

St. Gerard Catholic Elementary School

(Name)

(Grade)



A Place Where Students Shine...

12415 – 85 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5B 3H3

Telephone: 780-474-5208
Fax: 780-474-6257

www.stgerard.ecsd.net

Principal: **Mrs. G. Tarnawsky**
Assistant Principal: **Mrs. D. Bowers-O'Neill**
Admin Support (Secretary): **Mrs. L. DeRose**

2024-2025

School Handbook

Our Mission

Our mission at St. Gerard Catholic School is to provide a Catholic education that inspires all students to learn and experience academic growth in a safe, nurturing, and accepting environment based on Gospel values. It is integral that we; teachers, parents and students, work together to ensure we attain this goal for each and every student in our school community.



HOURS OF OPERATION
Supervision outside begins at 7:50 a.m.
School Office open 7:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday		Thursday
1 st bell	8:05 a.m.	8:05 a.m.
Classes begin	8:10 a.m.	8:10 a.m.
Morning Recess	10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	10:00 – 10:15 a.m.
Lunch/Recess	11:33 a.m. – 12:08 p.m.	Dismissal at 11:50 a.m.
Afternoon Break	1:26 – 1:31 p.m.	
Dismissal	2:42 p.m.	

Important Exceptions to School Schedule

December 19 – Thursday (Full Day)	March 20– Thursday (Full Day)
December 20– Friday (Half Day)	March 21 – Friday (Half Day)

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2024-2025

First Day of Instruction
 Last Day for Students

Tuesday, September 3, 2024
Wednesday, June 25, 2025

<i>Holidays - School closed on ...</i>	<i>Report Cards and Demonstrations of Learning</i>
Labour Day September 2	
Truth and Reconciliation Day September 30	Meet the Staff September 10
Thanksgiving Holiday October 14	Demo. of Learning November 28
School PD Day November 1	Demo. of Learning March 13
Remembrance Day Holiday November 8-12	Report Cards available on PowerSchool June 25
Christmas Vacation December 23- January 3	
Family Day February 17	
Faith Formation PD Day February 26	
Teachers' Convention February 27 & 28	
Spring Break March 24 – 28	
Good Friday April 18	
Easter Monday April 21	
Victoria Day Weekend May 17- May 20	

Supplemental Education Fees & Supply Lists

School Fees - Information about Kindergarten – Grade 6 school fees will be updated on the school website at www.stgerard.ecsd.net.

Supply Lists – Class supply lists will be available in the school office as well as updated on the school website at www.stgerard.ecsd.net in the School Information section.



Our Beginning

St. Gerard Catholic School first opened its doors in September 1950. Today, St. Gerard School has more than 140 students from Kindergarten to Grade 6.

St. Gerard – Our Patron Saint

Gerard Majella was born in Muro, Italy, in 1726, the youngest of five children. As a young man, Gerard became a Redemptorist brother and worked as gardener, porter, and tailor; he helped in a hospital and at his community church. God seemed to have given him special gifts of sensitivity and insight and he was known to have healed many sick and suffering people. Because he helped pregnant women, he became known as the patron of expectant mothers. His great works of charity also earned him the title of “Father of the Poor.” One of Gerard’s greatest virtues was trust, and his favourite saying was, “God will provide.”



Gerard died of tuberculosis on October 16, 1755, at the young age of twenty-nine. He kept a small note tacked to his door on which was written “The will of God is done here, as God wills it, and as long as God wills it.” Brother Gerard was canonized by Pope Pius X on December 11, 1904. St. Gerard inspires us with his virtues of faith, trust, and love. He is a model for young people, encouraging them to be generous with their time and talents, in service to others.

Our Vision

We believe that to achieve the mission of St. Gerard School, we need to develop our capacity to function as a professional learning community.



We envision a school in which staff:

- Work together in collaborative teams focusing on Literacy and Numeracy skills.
- Provide a safe and caring environment in which all students can learn to their fullest potential.

St. Gerard Catholic School Creed

We believe in Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

We believe that we are all God’s children and loved by God.

