WELCOME TO ST. CECILIA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Frequently Asked Questions Answered by St. Cecilia Parents

**General School Information:**

**ADDRESS: TELEPHONE & fax:**

355 Annette Street, Toronto, ON M6P 1R3 416-393-5218/416-397-6045

**SCHOOL HOURS: 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Morning Recess: 10:12 a.m. to 10:27 a.m.

Lunch Hour: 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Afternoon Recess: 1:40 p.m. to 1:55 p.m.

Students may start arriving at school at 8:15AM.

If you are late to pick up your child, please contact the school. Your child will be taken to the main office until a guardian arrives.

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| **TCDSB SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR 2018-2019** |
| Number of school days                                          194  Number of Professional Activity Days                     7  Labour Day                                                            September 3, 2018  First Instructional Day                                            September 4, 2018  Thanksgiving Day                                                  October 8, 2018  Christmas Break                                                     December 24, 2018–January 4, 2019  Family Day                                                              February 18, 2019  Mid-Winter Break                                                    March 11–15, 2019  Good Friday                                                            April 19, 2019  Easter Monday                                                        April 22, 2019  Victoria Day                                                             May 20, 2019  Last day of classes for elementary students           June 27, 2019 |

**Seven (7) Professional Activity (PA) Days for ELEMENTARY schools:**

* October 5, 2018                     Provincial Education Priorities/Faith Development
* November 16, 2018               Parent-Teacher Conferences
* December 7, 2018                 Provincial Education Priorities
* January 18, 2019                   Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting
* February 15, 2019                 Parent-Teacher Conferences
* June 7, 2019                          Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting
* June 28, 2019                        Provincial Education Priorities

**School Colours & Mascot**

Blue and white Tiger

**School Motto:**

Learning with Hearts, Hands and Minds – Growing in Harmony

*\*\*Please note that information may change throughout the year, and we will do our best to keep this document updated. The most recent version of this document will be posted on our school blog (www.stceciliaparentcouncil.weebly.com).\*\**

**When will I find out what teacher my child has?**

You will be notified about your child’s teacher at *Welcome to Kindergarten Night*. Going forward, for SK and up, you will find out the teacher’s name on the first day of school.

**What can I expect on the first day?**

They should wear blue and white and adhere to the dress code. They will need to bring lunch, a drink and a snack. Please note that St. Cecilia is a nut-free school. When the bell rings your child will line up in a designated area of the front yard.

**Where do I drop off my child?**

St. Cecilia encourages walking, biking or carpooling to school to ease congestion. *Parking regulations are strictly enforced before and after school and dropping off or parking in the staff parking lot is prohibited.*

Students may be dropped off in the Kindergarten schoolyard gate at the front of the school, beginning at 8:15AM when teacher supervision begins. Due to space, parents are not allowed in the Kinder playground. This area can become quite congested and, therefore, the parents have decided that adults are not allowed to enter or stay in the schoolyard with their child for safety reasons, and it allows the supervising teacher do his/her job. Parents may stand outside the fence to watch their child.

Parents cannot walk their children into the classrooms. When the bell rings, the teachers will walk the students into class. For the safety of all our children, it is important that we comply with these rules. The first day of school is emotional for some people and you might want to say good-bye to your child inside the school but this compromises the safety of other students by allowing un-documented visitors inside the school. As parents, it is our duty to comply with this rule to protect everyone.

**What if it’s raining when I drop my child off?**

If it is raining in the morning students are asked to go into the lower level of the school or the gym. Teachers will be on duty to supervise the children.

**What if my child is late for school?**

Your child must report to the office, advise the secretary of their name, grade and teacher, and get a late slip. They can then take the late slip and go directly to their class. You may accompany your child to the office to get the late slip. If the main school doors are locked, just press the button to the right of the door to be let in.

If it is a planned late arrival due to an appointment, you must call the school to advise otherwise they will be assumed absent and you will be called at home. You can leave this information on the school’s voicemail out of hours by following the prompts.

**What if my child will be absent from school?**

If your child is going to be late or absent from school, you have to notify the school by calling (416) 393- 5218 and leaving a message before 8:00 a.m. This action is required as part of the Safe Arrival Program.

