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# DCS FAMILY HANDBOOK

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Drafted July 2017  
Revised September 2025

A Ministry of Home Church



# Table of Contents

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PROGRAM .....	4
School Vision and Mission Statement .....	5
Mission Statement .....	5
Core Values .....	5
Vision Statement .....	5
Faith Statement of Destiny Christian School.....	5
Notice of Non-Discriminatory Policy .....	5
Introduction .....	6
Philosophy and Beliefs .....	7
Beliefs We Live By.....	7
Policies We Live By.....	7
Identity Statements.....	8
What Makes DCS Different.....	9
Destiny Christian School Society Board of Directors .....	9
DCS as an Organization .....	9
DCS as Staff .....	9
DCS as a Student Community .....	9
STUDENT LIFE.....	11
Admissions Policy .....	12
Application and Enrollment Process .....	12
Registration and Society Fees .....	13
Tuition Assistance .....	13
Arrears Policy .....	13
Withdrawal and Refund Policy .....	13
Auto Reenroll .....	13
Academics .....	14
Awards and Scholarships .....	14
Exams .....	14
Report Cards and Honour Roll .....	14
Promotion Policy .....	15
Homework.....	15
School Supplies.....	15
Activities & Opportunities .....	16
Athletics .....	16
Field Trips.....	16
Attendance .....	17
Absences .....	17
Lates .....	17
Truancy.....	17
Signing Out Privileges.....	18
Code of Conduct.....	19

School Routines and Services .....	22
Before and After School.....	22
Early Dismissal .....	22
Electronic Devices .....	22
Facilities .....	22
First Aid .....	22
Inclement Weather & Recess.....	22
Lockers and Locks.....	22
Lost and Found .....	23
Lunch.....	23
Office Communications .....	23
School Photos.....	23
School Telephones.....	23
Student Safety and Emergency Procedures .....	23
Transportation .....	24
Visitors and Volunteers.....	24
APPENDIX.....	26
Home Church Statement of Faith .....	27
Honour Code .....	29
Student Code of Conduct .....	30
DCS Policy on Respectful Communication.....	32
DCS Healthy Technology Use Policy .....	33
Transportation Contract.....	35
Volunteer Application .....	36

# CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PROGRAM

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# School Vision and Mission Statement

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## Mission Statement

### **Education with a God-given Purpose**

As a ministry of Home Church, the mission of DCS, in partnership with families and the church, is to create disciples of Jesus, train servant leaders, and provide quality Christian education.

## Core Values

### **Christlikeness:**

Our staff fosters a Christ-like community through a personal relationship with Jesus, love for the Church, and treating others with the compassion and love Jesus would. We embrace our role as committed stewards of the mission, vision, and calling of Jesus as staff at Destiny Christian School.

### **Student-Centered:**

Our staff promotes a student-centered culture by deeply understanding and valuing each student as a unique individual with a God-given destiny. They manage with love and discernment to foster a thriving community where students can flourish.

## Vision Statement

The vision of Destiny Christian School is to nurture a community where students flourish in faith, servant leadership and learning, preparing them to live out their God-given destiny as disciples of Jesus.

## Faith Statement of Destiny Christian School

DCS has the fundamental belief that all children are created and loved by God, each having a divine purpose for living. The goal of life is to discover God and His will for their life. The goal of the school is to support students to reach their full development: academically, physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

DCS is a ministry of Home Church. Parents choose Destiny Christian School and agree with the mission and vision of DCS along with the Statement of Faith of Home Church. The application for enrollment specifies the philosophy and beliefs that DCS adheres to. Parents acknowledge and agree with these statements when they enroll their child(ren).

## Notice of Non-Discriminatory Policy

Destiny Christian School accepts students of all races, color, national and ethnic origin, who form part of the student body, to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

# Introduction

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## Welcome Message

Welcome to Destiny Christian School (DCS)!

As a ministry of Home Church, DCS offers a Christ-centered education built on the Alberta curriculum, taught through an evangelical Christian worldview.

Our desire is that every student feels at home in a safe, caring, and nurturing environment, experiences academic excellence, and encounters God through a personal, intimate relationship with Him.

**Our mission shapes everything we do, and we embrace these distinctives:**

**Christ-centered education:** We teach from a biblical worldview, recognizing Jesus Christ as the Creator and Sustainer of all things. Our goal is to help students think and live biblically, applying Christian principles to every area of life.

**Knowing Jesus Christ:** We believe we are created to know, love, and glorify God through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, living a Spirit-filled life of obedience and service.

**Godly character:** We strive to guide students in developing Christlike character, allowing Jesus to shape their hearts and actions.

**Academic excellence:** We challenge students to pursue excellence in their studies as an act of worship and preparation for their life's calling and service in God's kingdom.

**Service to others:** We provide opportunities for students to serve within the school, church, and community through projects, missions, and ministry involvement.

At DCS, we are committed to helping each student discover their God-given potential and pursue excellence in every area of life. More than anything, we desire that our students develop a heart after God and live for His kingdom. As an independent Christian school in Red Deer, Christ is our source and our center.

Sincerely,

*Tim Gill*

Tim Gill, Principal

*Brandi Gerber*

Brandi Gerber, Vice-Principal

# Philosophy and Beliefs

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At Destiny Christian School we believe that “all children are gifts of the Lord and His reward (inheritance).”<sup>1</sup> Children attending Destiny will be mentored in developing a personal faith in God and building a life-long relationship that will bring strength and direction to their personal lives through Biblical principles.

**Church** – Destiny is a ministry of Home Church; therefore, students and families are encouraged to connect and be a vital part of a local Christian community. We believe the **Local Church Family** is a vital part of the team to assist parents in the development and growth of their children.

**Parents** have been mandated by God to nurture and support their child(ren),<sup>2</sup> which affirms their responsibility in the education of their children.

**School**, though significant and foundational, is only part of a life-long learning process.

<sup>1</sup> Ps 127:3 <sup>2</sup> Pr 22:6

## Beliefs We Live By

1. Parents have the primary responsibility of raising their children to find and fulfill their God-given destiny.
2. The staff, parents, and student family of Destiny, are part of a team dedicated to supporting children to become lifelong learners who grow into their full potential and destiny, striving to be excellent learners with academic and personal excellence, aiming to fulfill our God-given destiny.
3. The local church family, a vital part of the team, is to assist parents in the training and growth of their children.
4. Children attending Destiny will be mentored in developing a personal faith in God and building a life relationship that will bring strength and direction to their personal lives.
5. Children attending Destiny will be mentored in building meaningful life relationships using Biblical principles.

## Policies We Live By

1. Parents acknowledge and agree to abide with the beliefs of Destiny Christian School and the Statement of Faith of Home Church. *(See Appendix)*
2. Parents must be willing to be involved with our staff by giving input to create and implement strategies for academic, relational, behavioral, personal, or spiritual issues as they arise. The principal and staff will make final decisions considering these discussions.
3. Bullying will be dealt with as soon as a parent, or student, notifies school staff. DCS has a Student Code of Conduct that addresses bullying.
4. We are a community whose success depends on every family's involvement. As a partially funded school, we rely on families to partner with us in supporting our programs and initiatives.

## Identity Statements

1. We are an outreach and service ministry of Home Church and adhere to its statement of faith.
2. We are a Christian school promoting Christian values, morals and standards in all subjects and grade levels.
3. We affirm that students are God's unique creation, deserving of a respectful, loving, and nurturing environment which prepares them for life now and eternally.
4. We believe that Christian education develops the total person spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically.
5. We are committed to teaching the Alberta education curriculum from the perspective of what the Bible says about God, ourselves, and the world.
6. We will develop a qualified, committed Christian teaching staff, providing a supportive environment for their professional development.
7. We respect, value, and honour the role and responsibility of parents as partners in education.



