



**ST. MATTHEW  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Mrs. Teresa Johnson**

PRINCIPAL

**Mrs. Kristin Miller**

VICE-PRINCIPAL

5735 58 Street  
Rocky Mountain House, AB  
T4T 1S2

403-845-2836 (phone)

403-845-4725 (fax)

<http://stmatthewcatholic.ca/> (website)

<http://goo.gl/rO91F> (Facebook)

[smsinfo@rdcrs.ca](mailto:smsinfo@rdcrs.ca) (School email)

### **OFFICE HOURS**

8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

When the office staff is unavailable,  
a telephone message recorder will be on.

***This agenda belongs to:***

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ HOMEROOM \_\_\_\_\_



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## MISSION STATEMENT

St. Matthew School's mission is to provide students with quality learning experiences in a Christ-centered environment. Working in partnership with parents and the church, we inspire students to reach their spiritual, academic, and athletic potential by fostering a desire to become lifelong learners and followers of Jesus Christ.

## VISION STATEMENT

St. Matthew Catholic School is a Christ-centered learning environment providing an education within the framework of Christian love and justice.

## RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The heart of our program is the Catholic faith. Religion classes, therefore, are the cornerstone from which all other academic programs build, from Pre-Kindergarten to grade eight. As such, all students are provided with formal religious instruction.

St. Matthew School has regular school-wide celebrations and religious retreats. All students are expected to attend at the school and/or parish.

The school is a partner with the parents/guardians and the church in sacramental preparation.

## ATTENDANCE

All students are encouraged and expected to attend school on a daily basis. If a student must be absent or late, his or her parent/guardian should contact the school before 8:45 AM. We have an answering machine on which you can leave messages for absences or late arrivals. Students with unexplained or continual attendance/lateness problems, both at school opening or after lunch, may be considered truant and will be referred to a school administrator. (Supervision is provided by the school between 8:30 AM – 3:45 PM)

During school hours, students are required to notify the school office before leaving the school. Permission will be given to leave the school if the parent/guardian is present or can be reached by telephone, or if the student produces written parental permission. In cases where students will be picked up by someone other than the contacts we have on file, the note must specify who will be picking up the student.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR 2019 – 2020

Opening Staff Mass	August 28
Teacher Admin Day	August 29
P.D. Day	August 30
Labour Day	September 2
First Day for Students	September 3
P.D. Day	September 20
Division P.D. Day	October 4
Thanksgiving	October 14
P.D. Day	October 25
Parent - Teacher Interviews	November 6 & 7
Day in Lieu	November 8
Remembrance Day	November 11
P.D. Day	November 12
P.D. Day	November 29
Faith P.D. Day	December 13
Christmas Break	Dec. 23 – Jan. 3
Return from Christmas	January 6
P.D. Day/Semester Break	January 31
Family Day	February 17
Holiday	February 18
PD Day	February 19
Teachers' Convention	February 20 & 21
Div. Faith Day/PD Day	March 6
Parent - Teacher Interviews	March 18 & 19
Day in Lieu	March 20
Division PD Day	March 30
Good Friday	April 10
Easter Monday	April 13
Spring Break	April 14-17
Holiday	May 15
Victoria Day	May 18
PD Day	June 1
Last Day for Students	June 26
Teacher Admin Day	June 29

## KEY CONTACTS AT CENTRAL OFFICE

**Central Office Toll Free Number: 1-877- 343- 1093**

*Associate Superintendent of Inclusive Learning*

Mr. Dave Khatib

*Associate Superintendent Faith Development and Division*

*Support*

Mr. Ryan Ledene

*ECS/ Pre-K Lead Teacher*

Mrs. Suzy Potts

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

Except for days in which travel endangers the health and safety of students and employees, the school will remain open. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to decide whether or not it is safe to send their children to school on any given day. Parents/guardians are asked to listen to CKGY or B - 94 (844-9390) radio stations during inclement weather to confirm bus operation.