**Is child-care available before and after school?**

St Cecilia does not offer child-care, but PLASP runs a before and after school care program at the school. You can find out more about PLASP at [www.plasp.com](http://www.plasp.com/) or call them at 1-888-739-4102. You should have also received information from the school about daycares in the area around St. Cecilia. If not, you can get information about local daycares from the office. As a courtesy to you a list of last year’s care providers is attached at the end. Please note that childcare needs are very individual and for this reason, *none of these providers are recommended*. Please make your own enquires to see which one meets your needs.

Students that attend PLASP are dropped off inside the school. You may enter the school through the front door or the back door by ringing the bell. The front door of the school is the middle door facing Evelyn Avenue. The back door with the bell is the door that is the furthest south.

**How do I find out about the school bus schedule and bus stops?**

Registration for busing must be done at Welcome to Kindergarten evening and subsequently via a yearly notice from SK-grade 8. Please contact the school directly should you have any other transportation questions.

A staff member will greet bus students at the curb in front of the school. There is a second staff member on duty in the Kindergarten playground.

At dismissal, students line up in the gym and are accompanied to the buses. It is important that your child knows their bus number, although the school will provide a bus number tag that will be attached to your child’s backpack on their first full day of school. It is recommended that you put information in your child’s backpack specifying what their after school arrangements are to avoid confusion.

**Do I need to worry that my child could get lost in the shuffle?**

No need to worry! Although the first days and weeks of schools may be confusing to you as a parent, and to your child, please keep in mind that the school has been doing this for 100 years. Each teacher, or teacher plus assistant, knows exactly who is in their class. There is a buddy system for washroom breaks and children line up going to and from recess and lunch. If your child happened to be put on the bus by mistake, do not worry, he/she will be returned to school to the main office. You may want to talk to your child and tell them where he/she is supposed to go after school.

**What is the best advice for parents to help navigate their child’s educational journey at St. Cecilia?**

The best thing you can do is get connected with other parents. Share cell phone numbers and help remind each other of field trips, civvies days or special events. You can start networking with other parents at the Kindergarten welcome night, or the first day of school. If you can drop your child off at school in the morning, many parents are around to drop off their child and you can meet each other face to face. Also, joining CSPC (Catholic School Parent Council) is a great way to meet other parents and find out what is happening at the school. CSPC meets once a month at the school, and you are not required to do anything except show up, meet some great people and find out what’s happening in your school community.

Some parents try to organize playdates before school begins so that their child will have a familiar face in the classroom.

Many teachers also maintain a blog or use the agenda and/or Google Classroom to help get information home. Ask your child’s teacher what their methods are.

**Where else can I get information?**

You can always talk to your child’s teacher or other staff at the school. Every teacher has their own preference on how to communicate. Some prefer email and some prefer notes written in the agenda or placed in the child’s backpack. If this is not working for you, discuss other alternatives with the teacher.

CSPC has a Facebook page (@stceciliaparents) as well blog (www.stceciliaparentcouncil.weebly.com) and the school regularly sends out emails with monthly newsletters and a calendar. You can also follow St. Cecilia on twitter at @StCeciliaCS or you can navigate through the Toronto Catholic District School Board website at [www.tcdsb.org](http://www.tcdsb.org/) and of course, you can join the parent council (CSPC) and get on the email list or come to the monthly meetings.

**Fundraiser:** Order labels. Go to mabelslabels.com. Go to Fundraising, select St. Cecilia Catholic School, then select your labels. Other fundraisers are held throughout the school year, more information to follow.

**What do I do if my child needs to leave early?**

Parents should send a note to the teacher explaining the date and time of early pick up. When the parent arrives to pick up the child, the child will be called to the office. Parents will sign children out using the checkout system in the office.

**What is the bathroom policy for JK students?**

Each kindergarten class has its own bathroom; in addition, there is a set of bathrooms on the lower level of the school. If students need to use hallway bathrooms, they are assigned a buddy to go with them and they require a washroom pass given to them by their teacher.

Unless there are special circumstances, it is expected that kindergarten children have independent bathroom skills including unbuttoning/buttoning, unzipping/zipping, and wiping and washing hands. Summer is a good time to solidify independent bathroom skills if needed.

Kindergarten teachers will request that a second set of clothes be kept in the classroom in the event of a bathroom accident or any other kind of accident where water or paint gets spilled on clothes.