# What Makes DCS Different

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## Destiny Christian School Society Board of Directors

The Society is committed to excellence in the Christian learning environment of DCS and the spiritual nurturing of its students and staff, playing two main roles in that process.

The Board of Directors is a group of individuals who meet several times through the school year, giving oversight to the school. Particular attention is given to Alberta Education matters, maintaining high moral and educational standards, and the financial aspects of operating DCS. The Board selects the Principal in cooperation with Home Church, interacts with school staff, and is a liaison with the Home Church legal board.

## DCS as an Organization

### ***DCS Mission Statement***

- Clearly expresses our focus on Christ-centered education and promoting godly character in the development of the students.

### ***Association of Independent Schools and Colleges of Alberta (AISCA) Member***

- AISCA provides many resources that connect Christian schools throughout Alberta and around the world.
- AISCA Board/Admin Conference — development and networking for Administration team.

## DCS as Staff

### ***Committed staff***

- Teachers are Christians and bring a Christian viewpoint to issues and topics from all curricular areas and adhere to the Home Church Statement of Faith and Code of Conduct.

### ***Substitute teachers profess personal faith in Jesus Christ***

- Substitute teachers are expected to demonstrate the same personal commitment to Christian perspective as hired staff.

## DCS as a Student Community

### ***Daily devotions/prayer times with all students***

- Homeroom teachers facilitate a morning devotional time to pause at the start of the day to bring glory to God and commit the day and its activities to Him.

### ***Weekly Praise & Prayer for all students***

- This is an opportunity for corporate worship where students will experience and participate in various spiritual disciplines and learning.
- These are broken down by grades; K-Grade 3, Grades 4-6 and Grades 7-9.
- The daily schedule is adjusted on Healing Meeting days. All teachers and students are expected to attend.

***Bible classes, including a Bible memory program, for all students.***

- The spiritual formation of our students includes age-appropriate Bible curriculum as we encourage students to meet and know Jesus personally.

***Interviews for prospective families/students***

- It is our desire that every student finds DCS to be a safe, welcoming environment. For those unfamiliar with a Christian perspective, the interview process allows administrators to explain what students can expect in a Christ-centered culture and what will be expected of them as students.

# STUDENT LIFE

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# Admissions Policy

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Destiny Christian School is a private Christian school that accepts registrations on a space basis. Our school is rooted in and continues to operate within the bounds of evangelical Christianity. DCS does not exist to reform attitudes or modify behaviour, but rather to provide an educational program (teachers, curriculum, and activities) that brings glory to Jesus Christ. The educational philosophy of DCS is based on a Christ-centered view of truth as presented in the Bible. A personal, dynamic relationship with Jesus is at the heart of our mission and school culture. Parents and their children are expected to acknowledge and affirm their support for the mission and biblical principles of the school.

Each year the school evaluates the students to confirm that the goals of the school and students are compatible. Returning students and families may be declined readmission, at the discretion of the administration. A condition for readmission is that financial obligations to DCS have been met.

All new students interested in enrolling at DCS must complete the Application for New Students.

Parent and student interviews are a key part of the admission process. They enable families to meet with school administration, learn more about DCS and confirm that the student truly wishes to attend DCS and support its mission and program. A commitment form supporting the school's mission and philosophy must be signed prior to acceptance. Registration Fees are due with the receipt of each application form and are non-refundable. A payment plan for society fees is required upon acceptance.

## Application and Enrollment Process

Existing families will be Auto Re-Enrolled on February 15<sup>th</sup> for the following academic year unless a Not Returning/ Withdrawal Form has been received by the school office.

New student applications will be considered throughout the year. Applicants are placed in a pool of potential students and may be contacted for an interview as space becomes available. The following priorities are considered in the enrollment process:

- 1<sup>st</sup> priority** — returning students before the re-registration deadline.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> priority** — potential students with siblings currently attending DCS and children of staff.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> priority** — potential students of Home Church families.
- 4<sup>th</sup> priority** — potential students outside of the above listed groups.

If two students are of equal priority for an available class placement, date of application will be an important consideration. New families are encouraged to apply early.

## Registration and Society Fees

The fees for the current school year are available online at [Enrollment – Destiny Christian School](#).

The *Registration Fee* is due at the time of registration for each new student.

*Tuition fees* are due by auto debit, set-up through accounting, on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of the month or paid in full by September 15<sup>th</sup> each year. Payment plans must be submitted within 5 business days after enrollment is accepted.

## Tuition Assistance

Available upon request and reviewed by the principal and board of directors.

## Arrears Policy

- Parents are expected to keep their accounts current. Payments not honored by the bank are subject to a \$50 NSF fee.
- Re-registration of students cannot be accepted if fees are not up to date or payment arrangements are not being met.
- Current account in arrears three months – the family will be asked to prepare a written payment report and plan to be submitted to the school board for review. A meeting between the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be held with a board member to determine the family's registration status.
- In the event a family is experiencing genuine financial difficulty, please contact the school and we will be happy to discuss payment arrangements.

## Withdrawal and Refund Policy

If your child withdraws from DCS, tuition will be refunded for the number of months remaining in the school year, not including the month of withdrawal. Monthly fee payments will be stopped. Lump sum payment refunds will be pro-rated following the effective date of withdrawal.

## Auto Reenroll

Currently enrolled students from kindergarten to grade 8 will be automatically re-enrolled on February 15<sup>th</sup> for the following school year, unless a Not Returning/Withdrawal Form is submitted to the office. Students enrolling in Preschool or Kindergarten will need to complete an enrollment form for the following year.

Students will only be reenrolled, and classroom space will be reserved if a family's account is up-to-date or if satisfactory payment arrangements have been made by the reenrollment due date. Families who communicate that they will not return after April 30<sup>th</sup> will be invoiced a \$200 Late Withdrawal Fee.

# Academics

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## Awards and Scholarships

Awards and scholarships are an opportunity to recognize and acknowledge excellence in student achievement.

The *Awards Night* in June recognizes curricular achievement for all students.

**Most Improved** – Grades 1-4 this is for the most improved student.

### **Imagine IT Scholarship Award for Athletic and Academic Excellence**

This scholarship is awarded to one male and one female in grades 7 – 9. The recipient of this award is chosen based on the students' pursuit of excellence in Athletics. They are involved in multiple sports and work with persistence to better themselves and their teammates. They have a positive, encouraging attitude and do their best to confront challenges they faced throughout the year.

Complimentary to Athletics, the student has also demonstrated a commitment to their academic studies. They have applied themselves and worked hard to achieve their best. This student lives out the Christian values of Destiny School and works consistently to greatness.

Throughout the year each student will also be recognized for one of four areas of excellence: Servant Leadership, Education, Athletics or Discipleship. Parents are invited to attend the in-school assembly where their child is recognized.

## Exams

Final exams are scheduled in June. Achievement Tests are scheduled by Alberta Education, and rescheduling is not contemplated for any reasons other than a school or family emergency. Requests to reschedule exams of any nature **MUST** be made through the principal and not teachers or office staff.

*NOTE: Achievement tests will normally occur regardless of weather. Students are expected to make every reasonable effort to reach the school on these occasions. The school will be open for achievement tests, whether or not the buses are running.*

## Report Cards and Honour Roll

Report Cards are sent home at the beginning of December, the middle of March, and the end of June.