Each person at St. Gerard Catholic School has a special place.

We treat each other with kindness and respect, as we are all made in the image and likeness of God.

We are asked to forgive all, even those who have hurt us.

We pray for those who need help and God’s love.

We believe that we have a duty to do what we can to help others.

We believe that with the help of our Patron, St. Gerard, we can become the best person we can be.

Amen

St. Gerard, pray for us.

In the Spirit of Supporting Emotional and Behavioral Development

St. Gerard Student Code of Conduct Policy

The students, parents and staff of St. Gerard work together to create a safe, welcoming, caring and respectful learning environment. The Student Code of Conduct Policy is based on input from all stakeholders including students, parents and school staff. It was developed in accordance with provincial legislation and district policies. The Code of Conduct is shared with all members of the school community every year. We invite families to review this policy, and sign below to join us in maintaining a positive school climate. The staff at St. Gerard implement the school conduct policy within the context of a Catholic School Environment and in harmony with the Core Values of Edmonton Catholic School, the teachings of Jesus Christ and of the Catholic Church.

We affirm that pursuant to the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, students and staff members are protected from discrimination. More specifically, discrimination refers to any conduct that serves to deny or discriminate against any person or class of persons regarding any goods, services, accommodation or facilities that are customarily available to the public, and the denial or discrimination is based on race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation.



EXPECTATIONS FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Expectations of students and school rules are outlined at the beginning of the year and are regularly reviewed with students.

Section 31 of the Education Act sets out student responsibilities. A student, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to:

- (a) attend school regularly and punctually
- (b) be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education
- (c) conduct yourself in ways that contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment of the school. Students will respect diversity and foster a sense of belonging of others in the school according with the Alberta Human Rights Act. Therefore, any act that serves to deny or discriminate against any person based on race, religious beliefs, color, gender, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, source of income, family status, or sexual orientation will be addressed
- (d) respect the rights of others in the school
- (e) refrain from, report, and not tolerate bullying or bullying behavior directed toward others in the school, whether it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means
- (f) comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the board
- (g) co-operate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services
- (h) be accountable to teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct
- (i) positively contribute to the student's school and community

Consequences for Misbehaviour

We focus on positive behaviour and attitudes; however, there are times when a student has difficulty recognizing their responsibility as a student. When this occurs, there will be natural and corrective consequences. **Intervention strategies, preventative procedures, and/or consequences will take into consideration unique student attributes such as age, maturity and individual circumstances.** Students will be held accountable for conduct that occurs within the school building and grounds, as well as outside of the school day. This includes electronic use (social media).

Parents will be informed of classroom misconduct. If classroom difficulties persist, administration will speak with parents. We see discipline as a learning experience that is rooted in the Christian belief of forgiveness. Ultimately, our goal in any situation is to teach our students to make appropriate behavioral choices. In doing this, we seek to teach children to accept responsibility for their actions, to right their wrongs, to reconcile with one another and to forgive. Any behaviours that create unsafe conditions or interfere with the learning of others or the school environment will be addressed.

A minor offence may include:

- impolite manners

- *disruptive behavior*
- *incomplete homework*
- *disrespectful conduct*
- *unsafe/rough play*
- *inappropriate dress (no beachwear, no offensive graphics/language)*

A major offence may include:

- *bullying (within the school, during the day, or by electronic means)*
- *vandalism*
- *stealing*
- *fighting*
- *use of inappropriate language / gestures*
- *habitual neglect of student responsibilities*
- *willful major disobedience that endangers the safety and smooth operation of the school*

In such instances, the student will speak with an administrator and parents will be contacted. Major offences may result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension.

The principal may suspend a student if:

- (a) the student has failed to comply with Section 31 of the Education Act, or
- (b) the student's conduct is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school.

Suspensions could range from a one-hour period to a full-day in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension ranging from one to five days. During the suspension, the student may lose recess and extracurricular privileges and will be responsible for any work missed. In accordance with section 24 of the Education Act, the administrator will determine the length and nature of the in-school or out-of-school suspension based on the severity and/or frequency of any breach of conduct.

Acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation:

Section 1(1)(d) of the Education Act defines bullying as "repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more other individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation."

Bullying can take different forms:

- Physical – repeated pushing, hitting and any unwanted physical contact
- Verbal – repeated name calling, threats
- Social – repeated exclusion, rumors
- Cyber – repeated use of technology to harass or threaten

Students may report bullying by:

- telling an adult staff member at the school
- telling a parent/guardian
- calling the Kids' Help Line at 1-800-668-6868

Acts of conflict:

Conflict is a disagreement or struggle over opposing beliefs, needs, feelings or actions and is a normal part of life. Learning how to resolve conflicts peacefully and recognize the difference between a conflict and bullying is an important skill for students as well as adults. Conflict can take different forms:

- Physical violence.
- Verbal abuse
- Slander
- Cyber – misuse of technology
- Retribution against any person in the school who has intervened to prevent or report bullying or any other incident or safety concern.
- Illegal activity such as: possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances, possession or use of weapons, theft or damage to property

In such cases, depending on the misbehaviours, we have outlined a number of possible consequences for behavior.

- Problem solving, monitoring or reviewing behavior expectations
- Talk through problem with teacher or administrator
- Verbal/written response by student
- Walk with a supervisor at recess
- Restriction of privileges and activities
- Phone call home to parent
- Conference with parents, teacher, administrator
- Involvement with Emotional Behavioral Specialist
- Behavior Contract
- Replacement or repair of damaged property
- Bus suspension for student's misbehavior while riding bus
- In school suspension
- Out of school suspension in accordance with section 31 of the Education Act
- Expulsion
- Referral to the Attendance Board
- Involvement of Police

A continuum of supports may be provided to students who engage in inappropriate behavior as well as for students who are impacted by such behaviors. This may include:

- services provided by the school **Inclusive Support team** (emotional-behavioral specialist, emotional behavioral -therapeutic assistant, family-school liaison worker).
- services provided by the Early Learning Multi-disciplinary team- **MDT-** (occupational therapist, speech- language pathologist).
- services provided by Alberta Health Services (occupational therapist, mental health therapist, speech-language pathologist).

Parent Responsibilities

Section 32(d) of the Education Act states that parents also have a responsibility to contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment. Parents have an important role to play whether they are in the school regularly or not. Some examples include:

- Consistently ensuring your child comes to school and is picked up punctually.
- Take an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with the school conduct policy.
- Notify the school if your family needs social supports (food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and safety).
- Speaking and responding respectfully to and about school staff.
- Speaking positively about the school, staff, other students, and their families in front of your child. Voice concerns, first with the individual involved and then by contacting administrative staff.
- Have regular communication with the teacher or other school staff making appointments to ensure the person you want to speak with has sufficient time to have a focused conversation. Drop off and pick up times may not be ideal for you or for the teacher.
- Encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school.
- Engage in your child's school community.

At St. Gerard School, it is our aim to provide students, staff, and families a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe Christ-centered learning environment that honours diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

We affirm that the rights set out in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* are afforded to all students and staff members within St. Gerard.

Absences/Late

OFFICE HOURS: 7:45 A.M. TO 3:15 P.M. (MONDAY TO FRIDAY)

Please call the school at 780-474-5208, to report all lates and absences. Please leave a message on the answering machine. It is helpful to speak slowly and clearly, as it is sometimes difficult to understand some voice messages. Please indicate: "Hello, this message is for (child's name), in grade (), and will not be in school due to (appointment, illness, other) or (will be arriving late).

Regular attendance significantly improves overall achievement. Please try to minimize absences and being late. All parents/guardians will be called when children are absent unless the office has been previously notified. Student attendance is a legal obligation for parents.

Late – students who arrive late must report to the office to receive a late slip.

Agenda Books

Our agenda books are key to students and families staying organized. They are also a great way for teachers to communicate with parents. Please note the following regarding our agenda books:

- Students are to bring their agendas to class *every day*.
- We ask that agendas are **signed daily**.
- Lost or damaged agenda books will need to be replaced by the child's parents/guardians.

