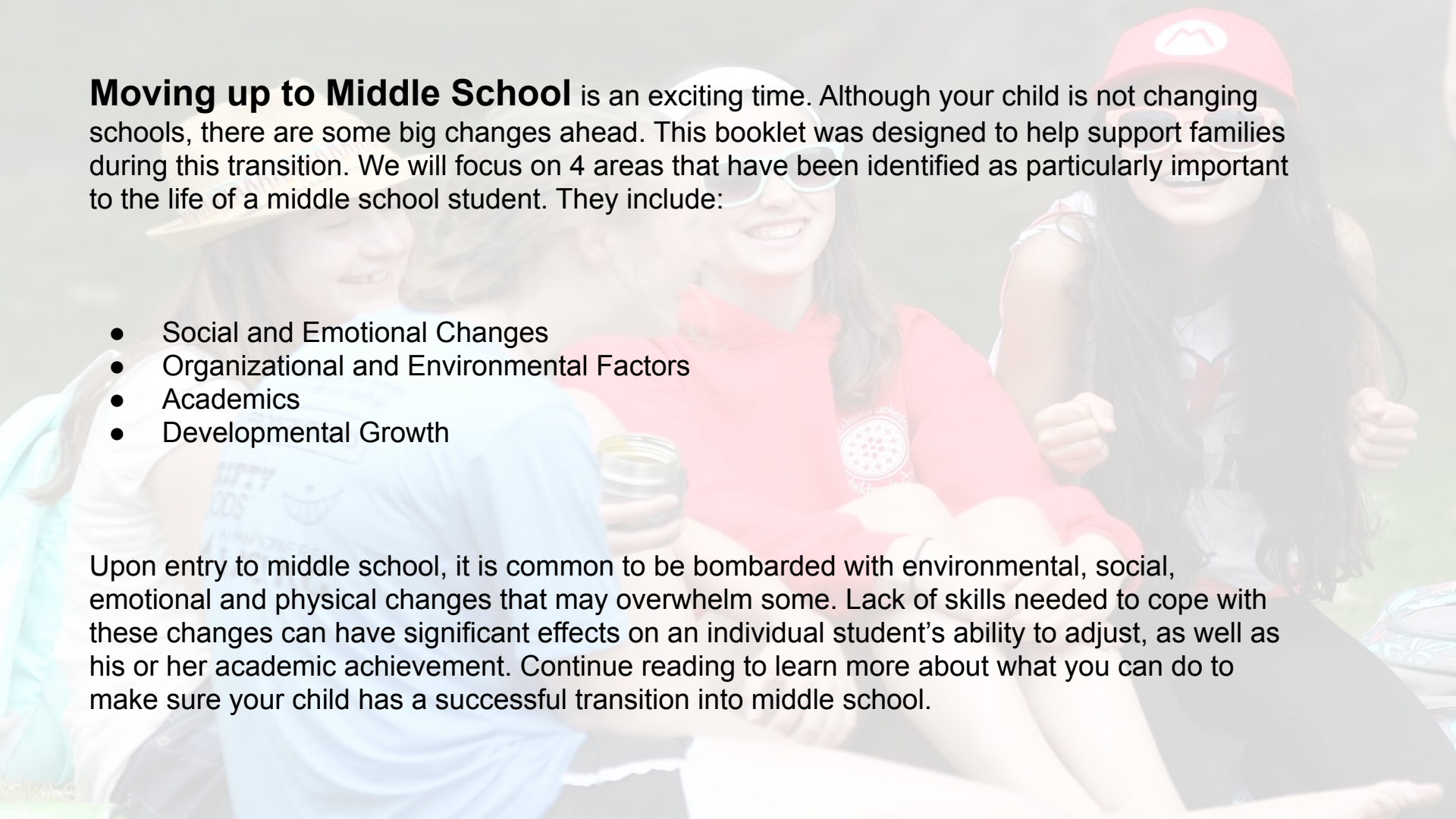




MIDDLE SCHOOL TRANSITION



Moving up to Middle School is an exciting time. Although your child is not changing schools, there are some big changes ahead. This booklet was designed to help support families during this transition. We will focus on 4 areas that have been identified as particularly important to the life of a middle school student. They include:

