

# FAMILY HANDBOOK

2019-20

## St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Schools

STAR Catholic Website: [starcatholic.ab.ca](http://starcatholic.ab.ca)



### **Father Leduc Catholic School**

400 Sheppard Blvd  
LEDUC, Alberta  
T9E 1C1  
Telephone: (780) 986-0045

Father Leduc Web Site: [flcs.starcatholic.ab.ca](http://flcs.starcatholic.ab.ca)



## **WELCOME TO FATHER LEDUC CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Our major purpose is to encourage our students to maximize their learning potential. We seek, in close co-operation with the home, to provide a positive, joyful, and faith filled environment in which students are encouraged to develop spiritual, academic, physical, cultural, social, and aesthetic skills, to serve them now and in the future.

Our unique position as a Catholic school invites us to present Christ's message of love as an integral part of our curriculum. We are blessed to put the message of the Gospels into the experiences of the school community. With this focus, all of us will have the opportunity to reflect upon our own call to service in Christ, in our community, in our school, in our families, and with each other.

The staff of our school looks forward to an exciting academic year working with the students, their parents, and the St. Michael's parish community. To assist in this, we have prepared this handbook to serve as an introduction to the operation of our school. Your comments and suggestions on this handbook would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Tara Malloy  
Principal

Mr. Darren Schneider  
Vice-Principal

---

### **ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

Student absenteeism should be reported by a telephone call to the school by a parent or guardian. Please phone the school by 8:40 a.m. for morning absence, or 12:15 p.m. for afternoon absence. If a child is late by more than an hour, they will be marked absent for half a day. Therefore, after 9:40 am, the child will be marked absent in the morning, and after 1:15 they will be marked absent for the afternoon.

STAR Catholic School Division Absenteeism Policy #330, wherein school administration have the responsibility to implement the structure and process for gathering daily attendance data and ensure timely and ongoing communication between the school and the home regarding attendance concerns. Administration is responsible for taking action when milestones for absenteeism reach 10%, then 15% and 20%. This action could include

a referral to attendance officer who will follow sections 14 and 15 of the school act. At Father Leduc Catholic School, we work closely with families to ensure consistent attendance is supported.

### **CHILD CHECK**

From approximately 4:00 p.m. to 8:30 a.m. and on weekends, our school sites operate a recorded phone-in absentee reporting line so you can let us know of your child's absence, at your convenience: Father Leduc: (780) 986-0045. Simply press "0", wait for the tone after the message, and tell us: your name, child's name, date and times of absence, reason for absence.

### **STUDENTS LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE DAY**

All students (except those who reside within the City of Leduc who regularly go home for lunch) shall not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day without written parental permission. Plan ahead: If your child needs to leave early, please let us know at the office. If they are leaving early, students are asked to be picked up through the front doors by the office.

### **Junior High**

All junior high students are not permitted to leave the school premises during the lunch hour break without written parental permission. If a Junior High child has the signed permission form and is off campus, they are expected to conduct themselves accordingly and will be subject to the school's discipline policy should their actions warrant.

### **Elementary**

All elementary students shall not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day without written parental permission. If parents prefer to have their child go home during the lunch break, written consent is required.

Leaving the school grounds during the lunch hour eating period and recess, involve certain elements of risk. Personal injury, including serious injury up to and including loss of life may occur.

The risk of sustaining these types of injuries results from the nature of the activity and can occur without fault of either the student or the school board, its employees/agents or the facility where the activity is taking place. By choosing to allow your child to take part in this activity, you are accepting that your child may be exposed to risks.

The risk of an injury occurring can be reduced by carefully following instructions at all times.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

Use of the telephones at school by students is restricted to **EMERGENCY** calls only. Phone passes from a student's homeroom teacher are required before a call may be made. Students and parents are asked to make arrangements for rides, lunches, etc. before school if possible.

