

# ***CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL- HAMILTON***

## *Information Packet*

### The Mission of Calvin Christian School

is to assist parents by providing for each student a Bible based elementary education in a supportive Christian classroom community that nurtures growth in knowledge, maturity and commitment to God for sharing in the life and work of His people in the world.

Calvin Christian School (CCS) is an independent elementary school offering a complete curriculum that is Christ centered, Teacher directed and Child oriented. CCS maintains an excellent academic curriculum that meets or exceeds government standards. In addition to the academic disciplines and values education, the school also offers fine arts, physical education and co-curricular activities.

Calvin Christian School is founded on the infallible Word of God. The school's constitution is based on God's Word as interpreted by the historic Protestant Creeds. The school emphasizes a Reformed world and life view. All aspects of one's life (home, school, work, play) are devoted to the glory of God. The school exists as a response to God's call to raise our child for God's glory.

CCS is located at 547 West Fifth Street in Hamilton. The school has been at this location since 1952. Currently, Calvin Christian School serves students from Senior Kindergarten to Grade 8. The school also has a day program for 4 year old children called, "Jubilee School."

Calvin Christian School is supported by a Christian community that consists of churches, parents, individuals and staff members.

# ***CURRICULUM***

The CCS curriculum either meets or exceeds the expectations of the Ministry of Education. Our approach to curriculum is to be CHRIST centered, TEACHER directed, and CHILD oriented. The curriculum in the school is built upon the understanding that human life is governed by God and that man is called to serve God everywhere. All activities within the scope of education at CCS must grow out of that starting point. The curriculum goal statements at CCS reflect the mission statement. The curriculum is designed and taught so that each student is given the opportunity to gain Bible knowledge, to discover and develop particular talents and skills, to mature as an image bearer of God, to develop a deeper commitment to love and to serve God, to develop competency in communication, and to acquire an appreciation for other customs and cultures.

## ***Jubilee School - (children must be four years old as of December 31)***

Jubilee School is located in the beautiful and roomy 2<sup>nd</sup> kindergarten room of CCS. Jubilee School offers a day time program for 4 year old children. Please call the school office for more information.

## ***Senior Kindergarten – (children must be five years old as of December 31)***

In Kindergarten the students learn about themselves, their families, friends, community, animals and God's love in our world. This goal is accomplished through Bible stories, play centers, number and letter recognition, music, drama and games. The students experience a full day of school on Monday, Wednesday and every other Friday or, on Tuesday, Thursday and every other Friday.

## ***Grades One through Eight***

Most of the curriculum has been developed by Christian Schools International (head office in Grand Rapids, Michigan) and by the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (head office in Ancaster, Ontario). Detailed course outlines or samples of units or textbooks are available upon request from the principal. The curriculum includes Bible, literature, language arts, mathematics, French, art, music, science, geography, history and computers.

# ***ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS***

We believe that the whole person, all that he/she thinks, does and says, is called to glorify God. We seek to nurture the mind, the heart and the “feet and hands”: to educate the whole person. Our programs include more than just academic instruction. They also provide values/attitude/moral instruction, skills instruction, and spiritual instruction. We are pleased to offer a wide variety of programs and activities to help develop the child’s variety of talents and skills. CCS offers the following programs:

## **Special Education Program**

The focus of the Learning Resource Program is to try and meet the needs of the exceptional students. Some of our students have various needs, such as health related disabilities, learning disabilities and some may have social disabilities. Others have challenges related to giftedness. Accordingly, our learning resource department exists to serve these children. Specially assigned personnel and specially designed programs are available to meet the needs of these children.

## **Computer**

Our well-equipped computer lab consists of 30 computers. The lab includes guarded Internet access. Students are taught to manipulate various educational games, which reinforce a variety of skills. They are taught to use the computer for writing and editing. In addition, students have the opportunity to use the multi-media computer programs for research purposes.