- Social and Emotional Changes
- Organizational and Environmental Factors
- Academics
- Developmental Growth

Upon entry to middle school, it is common to be bombarded with environmental, social, emotional and physical changes that may overwhelm some. Lack of skills needed to cope with these changes can have significant effects on an individual student's ability to adjust, as well as his or her academic achievement. Continue reading to learn more about what you can do to make sure your child has a successful transition into middle school.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CHANGES

Social and emotional changes during the middle school years are a natural part of development. During this phase in their life students will learn social skills that they will use well into adulthood. They form self-concepts and self-esteem, build new relationships, and begin to self-regulate their behaviour.

What to Expect Socially:

- Spending time with parents becomes secondary to their peers
- Desire for privacy and secrecy develops
- Belonging to a group becomes important
- Exposure to peer pressure and negative influences increases

What to Expect Emotionally:

- Desired freedom from parental supervision
- Experiencing mood fluctuations
- Becoming highly critical about themselves
- Experiencing stress related to ability levels and competition

What you can do to help:

- Talk to your child about school and their peers
- Expect your child to make mistakes and have personal struggles
- Give them time to think and make decisions about how to manage their problems as well as time to deal with the consequences

ORGANIZATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Organizational and environmental factors can influence your child's ability to learn. The middle school day changes frequently, with students possibly experiencing as many as seven classes with seven different teachers, with seven different expectations and at times seven different assignments. Organization and time management skills must be developed so students will feel less overwhelmed.

What to Expect:

- Learning to manage time
- Getting to each class and other activities on time
- Keeping up with materials and assignments
- Adjusting to using a locker instead of a desk
- Keeping their locker and binder neat and organized
- Using the online homework document daily

What you can do to help:

- Balance after school recreational activities
- Provide a quiet study area
- Expect to see your child working regularly on homework and long-term projects
- Set limitations on cell phones, TV and computer use
- Help your child learn self-regulating strategies in order for them to become more accountable and self-reliant
- Set up a homework and activities calendar at home

ACADEMICS

Academics relate to what your child is learning and is expected to learn in middle school. The following core classes are offered at our school: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. In addition to these subjects students will also participate in Physical Education, French, Band, Art, Religion, and Career Education, as well as several exploratory courses such as sewing, home economics, drama, and coding. If you have any concerns regarding your child's academic progress please contact your child's subject specific teacher first. If our teaching staff have any concerns regarding your child, you will be contacted promptly and a meeting will be scheduled. If further concerns are present then a School Based Team meeting may be required, where an administrator, subject teachers, and support staff may be present in order to brainstorm strategies to better support your child's learning.

What to Expect:

- Increased homework loads
- Reduced parental help in completing homework
- Accepting more responsibility
- Presenting more class projects

Tips for students:

- Understand the assessment criteria
- Raise your hand, ask questions, and seek help when needed
- Expect more homework
- Know that incomplete homework will affect your grade
- Attend class every day
- Be prepared for every class
- Stay well rested and fueled for each day

How you can help:

- Make it a goal to meet all your child's teachers at either the curriculum evening or parent teacher interview
- Establish ground rules and expectations for phone, texting, and TV/computer usage while studying.
- Check the homework document daily with your child

Middle School Project Block:

Each grade will participate in one term of project block. The goal of project block is to allow students to immerse themselves in the inquiry process, and show their ideas and learning in different ways. This year the grade 6 class designed their own country, paying close attention to all the things needed in running a successful nation. The grade 7 class designed their own business from scratch, marketed their design, and sold their product/service in order to raise money for charity. The Grade 8 class adapted a favourite novel into a play, changing the story to suit a different time period and location.

Math Enrichment

Each grade participates in one term of math enrichment. This course allows students to challenge themselves in math, or receive any extra support they may need. Mrs. Salchert teaches some very fun and exciting ways to work with numbers and is also available to help those who would like extra tutoring or additional time to complete assignments.