### **SCHOOL DIVISION POLICIES**

Available at: [www.staratholic.ab.ca](http://www.staratholic.ab.ca)

### **PERSONAL ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT:**

Personal electronic equipment on the school premises is to be turned off while students are in the classroom unless the classroom teacher has outlined and identified specific times and instances for its use. While in class, the cell phone is to be stored in their backpack or locker. They are not to store it on their person. Students bringing their own personal electronic devices **do so at their own risk**. Father Leduc Catholic School or STAR Catholic School Division does not assume any responsibility for lost, broken, or stolen devices.

### **STUDENT ENTRY TO BUILDING**

In keeping with School Division Policy, all students will be permitted to enter the building at 8:25 a.m. each morning, unless registered for alternate programs in the school. The Administration will decide "indoor" days at recess and lunchtime should such be required due to environmental reasons.

### **PARENT/VISITOR ACCESS TO BUILDING**

Father Leduc Catholic School values your support and participation in school activities involving your children. For your child's safety, we require visitor passes when entering the building. Please check in at the office to receive your visitor pass. In addition, if you wish to volunteer, you are required to have a current Criminal Record Check and Child Welfare Check on file with us. We can provide this service at no cost to you. Please contact the office for additional information.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

Our school provides for the educational needs of the school-age child. We develop the basic skills and learning essential in the elementary and junior high grades, and at the same time broaden the experience of the child, in academic, physical, cultural, spiritual, social and aesthetic areas. Our school provides for the diverse interest and capabilities of our students by offering:

1. Core Subjects: Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Religion
2. General Interest Courses: Art, Music, Fine Arts, Digital Literacy,
3. Complementary Courses: Sports Appreciation, Home Economics, Science Enrichment, Robotics, etc...
4. Daily Physical Activity (DPA)
5. Pro-Social Skills

## **INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

At Father Leduc Catholic School, we believe in integration. It is the policy of this school to employ differential standards for grading and course requirements. The regular classroom teacher will modify the curriculum, instructional approaches and grading practices for those students identified as having disabilities. In classes where it is required, supports suitable to the student identified may include modifications and/or adaptations to materials, books or equipment, tests, quizzes, or time constraints; grading; organisation, environment, behavioural management; and/or teaching strategies to provide the optimum learning opportunity for the student.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips enhance our curriculum. Students may be required to help defray the costs. At Father Leduc School we collect a one time field trip fee from all students at the beginning of the year. This fee is used for all field trips throughout the school year.

A field trip is a school activity and students are expected to exercise their best behaviour. Students are representing our school, and the school's reputation is their responsibility. In keeping with School Division Policy, a division informed consent must be completed and signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of each child attending the field trip. If the completed informed consent is not returned to the school, the child will NOT be permitted to attend the field trip.

Please Note: It is our school policy that any student who struggles in a non-structured environment, may be accompanied by his/her parent/guardian on any field trip in order to assist with success.

## **ASSESSMENT**

In keeping with School Division Policy, teachers assess student progress continually and assist where students have difficulty.

In elementary classes, placements are made by the administration upon the recommendation of the teacher. Special cases may involve meetings with parents, administration, teachers and the learning support facilitator.

Teachers assess students based on classroom performance and examination results, as well as effort and attitude, the components of which will be outlined for the parents by the teacher early in the school year. Student assessment for learning helps us individualize instruction.

Parents who may wish to appeal final grades for their child should contact the Principal for the Appeal Procedure.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

Our school issues report cards for each student three times during the school year (November, March and June). All 3 of these report cards are distributed electronically (via email). In addition, brief interim progress reports may be issued at the discretion of the teacher.

## **APPEAL OF MARKS**

Parents who have concerns about student marks or student placements have a right to appeal these decisions to the school board and ultimately to the Minister of Education. Please contact the Principal for information about the Appeals Process.

