



# Prairie Christian Academy

www.pca3hills.ca

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK K-6

Welcome to the Elementary Division of PCA.

What a privilege to have your child(ren) in our school. We are excited to be given the opportunity to share with you the responsibility of guiding them to become all God intends them to be. Thank you for the trust you have placed in us.

We take seriously our shared role with you in teaching and building into your children's lives, spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally.

We value the privilege we enjoy as an alternate Christian school to integrate Biblical teaching throughout our program. To demonstrate God's relevance in all areas of life and learning is vital if we hope to raise a generation of Christians who see God as relevant to all aspects of their lives. To accomplish our mission, we acknowledge Jesus Christ as our source of all wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3)

As we partner with families to integrate the essentials of the Christian faith into a provincially accredited curriculum, we encourage you to contact us with any questions, concerns or suggestions you may have.

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# STATEMENT OF FAITH

## **The Scriptures**

We believe in the plenary, verbal inspiration of the Old and New Testament Scriptures as originally given. These Scriptures are inerrant in all that they affirm and are our final authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

## **The Godhead**

We believe there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who are the same in essence and co-equal in power and glory.

## **Jesus Christ**

We believe Jesus Christ is fully God and fully Man in one Person. Prior to His incarnation He eternally existed with the Father. Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. Though tempted by Satan, He lived a sinless life on this earth. He paid the penalty for the sins of all men with His own blood on the cross. He arose bodily from the grave and ascended into Heaven, where He now intercedes for His own as their great High Priest.

## **The Holy Spirit**

We believe in the personality of the Holy Spirit. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. At conversion He regenerates, indwells, seals and baptizes the believer into the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit fills and conforms the yielded believer increasingly to the body image of Christ. He enables the believer to live a life of Christian Victory through faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to the Word of God. As He will, the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts and empowerment for spiritual service.

## **Creation**

We believe in the direct creative acts of God as recorded in Genesis.

## **Satan**

We believe in the personality of Satan, a fallen angel, who, with other angelic beings rebelled against God and was cast out of Heaven. Although he was defeated at the cross and his final destiny shall be the lake of fire, he continues to be the Archenemy of God, angels and man.

## **Man and Sin**

We believe man was created in the image of God. In Adam he fell because of disobedience and rebellion against God and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. As a consequence, all mankind is declared by God to be totally depraved, having inherited a sinful nature and having become sinners in thought word and deed.

## **Salvation**

We believe the grace of God provides salvation from sin for all men only through personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and His atoning work.

## **The Church**

We believe the Universal Church is comprised of all true believers. With Christ as her head, she exists in local expression to glorify Him by edifying believers and evangelizing lost men everywhere.

## **The Second Coming of Christ**

We believe in the literal, physical, pre-millennial second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ

## **Future State of the Dead**

We believe that at death all men continue in conscious existence; the just in the presence of Christ, the unjust in torment in Hades. The just await their bodily resurrection, at the rapture of the Church, to the reward of everlasting life and blessedness. The unjust await their bodily resurrection at the Great White Throne, to judgment and everlasting punishment of conscious torment in the lake of fire.

## 1. *History*

Now under the name of Prairie Christian Academy, Prairie General Education has been operating since 1938 as an extension of Prairie Bible Institute. Back then, Prairie's founder, J. Fergus Kirk was concerned that his children and others in the community had a Christ centered education. Growing from the original class of 11, PCA now has around 300 students in its pre Kindergarten to Grade 12 programs. Students have come from all over the world to study in these halls and graduate into hundreds of vocations and careers.

In September 2003 steps were made to form Prairie Christian Academy, an alternate school under the Golden Hills School District. This decision not only increased resources for our educational system, but also gave the primary stakeholders – the parents – more of a governing position in their children's education. The distinctive of Biblically based teaching and discipleship is still at the cornerstone of Prairie Christian Academy. We embrace the godly heritage that is ours, and look forward to the future of continuing to provide quality education that is fully integrated with God's Word and Christian principles.



## 2. Goals

The primary purpose of Prairie Christian Academy Elementary is:

1. to train our students in the knowledge of God and the Christian way of life, and
2. to give them a quality education which is Christ-centered and Bible-permeated.



Consequently, the school program is aimed at the vigorous and balanced development of the whole child — spiritually, academically, physically, emotionally and socially. The scope of the program is based on Luke 2:52, where we find that as Jesus grew, He “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.”