Allergies

Please notify your child's teacher and the office if your child has a severe allergy. A Medical Alert form must be completed at the beginning of every year. It is always strongly recommended by the school and the Capital Health authority that an Epinephrine Auto Injector (or Epi Pen) be carried if your child so requires.



Though every effort is made to inform and educate our school community of severe food allergies, we cannot guarantee a 'nut free' school. Students who are in classrooms with children who have severe food allergies (e.g. nuts) will be notified by letter and asked not to bring lunches to school that contain nuts. It is recommended that parents of children with severe food allergies bring in suitable treats for their own child on the event of a classroom celebration or birthday.

Arrival Procedures

Outdoor supervision of students begins at 7:50 a.m. In the case of inclement weather students will be supervised in designated indoor areas before school starts. Students are asked not to arrive before 7:50 a.m. For the safety of the students and staff, all doors of the school are locked. Teachers are in the park area to supervise between 7:50 am until the 1st bell rings. Students cannot be in the school wandering around during this time as staff are busy preparing for the day. There is no student drop off or pick up in the staff parking lot.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting

Assessment is the continuous process of gathering data on student learning, growth, and performance. The information gathered throughout the school year accurately measures student ability with respect to achievement regarding identified curriculum expectations. Assessment methods include assignments, demonstrations, teacher observations, projects, performance tasks, tests, etc.

Evaluation is the application of professional judgment by teachers about the quality of student work based on the data gathered.

Reporting is the communication of evaluative data to students and parents/guardians about student progress and achievement. The reporting process focuses on your child as a unique individual, who learns at his or her own rate. All students in Grades 1-6 receive a progress report card. The descriptors used for each subject are directly linked to Alberta Education's Program of Studies. Descriptors will vary in number from one report to another. The following are *reporting periods*:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Meet the Staff Night | September 10 th |
| • Demonstration of Learning | November 28 th |
| • Demonstration of Learning | March 13 th |



- Report Cards available on PowerSchool

June 25th

Note that student progress can be reviewed by accessing PowerSchool in January and June. Student assessment will be shared throughout the school year. Parents are also encouraged to contact their child's teacher for a conference at any time throughout the year if they have questions or concerns.

Bussing

Edmonton Catholic Schools provides a transportation service that is more generous than the standards specified by the Alberta Education Act. Every effort is made to provide students with safe and efficient transportation at a reasonable cost.

If your child has registered to use ECSD bussing, you will have access to a Student Transportation manual regarding student transportation services. You can also access 'Busplanner web.ecsd.net, for information on your account, and if you need to change/update your information. For any questions regarding your child's bus service, please contact 780-441-6078. If your child's bus is delayed, information can be accessed by downloading the BusPlanner app store: . 

You are asked to read the brochure carefully and then review, discuss, and even demonstrate the Safety Rules and Procedures with your child on a regular basis to ensure that all the information and instructions are understood and retained. It is crucial to your child's safety that the most important rules be fully comprehended. For example: exactly what stop to get off at, what to do if the bus does not come, and how to behave near the danger zone. If a child does not follow the rules, they may lose the privilege of the bus service.

Bus pass applications are available through Bus Planner. If your child typically takes the bus and will not be riding the bus home on a day, we require that a parent contacts the school to inform the office staff of any changes. Bus passes must be retained from year to year.

Change of Address/Phone Numbers

In case of emergencies, the school must have accurate contact information for parents. Please advise the school of any changes in your personal information or phone numbers – including home and work.

Curriculum

Students at St. Gerard School follow the approved Program of Studies outlined by Alberta Education. In September, parents are invited to attend the Meet the Staff evening. During this evening, each teacher reviews the curriculum areas and goals to be achieved during the school year. These resources are available online through the Alberta Education website.