## **FAMILY INTERVIEWS**

Before and after the first and second report cards, our school will set up interview sessions with the families of the students. These are excellent opportunities for teachers and parents to get to know each other better, and also to provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to work together for the child's benefit. Dates for the Family Interviews are contained in the school calendars and provided in our weekly family update. Should the need arise, due to a student experiencing academic or social difficulty, then the involved parents and teachers may meet at a convenient time to discuss the concerns.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Father Leduc Catholic School has embraced the Alberta Teachers' Association Safe and Caring Schools Project. The intent is to teach students respect and a sense of responsibility and to foster their ability to resolve conflicts peacefully. This approach ties in well with our Hands-off Policy and with the Gospel values Jesus taught and which our Catholic Tradition espouses. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9) We believe that Christian values and behaviours must be taught and reinforced consistently by all important adults in a child's life. Our programming and discipline policy reflects the goals and objectives of a Safe and Caring learning environment where everyone has the right to feel safe and cared for.

The staff at our school is committed to providing the best teaching and learning environment possible for our students.

We believe that appropriate behaviour should be encouraged and rewarded, while inappropriate behaviour should be discouraged and corrected.

We believe that all students must behave appropriately within the school, the classrooms and on the playground, so that everyone has an equal opportunity to learn in a safe environment.

It is also the belief of the staff that all students should be encouraged and taught to be responsible for their own actions. Consequences for behaviour should be logical and natural. The student should be helped to understand that all actions, good or bad, have natural consequences and guide them to reconciliation. We feel that we are called to live the Gospel values in response to what our loving God has done for us, and therefore, students should be encouraged to live up to these expectations.

Positive behaviour will be recognized in one or more of the following ways:

Praise and specific feedback, personal interviews, positive notes home, positive phone calls to parents, self-selected activities, special activities and/or projects, student of the Week, Lightning Acts of Kindness.

## **HANDS-OFF POLICY**

Our school is following a "HANDS-OFF" policy on the playground and around the school, and on the way to and from school.

Each student must be in a school climate that is satisfying and productive, without disruptive behaviour by any students infringing upon the rights of others.

Fighting, intimidation, threatening, name calling, insulting, play fighting and roughhousing will absolutely NOT be tolerated. It is the philosophy of the school that we encourage and instruct each child to be responsible for his/her own behaviour. Students are given opportunities to identify and practice resolving conflicts in a peaceful way, as Jesus did; while keeping in mind the Gospel value of forgiveness, and that the school is a learning environment. The program has an anti-bullying component.

A problem-solving strategy will be used for a student's first offence. Depending on the seriousness of the offence, parents will be informed. A problem-solving strategy will be used, and the consequence for a subsequent offence will include in-school suspension, to out-of-school suspension, to a recommendation to the Superintendent for a discipline review committee.

Less serious offences will also be dealt with using a problem-solving strategy and consequences will be pursued that are appropriate to the offence, as much as possible. Removal of privileges through office referrals will continue to be used. All offences referred to the school administration are recorded and kept on file at the office.

### **STUDENT DRESS**

- ❖ In dressing for school, please assist your child in making clothing choices that are appropriate for a Catholic learning environment. Grooming and clothing choices should be made in good taste and err on the side of modesty.
- ❖ Students are asked to remove hats, caps, or sunglasses on their heads inside the school except on designated school spirit days.
- ❖ Notwithstanding the above guidelines, the administration reserves sole discretion on what constitutes appropriate dress or grooming in any given case. Students who do not come to school appropriately dressed may be sent home to change or be given an alternative outfit.
- ❖ Students are to remove outside footwear upon entry to the school. A clean pair of indoor shoes must be worn inside the school for safety reasons. Running shoes that do not leave black marks are recommended for inside wear, as they are also required for physical education in the gymnasium.

### **SAFETY**

Stands are provided for parking bicycles at school. Bicycles brought to school must be left in the stands, and must be locked. It is vital that all cyclists/riders are as careful as possible and follow all traffic rules. Riding on school grounds

is not permitted. Walk bicycles across the street in a crosswalk.

Skateboards and scooters are permitted at school; however, they must be stored securely during the school day. If the scooter is not able to be stored, it should not come to school. Helmets must be worn when using the above.

Students who walk to school must also be cautious when crossing streets. Cross at intersections or on designated crosswalks only. The area where cars are parked is off-limits to students.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

In keeping with our safe and caring school policy, school administration may have reason to conduct searches of a student, his/her locker, or his/her belongings. Such a search may result in the seizure of substances, articles and/or objects. A search may be conducted when a teacher or principal has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a school rule has been violated and the evidence of the breach will be found on the students, in his/her locker or among his/her belongings.