**What supplies will my child need?**

Kindergarten students will be required to bring a backpack large enough to carry library books, school papers, a lunch box and jacket. Teachers will request any additional items that your child needs at the start of the school year.

**Can I get the names and phone numbers of the other children in my child’s class for playdates and parties?**

St Cecilia will not provide this information to parents, so that’s why it’s important for you to try to show up at the school the first month to meet other parents and get this information yourself.

Sometimes teachers will send home a class list, with first names only, for the purposes of addressing

Christmas or Valentine’s Day cards to other children in the class. Hang on to that list!

**Can my child purchase lunch at school?**

CSPC runs a fundraising program whereby you can purchase a lunch for your child several Fridays each month.

Also, there is an independent business called *The Lunch Lady* that delivers hot meals to students on certain days of the week (days to be determined). If you are interested in signing your child up with *The Lunch Lady*, you can visit their website at: [www.thelunchlady.ca](http://www.thelunchlady.ca/) – see bag & flyer insert.

Our school also offers lunches provided by Rose Reisman – see flyer insert

On occasion, your child’s teacher may organize parties with food – such as a Halloween Party or Christmas Party. At this time, the teacher may request that you donate an item to the party, details to be provided by the teacher at the time of the festivities.

Also, sometimes the Student Council organizes a Bake Sale. You can send your child to school with money and they can purchase a treat. Parents are generally notified a few weeks in advance of bake sales or special activities.

For students that bring their lunch from home, St. Cecilia strives to be a “green” school and therefore encourages litter-less lunches. This means packing sandwiches in re- useable containers instead of wrapping them in plastic wrap that would be thrown away. We also encourage refillable water bottles instead of juice boxes. Watch for the monthly calendar – it usually reminds students and parents to have completely litter-less lunches on Thursdays.

**What about food allergies?**

St. Cecilia staff and students take *food allergies very seriously*, and therefore we are a **nut free school.** If peanut butter or other nut products are found in your child’s lunch, that item will be removed immediately, contained and a parent will be contacted to provide a nut free lunch.

If your child has an allergy or medical issue, all staff will be notified, not just your child’s teacher.

**Who do I call if I have a concern about my child’s teacher or about a general school issue?** Should you have any concerns, your child’s teacher is the first person with whom you should speak. If you feel that your concerns are not adequately addressed, then you should contact administration who will address your concerns. It is recommended that you call the main office and make an appointment to see them.

**Can my child bring in a favorite toy or blanket?**

Toys are only allowed if a teacher has set up a show and tell time. Favorite stuffed animals or other comfort items are only allowed with the permission of the teacher.

Electronic devices should not be brought to school, and toy weapons are never to be brought to school, not even for show and tell.

**Will my child receive a report card?**

Children receive progress report in November and two report cards. One in February and one in June Parent/teacher conferences are set up in November and February, usually for about ten minutes, to discuss how your child is doing in school. If you need more time with the teacher, you can ask to meet again at a later time.

**What is the dress code?**

Plain white or navy blue top and navy blue bottom. No slogans, stripes, logos, denim or denim copies are permitted. Running shoes are the footwear of choice for safety reasons and are crucial to safe and active play during Physical Education.

CSPC often organizes fundraisers where you can buy St. Cecilia branded clothing that meets uniform requirements. Watch out for these notices during the year. Otherwise, you can purchase blue and white clothing from lots of local shops including Walmart, the Children’s Place and Gymboree.

**What are Spirit Days?**

Spirit days allow students to celebrate different themes during the school year by having some fun and dressing in a humorous fashion. Sometimes the school has a spirit week, comprised of themed days. For example: Pajama day

**What are Civvies Days?**

On days called “Civvies Day” students can wear regular clothing to school and not follow the dress code. Usually the Student Council asks for a donation of $1 – 2 for charity in order to wear civvies.

Civvies days are usually noted on the monthly calendar issued by the office. You can find the monthly calendars and newsletters on the St Cecilia Facebook page as well as the school’s website.

**Can I call my child during the day?**

In the event of an emergency please contact the main office.

**What if my child gets sick or hurt during the school day?**

You will be notified immediately and asked to come and pick up your child. If the school cannot reach the first parent or guardian, then they will immediately call the second parent or guardian for pick up.