### A. *Spiritually*, the school seeks

1. to help parents lead their children to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Living Word.
2. to foster a growing desire to read the Bible, the Written Word.
3. to help students want to please God.
4. to build strong righteous character.

### B. *Academically*, the school seeks

1. to help students gain excellence in basic skills.
2. to promote the best possible quality of workmanship.
3. to teach and encourage
  - a. formation of good study habits
  - b. good use of time.
  - c. good attitudes toward studies
4. to develop a sense of responsibility by expecting students to
  - a. complete assignments on time.
  - b. recognize the importance of punctuality
  - c. “first work — then play”

### C. *Physically, emotionally, and socially*, the school seeks

1. to foster right attitudes toward
  - a. themselves — their personality and abilities
  - b. others — J.O.Y. (Jesus, Others, You)
2. to promote good citizenship.

### D. To foster appropriate *Interpersonal Relationships*, PCA Elementary seeks to help students develop character based on Scriptural principles.



*“Do not merely listen to the Word... Do what it says.”  
James 1:22*

### 3. **Acceptance Policy**

Application Procedure:

Parents, please:

1. Read the PCA Elementary Handbook on the PCA website.
2. Fill out application forms and return to the school.
3. Each new family is required to meet with the Associate Principal before school starts.

Admission to Kindergarten:

A child may enroll in Kindergarten if he/she will be five years of age on or before the last day of February.

### 4. **Special Needs Assistance**

We welcome the opportunity to discuss your child's needs and to provide information on the programs we offer.



### 5. **Early Childhood Services**

Kindergarten at PCA

Prairie Christian Academy functions as a K to 12 school so Kindergarten is an integral part of the school.

The Kindergarten at PCA provides spiritual, social, academic and physical preparation to assist students in the transition from home to grade one. Since the program prepares children for first grade, the Kindergarten does not serve the function of a preschool/nursery program.

Parents are encouraged to provide input and to participate in the classroom in order to make their child's first school experience a comfortable and happy one.



Kindergarten is offered as two full days, Tuesdays and Thursdays, with one additional Friday per month, as determined at the beginning of the year.

### 6. **Curriculum**

Prairie Christian Academy employs Christian teachers, who are provincially certified, to teach the Alberta curriculum, through the lens of a Biblical worldview. The school is a member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

Our curriculum:



- Bible Memory
- Bible Study
- Language Arts
- Math
- Music
- Health and Physical Education
- Science
- Social Studies
- Art

subject area

Information Communication and Technology, with emphasis on computers integrated into the content subjects.

Library Skills—  
integrated into content sub-

## 7. ***Spiritual Emphasis***

Biblical instruction is taught in accordance with the PCA Statement of Faith. The Bible curriculum of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) is followed in each classroom.



We do this through:

- Daily class devotions and prayer
- Weekly chapel
- Bible curriculum as a school subject
- Biblical principles integrated into every subject
- Young Peacemaker* program to enhance peer relationships.

During our weekly chapels, we worship God together. We stress character qualities, have speakers bring challenges from the Word, and present the work of missions.

## 8. ***Student Ministry***

PCA Elementary looks for ways to minister to others. Activities include:

- Visits to the Seniors' Lodge and Continuing Care
- Grandparents Day
- Participation in the Christmas Shoebox and the Three Hills food hamper projects
- Musical/drama presentations, including performances by Music Makers.

- Classroom programs for parents/chapel presentations
- Support of the yearly ACSI missions' project and other ministry projects
- Sponsorship of two overseas children and a missionary family. Offerings are taken at chapel.
- Volunteering at the Foodbank.



## 9. ***Parent Involvement at PCA Elementary***

Parents serve through a Parent Advisory Committee, Moms Who Care prayer groups and school-wide and classroom volunteering. Parental involvement is valued at PCA Elementary. Families are also prayed for on a regular basis by the staff.

## 10. Security

We consider the safety of staff and students to be of the highest priority. While all of us would like to think that nothing could ever happen in this community, we cannot assume that in our world today. Therefore, all of our school doors will remain locked except for the office door. Any parent or visitor arriving at the school must come in through that door and sign in if they are going to be in the building for any amount of time.

## 11. School Hours

The morning bell rings at 8:30 a.m.; school ends at 3:30 p.m. The noon hour break is from 11:50 to 12:30. (Lunch is supervised for children who do not go home. Noon hour intramurals are optional for grades four to six.)

The school office door opens at 8:00 a.m., but students should not arrive before 8:20. If early commitments by parents require that their children be brought to the school earlier than 8:20, please make arrangements ahead of time with the office.