Kindergarten

Kindergarten with full-day programming at St. Gerard is based on the philosophy which encompasses the idea that the children themselves, who are naturally curious, are the co-constructors of knowledge. They are interactive partners in their learning and are encouraged to creatively explore and express themselves within an actively engaging environment in which they play a predominant role. The teacher and Early Childhood Educator play the role of researcher, constantly evaluating and interpreting these dynamic inquiry-based learning processes through documentation.

Cell Phones/Personal Devices

We ask that all students please shut their cell phones ringers off during the entire school day. Students are asked to hand in their cell phones to their teachers at the beginning of the day. Please call the school office if you need to speak to your child. At times, cell phones may be used for class projects at the teacher's discretion. The school cannot take responsibility for the theft or damage of phones.



Communication

Open and positive communication between the home and school is one of the most important contributions we can make for the educational development of children. The **agenda books** are an excellent means of

communication. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teacher regularly. We communicate via our newsletters, outdoor sign, agenda books, letters, parent-student-teacher conferences, and phone calls home.

Newsletters

Our newsletter is our prime method of communication to keep our parents informed about school affairs. A brief newsletter and calendar is emailed at the beginning of each month. Homeroom teachers will also keep families updated with weekly/monthly email updates. Please ensure that the office has your current email address. Newsletters and calendars are available to view on the school website (www.stgerard.ecsd.net).

Reporting Periods

Demonstrations of Learning (Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences) will be scheduled throughout the year. We encourage you not to wait if you feel a need to meet with your child's teacher or the administration at any time during the year.

Dealing with Conflict

If you have concerns regarding your child, we encourage all parents to deal directly with the school personnel. If the situation is not resolved, discuss your concern with a member of the administration. It is our experience that most concerns are inevitably resolved through open and positive communication.

Avoid criticizing the school, teachers or staff in front of your children. It is confusing because children may believe in their teachers, and it provides a poor model for children on how to handle adversity. When children hear criticism, they become empowered to defy the school. If problems occur, go directly to the teacher with an open mind. If after discussing the issue with the teacher and more support is needed, please contact the School Administration. Information about Edmonton Catholic Schools Protocol and Procedures on Dealing with Parent-School Conflict Management is available at the office.

Dressing for School

As the weather warms up, clothing should be both comfortable but also modest. While some outfits may seem fine, in reality, the tasks of sitting at desks, reaching onto shelves, and participating in gym activities may not suit some clothing choices. We ask for your assistance in providing guidance in this area for your child. Please support us in ensuring that clothing that may become too revealing during school activities are not worn at school. Where necessary, school staff will use discretion to quietly approach any student who may be inappropriately dressed for school, to change into or add something more appropriate for school. Our dress code is founded on our District's Core Values of dignity and respect and is an important and valuable part of our program. Rapidly changing styles and fashions make it impossible to suggest a definite standard of dress. However, a few standards are:

- Please remain appropriate by keeping underwear under clothing.
- Given the spiritual nature of our school, students are asked to use good judgement regarding clothing with offensive language or slogans.
- No hats indoors unless special circumstances permit.
- Students are expected to have a pair of clean shoes or indoor runners for school at all times. Students are asked to remove their outside footwear and change into clean indoor shoes upon entering the building.
- Ensure that students are dressed for the weather as, weather permitting, all students are sent outside for morning as well as lunch recess each day.

Students are not permitted to bring cosmetic items such as hair products, perfume, or make-up. We need to be sensitive to our children and staff with asthma and allergies who can react to perfumed items. It is helpful for personal items to be labeled with your child's name.

Entering School Safely

To ensure safety, children should not be at school before 7:55 am or after 2:45 pm unless they are involved in a scheduled and supervised school activity.



Following District expectations, during the school day, all doors are locked to ensure the safety of our students. While we welcome all visitors to our school, we ask that you please report to the office and, if staying, sign in the visitor's logbook. Please enter through the front doors by ringing the buzzer and remove soiled footwear. **ALL VISITORS MUST REPORT TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE- EVEN TO DROP OFF LUNCHES OR VISIT YOUR CHILD.** Thanks for keeping our students safe and our school clean.

