we can all work together to help your child achieve his/her potential. This will be done in an informal, on-going way throughout the year, as well as through formal progress reports and report cards.*

Informal reporting may include:

- notes in the agenda/communication log
- phone calls
- sending work home to be signed
- special recognition awards
- homework checklists

Formal reporting and meeting dates:

- 1<sup>st</sup> progress reports go home November 14<sup>th</sup>
- 1<sup>st</sup> formal reports go home February 13<sup>th</sup>
- 2<sup>nd</sup> formal reports go home June 25<sup>th</sup>

If you feel that your child is experiencing any learning difficulties, please contact your child's teacher at any time during the school year. We want to work with you as partners to help your child succeed.

At any time, please do not hesitate to ask questions or voice concerns about your child's progress.

## School Goals and Programs

We are always looking for ways to improve our school and the educational school experience for your child. While every school subject is important, and quality programming and activities will be provided in all academic areas, our main focus will be on improving language and math skills which will be important for every child's future success. To help us do that, we will be focusing on the following goals:

- *Literacy (Language)*
  - o improving reading fluency (speed and smoothness)
  - o improving reading comprehension (understanding the text)
  - o using a variety of texts to help students learn to be critical analyzers of what they read
  - o asking questions to help students think deeply about what they read
  - o using technology to help make communicating our ideas fun and interesting
  - o using anchor charts (examples) and success criteria to show students what great work looks like
  - o providing on-going feedback to help students improve the quality of their own work
  - o encouraging students to be curious and ask questions (inquiry learning) and to actively engage in research to find the answers to their questions.
  
- *Numeracy (Math)*
  - o helping students develop a growth mindset about their ability to do math (we can all be successful in math)
  - o developing excellent number sense and numeration (how to use numbers)
  - o using a variety of manipulatives to help students learn
  - o instructing through problem solving – finding multiple ways of solving
  - o using real-life math situations to make connections between school and the world
  - o giving students more opportunity to talk with each other about their understanding of math
  - o using technology to help us learn and explain our understanding of math ideas

We know that school is about more than just academic performance. To support our students on their journey to becoming great people, we will also be focusing on the following areas:

- *Positive Behaviour*
  - giving out Caught You Caring tickets to reward positive behaviour and helping others
  - reinforcing consistent behaviour expectations
  - creating positive learning environments where students can learn without distraction
  - making students accountable for their words, attitudes and actions
  - acknowledging positive effort, behaviour, attendance and virtues at monthly assemblies
- *Building A Strong School Community*
  - organizing opportunities for parents and families to share in students' learning
  - encouraging students to share about themselves and their families
  - providing opportunities for older students to take on leadership roles around the school
  - planning group activities that encourage students of all ages to interact with each other
  - planning spirit days and special events to allow students (and staff) to show their pride
  - encouraging Parent Council to plan activities to encourage all families to get involved
  - inviting community members into the school to participate in activities and learning
- *Helping Students See the Possibilities for the Future*
  - encouraging students to think about their likes and dislikes
  - helping students become aware of the people in their communities
  - providing exposure (real life, through technology) to possible future careers
  - inviting community members into the school to share about their work and careers

We know that the best way to improve our school is to make it a great place where students are not only learning academics but are also developing their other social skills. We hope to provide many different opportunities for our students to help them enjoy their school experience.

Great things happen when we work together!

## School Policies, Procedures and Expectations

### Before school

- ✓ Arrive at school on time (after 8:35) with a positive attitude and all of your belongings
- ✓ Move quickly away from the bus unloading zone and onto the playground
- ✓ Remain outside until the bell rings – school bags can stay outside
- ✓ Put any iPods, cell phones or other electronic devices away once you are on school property
- ✓ Ask permission from a supervisor to come in to the school before the bell (e.g. to use the washroom)
- ✓ Walk your bike (or skateboard) on school property and park it in the racks
- ✓ Line up quickly and quietly when the bell rings

### Attendance

- ✓ Be at school every day – unless you are sick or have an appointment (please bring a note)
- ✓ Be on time – when you are late you miss important learning time and disrupt the class
- ✓ Be responsible for completing any work you missed when you were not in class

### Dress Code

- ✓ **Take off your hat when you enter the school**
- ✓ Wear clothes that are appropriate for a learning environment
  - no pictures or words that may be offensive to others (including sarcasm)
- ✓ Wear outside clothing that reflects the weather - coats, hats, mittens & boots
- ✓ Have a change of shoes to be worn inside the school which is appropriate for phys. ed. activities

### Classroom expectations

- ✓ Come to the classroom prepared to learn (positive attitude, books, homework completed ...)
- ✓ Listen attentively to the lessons and instructions
- ✓ Participate in discussions and ask relevant questions
- ✓ Follow instructions without arguing
- ✓ Follow and respect classroom routines
- ✓ Complete assigned work to the best of your ability – ask for help if you don't understand
- ✓ Use appropriate language and tone of voice when speaking to staff and other students
- ✓ Be respectful of others' learning (focus on your work, raise your hand if you wish to speak ...)

