

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

Chatham Christian Middle School [6-8]



"Christ-centred learning in all areas of schooling
for Christ-like service in all areas of life."

"Providing vibrant and dynamic educational
experiences for each student and
for God's glory."

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Middle School!

While some students and parents view the middle school years as difficult, we embrace it. We love these students and greatly enjoy creating wonderful learning experiences and memories with them. We pray that your son or daughter experiences growth and God's leading during these years and ask that you partner with us to pray for their days at school.

The vision for middle school remains the same as the elementary, *to provide vibrant and dynamic educational experiences for each student for God's glory*. We strive to design unique, innovative lessons and learning experiences tailored to meet the needs of each of our students, while also building positive relationships amongst students and staff, as well a community culture of acceptance and belonging.

Social activities, extra curriculars, leadership teams and a new FlexBlock are all unique ways in which students in grade six through eight permeate the age and grade level barriers to allow students to build lasting friendships during their middle school years.

Our middle school chapels are another unique experience that allows students to be challenged with thoughtful scriptural lessons, relevant videos, and meaningful worship. We love having parents join us!

This handbook is a complement to our JK - 8 elementary handbook (please ensure you've read through that one!) and helps to share with you a bit more detail about our middle school days. We hope it is useful and should be kept as a resource for you and your middle school child. Read through it together to ensure everyone is on the same page and as always, feel free to message myself or any of the homeroom middle school teachers with any questions you may have.

Welcome to middle school; we can't wait to get to know you and experience these fantastic school years together!



Sarah Hopman
[VP | Grade 7 Homeroom | MS Science]

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
The School Day	3
School Calendar	3
Office Information	3
Student Life	4
Attendance, Absence & Appointments	4
Morning Arrival	4
Absences	4
Dress Code Uniforms Dress Down Days	4
Electronics & Cell Phones	5
Field Trips	5
Google	5
Homework	6
Leadership Teams	6
Middle School Socials	6
School Supplies	6
Communications	
Parent - Teacher Communications	7
Report Cards & Conferences	7
Bloomz	7
Homework Organization Google Classroom	7
Educational Program	
Mission Statement	8
Vision Statement	8
Education & Student Goals	8
Curriculum	
Instrumental Music	8
Flexblock	8
Extracurricular: Sports Teams	8
Special Policies	9

THE SCHOOL DAY

Instructional Day (Daily Schedule):

AM	8:30	Outdoor supervision begins
	8:45	First Bell
	8:50	Devotions & Classes
	10:30	Outdoor Recess
	10:50	Recess Bell Classes
PM	12:20	Lunch
	12:40	Recess
	1:10	Recess Bell Classes
	3:20	Dismissal Bell for bus students
	3:25	Dismissal Bell for non-bus students
	3:35	Outdoor supervision ends

Students receive a grade specific schedule outlining their classes and teachers each September. In addition, a master middle school schedule will be shared with all MS families.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Chatham Christian School provides a calendar of major school events at the start of each school year. A copy of this calendar is linked to each published newsletter and online on our website. In addition, a **Save the Date Card** is sent home each fall for your convenience. Please write the important and relevant dates in your family calendar.

OFFICE INFORMATION

OFFICE HOURS: 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

OFFICE PHONE NUMBER: 519.352.4980

OFFICE EMAIL: office@chathamchristian.ca

SCHOOL WEBSITE: www.chathamchristian.ca

STUDENT LIFE

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCE, & APPOINTMENTS

Please inform the office as well as your child's homeroom teacher of any absences or appointments; feel free to include any of the other MS teachers as well if you are aware of specific classes your child will be missing.

Note that following the safe arrival and early/appointment pick-up procedures outlined in the elementary handbook is important. Students leaving for an appointment will be dismissed to the office to meet you for pick up and upon arrival should return to the office to check-in and receive a late/appointment slip before returning to class. This procedure is important when MS students are rotating classes; for effective communication and the safety of each student, the office should be aware if a child leaves campus and when s/he returns.

MORNING ARRIVAL: Similarly to the elementary school, middle school students should not arrive at school before 8:30 am. Teacher supervision of the playgrounds begins at 8:30 until the first bell rings at 8:45 am; middle school students are expected to remain outside until the bell. In case of rain or extremely cold weather, students will be directed to enter the school building early through the appropriate doors.