Honour Roll certificates are given to grade 5-9 students that achieve an average of at least 80% on their four core subjects. Principal's List certificates are given to grade 5-9 students that achieve an average of at least 90% on their four core subjects. The certificates are presented at the *Awards Night* in June.

## Promotion Policy

In junior high, a pass consists of a final mark of 50% or higher. In a borderline case, the teacher will consider factors such as:

- the student's ability or potential,
- the student's attitude and effort,
- learning disabilities, and
- the student's marks in the full range of subjects.

Student retention will be determined by school administration in consultation with parents and teachers after careful examination of the student's record over the entire year.

## Homework

Homework supplements instructional time in the classroom to enhance knowledge and learning for each student to achieve the key learning outcomes established by Alberta Education. Special projects, reports, assignments, worksheets, tests, and exams are examples of homework activities intended to benefit each student.

In junior high, an average student can expect to spend 1¼ to 1¾ hours on homework each day. While teachers attempt to provide balance across the subject areas, core subjects are emphasized, and the amount of homework may vary from day to day and week to week.

Parents are encouraged to provide an environment that will foster and facilitate homework completion. Homework is part of the goal to achieve independent, confident learners both in school and away from school.

## School Supplies

School supplies vary according to each student's grade. A list is available on the [website](#).

# Activities & Opportunities

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## Athletics

The DCS Warriors compete against other CENAA (Chinook's Edge North Athletic Association) schools in junior high, and in CWAJHAA (Central Western Alberta Junior High Athletic Association).

Many student athletes compete through interschool competition. Teams include:

Badminton	Basketball
Track & Field	Volleyball

Participation is a privilege and subject to staff approval, satisfactory progress in all subjects, and good conduct and attitude in school. Students who successfully become a member of a school team must pay all team fees prior to competition.

Students should notify their parents and have verbal permission for any after-school activity. Parents are responsible to provide transportation immediately after the activity unless otherwise notified.

## Fans

In the interest of good sportsmanship and positive Christian testimony, Warriors' fans conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates the utmost respect for DCS players, opposing team players, coaches, referees, and other fans. All fans are expected to adhere to the CENAA code of conduct.

## Field Trips

Field trips are taken periodically. A permission form is sent home with the student and must be signed and returned to the teacher. A fee may be assessed for transportation and/or for admission. Parents may be asked to help with supervision or as chaperones.

The DCS office must have copies of each chaperone's criminal record check and child services intervention check on file. Copies of criminal record checks and child services intervention checks expire after three years and must be updated upon expiry. *Please see the Volunteer Application in the appendix for more information. For a uniquely created letter please contact the school office.*

Parent drivers must carry a minimum of two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) Public Liability and Property Damage insurance in the event of an accident.

\*If approved Volunteer Drivers are used for transportation for an Event, the Board's Liability Insurer provides coverage, subject to the exclusions and limitations set out in the policy, for parents, volunteers, and staff who are drivers or owners of vehicles used to provide transportation for students in compliance with Destiny Christian School's procedures regarding such transportation. The said insurance is EXCESS only and does not replace the driver's/owner's insurance as the primary insurance. The excess insurance will only be available after the driver's/owner's insurance is exhausted, and only applies to payments in excess of two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00). Owners must carry a minimum of two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) Public Liability and Property Damage insurance to be fully protected, and for the vehicle owned by them to be approved as a vehicle for transporting students.



# Attendance

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Regular attendance is essential for success in learning. As such, students are expected to:

- Attend scheduled classes;
- Be punctual;
- Complete and hand in the work assigned during absence;
- And sign in and out at the office.

Parents of students in grade 6-9 will be able to track attendance (absences, lates) through Power School.

Students absent from school due to illness should not expect to participate with an athletic team in a game or practice that day.

## Absences

Parents are asked to notify the school office (in advance if possible) of any student absences.

**Student Responsibilities:** Exams and major assignments should be written or handed in on the first day of the student's return to school. Students are to take the initiative to request and complete assignments or work missed while absent.

**Extended Absences:** Parents and/or students are to contact teachers prior to an extended absence. Teachers will create and communicate a plan for the student to complete class work that will be covered during the student's absence. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that all missed work is completed promptly. Parents must also find suitable tutoring for missed concepts taught during their student's extended absence.

## Lates

Students are expected to be at their desks ready to work by 8:45 AM. Late students will be required to get a late slip from the office prior to going to class.

Students who have not been excused by parental communication to the office or teacher will be marked with an Unexcused Late. Students must go to an administration desk to receive a late slip and give it to their teacher.

**Excused:** Illness or appointments, weather delays, unforeseen traffic issues (requires notification directly from a parent).

**Unexcused:** Including but not limited to sleeping in, being unprepared, missing the bus, extended construction, or other avoidable reasons.

To encourage punctuality, students with an unexcused late will serve a detention. Bus students will serve at first recess and non-bus students will serve after school. Initially, this will be a 15-minute detention, but it will increase if lateness continues.

In Middle School, students' punctuality to all classes will also be monitored. If a student accumulates 3 late arrivals outside of the 8:45 AM bell, they will need to serve an in-school detention during recess.

## Truancy

Truancy is any absence from class without the knowledge or consent of parents and school. Such incidents are referred to the school office. Incidents of truancy are considered unexcused absences.

1. When a student has missed 7 days of school without communication from parents, a teacher will discuss it with administration.
2. At this time, the administration will contact the student's parent or guardian to notify them of the concern.
3. Parents and school staff will work together to encourage an increase in student attendance.

### Signing Out Privileges

Students go to the school office to sign in and out according to the following guidelines:

- All students must sign out when leaving during the school day and sign in upon returning to school (i.e., appointments, illness).
- Students are permitted to sign out ONLY if leaving with an adult. Parental consent is required.

# Code of Conduct

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DCS promotes a Biblical standard of conduct with its students, providing a Christian learning environment that encourages them to make God-honouring choices and be accountable for their behaviour. Conduct should be such that the safety of everyone is assured, school and personal property or equipment is carefully maintained for maximum use, and everyone has the maximum opportunity for learning.

This responsibility extends beyond the confines of the school into the community and on all out-of-school activities (i.e., field trips) where students represent themselves, their school, and their faith. Additional to the information here, students in junior high are expected to sign an Honour Code agreeing to conduct themselves in a manner that adheres to the mission and vision of the school. Students who take the bus to and from school are also expected to sign a Bus Covenant that outlines their expectations while riding the bus.

*See Appendix for the Student Code of Conduct, the Student Honour Code, and Transportation Contract.*

## For Students

Students are expected to show respect for all staff, other students, and visitors, and conduct themselves according to the following principles and rules:

- Know, understand, and follow school rules.
- Contribute to a safe and caring environment, free from fighting, bullying, incendiary devices, and weapons of any kind.
- Refrain from using profanity, or questionable or coarse language or joking.
- Contribute to an environment where everyone has the maximum opportunity for learning, free from distractions and disruptions. This includes regular attendance and appropriate effort in course work.
- Music used in any school function (athletics, classroom, or for an assignment) must reflect good taste in content and language and portray messages that are morally consistent with Biblical standards.
- Maintain and protect school and personal property or equipment with a 'pride of ownership.'
- Good, wholesome friendships are encouraged. There should be no public display of affection.
- Abstain from tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and non-prescribed drugs regardless of age.
- Refrain from gambling.
- Abstain from involvement in pornography or immoral sexual activity.

While students may experience challenges for one reason or another, we encourage them to approach the school's administration to find counselling, acceptance and help through the resources of the school and church. This will be done with confidentiality. Our desire is for healing and restoration.