## **Music**

CCS has a primary choir and a chamber choir. In addition, we offer a hand bell choir and recorder choir. CCS also has a concert band. Students in grades seven and eight are required to take band for their music classes. The choirs and concert band perform at worship services, senior homes and other musical opportunities.

## **Athletics**

Over and above our regular physical education program, the school offers many different athletic opportunities. There are soccer, volleyball, hockey, basketball and softball teams. Tournaments are held with other Christian schools. In addition, intramurals are held during recess and noon hours to enable all students to participate in various team activities. Each spring all of the students participate in Field Day. From the results of this event, various students represent CCS at Master Field Day involving other Christian Schools.

## **Private Piano Lessons**

A qualified music teacher provides lessons 5 days per week at the school. This service is not covered by tuition and is an arrangement between the instructor and the parents. The students may leave during class time to attend their lessons.

## **Other Activities**

Our school offers a variety of events to help promote student growth and participation. These events include devotions, assemblies, Book Fair, Battle of the Books, Reading Buddies, Fine Art Festivals, Science Fair, Hobby Fair, Winter Activities, Student Council, Rainbow Program and Peace Keepers.

## **Community Activities**

The students participate in food drives, perform for the community and senior homes, and volunteer at a local story hour program.

# ***TRANSPORTATION***

The school buses are owned, operated and maintained by the Calvin Christian School Society. There are four bus routes, which cover sections of Hamilton Mountain, Mount Hope, Caledonia, Ancaster and surrounding areas.

At this time, there are no bus services in downtown Hamilton. Parents are encouraged to arrange for car pools or have their children use public transportation. Car-pooling is also suggested for those families living on the mountain but outside of the regular bus routes. Other arrangements such as meeting the bus at a predetermined location can also be made.

Parents apply for school bus services. The cost of transportation is not included in the tuition fee. The operating expenses for bus services are borne by the families who use the buses. The capital expenses for new buses are borne by the entire Calvin Christian School Society.

The Transportation Committee, a committee that is accountable to the Board of Directors, oversees the school's bus transportation system. Committee members usually finalize the bus routes in the summer preceding the new school year. If you wish further information about any aspect of transportation at CCS, please call the school office.

If you are considering moving to the Hamilton area and wish to enroll your children at a Christian institution such as Calvin Christian School, we recommend that you call the school first about its bus routes.

# ***ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE***

Calvin Christian School is a member of the Ontario Alliance of Christian School Societies (OACSS), an organization serving more than 75 schools across the province, with a total enrolment of some 12,000 students. Calvin Christian School is also a member of Christian Schools International (CSI), which serves some 400 schools across North America. CSI and OACSS are both valuable resources for curriculum materials, policy guidelines and general advice.

Calvin Christian School is operated by the Calvin Christian School Society. Membership in the Society is open to parents who enroll their children, and to other friends and supporters of the cause of Christian education who are in agreement with the basis, purpose and principle guidelines of the Society. Members of the school society are encouraged to be involved in the school's operations and join school committees. Members may also serve as volunteers at the school.

## **The Calvin Christian School Society**

*elects*

## **The Board of Directors**

*which appoints*

### **Committees**

Admissions Committee  
Bazaar Committee  
Building Committee (incl. Health & Safety)  
Capital Development Committee  
Contract Partnership Committee  
Education Committee (incl. Care, Library)  
Executive Committee  
Finance Committee (incl. Tuition Assistance)  
Fund Raising Committee  
Personnel Committee (incl. Adhoc Interview)  
Public Relations Committee  
Transportation Committee  
Willing Workers

### **Personnel**

Principal  
Vice Principals  
Teachers  
Finance Manager  
Secretary  
Custodian  
Paraeducators  
Bus Drivers

# ***HOW TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION***

We encourage you to meet with us so that we can address any questions or concerns you might have about Calvin Christian School.

In order to enrol a child in Calvin Christian School, there are a number of forms that you will need to complete. Please be advised of the two types of society membership as outlined in the Status and Rights of Membership. Parents wishing to enroll their children at CCS are required to become members of CCS first. They will need to fill out Form #1 or #2, plus Forms #3, 4, and 5.