*"We are God's  
workmanship,  
created in Christ Jesus  
to do good works."  
Ephesians 2:10a*

## 12. Academic Guidelines

### A. Excellence

In our Christian school setting, we have the opportunity to maintain high academic standards for God's glory. Let us pray and work together for excellence. As parents, the encouragement and help you give your children are key factors in achieving high goals.

Working together as a team, in the strength of the Lord, let us labour to make Prairie Christian Academy Elementary School one with which our wonderful Lord is well pleased.

### B. Homework

Home study is expected for memory verses, spelling and math facts. Additional homework is given for purposes such as:

1. finishing assignments not completed at school.
2. catching up on assignments because of absenteeism.  
(If a student misses a day of school, it is his/her responsibility to see the teacher for make-up.)
3. reading for practice.
3. mastering weak areas.
4. reviewing and studying for tests.
5. working on special projects, such as book reports, compositions, and special research assignments.
6. developing good study habits.

The amount of time a child should spend doing homework varies greatly from child to child. Factors to consider include the age of the child, innate ability, attentiveness and diligence in class, and use of time at home while doing homework.

The primary grades (one to three) have little, if any, homework — apart from drilling math facts, reviewing spelling, and memorizing verses. It is of tremendous benefit for parents to read to their children and/or have children read books by themselves.

Children in upper elementary (four to six) can expect an average of 30 to 60 minutes per day, provided their class time has been used wisely.

Club 100 & 200 - To promote reading at home, students are encouraged to participate in the PCA 'Read With Me' project that requires 100 parent signatures. That's 25 each in Clubs 25, 50, 75 & 100. Along with additional incentives along the way, all Club 100 members earn a family picnic. Those who complete Club 100, may go on to complete Club 200, earning "Breakfast with the Principal" in June.



### C. Extra Help

We want all students to do their best for God's glory. Students who are weak or have missed school because of illness may be asked to get extra help or do make-up work after school. Parents are notified if students need to stay after school.

### D. Textbooks

All textbooks are provided by the school.

Students are held responsible for the diligent care of textbooks loaned to them. These books should be treated gently and kept clean at all times. Families pay for a lost or damaged textbook.

### E. Field Trips

Field trips provide additional experiences and learning situations which cannot be met in the classroom setting.

One major field trip is planned for each class. This is a combined fun and educational experience. All field trips are user pay and optional. Parents are welcome to come along as chaperones but other siblings should not accompany their brothers and sisters. All students on the fieldtrip are encouraged to ride on the bus as part of the experience. Often there is not enough room for all the parents on the bus too; parents are urged to carpool and meet the students at the fieldtrip location.

### G. Learner Profiles and Parent-Teacher Interviews

At the conclusion of each trimester, Learner Profiles are sent home. A parent-teacher conference is scheduled at the end of the first and second trimesters. The conference held after the second trimester may or may not be student led, depending on the teacher. Additional conferences may be requested by parent or teacher.

### H. Achievement Testing

The Canadian Achievement Tests and Provincial Achievement Tests are administered by the school. We include all students in the testing, with rare exceptions.



### I. Placement of New Students

If the current placement is questioned by either the school or the parents, we will meet with the parents to consider what is best for the child. Testing may be advisable.

No change is made without consultation with the parents. We realize that a variety of factors, including ability and social needs, influence placement.

### 13. Awards

#### A. PCA Elementary Citizenship Award and Daniel Award Criteria

- Students considered for the Citizenship and Daniel awards must promote a positive class spirit, exhibiting Christian character. (see 14 #3 pg 16).

- The top 15% in each class, who consistently demonstrate Christian character, receive a citizenship certificate.

- Daniel award recipients, who are acknowledged publicly at the Celebration Assembly, receive a plaque, one per class, grades one to six. They are chosen from among the citizenship award recipients.

- The Daniel award may be earned only once while at PCA Elementary. The Citizenship award may be earned annually.

- The teachers will review potential Citizenship Award and Daniel Award recipients prior to the Celebration Assembly to evaluate their consistent display of Christian character throughout school classes and activities.

#### B. Bible Memory Awards Criteria

- For those students who can recite all 8 Bible passages, learned throughout the year, orally in June with a 90% or above in each one, special recognition and an award will be given to those students at the annual awards ceremony.



- A certificate with a gold seal is given for Bible Memory, awarded for a 90% or better average on the entire year's course.

### 14. Certificates

A certificate will be handed out to each student, with stickers as follows.