## Dress and Appearance

At DCS, our standards for the dress code are in keeping with the high Christian principles we seek to establish in those who attend our school. The following guidelines are meant to provide a standard of dress that is reasonable and modest. 1 Timothy 4:12 says: “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.”

- 1. **HAIR**            A. Hair must be modest, clean, and neat in appearance.
- 2. **SHOES**           A. Properly fastened shoes must be worn at all times.  
                             B. All shoes should be in good repair.
- 3. **GENERAL**        A. No hat is to be worn in the school at any time.  
                             B. Gym strip may not be worn in class.  
                             C. No undergarments should be visible.  
                             D. No writing/drawing on skin.

**The Dress Code  
applies to school  
field trips, sports  
events,  
performances, and  
graduations.**

### 4. MAKE-UP & JEWELLERY

- A. Make-up and jewellery should be modest in appearance.

## BOYS

### 5. PANTS

- A. All pants must fit properly and be in good repair.
- B. Shorts must be mid-thigh or longer.
- C. No undergarments should be visible.

### 6. SHIRTS

- A. T-Shirts: no spiritually or culturally offensive printing or pictures.
- B. All shirts must have full shoulder width. No tank tops, muscle shirts, or bare midriff may be worn to classes.

### 7. SWIMWEAR

- A. Swimwear must be mid-thigh or longer.

## GIRLS

### 5. DRESSES, SKIRTS, TOPS

- A. All dresses and tops must have a modest, well-fitting neckline. No tops may be worn off the shoulder.
- B. Dresses and skirts shall be near knee length or longer.
- C. Sheer materials must have proper undergarments.
- D. Sleeveless tops must have 2-finger width straps. T-Shirts must have no spiritually or culturally offensive printing or pictures. Bare midriffs are not permitted.

### 6. PANTS

- A. All pants must fit properly and modestly and be in good repair.
- B. Shorts must be mid-thigh or longer.
- C. Leggings worn by students in grades 4-9 must be covered by a piece of clothing mid-thigh or longer.

### 7. SWIMWEAR

- A. Swimwear must be one-piece or tankini.

If a student comes to school or a school event in attire that does not meet the dress code, they will be asked to change. If they do not have appropriate dress code attire to change into, their parent(s) or guardian (s) will be called to bring them appropriate dress code attire.

## Student Behaviour and Discipline

Discipline at DCS is grounded in scripture with these objectives:

- To develop and maintain the optimum environment for learning.
- To correct behaviour that is disruptive to the learning environment.
- To train students to conduct themselves in ways that help the school community support and achieve goals of spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social development for all, individually and corporately.
- To remove recalcitrant (resisting authority or control; not obedient or compliant; hard to deal with) students so that the learning environment may be maintained.

## For Parents

While it is the parents' responsibility to instruct and teach their children in the way they should live, a partnership between teachers and parents is vital to ensure the success of the educational program at DCS. Parents are encouraged to be involved and support the child's learning at school and at home.

We recognize that everyone may not agree with all the rules and procedures of the school; however, parents are expected to support the school in its operation. Some ways to demonstrate this are:

- Establish a positive learning atmosphere at home.
- Support the staff in carrying out school policies.
- Keep the school apprised of contact information and address changes so parents can be reached when needed.
- Maintain communication with staff regarding learning and/or behavioral issues.
- Keep all School and Society fees current.

If parents have questions or disagreements regarding disciplinary actions taken during the school day and in school activities, they are encouraged and expected to discuss concerns promptly with the teacher involved rather than other parents, staff, or students.

*Please see more information in the Student Code of Conduct and the DCS Policy on Respectful Communication in the Appendix.*

# School Routines and Services

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## Before and After School

Please ensure students are not dropped off at school prior to 8:30 AM and pick up no later than 3:30 PM.

## Early Dismissal

Buses will run on early dismissal days. Parents are asked to make sure that they have made the necessary arrangements for their students.

## Electronic Devices

Students are not to use cell phones or other electronics in class, during assemblies, class instructional time, or recess time, unless they have teacher permission. Any electronics used (including phones that ring in class) will be temporarily confiscated. Parents can reach students, if it's an emergency, through the school office. *Please see the Student Acceptable Use of Technology document in the appendix for more information.*

## Facilities

The facilities we enjoy are shared by DCS and HOME CHURCH. Students are expected to remain within school designated areas. Home Church areas are considered out of bounds to students without confirmation from parent to be at the church.

## First Aid

When a student is reported sick, hurt or injured, the student is sent to the office where the medical need is reviewed, and a decision is made as to what action is appropriate. Further consultation with the student's parent or an administrator occurs when additional medical attention is deemed necessary. If required, transportation to a medical clinic or hospital will be arranged, either by ambulance or car, upon the approval of the parent or administrator.

## Inclement Weather & Recess

DCS has placed the following guidelines in place for inclement weather therefore ensuring the safety of students and staff.

**Recess:** Students remain indoors when the temperature is -20°C or -25°C with wind chill. When it is raining heavily students may remain indoors.

**Bus Cancelations:** If the temperature is colder than -40°C (with or without wind chill) buses will be canceled for the morning and may *possibly* run for the afternoon.

**School Closures:** If the temperature is -40°C (with or without wind chill) for the *majority* of the day, school will be closed.

## Lockers and Locks

Hall lockers are issued at the beginning of the year and remain the sole property of DCS. Junior high students can provide locks for their lockers if desired. School administration has the legal right to inspect lockers and contents to maintain the integrity of the school environment; student permission or presence is not required. Students are expected to care for their lockers and keep them clean.

The care of personal property is each student's responsibility. To keep lockers secure, students should not share their locker combination with others. Although DCS is unable to accept responsibility for recovering lost or stolen property, staff will investigate reports of missing items, as much as is reasonable. Schools do not carry liability insurance for the loss of personal property.

### Lost and Found

Small articles are kept in the school office. Large items are placed in a storage bin in the main hallway. Unclaimed items are displayed during parent/teacher interviews. All unclaimed articles are sent to a charity or disposed of after each parent/teacher interview session.

### Lunch

DCS is a *nut aware* environment. We ask you to refrain from sending lunches and snacks containing peanut butter, nuts or nut products as several students have severe allergies.

Kindergarten to grade 6 students eat lunch in their homerooms, while grades 7-9 students eat together in one room, all under supervision. Students should not eat lunch in school hallways. Students are responsible for bringing their own lunches.

Students are permitted to leave the school premises for lunch under adult supervision with a telephoned or personal request from parents. Parents are asked to contact the Office prior to the noon break.

### Office Communications

Stay informed! The office sends weekly emails to update families on upcoming events. Social media is also used to stay informed through Facebook, X, and Instagram. Teachers utilize the Bloomz app to communicate class information.

### School Photos

Individual photos are taken each fall. Each student should have their picture taken to ensure inclusion in the school yearbook. Details will be sent home prior to picture day for parents who wish to purchase a package of photos. Yearbook purchases are optional. Graduation photos for Kindergarten and Grade 9 classes are taken in the spring of the school year.

### School Telephones

School phones are intended for business purposes; however, students may contact parents/guardians from the office with permission.

### Student Safety and Emergency Procedures

Student preparation and emergency drills occur throughout the school year and students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner throughout each drill. This includes evacuation and lock-down protocols for different types of emergency situations.

**Emergency Closures:** In the event of a school closure due to a power outage, lack of water, severe snowstorms or other emergencies, the school will post on the school's social media sites (i.e., X, Facebook, Instagram, etc.)