Field Trips

Field trips enhance student learning, and they provide children with unique experiences within the context of the curriculum being taught. Together children discover new insights into a learning situation with their classmates. Before each field trip, parents will be asked to read and sign a field trip permission form. Without this written permission form signed and returned, children will not be allowed to participate in the field trip. **Verbal permission cannot be accepted.**



Though our School Parent Council can support some of the costs of field trips, many activities may require additional cost to families. Please note that parental support is often required to help supervise field trips, so volunteers are welcome.

FOIP – Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

The Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, (FOIP), sets the standards on how public bodies, such as schools, collect, use, disclose and dispose of personal information. St. Gerard School collects information for the purposes of registration and other important activities. Parents are informed that both the information they provide as well as any other information placed in their student record will be protected and used in compliance with the FOIP Act.

These forms are given to parents of children at the time of registration. Should you have questions regarding this form, please contact the school office.

Illness and Accidents

In fairness to all, please do not send your child to school if there are signs of ill health in the morning. We have neither the facilities nor the personnel to care for sick children. Good health is necessary for effective learning. Students who are ill should receive proper medical attention and should not attend school until their health is reasonable. Our policy is to get students who are ill home as soon as possible. Our practice is to call parents and ask them to pick the student up. If a child is too ill to go out for recess, he/she is too ill to be at school.



In the event of an accident, first aid will be administered, and the school office will endeavor to contact the parent or guardian by phone to ascertain his/her wishes with respect to medical attention. If the child needs immediate medical attention, and the parent/guardian or contact number the administration will do their best to make decisions. In extreme emergencies, an ambulance will be called at the **cost of the family**.



Please ensure that all necessary phone numbers (emergency, home, and work) and medical information are kept up to date in the office.

Medication

On occasion, we have been asked by parents to ensure their child receives prescribed medication. Please be aware that prior to school staff administering medications, parents must complete a **“Request for Administration of Medication at School” form** and have it signed by their family doctor. The school will administer the medication according to the doctor's prescription, provide safe and limited access storage, and keep a record of each student receiving medication.

Homework

Home study is an integral part of every student's educational program and is to be encouraged by teachers and supported by parents. It must be considered an extension of classroom assignments and should vary according to the individual student's grade level, ability, and need.

General Purposes of Homework



- To complete assignments not finished during class time.
- To promote good study habits.
- To aid in the mastery of skills.
- To reinforce knowledge.
- To allow the parents to view their child's progress and performance.

Students in Grades K-6 are to use an agenda book. Please check your child's agenda book daily to keep well-informed and encourage the home study materials are returned to school.

If your child has no homework, time taken to read is time well spent. Encouraging reading at home every day is an important skill with great carryover into schoolwork. It is suggested that approximately 10 minutes per grade could be spent on homework. For example, students in grade 2 could spend 20 minutes on homework while students in grade 3 could spend up to 30 minutes on homework. If you have any questions about the amount of homework your child has, you are encouraged to discuss these with your child's teacher.

Nutrition Programs:



Lunch and Snack - St. Gerard School offers a daily snack and free lunch program. Lunch is provided for those who have filled out the form handed out at the beginning of the year.

Children are reminded that having lunch at school is a privilege and that appropriate behavior is necessary at all times.

- Cleaning up their own area after they have eaten their lunch is a must.
- Repeated misbehaviour will result in the student losing the privilege of eating lunch at school and parents/guardians will have to make other arrangements.
- Microwaves or refrigeration are **not** available for student lunches.

Inline Skates, Skateboards, Scooters and Bicycles

Students riding skateboards, scooters, inline skates, etc. to school are expected to wear helmets. Use of these is not allowed on school property between the hours of 7:45 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Bicycles - When students ride their bikes to school, we request that they be properly identified (through name or serial number) and locked at all times. The school does not take responsibility for theft or damage. By law, students must wear helmets for safety. Helmets should be kept inside the school. Parents are asked to review basic traffic safety with their children. We ask students not to enter the staff parking lot for safety reasons.