When the weather and wind-chill factors combine to create a temperature of -25° Celsius or lower, students may begin entering the building as early as 8:30 AM, where adult supervisors will be on duty. When the temperature with wind-chill is approaching -25° Celsius but **may not get there**, PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR CHILDREN ARE DRESSED APPROPRIATELY FOR THE WEATHER.

## RECESS

All students are required to go outside during recess. Students will not have to go out during severe weather. Please be sure that your child is always dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. Recess is supervised by staff. They always wear bright orange vests, making it easy to identify them.

## LOCKED DOOR POLICY

In order to ensure that students are adequately supervised at all times, they must remain outdoors with our supervisors until the entrance bell sounds at 8:50 AM. School doors are locked until 8:50 AM to ensure that students remain within sight of school staff. (Note: Pre-K students are permitted to enter earlier than 8:50 AM)

## BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

If a student is having difficulties that cannot be settled, a staff member should be contacted for assistance. The supervising staff member generally deals with discipline problems on an individual basis. More serious offences are referred to administration. Remedial procedures may include counseling, giving corrective assignments, telephoning parents, issuing in-school suspensions, or issuing out-of-school suspensions. Expulsion is a last resort.

## DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress with modesty and respect at all times. Revealing clothing (mini-skirts and “short shorts,” shirts with spaghetti straps or those that expose the midriff, etc.) or clothing with inappropriate language or imagery are in bad taste and will not be permitted. Students’ undergarments shall

not be visible at any time. Students may be asked to return home to change clothing, or parents may be required to bring in a change of clothes, if school staff so decides. Students are expected to dress in accordance with Catholic Christian values at all times.

## FINAL EXAM EXEMPTIONS, GRADES 7 AND 8

Students may choose to be exempt from one core-subject final exam per year provided that:

1. the year-long average in that subject is 80% or higher, and
2. the student was not exempt from the final exam in that subject the previous year.

## EXTRA – CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students may have the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities that include volleyball, basketball, badminton, cross-country running, track and field, intramurals, band and drama. Fees may be charged for team participation. Participation on teams in middle school is contingent upon good behaviour and maintaining good academic standing.

## LUNCH STUDENTS

Students who remain at school during lunchtime must abide by all school rules. A note must accompany students who will be going home for lunch, or leaving the school grounds.

## VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

St. Matthew School is a community partner. Parents are especially invited to visit the school and, upon request from the teacher, to visit the classrooms. ***Parents do not have unlimited access to classrooms.*** In favor of optimal learning conditions, teachers may limit classroom interruptions at their discretion.

Comments are gratefully received. Appointments can be made in advance by calling 845-2836.

***All visitors and volunteers must enter the building through the front doors, and must check-in with the office staff. The office staff must know the purpose and approximate duration of your visit. Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools requires that all volunteers have a CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK filed at the front office. Further, parents who assist in transporting students must have a copy of their auto insurance policy filed at the office.***

## GENERAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- † Students are expected to behave respectfully to all people in the school at all times.
- † Students must attend class with the tools of learning (pens, pencils, paper, and textbooks) and must not interrupt class to obtain these materials.
- † Students must treat all school property with respect. Abuse of school equipment or property will not be tolerated.
- † Students must refrain from profanity and ridicule of others, such as mental/verbal harassment and threats toward staff, students or visitors to the school.
- † Students must refrain from sexual harassment and any form of physical abuse.
- † Students must not defy staff authority.
- † Students must not leave the school property without permission.
- † Students should not be in the school after school hours unless so authorized by school personnel.
- † Students must never push, jostle, or fight/play fight on school property.
- † Lunches are to be eaten in the students' homerooms or in rooms determined by staff arrangement.
- † Bicycles/rollerblades/skateboards/scooters/heellies are not to be ridden on school property. Bicycles are to be parked in the racks. Helmets must be worn when using bicycles.
- † Students will not smoke on school property.
- † Homework (home study) is required at all grade levels. Increasing amounts can be expected as a child progresses in age. A minimum of one hour per day is acceptable for middle school students.