## Transportation

Bus transportation to and from school is a user-pay service available on a first come, first served basis to students. Safety is paramount when travelling to and from school and school events, and students are always expected to adhere to the Transportation Contract (see appendix) and obey bus drivers' instructions. Full details regarding the Student Transportation program, fees, conduct and suspension of service are available upon request.

In the event of bus cancellations and school closures, parents can find information through the school's social media sites (i.e., Bloomz, X, Facebook, Instagram, etc.).

### Pick-Up & Drop-Off Procedures

The bus driver will not drop children off anywhere except the regular stop after school. Changes in plans, or appointments, are the responsibility of the parent to make alternative rides outside the bus.

Bus drivers will strive to be on time at each designated pick-up location.

- Students must be ready and waiting for the bus.
- The driver will not wait for students who are late.

Parents should inform the driver when their children are to be absent from school or when a student is not returning home on the bus after school.

Changes to the bus route must be approved by the school office.

### School Bus Regulations

1. All passengers are under the immediate authority of the driver.
2. During field trips supervisors are responsible for student behavior.
3. Drivers shall inform each student of his/her designated pick-up time.
4. Buses shall stop at pick-up points, at designated times, for sufficient time to load and unload passengers.
5. Buses on regular scheduled runs are not permitted to make stops other than those designated by the school office.
6. No one other than students, drivers and supervisors may ride on the bus without permission from the school office.
7. The driver will have a seating plan for regular routes.
8. The driver has the right and responsibility to prohibit any dangerous articles from being transported on the bus.
9. Students shall cross the road in front of the bus on entering or leaving the bus and shall wait for the bus to stop before approaching to enter.
10. The rear door shall only be used in an emergency or when directed to do so by the driver.
11. It is the responsibility of the driver to keep the bus clean and tidy.
12. Unless otherwise prescribed by local bylaws, all buses transporting students must stop at all railway crossings.

*Please see more information in the Transportation Contract in the Appendix.*

## Visitors and Volunteers

DCS continues to promote safe and caring schools. Therefore, DCS aims to be a closed campus during the school day, with strict requirements in place for volunteers, as is true in all schools. Volunteers and parents



are asked to sign in at the school office. Parents bringing items for their students are asked to drop them off in the office.

All volunteers are required to complete record checks and intervention checks prior to volunteering. See *the Volunteer Application in the Appendix*.

# APPENDIX

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# Home Church Statement of Faith

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1. We believe in the Divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. (2 Timothy 3:16)
2. We believe the eternal Godhead is revealed in Scripture as one God, existing in three persons - The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. The Godhead is distinguishable but indivisible; co-eternal, coexistent, co-equal in nature, attributes, power and glory. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 48:16; Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 4:4-6)
3. We believe in the only Savior of men; the Lord Jesus Christ conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; the living God and a real man. (1 Timothy 2:5; Matthew 1:22-23)
4. We believe in the creation, test, and fall of man as recorded in Genesis.
5. We believe man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, by voluntary transgression and willful disobedience fell and thereby incurred not only physical death; but spiritual death, which is separation from God. (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19)
6. We believe in the gospel of the grace of God how that Christ was crucified and died for our sins, was buried, and on the third day rose again for the justification of mankind. (Hebrews 9:28)
7. We believe in the salvation of sinners by grace alone, through faith in the perfect and sufficient work of Christ on our behalf, upon the cross of Calvary. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
8. Man's only hope is redemption through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
  - a. Conditions of Salvation — Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life. (Luke 24:46-47; John 3:3; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7)
  - b. The inward evidence is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16; 1 John 5:10-12)
  - c. The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness. (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12; 2 Timothy 2:19)
9. We believe in water baptism of believers by immersion. All who repent and believe in Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus, they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life. (Matthew 28: 19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 10:47-48; Romans 6:4)
10. We believe in the filling of the Holy Spirit as an experience subsequent to salvation, leading to the Spirit filled life. (Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:2; 5-7; Ephesians 5:18-21)
11. We believe the gifts of the Holy Spirit are to be active in the life of every believer. (1 Corinthians 12-14; Romans 12)
12. We believe in the Lord's Supper for believers. The Lord's Supper is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1 :4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26) to be participated in by all believers until He returns.
13. Jesus made provision in the atonement for our healing and health (1 Peter 2:24) and we believe in the practice of praying for the sick. (James 5:14-16)
14. We believe in the eternal life of the believer and the eternal punishment of the unbeliever.

15. We believe in the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52)
16. We believe the Church is the Body of Christ, God's people, called out, gathered, assembled, equipped, trained, and sent into the world on a mission to preach the gospel, make disciples and build local churches in every community. (Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:22; 4:4-16; Hebrews 12:23)
17. We believe in a divinely called five-fold ministry for the equipping of God's people, the church, to do the work of ministry, evangelize, and transform the world. (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-20; Ephesians 4:11-13)
18. We believe in the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church. (Acts 1:11; Hebrews 9:28)
19. That all persons are created in God's image and are made to glorify Him; that God's design was the creation of two distinct and complementary sexes, male and female; that this design is perfect and integral to the very biology of the human race; that sexual intimacy is intended for marriage (defined as one woman and one man joined in a lifelong, legal union) and sexual intimacy outside of this protective bond is contrary to God's good design for our humanity. Because of our love for the Gospel and urgency for the Great Commission, we must include the declaration of the whole counsel of God, proclaiming what the Holy Scriptures teach regarding the creation of both male and female persons and their distinctive design, created in His image and for His glory. (Genesis 1:27; Isaiah 43:7; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 20:27)

# Honour Code

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I agree that the standards of conduct in lifestyle and morality of middle school students must comply with the Statement of Faith of Home Church.

In particular, but without limiting the generality to the following, I will:

- Habitually read God's Word and be a person of prayer
- Fellowship with like believers and attend church regularly, not as a spectator but as a participant (this includes youth group)
- Build up my schoolmates in their walk with the Lord
- Apply myself to my school studies to develop the abilities of my mind
- Faithfully and promptly attend classes and be prepared by faithful homework completion and study of course material
- Address the faculty and support staff with respect and with a pleasant tone of voice. I will follow the directions of my teachers, knowing they are given to me by God to train me in knowledge and in righteousness
- Yield my personality to the healing and maturing power of the Holy Spirit and earnestly strive to show the love of God toward my fellow man
- Read and keep the Code of Honor and Dress Code of Destiny Christian School
- Practice good health habits and regularly participate in wholesome physical exercise
- Abstain from tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, and illegal substances
- Abide by the standards of God's Word in regards to sexual relationships
- Adhere to the policy of no dating relationships on school grounds
- View my body as designed by God and not to be abused
- Cooperate fully with the administration as they execute the duties of their office, and abstain from lying or deceptive behavior
- Avoid even the appearance of evil or wrong-doing
- Respect my schoolmates and refrain from harassment of any kind
- Abstain from pornographic material
- Abstain from gambling activities
- Abstain from racist conduct and/or expressing racist viewpoints
- Guard my tongue and abstain from profane or blasphemous language
- Keep and honor the Criminal Code of Canada

**I acknowledge that the previous list is not exhaustive.**

I understand that enrollment at Destiny Christian School is a privilege and not a right. I determine to do my best and to support the school and its philosophy of providing a quality and wholesome Christian education. I understand that my signature below indicates my full and unconditional acceptance of the entire Middle School Student Code of Honor and is an agreement between Destiny Christian School and myself. I understand that it will become a part of my permanent file.