Visual Arts

Each grade participates in one term of art classes. For one hour a week, students will use the art facilities at CCCS in order to make amazing pieces of visual art using a variety of materials.



DEVELOPMENTAL GROWTH

Developmental growth will take place in your child during the adolescent years, physically, emotionally and mentally. Your child may be frustrated at times, but you can look forward to them also being funny, curious, imaginative and eager to learn. Make a point to talk to your child about developmental changes before they happen. A good relationship with a trusted adult is the best support your child can have during this trying but exciting time in their lives.

What to Expect:

- The onset of puberty
- Growth spurts and weight fluctuations
- Increased fatigue due to rapid growth
- The development of body odor
- Satisfaction when using skills to solve real life problems

Tips for students:

- Think before you act
- Use what you know to solve a problem
- Ask questions about developmental changes you do not understand
- Acknowledge and respond to the new physical, emotional and intellectual responsibilities that come with puberty

Highlights of BC's Redesigned Curriculum



- Core Competencies are sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies that all students need to develop in order to engage in deeper learning.
- The Core Competencies that are integral to the new curriculum are:
 - Critical thinking
 - Communication
 - Social responsibility
 - Collaboration
- Inquiry and a question-based approach provides insight into student's thinking
 - Project-based learning
 - Problem solving
 - Self assessment
- Assessment will evolve to fit the new standards of this curriculum. In the meantime, students will still receive letter grades and work habits on their report cards.
- [Curriculum Assessment Link](#)



HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED IN YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL AND EDUCATION

- Keep a family calendar with important dates. Encourage your child to add items such as tests, project due dates, and extracurricular activities as well.
- Ask your son or daughter to show you the Google Classrooms. These contain contain all assignments and due dates.
- Attend school activities and events, such as curriculum evening, parent teacher interviews, Celebration of Learning (Student-Led conferences), sporting events, and student performances.
- Be an informed parent. Carefully read information sent home from the school and read the weekly newsletters.
- Monitor your child's academic and social development.
- Get to know his or her interests and uncover what truly motivates your child to do better.

ONLINE TECHNOLOGIES

As students enter the middle years, they are expected to use communications technology every day. Most middle school written assignments are completed and submitted online. Homework assignments are also posted online using the School's Google Domain for Education. Many middle school students also have smartphones, while practically all have access to computers or tablets at home. All of these technologies allow unfettered access to the internet and a wide array of social media applications. This unprecedented level of internet access is wonderfully empowering and helps develop citizenship and a sense of responsibility.

ONLINE TECHNOLOGIES

Students are supervised at school while using the internet. We can teach them when and how to use these technologies and how to be positive and contributing digital citizens. **But their access to the internet does not stop at 3:00 PM and so parents have an even more important role to play** to ensure that your family values are being honoured while your child is online.

We have included some ideas to help you with this on the next page. We have also highlighted some of our rules about online behaviour while at school on the page after that.

Here are some ideas that may help:

- Set up the family computer in a common area that you can monitor
- Be clear about screen time limits (these can be negotiated or just set)
- Ensure all devices come out of the bedroom at night
- Speak with your children about their online activities
- Be inquisitive. Engage them. Ask them to teach you about a certain app
- Find out who they are 'meeting' while online
- Ask your son or daughter to explain how they know that person is who he or she says she is. Don't settle for less than proof.
- Be upfront about your expectations regarding appropriate language, screen violence, and online aggression (which is illegal)
- Visit the White Hatter's [website](http://tinyurl.com/q6vca3p) [http://tinyurl.com/q6vca3p] or the White Hatter's [Facebook page](http://tinyurl.com/nga3eb4) [http://tinyurl.com/nga3eb4] for more ideas.

If student's online behaviour during school or outside of school hours is affecting any other student's ability to learn in school, then the School administration will get involved. Students cannot learn if they are fearful, ashamed, or engaged in ongoing online [flame wars](#). Online aggression is particularly harmful as well as illegal. The School administration will contact parents and the police if necessary, to ensure the safety of our students.

All parents in grades 6 to 8 are encouraged attend any presentations about Internet safety held at the school.