## LOCKERS

Students in grades four through eight are provided with the use of a locker. Students are expected to keep their lockers tidy. The school issues combination locks for every locker. If the student loses the lock, they will be required to purchase a replacement. No one is to change locks or lockers without the consent of the office. **Student lockers belong to the school, not to the student. The locker is subject to search at any time without notification by any personnel associated with the school, or by persons representing other authorities, including the police.** Younger students do not have lockers and do not receive locks.

## SCHOOL TELEPHONE

**Telephone calls to students and staff during class time is discouraged so as not to disrupt educational programming. Messages, however, will be accepted and relayed by office staff during break times.**

## PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

**The use of personal electronic devices, including cell phones, is NOT PERMITTED in the school during regular instructional hours unless it is for educational purposes, as determined by a teacher. We appreciate parental cooperation and ask that you do NOT call or text your child during school hours, on their cell phone.**

## BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE POLICY (GRADES 6 TO 8)

**The use of cell phones and other personal devices is intended to assist student learning and is a privilege within the school setting. Grades 6 to 8 students who have successfully completed the digital citizenship course provided by the school will be issued a Wi-Fi access sticker which is to be placed on their device at all times.**

**St Matthew School has zero tolerance for texting, taking pictures or taking videos during the school day, unless for educational purposes as determined by the teacher.** During transition times in the hallways, students are asked to remove their headphones and put their cell phones and other devices away. Students may use the cell phone outside for music or games during recess, or before or after instructional hours. Administration reserves the right to remove personal electronic device privileges.

**No Wi-Fi sticker**→ Students who use their device without a Wi-Fi sticker will have their device confiscated and a parent will be expected to pick it up.

**1st offence** → The electronic device will be placed on the teacher's desk for the duration of the class period. At the end of the class period it must be placed in the student's locker and remain there till the end of the day.

**2nd offence** → The electronic device will be turned into the office by the staff member and will be given back to the student at the end of the school day.

**3rd offence**→The electronic device will be turned into the office by the staff member and the parents will be notified by administration of the offence, and will be asked to come and pick up their child's device.

**4th offence**→The electronic device will be turned into the office by the staff member and the parents

will be notified by administration of the offence, and will be asked to come and pick up their child's device. Administration will remove the student's Wi-Fi sticker from their device and the student's network account will be suspended for 1 week.

**5th offence**→The electronic device will be turned into the office by the staff member and the parents will be notified by administration of the offence, and will be asked to come and pick up their child's device. Administration will remove the student's Wi-Fi sticker from their device and the student's network account will be suspended for 2 weeks.

### **STUDENT ILLNESS/INJURY**

**No student will be sent home due to illness or injury unless a staff member has first contacted a parent/guardian. If the staff member judges that a student needs immediate medical attention, i.e. transportation to a medical facility, the staff member uses the following procedure:**

1. The parent/guardian is notified of the need for transportation.
2. If the need for medical attention supersedes contacting the parent/guardian, or if the parent/guardian cannot be immediately contacted, the staff member will arrange for immediate transportation to the hospital.
3. The staff member will stay with the student until such time as the parent/guardian arrives, or medical personnel relieve the staff member.

**No staff member is permitted to administer medicine to a student unless an appropriate form, available through the school office, is completed by the parent/guardian and doctor, and is on file at the school office.**

### **ALLERGIES/MEDICAL**

**Parents/guardians are asked to notify the school regarding their child's medical conditions and/or allergies. Parents/guardians will be required to fill out a medical release form to permit staff to administer medication to the students. Such medication will be stored in a locked cabinet in the office.**

Although the school will take reasonable precautions to ensure that at-risk students are not exposed to allergens, there may be occasions, i.e. classroom parties, when students have increased risk of exposure.