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Student Signature

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Date

# Student Code of Conduct

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## Rationale

In keeping with its mission and its Safe and Caring Policy, the Destiny Christian School Society (DCS) is committed to:

- Providing all students with a respectful and safe environment that will cultivate physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual growth.
- Teaching our students to be respectful and caring toward each other, especially when students disagree.
- Providing a student orientation, including written expectations for student behaviour (to students and parents) while at school, at school-related activities, or while engaging in activities that may have an impact on others in the school.
- Enforcing all school rules without partiality.
- Keeping records of serious or repeated offences.

## Expected Conduct

Consistent with Section 12 of the School Act and in keeping with the mission and vision of DCS, each student is responsible for acting positively in support of a welcoming and caring learning environment by:

1. Being diligent to pursuing their studies.
2. Attending school regularly and punctually.
3. Co-operating fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services.
4. Complying with school rules.
5. Being accountable for individual behaviours to the teachers and school staff for their conduct.
6. Respecting the rights of others by conducting oneself in a manner that respects others as individuals loved by God, regardless of their group identities and personal characteristics.
7. Ensuring that they contribute positively to the environment and culture of the school.
8. Refraining from and refuse to tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed to others in the school, whether it occurs within the school building, during the school day, or by electronic means.

## Unacceptable Conduct

Unacceptable behaviours that may negatively affect a member of the DCS community or the school's learning environment at any time or any place, electronically, in print or in person, will be sanctioned and include, but are not limited to:

1. Acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. In keeping with Destiny Christian School's commitment to address and reduce bullying and harassment, no student is permitted to treat anyone in a bullying or harassing manner, regardless of that person's group identity. (See examples of bullying behaviour below).
2. Physical violence.
3. Acts of retribution against an individual who has intervened to prevent bullying or who has been informed about bullying or other unacceptable behaviour.
4. Criminal activities including those involving illegal or restricted substances, possession or use or threat of use of weapons, and theft or damage to property.

**Specific Examples of acceptable behaviour:**

- a. Inadvertently causing a student to feel uncomfortable while discussing controversial topics relevant to educational outcomes including matters of human sexuality, religion, ethics and morality, and culture, law and politics;
- b. Civilly disagreeing with an individual on matters of opinion and academic debate, such as human sexuality, religion, ethics and morality, and culture, law and politics; and
- c. Minor physical force, such as what is required for sports and physical activities like soccer, floor hockey and basketball.

**Specific Examples of unacceptable behaviour (bullying and harassment)**

- a. Name-calling, insulting, accusing, and all other purposeful attempts to hurt or degrade an individual;
- b. “Making fun” of individuals or otherwise purposely attempting to embarrass or disrespect individuals by commenting negatively on the personal characteristics of an individual;
- c. Any threats, including threats to disclose personal information or to attempt to damage an individual’s reputation;
- d. Purposeful attempts to intimidate others through words or actions that are reasonably considered to be threatening;
- e. Pushing, slapping, punching, grabbing and all other acts of physical aggression.

## Consequences

DCS will investigate each instance of unacceptable conduct and pursue appropriate disciplinary action in a manner consistent with the school’s student discipline policy.

In the assessment of the potential consequences of unacceptable behaviour, the school shall also consider the student’s age, maturity, individual circumstances, and frequency of the misconduct. In addition, the specific circumstances of the situation and of the student must be considered when determining appropriate responses to unacceptable behaviour.

## Support

DCS recognizes it is important to support both the individuals who may have been the subject or victims of unacceptable behaviour, and to support the offenders of unacceptable conduct to improve their conduct.

Supportive actions from DCS may include as appropriate, but are not limited to:

1. Involving parents early in the support process.
2. Opportunities to be mentored by a member of the school student body or Home Church community
3. Regular follow-up meetings of specific teachers with focused attention to the specific needs of individual students.
4. Referrals to professional counselling services and appropriate outside resources, as needed.
5. Actions taken to ensure fair resolutions with students and staff.

# DCS Policy on Respectful Communication

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## Rationale

Destiny Christian School is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful environment that honours God and promotes wholesome conversation. We believe in nurturing our students not only academically but also spiritually, reflecting the values taught in Scripture:

- **Ephesians 4:29:** "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."
- **Colossians 3:8:** "But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips."
- **Proverbs 12:18:** "The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."

These verses remind us of the power of words and the importance of using them to uplift and heal, not to hurt or destroy.

## Policy

### 1. Behaviour Defined:

- Any use of disrespectful or inappropriate language towards a teacher, any adult in the building, or another student is strictly prohibited. This includes but is not limited to derogatory remarks, insults, profanity, and any form of verbal abuse.

### 2. Consequences:

- **First Infraction:** The student will receive a 15-minute after-school detention, and a message will be sent home to inform parents of the behaviour.
- **Repeat Infractions:** Students who commit three infractions within a week will receive an in-school suspension.
- **Pattern of Behaviour:** Continued infractions indicating a pattern of disrespectful or inappropriate language will result in an out-of-school suspension. A meeting will also be held with the parents to discuss the student's future at the school and whether they will return the following year.

## Goal

We aim to ensure that every member of our school community feels respected and safe. We strive to foster an environment where language is used not as a weapon but as a tool for growth and encouragement, aligning with our mission to shape servant leaders who reflect Christ's love and discipline through their words and actions.



# DCS Healthy Technology Use Policy

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## Preamble

At Destiny Christian School (DCS), we know that communicative technologies are widely used in our society. We want our students to succeed, so we have implemented a Healthy Technology Use Policy based on solid research. This policy aims to help our students use technology healthily and responsibly, and we hope it will foster a positive and productive learning environment for everyone. We believe that this policy will help our students thrive academically and personally, and we look forward to working with our students, parents, and teachers to ensure the successful implementation of this policy.

## Policy

Communicative technology (cellular-enabled devices) will be stored and turned off during the school day (8:45 AM - 3:20 PM). Failure to comply with this policy will result in confiscation of the device and consequences applied.

## Benefits

- Students create healthier relationships.
- Students can focus on learning with their classmates.
- Less peer pressure and social anxiety without being forced to be connected; thus, resulting in a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.
- More social connectedness with friends and school staff.

## Staff Commitments

- Lunchtime is an opportunity to talk and build relationships. Therefore, no technology will be used.
- Staff are committed to limiting their personal electronic device use during school time to work-related tasks and modelling best practices for teaching with technology.
- An awareness of developmentally appropriate screen time exposure throughout the day will also be a focus.

## Directives

- **STUDENT CELL PHONES:** Student cell phone use and Wi-Fi-enabled devices are not permitted at any point during the school day, unless given permission from the teacher for educational purposes.
- **COMPUTER USE:** School and personal computers used for educational purposes are permitted when required by the teacher/class.
- **SCHOOL DAY COMMUNICATION:** If a student needs to contact home, they may speak to their teacher, and a phone call will be facilitated. Parents may contact the office at any time during the school day. Every effort will be made to accommodate parent/student communication.
- **FIELD TRIPS & TEAMS:** In exceptional circumstances, where a cell phone is beneficial for a field trip, teachers will give clear directions, and arrangements may be made to allow cell phones during the activity. Sports teams will be allowed cell phone use after school and at sporting competitions.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA USE:** Students may not access social media (all forms, Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok etc.), on school networks or school devices.

## Storage of Devices

- Middle School Students will use combination locks on their lockers.
- Devices may also be stored in the office during school hours.

- Elementary Students will be allowed to store devices in a secure location in the classroom or at the school office.

**The consequences for violating this policy are as follows**

- **1st Offence:** The device is confiscated from the student and taken to the office. Parents of the student are contacted. The device is returned to the student at the end of the day.
- **2nd Offence:** The device is confiscated from the student. Parents of the student are contacted. The device is returned to the student at the end of the day. The students will now be required to have their device stored at the school office for the next 2 weeks during the regular school day.
- **3rd Offence:** Parents will be contacted, and a plan will be developed best to meet the needs of the school and family.