- ✓ Use the agenda/communication log and complete homework diligently
- ✓ Appreciate the time and effort that your teachers put in to preparing activities to help you learn

#### Computer and iPad Use

- ✓ Be sure you have permission to be on the computer or the iPad
- ✓ Access only appropriate and approved sites - be where you are supposed to be
- ✓ Remember school computers are tools for learning, not entertaining (no games, Facebook, hotmail ...)
- ✓ Keep the screensaver and desktop backgrounds as you found them
- ✓ Be aware that misusing the computer or iPad may result in, but not be limited to, suspension of computer privileges

#### Playground Expectations

- ✓ Be outside during recess unless a teacher has asked you to stay in to work or do an activity
- ✓ Show respect for and follow the instructions of staff without arguing
- ✓ Play in the appropriate areas, respecting the boundaries of the school yard
- ✓ Remember that the "hands off" expectation is always in effect (no play fighting, tackling)
- ✓ Show positive character – invite everyone to join activities, play games fairly, have fun
- ✓ Remember that name calling, teasing, bullying, gossiping or intimidating others is not acceptable
- ✓ No handheld electronics will be used during the school day unless directed by the teacher
- ✓ Bring in any outside equipment that was used at recess time (even if you didn't take it out!)
- ✓ When you hear the bell – stop your activity and line up quickly and quietly

#### Other General Expectations

- ✓ Speak respectfully to everyone - staff, volunteers, guests, fellow students
- ✓ Make everyone feel welcome at our school
- ✓ Walk quietly and in an orderly fashion in the hallways
- ✓ Respect others' feelings, property and space
- ✓ Use language that is appropriate for school
- ✓ Take responsibility for your actions and words - own up to it if you made a mistake
- ✓ Find opportunities to do something kind or helpful for someone -it will make you (and them) feel great!

## Dealing with Inappropriate Student Behaviour

*We know that our students are learning and making mistakes in judgment or making poor choices happens to everyone every now and then. This is part of the learning process. However, we also know that we have to take responsibility for the choices that we make and sometimes consequences must be put in place.*

**If a student's behaviour interferes with the learning or the rights of others, it is inappropriate.**

### Progressive Discipline:

When a student chooses not to do the right thing, a progressive range of strategies will be used to help him/her understand why the choice is inappropriate and to correct and change the behaviour. These strategies start small and become increasingly more significant if the behaviour continues. Some sample strategies include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Learning conversation - explaining why the behaviour is inappropriate/Sorry Cards
- ✓ Warning
- ✓ Loss of privileges (detentions)
- ✓ Assigned "school community work"
- ✓ Pre-suspension (day spent working in another classroom)

In the event that the behaviour is severe (such verbal and physical aggression towards staff), dangerous or illegal, more immediate and serious consequences will be given, which may include, but not be limited to, a suspension, police involvement and/or involvement of another social agency. Persistent (on-going) inappropriate behaviour may also lead to suspension or a formalized behaviour plan, which would involve families as well as other school and Board personnel.

## School Bus Transportation

Transportation to and from school is provided to eligible students as a PRIVILEGE and NOT a right. It is through the cooperation of students, parents, bus drivers and school personnel that the safety and well-being of all pupils being transported is ensured.

*The Education Act states that every pupil is responsible for his or her conduct to the Principal of the school that he/she attends while traveling on a bus that is under contract to the Board. Reg. 298 – 23 (4) (c)*

Please review the Bus Regulations pamphlet that will be sent home with your child in the first few days of school. Ensure that your child

understands the behaviour expectations for riding on the bus. Inappropriate or unsafe behaviours will not be tolerated and may result in a SCHOOL BUS REPORT and the loss of the privilege of bus travel. (This will also include field trips, tournaments, special events ...)

- 1<sup>st</sup> infraction: Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> infraction: Loss of privilege of bus travel - 3 school days
- 3<sup>rd</sup> infraction: Loss of privilege of bus travel - 8 school days
- 4<sup>th</sup> infraction: Loss of privilege of bus travel - Indefinitely

Bus routes and transportation schedules have been put in place to help get students safely to and from school. The bus may not be used to accommodate personal activities. PLEASE DO NOT SEND NOTES WITH YOUR CHILD OR CALL THE SCHOOL ASKING THAT YOUR CHILD TAKE A BUS OTHER THAN HIS/HER REGULAR BUS OR BE DROPPED OFF AT A DIFFERENT LOCATION OTHER THAN HIS/HER REGULAR BUS STOP.

In order to ensure a safe return home for our kindergarten students, bus drivers are required to keep the child on the bus if there is no adult visible at the bus stop. Please be sure that a family member or caregiver is available to meet your kindergarten student at the bus stop.

The end of the day is often chaotic. If you are picking your child up from school, please be sure to come a few minutes early and wait outside door J. If your child regularly takes the bus, please call the school before 1:30, advising that your child will not be taking the bus and who will be here to pick your child up after school. The school policy is that if there is no note or phone message for a bus student indicating that he/she will be picked up at school, the student will be put on the bus.

## Making Learning a Positive Experience

Here are some ways that you can help your child achieve to his/her potential:

### Make Learning a Priority

Your attitude toward school attendance, work completion and involvement in the school makes a strong and lasting impression on your child. Show your child, through your words and actions, that his/her learning is a priority for you.

### Encourage "Personal Best"

Always encourage your child to do his/her best, keeping in mind that "personal best" does not mean being the best or being perfect. Children need the freedom to make mistakes and learn from them.

### Encourage Good Habits and a Positive Attitude

Help your child develop good work habits and have a positive attitude toward learning to improve school performance. You could help your child by encouraging him/her to: (i) use the agenda/communication log daily to keep track of assignments and homework; (ii) complete daily homework, away from distractions; (iii) find out more information about the topic that he/she is learning about; (iv) proofread assignments for minor errors before handing in final drafts; (v) review homework and assignments and determine if more could be added to make the final result better; and (vi) review notes and assignments to prepare for tests.

### Help Set Goals

At the beginning of each term, help your child set goals to improve. Discuss the progress being made to meet these goals with your child on a regular basis. Make sure the goals are reasonable, specific and attainable.

### Get Involved

Make an effort to attend school activities such as open houses, family nights, student lead conferences and school council meetings. When you are involved and participate in activities at school, your child is also more likely to be involved in school activities. When you care about your child's school, your child sees school and learning as important.