The following forms comprise the admission application:

- Form #1 – Membership Application for Full Member
- Form #2 – Membership Application for Associate Member
- Form #3 – Student Application and Registration
- Form #4 – Statement of Agreement
- Form #5 – School Fees

If you are ready to proceed with the application, fill out the appropriate form and send it to the school office. The registration fee of \$500.00 (and any other applicable payments) must be attached. The Principal and/or Admissions Committee may follow up your application with a phone call or request a brief interview with you.

After you have completed and submitted the application, a recommendation to the Board of Directors will be made concerning your application. You will be formally advised of the Board of Directors' decision in a letter written from the secretary. You will also receive all of the necessary classroom documentation after your application has been accepted.

Parents interested in enrolling their children in Jubilee School are required to complete a registration form specific to Jubilee School only.

# ***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

## **HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HERE?**

Calvin Christian School (CCS) was founded in 1952 by Christian parents with a vision to provide an education that was consistent with the Holy Bible for their children so that these children may occupy places worthily in society, church and state.

## **WHAT IS SO DIFFERENT ABOUT A CHRISTIAN SCHOOL?**

In a Christian school all of life is defined from a Christian perspective and students are encouraged to live the Christian life style on a daily basis. We point the child to Christ; Christ is the center of every aspect of life. We encourage the child to be a servant, to use the gifts God has given him/her, and to be Christ-like - applying the fruit of the Spirit. The school's policies and programs are based on God's laws and His Word and not on popular opinion.

## **ARE YOU PART OF A LARGER SYSTEM?**

Yes. CCS is affiliated with the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools and Christian School International. These organizations provide various services and curriculum resources.

## **HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE IN A CLASS?**

We try to keep the numbers very low at the primary level in order to ensure good foundational learning. The school's overall pupil teacher ratio tends to average around 25:1

## **DO YOU HAVE TO BELONG TO A CERTAIN RELIGION TO SEND CHILDREN TO CCS?**

You need to be a member in good standing at a Christian church to send your children to CCS. Our students currently come from a number of different Protestant denominations. Most of our students come from churches with a Reformed perspective.

## **WHAT ARE THE PROTESTANT CREEDS?**

The Protestant creeds are Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, Canons of Dort.

## **HOW MUCH RELIGION IS TAUGHT?**

We have devotions at the beginning and end of the day and at lunch. We teach Bible as a subject.

Our assemblies focus on Christian feast days and events. It is our conviction that all of life should be Christ-centered and this must impact all the studies. Therefore we bring a Christian perspective to each subject and to our values and our interactions.

## **IS YOUR CURRICULUM THE SAME AS THAT IN OTHER SCHOOLS? DOES YOUR CURRICULUM MEET GOVERNMENT STANDARDS?**

Our curriculum meets or exceeds government standards and is quite similar to other OACS and CSI schools. Canadian Tests of Basic Skills (norm referenced tests which score achievements in math, language arts, research, reading, and science) show very favourable results when compared to the national scores. In general, our students score at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile. This means our average student is scoring among the top 25% of the national scores. Other standardized tests that we administer show similar results. These results affirm our curriculum.

## **DO THE STUDENTS WEAR UNIFORMS?**

Although students do not wear uniforms, there is a dress code, which is very specific regarding modesty and slogans.

### **ARE YOUR TEACHERS QUALIFIED?**

Yes. Most of our teachers have the Ontario Teacher's Certificate (or an equivalent from out of province) and/or the Christian School Teacher's Certificate. All of our teachers are professing Christians.

### **WHAT ABOUT ACCOUNTABILITY?**

Our teachers are accountable to the principal who in turn is directly accountable to the Board of Directors. The parents vote in directors for the Board of Directors and so there is a direct line of accountability to the parent. Furthermore, the school demonstrates or practices accountability via standardized tests, Individual Education Plan (IEPs), recognized teacher qualifications, health and safety measures, security checks, hiring practices (which meet the terms of Human Rights legislation), and numerous policies available for the parents' perusal and input.

