



Sathya Sai School of Canada

Parent Handbook

2011- 2012

Lovingly, anxiously
A parent releases a tiny hand
Steps back, prays for protection
Such trust
A teacher pledges to be worthy of that trust
And reaching out,
Invites the child on a voyage of discovery
“Will you need me on this journey?”
The parent asks
“Every step of the way,” the teacher replies.

The end of education is character.

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*Love as
thought is
truth.*

Introduction

The administration and staff of the *Sathya Sai School of Canada* warmly welcome you and your child to our school.

The successful operation of a school requires the cooperation of everyone concerned. We trust that the information included in this Parent Handbook will give you a clear idea of the school's expectations for parents, students, and teachers, and the daily operations of the *Sathya Sai School*. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns, or wish to make an appointment.

Background

Inaugurated on September 2, 2000, the school is a private elementary school governed by the Sri Sathya Sai Education Trust of Canada. It is open to all students regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic origin or religion. A nominal fee is charged to cover operational expenses.

The founder of the school is Sri Sathya Sai Baba, whose philosophy of education has inspired the founding of schools in Africa, Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, Mexico, and South America. His educational philosophy is based on the view that a balanced education gives importance not only to academic success, but also to the development of character. His educational program, called Education in Human Values (EHV), aims at developing each child's highest potential through the inculcation of the universal values of Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence.

Mission of the Sathya Sai School

The mission of the school is human excellence. In an atmosphere of love and mutual respect each child is encouraged to excel and aspire to his or her full potential. To fulfill this mission, the administration and staff will provide:

- A loving and nurturing climate for the growth of character, the development of noble ideals and the enrichment of virtues;



*Love as
action is
right
conduct.*

- Opportunities for responsible citizenship through a focus on the integration of the human values of Love, Truth, Right Conduct, Peace and Non-Violence in curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- A better understanding of all cultures and religious beliefs, and a sense of unity amidst diversity;
- A challenging curriculum that promotes academic excellence;
- Encouragement for parent-teacher-school cooperation and the promotion of community involvement;
- An opportunity for parents to play an active role in the integrated development of a socially conscious and ethically mature student.

Curriculum and Character Development

The curriculum follows the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines. In addition, human values are integrated into curricular and extra-curricular activities.

The school's goal is to develop character and help the students achieve academic excellence by:

- Creating and maintaining a school climate permeated by the human values of Love, Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence;
- Teaching students how to peacefully but effectively discourage harassment and bullying;
- Encouraging kindness, tolerance and an appreciation for the unity of all faiths and cultures;
- Nurturing the students' ability to use the human values in day-to-day decision making;
- Encouraging students to be positive, take responsibility, and practice selfless social service;
- Promoting a healthy lifestyle with a smoke-free and alcohol-free environment, and encouraging vegetarian food;
- Teaching students how to put a ceiling on their desires and not to waste time, energy, money, food and knowledge;
- Using dynamic teaching techniques such as teacher modelling, experiential learning and other methods to promote values.



*Love as
feeling is
peace.*

The Role of the Teacher

Teachers at the *Sathya Sai School* will strive to integrate human values in their own lives by expressing these values in their thoughts, words and deeds. They will:

- Be exemplars of good character by practicing the five Human Values;
- Apply the well-established principles of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values in teaching approaches and methods;
- Develop positive and productive relationships with students and parents;
- Set high standards that motivate students to excel academically;
- Use creative approaches such as light meditation and yoga to reduce stress and to increase the student's self-confidence, self-knowledge and ability to think creatively;
- Maintain high standards of discipline;
- Assess students' work thoroughly and constructively, and provide regular feedback;
- Create a collaborative relationship between the home and the school;
- Introduce extra-curricular programs that will develop the student's personality, and interests.

The Role of the Parent

The success of many of our programs is dependent upon the participation of all students and you, the parents. Therefore, your attendance and that of your child(ren) at the following events is most important:

Family Nights – held throughout the year

Year-End Concert/Rehearsal – Second week of December– (dates to be decided)

Walk for Values – May/June 2012 (date to be decided)

Sports Day – May 12, 2012



*Love as
understanding
is
non-violence.*

Student Code of Conduct

All students shall be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness by other students and staff, and they shall be provided with a learning environment that is free from physical, emotional, and social abuse.