### **FIRE DRILL REGULATIONS**

- a) When the fire alarm sounds, the classroom windows must be closed. The last person leaving the classroom will close the door. Do not lock it.
- b) Homeroom teachers will designate a meeting place for the class outside the building.
- c) All students are to leave the school immediately in an orderly manner; walk quickly, but DO NOT RUN. The first student reaching an assigned exit door should hold the door open until all students using that exit are outside.
- d) The teacher will have a roll call outside.
- e) When a class is not in its homeroom, it should leave by the nearest exit and, when outside, students should proceed to their designated meeting place.
- f) Pre-assigned staff will check washrooms for students.

- g) Students will not return to the school until they receive permission to do so, or a bell has sounded. The usual signal will be three short bell sounds.
- h) When your exit is blocked, you will be instructed to exit by another door.

### **HOMEWORK AND STUDY**

Assignments are given to practice and enhance instruction given in class. From time to time it will not be possible for a student to complete all assignments during class time. This will require homework. As the student progresses through the grades, this additional study time will become more frequent and will require more lengthy sessions.

Please consider these suggestions:

- Set aside a specific time every school day, perhaps 4:30, 5:00, or 7:00 p.m. at the latest. Even if there is no assignment, spend the time in study. All subjects would benefit from review work.
- Establish the habit of putting schoolwork in a definite location each evening so that you will not forget to pick it up in the morning. Perhaps you could place it next to your jacket or on a table by the door. Work that is not available in class for checking will be viewed as "incomplete".
- Try to find a quiet place to study, which is free from distractions. Concentration is the key to thorough studying!
- Before leaving class, be sure that you understand the assignment completely. Ask questions. Do some of the work and check with the teacher to determine whether you are doing it correctly.
- Get in the habit of reading a variety of books whenever there is some spare time. Remember both the school and public libraries are great sources
- Take pride in doing your very best at all times. Everyone enjoys success. Schoolwork that you can be proud of, completed regularly, will lead to success.
- We open our learning commons during all breaks to allow students to get supervised,

extra help with homework during the school day. This support can be assigned by a teacher or a student can voluntarily assign themselves by attending.

### **ABSENCES DUE TO VACATIONS**

Taking holidays during the school year will possibly compromise students' academic progress. We discourage parents from having their children miss school days due to extending holidays. However, we do understand that because of differing circumstances this may occur in various families. Students are responsible for catching up on all missed assignments within a reasonable timeframe determined by the teacher through consultation with the student. Teachers will also not be required to create homework ahead of time for students to take with them on vacation. With this in mind, we would encourage families to be mindful of the school year calendar.

### **CLASS BREAKS, RECESS AND LUNCHTIME**

Elementary students are dismissed by their teacher and go outside, weather permitting. Students are encouraged to use the washroom on the way in or out. Junior High students are dismissed by their teacher and are permitted to stay in student designated areas in and outside of school.

Lunch must be eaten in the assigned area. Elementary students who normally stay for lunch are NOT permitted to leave the school grounds during the lunch break unless parents have signed a "permission to leave school grounds" form. The staff parking lot is out of bounds to all students.

### **BUS/SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS**

In the event that school will be closed and/or buses will not be operating due to inclement weather, the Superintendent of Schools will notify the media with the message: "There will be no buses running and/or there will be no school in the CATHOLIC SCHOOLS in Leduc on (current day)." Please check your local radio and television stations. STAR Catholic Schools is committed to

the safety of our students and communication with our parents. In that regard, we offer the STAR Catholic Bus Status App available at the Google Play and IOS App Store. The App allows parents to keep track of the status of buses operated by STAR Catholic Schools.

### **ATHLETICS**

The Intramural Coordinators will plan a variety of activities for students to participate in during the lunch period.

Interschool teams will be formed depending on student interest and availability of coaches or supervisors. Interested persons should watch for announcements of organizational meetings. Students, who fail to maintain academic standards, will not participate in extra-curricular activities.