If the injury is serious and requires immediate medical attention, staff will call 911 and the parent. An administrator from the school will accompany the child to the hospital and wait there until a parent arrives.

**What is a book fair? Why am I being sent Scholastic Publishing flyers from school?**

From time to time your child may bring home flyers from Scholastic Books. This is a part of the school’s fundraising, and a portion of the sale of these books goes back to the school. You can complete the order form and return to your child’s teacher. This is not necessary, but if you are going to buy books anyway, why not help the school raise money?

The Scholastic publisher holds the book fairs at the school and essentially it’s an opportunity for students to shop for a book at school. This is not a requirement, and if you don’t send money, your child does not purchase a book.

**What do I do if my child has lice, or if I receive a letter stating that a student in my**

**child’s class has lice?**

First of all, try not to panic. Lice infestations in schools are a national problem, but pose no major public health threat. Don’t be embarrassed – lice tend to thrive in cleaner, freshly washed hair, so getting lice is no reflection on your family’s hygiene. School policy dictates that you notify the school that your child has lice and that you do not send them to school until they are lice free. However, if you’ve never seen lice or nits before, it may be hard to spot. There are several lice removal agencies you can contact in Toronto (for example, Nit Wits) and they will either come to your home to treat your child and the rest of the family or you can go to their lice removal clinics. This is somewhat expensive but effective. For most parents, once you’ve been through one case of lice, you tend to be more vigilant looking for them and catching them before your child becomes badly infected. The best way to get rid of them is to purchase a good lice comb from a drug store and comb through your child’s hair each night.

You may get notifications from the school that someone in your child’s class has reported lice, so when this happens, check your child’s hair more frequently to ensure you catch it early.

Although it’s not school policy, when you get to know the parents in your child’s class, it’s good to have an informal way to let each other know if your child has lice and if there is any risk of it spreading to classmates. This seems to be a bigger problem in JK/SK because little children tend to share hats, hug each other and play closely together.

If you feel like the school is not acting quickly enough or taking a lice issue seriously enough – take a deep breath and try to be patient. All primary schools face occasional lice outbreaks and they do the best they can to follow policies designed to advise parents as quickly as possible. But keep in mind that it happens every year, all year, and affects a large number of students, so it’s a normal part of their job that they take seriously but it may not alarm them in the same way as it will alarm and inconvenience you and your family.

**How can I get involved with the parent community/CSPC?**

Our parent community is called CSPC. It is the Catholic School Parent Council formed by parents of the current students. All parents are welcome to join CSAC. Parents who are part of CSPC form committees to organize different events and activities in the school, and these include the Curriculum Night Barbecue, Taste of St. Cecilia, Fun Fair, and First Communion Luncheon, to name just a few.

The families you meet this year are going to be a big part of your child’s life for the next decade. St Cecilia Catholic School has great teachers, a wonderful staff and a large and engaged parent community. Welcome to St Cecilia!

**Last year’s list provided by St. Cecilia of before and**

**after school care providers in the area.**

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| **Before and After School Day Cares** | |
| Angelgate Daycare | 416-763-6078 |
| High Park Early Learning Centre | 416-760-9958 |
| Humberside After School Club | 416-762-8888 |
| Humberside Day Care | 416-762-5509 |
| Little Footsteps Childcare | 416-604-0330 |
| Junction High Park Before/After School | 416-766-3843 |
| Keelemount Daycare | 416-763-6824 |
| One-step-at-a-time | 416-767-1897 |
| Stepping stones | 416-769-9719 |
| Teddy Bear Academy | 647-351-1566 |
| Private Day Care Providers Amina Degel (Glenlake/Quebec) | 416-604-8104 |
| Hidat Fekroy (Driveschildren) | 647-342-6167 |
| Rahella Hussain (Quebec Ave.) | 416-769-1731 |
| Ruta Mesfin (Mountview/Glenlake) | 416-763-2165 |
| Elizabeth Morales (Mountview/Glenlake) | 647-295-7578 |
| Marika Rewt | 416-762-8603 |
| Irina Koudriavtsev (ECE) | 416-854-9022 |

*Please note that childcare needs are very individual and for this reason, none of these providers are recommended. Please make your own enquires to see which one meets your needs.*