Student's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have discussed the contents and implications of the Student Technology Policy with my child(ren) and will support him or her in abiding by it.**

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Transportation Contract

*Student and parent must sign this contract before your child will be able to ride the bus.*

## Notes to Parents

1. The bus driver will not drop children off anywhere except the regular stop after school. (Change in plans, or appointments, are the responsibility of the parent to make alternative rides outside the bus).
2. Bus drivers will strive to be on time at your designated pick-up location. Students must be ready and waiting for the bus. The driver will not wait for students who are late.
3. Garbage must be put in bag at the front of the bus. Students violating this will be required to sweep the bus out.
4. An offence will be communicated as soon as possible, and the parents must solve a ride the following day.
5. Weekly tally charts will be kept and handed in by the bus drivers on the student's behavior and these rules will be enforced.
6. We are very concerned for the safety of the students. The attention of the bus driver must be focused on the traffic and roads. If you have any questions, feel free to call the administration office 403-343-6510. (These rules will be discussed with the students who ride the bus. We expect that you as parents will do the same at home. As we work together, we can make the bus experience positive and safe for every child.)
7. There may be the occasional day during the year when the bus will not be available to transport your children, due to vehicle servicing, etc. The school will contact you to make alternate transportation arrangements for your child(ren).

## Discipline will be issued for the following:

### One with a tally will be immediately given for:

- Yelling and screaming beyond normal tone
- Taking another student's belongings or food
- Not sitting properly in designated seat (ie: moving from seat to seat, standing in seat, sitting backwards)

*\*Three tallies per week, where applicable, are one offence*

### One offence will be given immediately for:

- Fighting, hitting, punching, or kicking
- Throwing items inside or outside the bus
- Making comments to pedestrians
- Sticking head/arms out of the window
- Profanity to bus driver or student
- Disobedience to direction given by driver
- Inappropriate talk or actions to any student
- Spitting

## Weekly Discipline Measures:

- **First offence:** one day off the bus
- **Second offence:** two days off the bus
- **Third offence:** three days off the bus
- **Fourth offence:** one week off the bus
- **No change in behavior:** removed from the bus program

*We, the undersigned, have read the above transportation contract and agree by them.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Driver

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator

# Volunteer Application

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Dear Destiny Christian School Volunteer,

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to volunteer at Destiny Christian School. We here at Destiny School want to provide a safe and secure environment for our students to succeed.

All information in this package is strictly confidential and only people with legitimate need will have access to any information obtained in the application process. Please understand that Destiny School has a spiritual, moral, and legal obligation to provide a secure environment for everyone participating in our programs.

It was established in March 2007 as a legal policy of the Home Church (which we are a ministry of) that all board members, all paid employees, and all volunteers of Home Church (including Destiny Christian School) working with children under the age of 18 be required to have an **Intervention Check** and **Vulnerable Sector Check** completed every three years.

A copy of both must be received by DCS before your volunteer day.

## How to obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check:

To obtain a Police Record check **if you live in Red Deer** you can apply online here:

<https://mycity.reddeer.ca/tempest/EAPPLYPERMITS/CriminalRecordCheck#>. Choose Vulnerable Sector Check.

If you are a **Red Deer County resident**, you need to go in person to your local detachment. It may be Blackfalds or other.

I've attached the volunteer letter from the school so that it only costs \$10. Your local RCMP Detachment will call you when it is ready to pick up.

## What to do for an Intervention Check:

Email: **cfs.irccentral@gov.ab.ca** to request an online Intervention Check. Let them know it is for the purpose of volunteering in the school. Once you receive the email form, fill it out and submit it, they will send back and approval copy.

Once you receive your completed record checks, please forward to [denise.sherriff@destinyschool.ca](mailto:denise.sherriff@destinyschool.ca). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school office at (403) 343-6510 or email. Thank you so much for your willingness to volunteer. We know God will richly bless you as you serve our students.

Sincerely,



Tim Gill  
B.Ed. & P.PE  
Principal

# Destiny Christian School's Plan to Protect Program and Policy

Plan to Protect is a policy in place to protect every child and volunteer in any ministry for the safety and security of every individual.

## REASONS FOR DEVELOPING AN ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

- **Prevention** of abuse of children / youth / vulnerable adults. Prevention includes having adequate processes in place to prevent opportunities for abuse, neglect, and harm from arising.
- **Protection** of all the vulnerable in our midst. The protection of all children, youth and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility.
- **Reporting** of all incidents of abuse, neglect, and harm. Such incidents, wherever, and whenever they are encountered, will be reported immediately to a designated internal authority, the police, and the appropriate agencies in accordance with civil law requirements.
- **Training and Support** for staff and volunteers. A process of screening, recruiting, training, supervising, and supporting staff and volunteers.
- **Protection** of the organization from lawsuits involving allegations of abuse. Abuse can place the reputation of the organization in jeopardy, and the financial costs of defending lawsuits can be devastating.

### Adult – Child/Youth Ratios for Preschool and Kindergarten

Here are suggested child / youth / adult ratios to adults in a regular classroom setting, but additional adults can be helpful if one adult needs to leave the program temporarily.

2½ – 4 years:	2 adults to 15 children
5 years:	2 adults to 23 children

### 1. Destiny Christian School Plan to Protect Policy

- Every volunteer must have gone through the volunteer screening and Police Records Check process.
- **Two-person policy whenever possible – during any program.** If a volunteer, a teacher must be present at all times, where applicable.
  - **Never be in a bathroom alone with a child**
- **Do not be in a vehicle alone with a child;** two volunteers/staff to transport children / youth / vulnerable adults in an organization vehicle or in a volunteer's vehicle.
  - When the two-person policy cannot be used, notify a parent before a proposed one-to-one contact with a child / youth.
- No parents or adults should enter a classroom / activity room without permission.

### 2. Incident Reports

If any incident occurs a report must be written and handed to the teacher to deal with and file.

When to report an incident:

- When a student has been hurt or is in danger.
- When you have hurt a child unintentionally.
- When a parent or guardian has had an issue.
- When you have been accused of anything.

### 3. Working with Leaders/Volunteers

#### A. Recruit New Leaders / Volunteers and Support Experienced Leaders / Volunteers:

Regardless of who does the recruiting, the process must include a personal interview, a reference check, and a record and intervention check of the prospective leader or volunteer.

#### B. Recruiting Process:

A personal interview is an essential way to discover if the applicant is a good fit with a volunteer position. In addition, a conversation with an applicant helps him / her determine whether the timing is right for him / her to assume a position.

#### C. Experienced Leader/Volunteer:

Teachers will lay out clear expectations and procedures with volunteers prior to each volunteer event.

#### D. Volunteer Screening Check and Police Records Checks:

Screening comes prior to a Police Records Check (PRC). Screening is a process performed by an organization to ensure that the right match is made between the work to be done and the person who will do it. PRC's are

mandatory for all leaders and volunteers in the organization regardless of whether their position specifically deals with children, youth, and / or vulnerable persons. Any position within an organization that ministers to children / youths / vulnerable adults may be seen as an access-point by predators.

#### **4. Job Description**

**Title of the Position:** Parent Volunteer/Volunteer

**Responsible to:** Teacher(s)

**Responsible for:** assisting teacher(s) with classroom

**Main Goal:** To assist teacher(s) in tasks relating to classroom or other student/class related tasks.

**Roles, Responsibilities, and Tasks:** (list the expectations of this position)

- Maintain a vital spiritual life
- Maintain confidentiality unless the child is in danger
- Advise the teacher of his/her absence

**Screening Procedure:** All prospective volunteers are required to fill out a volunteer packet, have an interview (if one was not completed at the time of a family's acceptance to Destiny Christian School), a reference check, a Child Intervention Check, and a Police Record Check (including a Vulnerable Sector Check).