1. As God's creation, everyone is special and therefore receives a 'YOU ARE SPECIAL' sticker.
2. As applicable, everyone receives promotion and perfect attendance stickers.
3. Each student will receive 2 stickers indicating their top Christian character traits from the following list:
  - courteous, friendly, helpful, kind, servant heart, cheerful, creative, diligent, and encourager, faithful, sportsmanship, caring, organized, loyal, consistent, reliable, conscientious, energetic.
4. Each student will receive 2 stickers indicating their top subjects from the following list:
  - athletics, art, Bible, language arts, math, reading, penmanship, science social studies, spelling, music, creative writing, technology, public speaking, math facts.





## 15. *Standards of Behaviour*

Prairie Christian Academy Elementary School believes that the family is primarily responsible for developing and maintaining standards of behaviour at home. The school, as an extension of the home, will do its part in maintaining discipline at school. As home and school work together in cooperation and harmony, children will be trained more effectively.



## 16. *Discipline*

The staff at PCA elementary school takes a proactive approach when dealing with discipline. Students are taught and given the opportunity to practice appropriate behaviour.

If behavioural situations arise during the course of the year, the following procedure may take place: Minor offenses are handled either on the spot in the class, halls and other general areas, repeated offenses or more major offenses may be handled by the office. If and when the office becomes involved actions taken include: investigations, mediated 'Time in for Success' forms, and communications with home through telephone calls.

*Hebrews 12:11 - "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."*

The following progressive discipline cycle is implemented at the office level for the following major offenses or continuous disruptive behaviour.

- Stealing
- Truancy
- Fighting
- Insubordination or insolence
- Vandalism
- Throwing objects such as rocks
- Discrimination

Depending on the seriousness of the situation, the following plan is implemented:

1<sup>st</sup> incident Warning and a logical and natural consequence (parents are not notified unless deemed necessary depending on the seriousness of the offense). This is typically dealt with by the classroom teacher.

2<sup>nd</sup> incident Warning and a logical and natural consequence (parents are not notified unless deemed necessary depending on the seriousness of the offense) This is usually when the office becomes involved.

3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> incident Mediated 'Time in for Success' form. Parents will be notified. This is an office referral.

5<sup>th</sup> incident A possible in school suspension. Parent will be notified. School and home will work together with the student in creating a possible behaviour contract. Please note any form of suspension needs to be authorized and overseen by Darryl Hern, principal of PCA.

6th incident A possible out of school suspension. Conference will take place with the parents and an official behaviour plan will be put in place. Please note any form of suspension needs to be authorized and overseen by Darryl Hern, Principal of PCA.

Whatever the level of discipline, it is important the student understands there is agreement among the authority figures in his/her life.

The administrator is brought into the discipline process when deemed necessary by the teacher encountering the problem, usually at step three. Action taken at step four or above always includes involvement by the Associate Principal or designate.

### **17. Parental Commitment**

We believe that God has given parents the responsibility for discipline and instruction of their children. The school is but an extension of the home. For effectiveness in molding children's lives, mutual support and cooperation between the home and the school is critical. Following Matthew 18:15, if an issue arises between your child and his/her teacher, please try to solve it by first talking to the teacher. If that does not work, then approach the administrator. As a school we ask for your prayers and support.

*(If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. Matthew 18:15)*



## **18. Library**

### **A. Hours**

The library is open from 8:30am to 4:00pm each day. Children may visit the library individually, with their teacher's permission, when the librarian is available.

The library is for study, reading and research, not for loitering or visiting. No food or drink is allowed.

Parents, you are welcome to visit our library and check out books for home — story time, devotions, or personal reading.

### **B. Checking out Materials**

All materials taken from the library must be checked out at the circulation desk. Books and periodicals may be checked out for two weeks. Reference books are due the next school morning.

### **C. Returning Materials**

Whatever is borrowed should be returned on or before the due date. All materials must be returned to the circulation desk, *not to the shelves*. If the material checked out is lost, students are charged for that lost book.



## **D. Content**

When the suitability of a book for the PCA library is questioned, a procedure is in place for dealing with the concern. Please ask the librarian for details.

## ***19. Athletic Program***

In addition to physical development, we seek to teach and develop teamwork, loyalty, unselfishness, good sportsmanship, and leadership qualities. Our athletic program is divided into two categories:

### **A. Physical Education Classes**

If a child is not able to participate in Phys Ed classes for an extended period of time, a doctor's note is required.

### **B. Intramural Sports**

An organized extra-curricular sports program is offered to students in grades four to six. Most games are played at lunch time.