In return, students of the *Sathya Sai School* are expected to:

- Show respect for authority, parents, elders, others and their property, values, and ethnic backgrounds;
- Strive for academic excellence;
- Be disciplined and apply the five human values in daily life;
- Follow good study and work habits such as concentration and time management;
- Be friendly and cooperative by forming positive relationships with peers and adults;
- Show initiative and a willingness to accept responsibility;
- Obey school attendance, punctuality and other policies;
- Develop an attitude of selfless service to the community.

In the event that a student's conduct does not meet expectations, the school and his/her parents will work together to help the student grow and learn from experience.

Punctuality

General Principles

Punctuality is an important life skill. Please help your child learn responsible behaviour by ensuring that he or she arrives on time. All children should arrive at school between 8 a.m. and 8:14 a.m. Exceptions will be made for all students only on days when traffic in the city is disrupted due to severe weather conditions and such exigencies. Barring such rare occasions, all students must arrive at school by 8:14 a.m. in the morning.



Consequences

1. In each term, if a child arrives after 8:15 a.m. 5 times, he/she will receive a green slip as a warning.
2. For their next 5 late arrivals (bringing the total to ten), they will receive a red slip and an in-school suspension on the following school day.
3. The next set of 5 late arrivals (bringing the total to fifteen), will result in a red-cornered green warning slip. This is regarded as a serious violation.
4. Another 5 late arrivals will bring the total of late arrivals for that term to 20 and will result in an immediate one-day out-of-school suspension and will be followed by a meeting of the student and parents with the principal.

Attendance

General Principles

Students display good character when they attend school regularly and punctually, and participate in all scheduled classes. Students are expected to be in school unless they are ill, have a medical appointment or there is an emergency or death in the family. Parents must make sure their child attends school and are held responsible by law for such attendance. Extended holidays during school time often affect a child's achievement, and can affect a child's promotion to the next grade. Extended holidays during school time are, therefore, strongly discouraged.

Excusable and Inexcusable Absences

1. Excusable absences are absences due to:
 - a. Illness, bereavement, family emergencies, or other extenuating circumstances such as grounds for compassion at the discretion of the Principal. Requests for absences should be made to the Principal in writing and should be for a reasonable period so as not to unduly affect the child's progress. Supporting documents should be provided, whenever feasible.



*When there
is beauty
in the
character,
there is
harmony in
the home.*

Illness

In order to ensure overall health and safety of all the children, Sathya Sai School requires that a child does not attend school if s/he displays any of the following symptoms:

- An elevated temperature of over 102 F/ 40C
- Vomited within 24 hour period
- Diarrhoea (3 loose bowel movements) within 24 hours
- Eyes or ears that have any kind of discharge
- Visible rash that has not been diagnosed by a physician
- A severe cough, runny nose and/or congestion
- Any communicable disease including (but not limited to): Coxsackievirus, Fifth Disease, German Measles, Hepatitis A or B, Meningitis, Measles, Mumps, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Ringworm, Scabies, Pink Eye, Impetigo, Scarlet Fever, Strep Throat, Chicken Pox, Tuberculosis. The child will be allowed back at school following a doctor's examination and provision of a note indicating that the child is free of any disease.

b. Pediculosis (Head Lice)

If a child is identified as having an infestation of head lice, he/she will be sent home and will not be readmitted to the school until proper treatment has been carried out.

2. Inexcusable absences are:

- a. Family trips/holidays scheduled when school is in session;
- b. Family visits/reunions when school is in session;
- c. Other unauthorized absences.



*When there
is harmony
in the home,
there is
order in the
nation.*

Consequences

1. If a student is away due to a vacation, early pick-up or any other unauthorized reason, teachers will not be required to provide make up tests or extra assistance before or after the absence. Missed tests and assignments will be marked as zero.
2. If a student misses more than 10 school days, for inexcusable absences, the principal will review the student's attendance and performance, and may refer the matter to the Board of Trustees. The Board may issue a warning that further inexcusable absences will result in exclusion from the school or offer the seat to another student on the waiting list.
3. If a student misses 20 school days for inexcusable absences the student will automatically lose his seat.

Please check the school calendar to schedule appointment days and activities so they do not conflict with school attendance.

Progressive Discipline

In cases of persistent behavioural misconduct, progressive disciplinary action will be implemented. This consists of: (1) verbal warning by teacher; (2) teacher meets with student; (3) principal meets with student; (4) principal, teacher, and parents meet with student to devise a behavioural modification plan; (5) if inappropriate behaviour persists, student receives a suspension.