## **BILL 10: LIFE FRAMEWORK**

*Red Deer Catholic Regional School Division is committed to using the LIFE Framework as a guideline for the creation and operation of student groups that are comprehensive in their approach to inclusion and open to the exploration, in a Catholic context, of a variety of issues including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity, discrimination, justice, and respectful relationships and language. The LIFE Framework is the result of a provincial collaboration of Catholic school jurisdictions. Each of our schools may be organizing LIFE Framework/Diversity groups. They will keep their communities informed as these groups are established by placing notices in their newsletters/websites.*

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

**Students must be under the direct supervision of a teacher in all instructional areas of the school. They are to use the gym or equipment only with permission of the supervising teacher.**

**Grade 4-8 students are expected to wear appropriate clothing and footwear to safely participate in all physical education activities. All grades 4-8 students are expected to change for physical education activities. Students are responsible for their belongings.**

**If students are unable to participate in physical education classes, a note from home is required. In instances when participation in physical education has repeatedly been inhibited or excused, a doctor's note is required.**

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBER**

It is essential that the office is able to contact a parent/guardian at any time during the day. Please inform the office of a change of address and/or telephone number as soon as the change occurs, or in advance, when possible.

**Please note:** Office personnel and classroom teachers must be notified of any special circumstances regarding custody and/or other legal matters in respect to students. Special requests regarding access to students **must be accompanied by legal documentation.**

## SCHOOL NEWS

A week at a glance is posted on our school's website at the beginning of each week.

School website - <http://stmatthewcatholic.ca/>

School Facebook site - <http://goo.gl/rO91F>

They will contain a calendar of events, a school calendar and a middle school homework calendar that will be of interest to students and parents. In addition, there will be articles highlighting curriculum news and detailing the involvement and successes of St. Matthew students.

## STUDENT SERVICES/RESOURCE

Staff is available to students and parents to discuss concerns. Students may request appointments by asking for the following services and information:

- † Short-term crisis counseling for personal and school issues;
- † Counseling for students with special concerns relating to learning, attendance, and discipline;
- † Mediation involving student/parent, student/student, and student/teacher conflicts;
- † Referrals and liaison for students, parents, and colleagues to various community agencies;
- † Educational and career planning;
- † Assisting teachers in adjusting their classroom activities to provide the best environment for students.

## ST. MATTHEW AGENDA PROGRAM

Our student agenda program involves students from grades K to 8. The original cost is covered through student fees. It is expected that all students participate in the program. A replacement cost of \$10.00 will be charged if an agenda is lost.

## SHUTTLE BUSES

Every morning before school, and every afternoon after school, several of our students ride shuttle buses from and to the Pioneer/Lochearn bus lanes.

*All St. Matthew students are required to use the shuttle service, and may not walk between the schools.* This becomes especially urgent in the winter, when snow is piled high (obstructing the view of automobile drivers) and the roads are slippery. Please

reinforce this important rule to your children at home if they use the shuttle service bussing services of Wild Rose School Division.

## BUS RULES

- † The driver is in full charge of the school bus at all times and students shall obey him/her promptly and respectfully.
- † The driver shall assign a seat for which the student shall be held responsible and he/she shall retain this seat until directed otherwise by the driver.
- † Students are responsible to be on time at the bus stop.
- † Unnecessary conversation with the driver is prohibited.
- † Classroom conduct is to be observed on the bus, and any disturbance which may take the driver's attention away from the safe operation of the bus is prohibited.
- † There shall be no tobacco products, drugs/controlled substances, contraband or weapons on any school bus.
- † Students shall not litter on the bus or throw anything out of the bus windows.
- † Students shall not extend any part of their bodies out of the windows.
- † Students shall remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- † Students shall leave the bus at their regular stops unless a note from the parent is presented to the driver requesting a drop-off at another regular stop.
- † When leaving the bus, students shall observe the directions of the driver and watch for traffic before crossing the road.

\*\*\*\*Students violating these rules may be reported to the school principal and may be suspended from riding the bus.



*"Let your light so shine before all that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Mt. 5.16)*