#### **5. Information Sheets for Volunteers / Leaders**

##### **Physical Contact**

It is essential to be careful regarding behaviour, language and physical contact when working with children /youth / vulnerable adults:

- Do not show favouritism when dealing with children / youth / vulnerable adults. Show a similar level of affection and kindness to all.
- Do not engage in or allow the telling of sexual jokes or behave in a way that promotes the sexual exploitation of others.
- Provide clearly stated consequences for inappropriate behavior. Stop inappropriate behavior early. Be fair, consistent, and reasonable, matching consequences to the age and ability to the child / youth.
- Do not use corporal punishment such as hitting, spanking or strapping.

##### **Appropriate and inappropriate touching**

A touch can convey a multitude of positive messages and communicate care, comfort and love; however, it is important to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touching. It is also important to be aware of, and sensitive to, differences in interpretation to touching based on sex, culture or personal experience.

Some examples of **appropriate touch**:

Love and care can usually be expressed in the following common sense ways:

- Affirming a participant with a pat on the hand, shoulder, or back
- Bending down to the child's eye level and placing a hand gently on the child's hand or forearm
- Putting your arm around the shoulder of a person who needs comfort
- Taking a child's hand and leading him / her to an activity
- Holding hands for safety when changing locations
- Shaking a person's hand in greeting
- Holding a child gently by the hand or shoulder to keep his / her attention as you redirect behavior
- Providing comfort with a wet, warm cloth.
- Providing basic first aid (i.e. band-aids, ice packs, etc.)

Some examples of **inappropriate touch**:

- Kissing a child / youth / vulnerable adult or coaxing them into kissing you
- Extended cuddling
- Tickling
- Piggy-back rides
- Having others sit on your lap
- Touching anyone in any area normally covered by a bathing suit (
- Hand holding, except for the examples listed above
- Stroking a child / youth's hair
- Hugging, where an adult knows or ought to have known that hugging is inappropriate.

### **Dealing with a participant's inappropriate behaviour**

The best approach to dealing with inappropriate behaviour is thoughtful prevention. If a volunteer has been adequately prepared for their task, makes clear statements about expectations, and provides an engaging program, inappropriate behaviour will be avoided or reduced. If, however, a child / youth / vulnerable adult's behaviour is unacceptable, these practices must be followed:

- Tell or remind the child / youth / vulnerable adult what is expected.
- If it is necessary to speak to a child / youth / vulnerable adult in private, move to a quiet place in view of others. Seek supervisory help if needed and if available.
- Keep children / youth / vulnerable adults from harming themselves or others.
- If necessary, engage another adult to help you remove the child / youth / vulnerable adult from the situation, to enable yourself to calm down.
- Discipline with children and youth must be limited to talking and time out. Correction to a vulnerable adult must be limited to talking to a vulnerable adult or his / her guardian.
- Provide a 'time-out' space for younger children on one side of the room until they are ready to rejoin the group. The 'time-out' should be no longer than one minute for each year of the child's age.
- Inform the parent / guardian of the problem and work co-operatively with them. They may have good ideas of how to deal with a particular situation.

**Do not use corporal punishment (such as hitting, spanking or strapping) under any circumstances.**

### **Washroom Procedures for Preschool and Kindergarten**

Every group providing a program or ministry for children / youth / vulnerable adults must determine the washroom procedure that will be followed in that program at the time of determining the risk. This is particularly critical with pre-school children and some vulnerable adults who must have help to use the washroom. Here are guidelines:

- Children under the age of 6 who need to go to the washroom should be accompanied by a parent who escorts the child to the washroom and checks the bathroom for safety. No adult or teen helper is ever to be in a closed washroom or cubicle with a child. If another adult is not available, the adult who accompanies the child should position him / her in plain view at the open door of the washroom. A volunteer or teen helper may stay behind with the remaining children.
- Children aged 6 and over may go to the washroom with a "buddy."
- Male personnel are not to accompany female children to the washroom.
- If there is an emergency bathroom situation, the parent or supervisor should be notified immediately.
- Vulnerable adults may need special bathroom aids, assists bars, and so on. It may be necessary to ensure that cleanliness follows use.

### **6. The Covenant of Care for Destiny Christian School**

- I promise, in all my relationships with children / youth / vulnerable adults, to follow appropriate action as defined in this information package.
- I promise to use only the physical contact that is deemed appropriate by the document (Abuse prevention policy), which I have read and understand;
- I promise to use appropriate language;
- I promise to show no bias based on gender, ethnic background, skin color, intelligence, age, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status;
- I promise that I will not harass others;
- I promise to respect confidentiality and privacy, unless a child, youth, or vulnerable adult is in danger, then I will report to a child protection agency or the police.

**I have read and agree with the Covenant of Care and have been given opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns that I may have.**

Name & Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name & Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have read and agree with the Destiny Christian School policy as outlined in the introduction package. I have also had opportunity to ask any questions or discuss any aspect of it that I may require.**

Name & Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name & Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Application Form for Volunteering

In our desire to reduce the risk of abuse within our school, we believe this information is necessary to protect our children, our youth, and our volunteers and to effectively place our volunteers in the right position. Thank you in advance for your partnership.

### Personal Information

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Personal History

Hobbies, Interests, Skills: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Experience or part time jobs: \_\_\_\_\_

### Spiritual History

Which church do you attend? \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you attended? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you regularly attend (2 or more services a month)? \_\_\_\_\_ When did you accept Christ as your Saviour? \_\_\_\_\_

In a brief paragraph, describe what your faith means to you. \_\_\_\_\_

### Information About Your Ability to Work with Children and Youth

To provide a safe and secure environment for our school's students, we believe it is necessary to ask the following questions as part of our volunteer application process. All information will be kept in confidence by school leadership and the team and will not be disclosed by the school unless required by law. Answering "yes" to any of the following questions may not necessarily prevent you from volunteering with the school. Thank you in advance for understanding.

1. Are there any circumstances involving your lifestyle or history that could call in to question your ability to work safely with children or youth in a Christian environment? (e.g. use of pornography, use of illegal substances, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Have you ever been expelled from or had your employment terminated by any organization or employer for assault or violence against any person, or for assault, violence or impropriety with children, youth or vulnerable persons? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you have any health concerns which could impact your ability to perform the functions of the volunteering at Destiny Christian School? (Note, this does not exclude you but is just for the sake of the awareness of the team so your position can be suitable for you.) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you have any contagious diseases or conditions of which we should be aware, and which we may need to take steps to protect against transmission should you volunteer at Destiny School? \_\_\_\_\_

### References

Please provide the names of three individuals, excluding relatives, who could provide a reference for you. Include at least one reference from outside the church.

1. Name of Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Nature of relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name of Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Nature of relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name of Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Nature of relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby give permission to Destiny Christian School to contact the above references to verify that I am qualified to work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults in a Christian environment.

Name & Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name & Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

***\*\* Information received is confidential and is being gathered for the purposed of screening ministry personnel and placing them into ministry with children. The information gathered here will be used for the purposes of supporting the ministries at Destiny Christian School.***

#### Office Reference Only:

☐ References Called

☐ Experienced Volunteer – References Waived

☐ Police Record Check on File

☐ Child Intervention Check on File

Renewal Date: \_\_\_\_\_