Lunch

Teachers will create a pleasant lunch time atmosphere in their classrooms. The following rules will be observed:

1. Students will sit at tables and have lunch in an orderly and responsible manner.
2. Students will be seated until dismissed.
3. Children will assume responsibility for cleaning up their eating area.
4. After dismissal, they will go outdoors. During inclement weather, students will remain inside.



5. Parents are required to pack only vegetarian snacks and lunches, and should avoid providing food or drink with a high sugar content.
6. There will be no eating or drinking in the halls.

Recess / Snacks

Parents are to send daily snacks with children – snacks such as fruit, sliced vegetables, or other nutritious vegetarian food.

Extracurricular Activities

With volunteer parents and teacher advisors, we plan to offer activities for students during noon hour in the winter season. Students will be placed in value houses, and activities may include house league sports, and student clubs for activities such as music, art, dance and drama. After school clubs may include activities such as basketball and chess.

Fieldtrips

Fieldtrips are essential for broadening students' understanding and knowledge, and are an essential component of a well-rounded education. Parents will be notified in advance of all fieldtrips requiring private and public transportation. A letter will be sent home providing details of the trip and costs. If the principal is informed beforehand, no child will be denied the right to participate in a fieldtrip due to a lack of funds. A standard permission slip covering all excursions will be filed in the office. Students must realize that they are ambassadors for the school wherever they are, and are expected to act responsibly and be well-behaved at all times.

Parent Volunteers

Research shows that parent involvement ranks as one of the most important factors in a child's success at school. At the *Sathya Sai School* we are committed to forging a strong link with our parents and the community.



*When there
is order in
the nation,
there is
peace in the
world.*

We would appreciate assistance in preparing classroom materials, reading to students, helping in the library or lunch rooms, supervising on fieldtrips, forming school clubs, and assisting in noon hour activities. Early in the school year, a parent council is formed. If you would like to volunteer your services to the school, please contact the principal.

Parent Workshops

To enhance the partnership of parents and the school, a number of workshops are offered throughout the school year on the philosophy of Education in Human Values and effective parenting. The Dynamic Value Parenting (DVP) Workshop, a 15-week workshop, is mandatory for all parents of students attending our school during the first year of their registration. Parents will be informed of these workshops through the school newsletter in collaboration with the DVP National Coordinator.

Homework

Students are expected to complete daily homework assignments. On average, students will be given the following amount of homework each day:

JK to Grade 2	up to 30 minutes on average per day
Grades 3 to 6	up to 1 hour on average per day

Children need guidance and support to develop good work and study habits from an early age. You can help your child with homework by:

1. Providing a suitable place to study with proper lighting and ventilation and freedom from distractions such as TV, stereo, video games, etc. Providing a quiet time in the household during homework and study time would be beneficial.
2. Ensuring your child has a regular time for homework and study. Help your child develop the habit of studying at the same time each day as far as possible by preparing a schedule which includes time for recreation, chores, homework and studying.
3. Monitoring your child's homework. If homework is not done, the teacher may send home a letter or phone you.
4. Parents are encouraged to read stories to their children in order to improve their language fluency.



Communication between School and Home

Communication between the school and parents is of utmost importance. Our primary communication link with parents and guardians will be our students. Let your child know that he or she has an obligation to ensure that you receive information from the school. In addition to personal visits and phone contacts, the *Sathya Sai School* will communicate with parents in the following ways:

1. Report Cards

One Progress Report will be issued in November. Two Report Cards will be issued each year: in March and June. If you have any concerns about your child's progress at any time, please contact your child's teacher. Our teachers will be happy to discuss your child's work at any time by appointment. Please call the school office or contact your child's teacher by phone or email to make an appointment.

2. Parent/Teacher/Student Interviews

Parent-student-teacher Interviews will be scheduled soon after the first term Progress Report and second term Report Card. You will be reminded of these dates in school newsletters. Whenever you have concerns about the welfare and progress of your child, do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher first.

3. Newsletters

Newsletters will be issued bi-weekly to inform parents of school events and activities. The newsletters will highlight important events that have occurred, announce future events, report student successes, etc. Please read these to stay informed about school activities. The newsletters are also available on the Sathya Sai School website.

Communication between Home and School

Parents are required to communicate with the school in the following ways:

1. Reporting Absences

If your child will be absent from school, parents are required to phone the school office before 8:30 a.m. to report the absence and reason for it. If the phone line is busy, a message may be left. For the safety of the



children, it is very important that the school has received a message from the parents regarding absences so that the whereabouts of all students may be accounted for.