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

All parents of students attending Father Leduc can be members of the school council for their school site. We urge parents to take an active in your association, so that it will continue as the vibrant and supportive group it is.

We use the "town hall" or "assembly" model for our meetings. All members in attendance may speak to or vote on all motions. Meeting times and dates are announced in our monthly family newsletter.

Parents are welcome to attend all celebrations, team games, and special events at our school. These events will be published in the weekly family updates. Please feel free to contact the school regarding our various volunteer activities.

### **OUT OF SCHOOL CARE**

For after hour calls please dial 587-873-4539. Please call the office for further information about this program.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

(Kindergarten)

Students must be (5) years of age by March 1<sup>st</sup> of the year in which he/she begin Kindergarten. As of the 2020-21 School year, students must be 5 years of age by December 31<sup>st</sup> (Alberta Education Act Change).

### **PICKUP AND DROP OFF STUDENTS**

Motorists picking up or dropping off students should do so on the designated street so that the parking lot is clear and the school perimeter is safe for student movement.

The parking lot is for STAFF PARKING ONLY and is not to be used for pickup or drop off at any time.

### **SCHOOL ACCESS HOURS**

Our school doors open with the first warning bell each morning, we ask that parents do not drop students at the school until after outdoor and indoor supervision begins at 8:25 am. If a student arrives before that time they will have to brave the elements until the school is open. This can be especially concerning in our colder winter months.

### **PEANUT ALLERGIES**

Many children have allergies and some allergic reactions can be life threatening. This medical condition is called anaphylaxis. Some children, for example, are severely allergic to nut products, including peanut butter. Even a tiny bit can be fatal within minutes. Father Leduc Catholic School promotes peanut-safe schools. However, we cannot guarantee a nut-free environment. We caution parents/guardians of an anaphylactic child that traces of nut products can be hidden. If you are a parent/guardian of a child with a life-threatening allergy, we need your cooperation in providing the school with current medical information and in developing a plan with school administration. We ask all parents/guardians to send foods to school without nuts or peanut products. We do, however, permit "may contain" products. Thank you for assisting us with creating



a safer and more inclusive environment for all students.

### **LIFE FRAMEWORK - GENERAL NOTICE**

Catholic schools share a foundational belief that all children are loved by God, are individually unique and that the school has a mission to help each student fulfill their God-given potential in all aspects of their person: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. Catholic schools are committed to using the LIFE (Lived Inclusion For Everyone) framework as a guideline for the creation and operation of student groups that are comprehensive in their approach to inclusion and open to the exploration in a Catholic context of a variety of issues including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity, discrimination, justice, and respectful relationships and language. Alberta legislation recognizes that parents have both the right and responsibility to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children. Please accept this as general notice that students may be organizing LIFE Framework/Diversity clubs at the school in the future. If a LIFE Framework/Diversity club is formed, notification of the formation of the club will be sent to all parents.

### **VTRA**

VTRA (Violence and Threat Risk Assessment) helps schools respond quickly to incidents where students' behaviours pose a potential threat to safety or serious harm. Our school division has formally signed off on community based VTRA protocols that include other regional partners such as the public school jurisdictions, the RCMP, Alberta Health Services, and other community agencies. Such protocols outline how we will collaborate and work together to respond quickly to threatening behaviour. Please be advised that the school division requires school administrators to complete a threat risk assessment in cases of students making significant threats to themselves or others.

### **ENERGY DRINKS**

According to self-report surveys, energy drinks are consumed by 30% to 50% of adolescents and young adults. Frequently containing high and unregulated amounts of caffeine, these drinks have been reported in association with serious adverse effects, especially in children, adolescents, and young adults with seizures, diabetes, cardiac abnormalities, or mood and behavioral disorders or those who take certain medications (reported by the Canadian Pediatric Society).

As a result, we are asking our parents to discuss these effects with their children. **Energy drinks (such as Rockstar, Red Bull, etc...) are not to be brought to school campus or consumed while at school.**

**THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING FATHER LEDUC CATHOLIC SCHOOL.**