Lanyards

In December 2012, after a young student at a Calgary school was found unconscious in the bathroom because his lanyard has been caught in a cubicle door, the education minister issued a directive that banned the use of lanyards in schools. The Edmonton Catholic School District has provided a list of alternatives that could be used instead of lanyards. In the case of students who need to carry a personal key, the district recommendation is to use a coil wrist band or a carabineer. Please ensure that your child does not wear a lanyard to school.



Library

All students at St. Gerard School have the opportunity to use the library. Students can sign out library books weekly. Students are to take care of the books they borrow and return them every week. It is also expected that the students pay a replacement fee for lost or damaged books.

Leaving School

Under no circumstance is a student to leave the school during class or lunchtime without a note or call from home and obtaining permission from the general office. It is imperative that the whereabouts of students are known at any given time. Should you need to pick up your child during school hours, please ensure his/her safety by signing your child out at the office.

Lost and Found

Please label all items of clothing (jackets, shoes, boots, etc.) with your child's name. This will facilitate the return of misplaced items. A lost and found box is located near the office and we encourage students and parents to check this box frequently. Smaller items such as keys are normally kept in the office. **Expensive items or valuables should not be brought to school.** Students are encouraged to respect the property of others.



Parent Volunteers

St. Gerard School is a dynamic school. As such, there is always more work to do than people to do it. We welcome the support of any parents/guardians who are able to assist with work around the school.

Volunteers are needed to decorate bulletin boards, collate, photocopy, help in our library, support our snack program, assist with field trips and special days, and perform other tasks. Many teachers also organize parental help in their classroom. Any parents/guardians who are interested in these tasks are asked to contact their child's teacher. All volunteers are required to complete a volunteer form that is available at the office.

The School Council is also in need of parent volunteers as executive members, room reps, and for other special events throughout the year. A volunteer form goes home in the fall to allow parents the opportunity to volunteer for many of the School Council roles and activities.

Parish Team and Liturgical Celebrations

St. Gerard School works closely with our school parish, St. Alphonsus. Our students are involved in a variety of liturgical celebrations that take place throughout the school year. These celebrations enable us to share the rich dimension of our Catholic faith. Jesus Christ serves as our role model and through our lived action; we bring our faith to life. The parish team and our parent community are always welcome to be part of our celebrations.



Personal Property

All personal items such as boots, toques, coats, runners, pencil cases, etc. should be clearly marked with your child's name on them. Toys or valuable items should remain at home. Staff cannot be responsible for lost or damaged items.

Programs

In addition to our full day Kindergarten through Grade 6 programs, St. Gerard School offers a variety of supportive programs:

- French as a Second Language for Grade 4 – 6,
- English Language Learning supports for students with English language needs,
- Literacy & Numeracy Intervention supports are in place for students needing additional support and small group instruction.

Safety -Evacuation

There are several causes that could potentially lead to the evacuation of the school building – for example: a major gas leak, a fire, total loss of utility services.

In the event of an evacuation, the students and staff would relocate to **Delton School**, located at **12126-89 Street**. We would then put into operation our emergency fan-out



to contact parents for arrangements for pick-up and dismissal of children. Parents would need to bring identification with them to pick up their children as some of the adults assisting staff may not know each child.

We will practice fire drill, lockdown, and evacuation procedures with students throughout the year (fall and spring) to ensure that in the event of an emergency, students will be aware of the procedures to follow.

-Lock Downs

Should there be a threat to the school from the outside community, the school will be locked down. This means all doors will be locked and no one will be allowed to enter until the issue has been settled. Children will be in their classrooms and parents who find themselves in the hallways are to go to the staffroom. Note that we practice lock down drills throughout the school year to prepare the students.

-Picking Children Up

We will not release children to anyone who does not normally pick them up from school unless we receive a signed note giving us permission to do so. We may request to see identification. Please do not park in the staff parking lot. All children must be signed out in the front office during school hours.

School Supplies

St. Gerard School has supply list for each grade level available in the office. The lists are also added on the school website at the end of June (www.stgerard.ecsd.net). Tools for School program donates and delivers free supplies to our school for any student who is unable to purchase the materials listed. Please do not hesitate to come to the office prior to school start if your child requires a free package.