Please bring a fellow parent or family member to share in this invaluable knowledge! (Adults only please)

These are 'MUST SEE' events for all parents who allow their children access to the Internet.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF CONNECTED TECHNOLOGIES:

- We expect all students to be positive and contributing digital citizens as demonstrated by their online behaviour at all times.
- During and after school hours, school computers should only be used for educational purposes.
- Cell phones and Smartphones should not be used during school hours. If a student needs to contact a parent, he or she can use the office phone.
- Cell phones and Smartphones may be used after school hours while on school grounds and in the entrances to the building.
NB: We reserve the right to make exceptions to this rule.
- Using a Smartphone to take photographs of other students and/or teachers is not allowed without their explicit consent.

ATTENDANCE

Missing school days can affect your son's or daughter's progress in school both academically and socially. They not only miss their classroom assignments but also the invaluable class discussions, teachable moments and in-class assessment and assignment details. Please consider this when planning family vacations outside of the breaks built into the school year. If the excursion cannot be avoided, please consult with your classroom teacher at least one month in advance to help prepare for the missed classroom work.

Positive Role Models in our Middle School:

Each student in middle school should be able to support and continually show respect for:

- a. their peer group
- b. students in other grades
- c. their teachers and staff members
- d. school technology (using it appropriately as directed by the teachers)
- e. cell phones or smart devices (kept in lockers during school, usage allowed at 3:15pm each day)

BEHAVIOUR CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

Code of Conduct:

All middle school students are expected to show proper positive behaviour in school, on the playground, and on field trips before, during, and after school hours. We respond to inappropriate behaviour with consequences that we deem to be fair and consistent.

- We focus on restorative, rather than merely punitive disciplinary action.
- Students are encouraged to participate in the development of meaningful consequences.

Possible consequences for misbehaviour may include:

- ★ A conversation about the incident and completing a “think sheet” to describe the incident
- ★ Withdrawal from an activity or an area of the school
- ★ Perform an appropriate service to the school
- ★ Record the incident in the schools incident book
- ★ An apology - spoken, written or both
- ★ A meeting with the student’s parents
- ★ Initiation of a behaviour contract
- ★ Payment for damaged property
- ★ In-school suspension
- ★ Out of school suspension
- ★ Expulsion*

**Christ Church Cathedral School has an appeal process for any decisions that affect a student’s educational career.*

EXPECTATIONS FOR OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY

Expectations for Students:

1. To be aware of our *Mission and Core Values* and use them to guide their behaviour.
2. To arrive punctually, to attend regularly, and to behave appropriately.
3. To wear the correct School Uniform at all times and wear it with pride.
4. To bring a written note signed by the parent/guardian explaining lack of school uniform if necessary.
5. To be prepared and to have the necessary books, materials and assignments.
6. To respect and comply with School regulations.
7. To be positive and contributing digital citizens when using any internet technology devices.
8. To attend events when their presence is required.
9. To participate attentively and reverently in the Christian life of the school.

*All middle school students are required to read and sign the ***My Commitment to Cathedral School*** and return this form to their classroom teacher during the first week of school.

EXPECTATIONS FOR OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY

(CONTINUED)

Expectations for Parents:

1. To be aware of our *Mission and Core Values* and help their children to understand them
2. To ensure that children are at school **on time** each day.
3. To respond promptly and affirmatively to any student behaviour at School.
4. To inform the School of any circumstances in the home that might affect their child's performance in School.
5. To support the School, the Head of School and the entire staff in their work to achieve the Mission of the School.
6. To be positive ambassadors of the school when in public.
7. To promptly bring concerns about your child's experience to the teacher so that we may address any issues directly.
8. To follow the fee payment and student withdrawal policies as set out by the School.
9. To supply written and signed or telephoned explanations of absences/lateness and lack of proper School uniform.
10. To keep children at home if sick, and notify the School by phone if children will be absent.
11. To volunteer to the extent that they are able, or to make a financial contribution in lieu.
12. To attend parent information sessions, parent/teacher meetings, and as many of the other School functions as possible.
13. To attend meetings with teachers or the School administration when requested.