ABSENCES

- **Excused Absences:** Students will be excused from school because of illness, to attend doctor or dentist appointments, funerals, or music lessons (maximum 45 minutes/week). Parents must contact the school by phone or e-mail (absent@chathamchristian.ca) to explain the absence. Teachers will provide lesson plans and material if necessary. Parents are expected to assist the teacher in helping the student catch up. Missed tests may be made up within a reasonable amount of time.
- **Unexcused Absences:** Students will not be excused from school for vacations, shopping, or other unnecessary reasons. Parents and students are responsible for and required to make up any major assignments, projects and/or tests that are missed. Teachers are not required to assign specific or detailed daily work. Parents will be responsible for, and will check their child's daily work. If students miss one week or more they are required to hand in major assignments, projects and/or tests within one week of returning to school. Students who are unexcused for one day must make up the assignment or test on the day they return. All work that is not handed in on time will receive a "0".
- **School Events:** Local Field Day, Christmas Programs, Concerts, Celebration of Learning and other special school events are important activities. Students are expected to attend. The excused and unexcused absence policy will apply.

DRESS CODE | UNIFORMS | DRESS DOWN DAYS

The dress code at CCS is based on Christian standards of modesty and neatness. All students are to wear uniform clothing for all classes and, unless otherwise specified, on field trips. The expectations in the elementary handbook are standard for the middle school as well.

In addition, middle school girls are permitted to wear the school-issued kilts. Shorts and skirts must be worn at 3-4 inches above the middle of the kneecap in both the front and the back.

As students grow, skirts can be altered by moving the button closure to expand the waist and letting out the hem to lengthen the skirt. If after alterations, the skirt does not meet length requirements, a new uniform bottom will be required and should be purchased.

Upon entering middle school, each student will receive a grey PE uniform shirt; additional shirts are available for purchase when needed. These shirts are not daily uniform shirts and are only to be worn during PE classes.

Dress down days occur once a month and are announced in the family newsletter. Modest and appropriate dress is still the expectation.

Please refer to the CCS Uniform Policy, available in the office, linked to each family newsletter, or online, for more specific expectations regarding uniform and dress down days.

All questions related to uniform clothing may be directed to clothing@chathamchristian.ca

ELECTRONICS & CELL PHONES

We strongly value healthy and effective student relationships in middle school. Face-to-face conversations and human interaction are important ways to build these relationships; thus, unless permitted by a teacher, all electronic devices, including cell phones, are not to be used during the school day. Once a student arrives at school, these devices should be checked safely into a backpack/locker. Pocket language translators may be used at school, but only for translation purposes and when permitted by the teacher.

We understand that there are times when communication between parents and students is required during the school day; please contact the office with any important information needing to be communicated throughout the day as students will not be permitted to access devices until 3:20.

FIELD TRIPS

In addition to occasional off-campus experiences throughout the year that enhance the learning experience of students and relevant classes, each year the middle school takes a larger year-end trip together. Each of these trips support and enhance learning as well as build positive culture amongst students. We encourage and expect attendance on these trips unless there are valid concerns that have been expressed to the organizing teacher and an exception has been made that all parties are made aware of well in advance of the trip date.

We often extend invitations for parents to join us on these experiences; the expectations and procedures for chaperones outlined in the elementary handbook apply.

GOOGLE

CCS is a google school. Each student has a school google account that allows them access to email, google classroom, and a whole suite of educational tools for use in completing assignments and working collaboratively with each other. They can access it all anywhere they have internet! All of our school issued

accounts are managed by our IT staff with a variety of controls. Please feel free to ask if you have any questions about Google or its use by your son or daughter.

HOMEWORK

Homework is important for learning responsibility, forming good study habits, and helping to cover content. Each of our middle school teachers places a strong emphasis on completing work in class and at school, allowing students to work alongside peers and receive immediate assistance when needed. We also value

the time students have outside school hours with their families and respect the variety of other activities families place importance on after school and in the evenings. Most homework in middle school is in the areas of band practice, consistent at home reading and math fact practice, incomplete class work, and occasionally, larger cumulative projects. 30-60 minutes of homework M-Th is appropriate although not always necessary; please inform your child's homeroom teacher if you feel they are struggling to complete or have an excessive amount of homework.

LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Leadership teams are small groups of students that accomplish tasks, complete jobs, and ultimately serve our school community. These jobs encourage the characteristics of leadership and servanthood in our middle school students; they are non-academic areas where our students can lead, serve and shine! Each September, students are presented with a variety of teams, the tasks they would be responsible for, and the skills required for the job. Students are all encouraged to consider which teams would be the best fit for them, after which they complete an application and possible interview. After conferencing with each other, teams are selected by lead teachers and shared with students for fulfillment in the upcoming school year.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCIALS

Building a community of students and a positive culture is one of our greatest goals in the middle school. To this end, we occasionally abandon our regular schedule to engage in fun social activities. Traditionally these occur in September, December, February and June. Stay tuned to Bloomz for invitations to join us if applicable (Christmas air-band, skating, sledding etc.) and for fun pictures and updates about how we enjoy our time together.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

A school supply list will be sent home in June for the following school year. This list is also available on our website. In addition to traditional school supplies, MS students are required to have their own chromebook. Please contact the office for more information on the subsidy program and purchase requirements with our local Staples store.