The sports played may include soccer, basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, handball, or dodge ball.



Participation is voluntary, but once signed up students must be faithful to their teams. Our focus in intramurals is on full participation by all involved. Participants are expected to encourage teammates and members of the opposing team. The standard is, 'What would Jesus do and say in this situation?'

## ***20. Music Makers***

As staff or volunteers are available, and if there is sufficient interest by the students, a music program is offered one day a week after school for students in Grades 4 to 6. Participation is voluntary, but once students sign up, they are expected to be committed to the program. For those students who love to sing, this is an opportunity for them to do so. Several performance opportunities are usually provided during the school year.

## ***21. Fees***

There is no Tuition Fee charged for enrolling in Prairie Christian Academy, however there are Society Fees and Student Fees. Fee schedules are available from the school office or on the PCA web site. All school fees are payable through School Cash On Line.

## ***22. Policies***

### **A. Dress/Grooming**

Our aim is to promote modesty and neatness in dress, appropriate to Christian character and purpose.

1. Pants or jeans must be in good repair (ie no holes in the knees)
2. Shorts (including for gym and sports), skirts and dresses should be no shorter than one hand width above the knee.
3. Students are asked to wear shirts that do not expose the midriff. Also not allowed are spaghetti straps (except over other clothing) and tight or spandex shorts.

4. Girls are required to wear a one piece bathing suit for any school sponsored swimming events.
5. Shirts with pictures or slogans must be consistent with good Christian character.
6. Hair should be neat and well-groomed with no extreme styles.
7. Make-up should not be worn, except for chapstick/lip gloss.

We expect parents to ensure the rules are followed. The need for 'policing' by teachers should be the exception.

## **B. Miscellaneous Policies**

### 1. Absences:

Please phone the school if your child will be absent. The reason for an absence may be explained by phoning the office or sending a note to the teacher.

### 2. Holidays:

We caution parents against taking holidays if it means children will miss school. In such cases parents and students must take the responsibility for catching up missed work **after** they return.

### 3. Student Visitors:

On occasion our students may wish to bring either a friend or relative to school with them for the day. This is not a problem, but it must be cleared **in advance** with the teacher and visitors will only be permitted to attend for **one** day.

### 4. Illness:

For the welfare of your child and others in the school, sick children must be kept at home.



When the child is well enough to participate in a normal school day, please send hat, coat, etc. in cold and wet weather to prevent further illness. If your child should not be outside, a note from home is required.

### 5. Electronic Equipment:

Students are not permitted to bring electronic equipment to school (including: mp3 players, ipods, gaming systems, cell phones). In the rare instance where a student needs to have access to a cell phone, either before or after school, arrangements will need to be made by the parents with the classroom teacher.

### 6. Footwear:

All PCA Elementary students are required to bring two pairs of footwear to school. One of these must be clean runners which are worn only inside the building and during gym class. These must not mark the gym floor. The other pair is for outside wear. They are kept in the entry lockers whenever the child is inside the school building. No Heelies allowed either indoors or outdoors.

### 7. Off Limits:

Students are required to stay on the school grounds unless they have written permission to leave from parents or guardians. For safety reasons, students are not allowed to climb trees at any time.



### 8. Bussing:

Prairie Christian Academy Elementary is an Alternate School under the Golden Hills School Division #75. All students are eligible for bussing under the GHSD Policy #680. Contact the Golden Hills Transportation department at 1-800-320-3739 ext 2010.

### 9. Chewing Gum:

Children must not chew gum at school.

10. Bicycles, Skateboards, Heelies, Scooters and In-Line Skates cannot be ridden on school property.



### 11. Class Parties.

Each class may have simple parties in the classroom or on the Elementary School grounds. Generally, parties are held on the last school day before the Christmas and summer holidays. Class parties for individuals are discouraged because these take valuable time from classroom instruction. If you choose to bring treats, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- i) Check with the teacher regarding food allergies.
- ii) Plan the celebration to include mainly recesses or noon (this must be done in consultation with the teacher)



### 12. Fire Drills

Fire drills are held in fall and spring.

### 13. Communication

Communication between home and school is very important. Monthly letters and emails are sent to you from our office to keep you abreast of happenings in our school. Please go to the PCA website at [www.pca3hills.ca](http://www.pca3hills.ca) for information and like the Prairie Christian Academy Facebook page.

Individual teachers inform you of classroom events.

*“That in all things, He might have the pre-eminence.” Col. 1:18*