2. Calls to Teachers

Teachers are not available to take calls while they are in their classrooms teaching. Please leave a message for the teacher and s/he will return the call when time permits.

3. Pick-up Arrangements

At the beginning of the school year a note will be sent home to all parents requesting the name and contact number of the person or alternate who will be picking up your child each day. If you have arranged private transportation, the name and phone number of the driver must be provided.

4. Changes to Pick-up Arrangements

Notes must be sent to the school office and to the teacher on the morning of the day requesting a change in pick-up arrangements. Children will not be dismissed to leave with another adult if the letter was not submitted that morning. **Phone requests will no longer be accepted by the school.**

5. Early Pick-up

Parents are encouraged not to take their children out of school before the end of the school day, due to the curriculum work they will miss. If it is absolutely necessary to pick up your child(ren) early, notes must be sent to the office and to the teacher no later than on the morning of the day requesting early pick-up. Teachers will not be required to provide make up tests or extra assistance before or after the absence. Missed tests and assignments will be marked as zero.

Recycling

We are dedicated to promoting resource conservation and waste management through the integrated waste management hierarchy “Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.” School programs integrate these concepts into the curriculum in order to set an example of natural resource stewardship and responsible citizenship to our students.



Celebrating Success

Certificates and awards will be issued at special assemblies to recognize student success in academic and non-academic areas. Students' accomplishments in their out-of-school extra-curricular activities will be acknowledged during the morning announcements.

Service to the Community

One of the key goals of the *Sathya Sai School* is to encourage an attitude of selfless service to the community. Students of the *Sathya Sai School* will, therefore, participate actively in service projects. Initially, these will be confined to the school environment and the home, and gradually to organized service projects in the community. Teachers will also plan service projects as an integral part of their units of study.



*Watch Your:
Words
Actions
Thoughts
Character
Heart*

School Hours

School doors open at 8:00 a.m. The school day begins at 8:14 a.m. and ends at 3:20 p.m. All students are asked to remain outside the school before the bell rings unless the weather is severe. A staff member will be available for supervision only at 8:00 a.m. **Please do not drop off your children before this time.**

The schedule for each of the classes is as follows:

Arrival	8:00 a.m.
Bell work and attendance	8:00 – 8:14 a.m.
National anthem, daily prayer, morning announcements	8:15 a.m.
Classes begin	8:25 a.m.
Lunch	11:20 a.m.
Dismissal	3:20 p.m.

Kindergarten Program

As of September 2011, the Kindergarten program is full-time and follows the same schedule as other classes.



School Calendar: Sept. 6, 2011 – Jun. 28, 2012

Important Dates

Labour Day holiday	September 5, 2011
School begins	September 6
Thanksgiving holiday	October 10
Remembrance Day holiday	November 11
Founders Day (school holiday)	November 23
Last day before Christmas break	December 22
Christmas holiday	December 23, 2011 – January 8, 2012 (inclusive)
First day after Christmas break	January 9, 2012
Last school day before March break	March 7 (for students); March 8 AM (P-T interviews)
March break holidays	March 9-18 (inclusive)
First day after March break	March 19
Good Friday holiday	April 6
Easter Monday holiday	April 9
Victoria Day holiday	May 21
Last day of classes for students	June 28
Last operational day – staff only	June 29, 2012



P.D. Days

No classes for students	September 16, 2011
	October 28, 2011
	December 2, 2011
	February 17, 2012
	March 8, 2012
	April 16, 2012
	May/June (to be determined)

Early Dismissal Days

Early dismissal at 11:20 AM (1/2 day of school)	Christmas Concert – 2 nd week of December 2011 t.b.d. Open House – March 22, 2012
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Report Cards / Parent Teacher Interviews

Progress report issued	November 18, 2011
Interviews	November 28-30, December 1, 2011 (5:00 – 8:00 p.m.) December 2, 2011 (9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.)
1 st report card issued	March 2, 2012
Interviews	March 5-7, 2012 (5:00 – 8:00 p.m.) March 8, 2012 (9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.)
Final report card issued	June 28, 2012



Parent Council Meetings

Third Monday of every month, except for: 6:00 p.m.
December 6, 2011
February 13, 2012
March 26, 2012
April 23, 2012
May 7, 2012
June 11, 2012

School Office

For additional information and staff profiles, please visit the school's website or contact the school during business hours.

Hours Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

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