Please check in with your son or daughter throughout the year to ensure they have what they need to be successful at school. Pencils, glue sticks, protractors and calculators are the most common items to need replenishing.

COMMUNICATIONS

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS

Good communication between parents and teachers is vital to the quality of education Chatham Christian School provides. Parents and teachers must communicate about student academic progress as well as about social and emotional issues. In the middle school, your son or daughter has a variety of subject specific teachers as well as a homeroom teacher. For all general inquiries, please contact your child's homeroom teacher; when questions arise about specific subjects or classes, please contact the appropriate teacher.

All email addresses follow this format:

firstnamelastname@chathamchristian.ca. The school website lists all email addresses.

REPORT CARDS & CONFERENCES

Formal report cards are sent home two times each year: in late January/early February, and at the end of the school year in June. Prior to the first report card, parent-teacher conferences are held with your child's homeroom teacher in October; these are often the first face to face meetings between parents and teachers and it is expected that all parents make their best effort to attend.

Student-Led Conferences are also held each year in late November. These conferences are invaluable experiences for students who, in an interactive format, demonstrate and share their learning through self-reflection and evaluation; all while practicing real-life skills like communication, organization and leadership. Middle school students present their conferences in their homeroom while sharing reflections on each of their core content areas and a select number of additional classes and learning experiences.

Significant effort is put into preparing for this important time between students and parents, and again, parents are asked to make every effort to attend this time with their child.

BLOOMZ

Bloomz is a parent/teacher communication app and online tool. While students in middle school have several teachers, they are still only required to belong to one classroom on Bloomz. For example, there is one grade seven Bloomz class for parents and students; all information regarding their various classes, extracurriculars, field trips and other relevant things to note are posted here.

HOMEWORK ORGANIZATION | GOOGLE CLASSROOM

All students in grades 3 to 8 are given a variety of tools to teach the skill of keeping track of schoolwork, extracurriculars and other school-related activities. These may include a homework book, Google classroom and teacher-updated calendars posted at school. It is our goal in middle school to help each student find an organizational tool or system that works best for them; parental involvement is always important in this process. Feel free to connect with your child's homeroom teacher at anytime to discuss different ways to help your child grow in their organizational skills.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

GENERAL INFORMATION

MISSION STATEMENT: To provide Christ-centred learning in all areas of school for Christ-like service in all areas of life.

VISION STATEMENT: To provide vibrant and dynamic educational experiences for each student and for God's glory.

EDUCATION & STUDENT GOALS

Please refer to the JK-5 elementary handbook for these detailed goals.

CURRICULUM

In order to fulfill our mission statement to "provide Christ-centred learning," we seek to integrate our faith with learning. Each subject is taught from the perspective of Biblical truth: God created the world, people have fallen into sin, Jesus has redeemed His people, God calls us to work towards the restoration of His world, and so on. By looking at all of learning through the "glasses of Scripture," we help each student develop a Christian view of the world.

In addition to the subject content outlined in the elementary handbook, middle school students transition into some unique programs:

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

All students in grades six through eight participate in band classes. Unless otherwise agreed upon, students in grade six choose from one of four instruments: clarinet, flute, trombone or trumpet. Additional instrument options are available to qualifying students in grades seven and eight. Regular at home practice is a significant requirement of the band program and parental encouragement is beneficial.

FLEXBLOCK

The new middle school flexblock [based on the former yearly Encounters program], will provide students with opportunities to learn and explore content that enhances and extends their regular learning inside our normal schedule. Each week for 65 minutes students will spend time encountering a variety of learning experiences with CCS staff as well as community volunteers and experts in their fields and passion areas. While some flexblock options will be required, others will be selected by student voice and choice. Parents who would like to be involved in leading or assisting in a block by sharing their passions, are encouraged to contact the office or one of the middle school teachers.

EXTRACURRICULAR: SPORTS TEAMS

At the discretion of coaches, all students in grades six through eight are encouraged to try out for the variety of sports teams at CCS. For some sports, both a junior and senior team is selected and each participate at different levels of competition in exhibition, league and tournament play. While skill building, positive sportsmanship, and commitment are important goals, remaining competitive in league and tournament play is also valued; to this end, coaches are permitted to make cuts to determine team rosters and use their knowledge and judgement to determine playing time for all team members.

SPECIAL POLICIES

Please refer to the elementary parent handbook for all policy information.