School Council and Parent Association

At St. Gerard School, the School Council meets with school staff and administration regularly throughout the school year. The School Council Executive is elected every fall at an Annual General Meeting at Meet the Staff Night. Parents are encouraged to become active members of the School Council. Members of the School Council are also encouraged to become members of the Parent Association, which is a separate fund-raising group and has Society status for gaming purposes. All parents are welcome to attend.



Recess

Recess is an important part of the school day. It is a time for socializing with friends, exercising, and refreshing the brain! Recess will only be indoors during extreme weather conditions. In winter, the temperature combined with the wind chill must be - 20°C or colder in order to stay indoors. Ensure that your child is dressed appropriately as, weather permitting, all students are sent outside unless a student has special circumstances. We believe that children who are too ill to go outside for 15-20 minutes are too ill to be at school.

Students are expected to:

1. Play games that will not harm or endanger ourselves or others. Inappropriate play includes tackle football, play fighting and throwing snowballs.
2. Play in designated areas.
3. Follow instructions of supervising staff or teacher.

Student Activities

There are a variety of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities that students at St. Gerard School can become involved in. The activities help create community and we encourage all students to participate. These activities may vary from year to year. Examples of student activities may include: lunch monitors, office helpers, recycling club, buddy classes, running club, student leadership, skating, skiing, concert performances, spelling bee, Glee Club, talent show and year end Fun Day.

Student Services

District educational specialists in the fields of literacy, numeracy, speech/language, and behaviour are available to the school when required. Parents will be consulted before the school refers a child to these specialists.

Supervision

Staff **outside** supervision is provided at the following times:

- 7:55 a.m. (first bell rings at 8:05 a.m. when students line up)
- Supervision is provided at all recess breaks.
- Students arriving before 7:55 a.m. will be unsupervised. For safety reasons, we ask that no students arrive **before 7:55 a.m.** unless there is a planned club or team meeting.
- Staff provide supervision during lunch.

Students are expected to go directly home following dismissal. No playground supervision is provided after dismissal and students should not be on the playground when there is not a teacher on supervision.

Taxes

Please review your tax notice to ensure your support is assigned to the Edmonton Catholic Schools. If there is any error or doubt, please call City Hall at 780-496-5090.

Technology

Students are required to have parental permission before being able to access the Internet. Student use of the Internet is supervised at all times. Students are expected to follow the ECSD Acceptable Use Policy. Unacceptable use of the internet or computer may result in the loss of the privilege to use it.

Technology is integrated into each curricular area. It is primarily used as a learning tool for creating digital resources and accessing information online. iPads, Chromebooks and laptops are accessible through the wireless network provided by Edmonton Catholic Schools. Technology tools are continually upgraded to keep up with emerging research.

Telephone Use

With staff permission, students may use the phone to call home if needed. However, we do not allow students to use the phone to make social plans as these are to be arranged at home prior.



Vandalism and Illegal Activity

Please call the police department if you notice any vandalism or illegal/unwelcome activity occurring on the school property after hours. Students who purposefully damage school property will be responsible for correcting the damage or replacing the damaged item.

Video

Video surveillance has been installed at St. Gerard. Several cameras help to ensure the safety of the students and staff in and around the building. All entrances/exits are monitored. Incidents of vandalism and theft around the school has diminished greatly since the cameras arrived.

Weather

It is expected that students will come to school with appropriate clothing for the weather conditions (i.e. winter boots, toque, mittens, scarves, snow pants, etc.). During severe weather conditions, all students will be kept inside the school at recess and noon hour. **Students will be supervised and remain in their regular classrooms for the recess and lunch break.**



The cold weather policy will be followed when:

- The temperature is –20 degrees Celsius or colder (taking the wind-chill into consideration).
- There is continuous rainfall (spring and fall).

Website

Another source of information about what is happening at St. Gerard is our school website which we update regularly. Please see (www.stgerard.ecsd.net).

In signing below, I agree that I have read the information in the St. Gerard Catholic School Handbook.

Parent's Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____