### **DO YOU HAVE BUSES AND IS TRANSPORTATION PART OF THE TUITION?**

We have four bus routes. The cost of transportation is not included in the tuition fee. It is important to check with the school office regarding bus routes and transportation eligibility.

### **WHAT IS A NORMAL SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE LIKE?**

8:50	Bell rings
10:30	Recess
11:00	Classes resume
12:30	Lunch bell
12:45	Recess
1:20	Classes resume
3:25	Dismissal bell

Students will have an opportunity for a snack and a short washroom break during the afternoon session.

### **WHERE DO THE STUDENTS EAT LUNCH? IS THERE A CAFETERIA?**

Our teachers supervise lunch in the homeroom. There is no cafeteria.

### **HOW OFTEN DOES THE KINDERGARTEN CLASS MEET?**

Class is a full day and meets either Monday, Wednesday and every other Friday or Tuesday, Thursday and every other Friday.

### **DO YOU HAVE A JK? DO YOU HAVE AFTER SCHOOL CARE?**

We have started Jubilee School, a day program for four year old students. We do not at this time offer after school care.

### **ARE THERE SEPARATE PLAYGROUND AREAS?**

There are playground areas for primary and senior grades. There is a separate area that is exclusively for kindergarten to grade three students.

### **WHAT ABOUT DISCIPLINE? HOW DO YOU DISCIPLINE?**

Every student is a special child of God and is made in His image. Like us, they are accountable for their behaviour and actions including that which is contrary to God's Word. Discipline may include verbal correction, detention and suspensions. It is important for the student to know that we all must do things out of love for the Lord. Forgiveness and closure regarding a discipline situation is also important.

### **DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL EDUCATION (LEARNING RESOURCE)?**

Yes. We begin with an inclusive approach, followed by withdrawal from the classroom if necessary. Our learning resource personnel monitor the students and are available for consultation. In very special circumstance, an educational assistant or personal support worker is hired to help out.

### **DO YOU TEACH FRENCH?**

French is taught regularly as a separate subject from grades 1-8.

### **WHAT IS THE TUITION?**

The tuition fee is a per family fee and covers all of the elementary school-age children in that family. There is also a membership fee of \$300, which must be paid annually.

New families coming to CCS must also pay a one-time registration fee of \$500.

The tuition fee is set by the membership at the Spring Membership meeting. Families wishing to use CCS buses pay a separate transportation fee. A family with a child in Kindergarten only pays about ½ the tuition fee and transportation fees (if applicable). Jubilee School requires a separate nominal payment.

### **DO YOU PAY THE TUITION ALL AT ONCE?**

Our Finance Manager will explain the best way to pay your tuition fee. You have the choice of paying monthly, annually, quarterly or by special arrangements.

### **DO YOU OFFER TUITION ASSISTANCE?**

Eligibility for assistance is dependent on a number of factors. Our Finance Manager will provide you with the appropriate information. Tuition assistance is generally reserved for those families who have been with CCS for more than one year.

### **DOES THE GOVERNMENT FUND THE SCHOOL IN ANYWAY?**

We do receive help for special needs children who have difficulties learning because of health related disabilities. We also receive a small sum of money from the Federal government in the form of a French grant for French instruction and French resources. The government does not provide any other funding for Calvin Christian School.

### **HOW DO WE GO ABOUT ENROLLING OUR CHILD(REN)?**

You will first need to apply for membership. After your membership application has been received, a member of our Admissions Committee will arrange a meeting. In some situations, a meeting can be arranged with the principal. A recommendation concerning your application will go to the Board of Directors. A student application and registration for your child(ren) will also be required. Prior to the first day of school, you will be contacted with all the necessary information regarding your child's fellow pupils, his/her teacher's name, the events of the first day and other pertinent information.