



# ST. PATRICK'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



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## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND LEARNING ASSISTANCE

In accordance with the CISVA rationale and based on the guidelines and policies of the British Columbia Ministry of Education, as laid out in 'Inclusive Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines' (2024), St. Patrick's Elementary School supports and promotes the inclusion of students with disabilities or diverse abilities as participating members of its school community.

St. Patrick's Elementary School is committed to promoting and delivering accessible, high-quality intervention and support services for children with disabilities or diverse abilities and their families, through an inclusive approach. We strive to improve and provide the right services at the right time, with clear IEP goals and objectives, strong progress monitoring and evaluation systems, within an integrated, and coordinated curriculum. Our curriculum focus is to create and maintain conditions that foster success for all students.

### **Inclusive Education Policy Goals**

The School aims to provide appropriate services for all students who have been accepted into its program, including students with disabilities or diverse abilities. In order to allow students to participate in available programs, the School endeavors to make its curricula accessible by employing the principles of Universal Design for Learning, by encouraging the use of curriculum differentiation strategies, and by providing opportunities for students to receive extra support within an RTI framework. The School has procedures in place for the identification and assessment of students with disabilities or diverse abilities. To ensure a continuum of service, the School strives to review the files of newly-accepted students with previously identified disabilities or diverse abilities and implement the necessary adaptations, accommodations and modifications in a timely fashion.

### ***When a student may need assistance***

The identification/assessment phase begins in the classroom, as the teacher observes exceptionalities in learning and behavior. The teacher responds by entering the first phase of the process, initiating in-depth, systematic classroom observation and evaluation. Further, while beginning a comprehensive assessment of learning needs, the teacher also introduces variations in instructional approaches, evaluating the success of using such teaching techniques and instructional materials with the student. The teacher consults with the parent and, when appropriate, the student regarding concerns and progress. The teacher discusses with the parent the appropriateness of a referral to a physician for a comprehensive medical examination to exclude the possibility of a medical basis for the concern (for example hearing and vision testing).

If these efforts prove insufficient to meet the student's educational needs the teacher embarks on a process of consultation and collaboration with the school-based resource personnel. This may take the form of classroom observation, additional assessment, the consideration of additional classroom intervention strategies, and implementation of those strategies.

A school-based team which includes the administrator, classroom teacher, learning assistance teacher, a school psychologist etc. can meet to problem-solve in assisting the classroom teacher to develop and implement IEP

instructional and or management strategies and to coordinate support resources for students with disabilities or diverse abilities within the school.

St. Patrick's Elementary School community works to ensure that all learners are supported in participating in school, in developing their individual potential, and in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need for personal success; and in contributing positively to society. We strive to implement a program and curriculum to enable acceptance and to meet the disabilities or diverse abilities of all students within our community.

***Services to support diverse learner include:***

- Curricular support
- Adaptations and modifications
- Inclusion and Integration
- Differentiated Instruction
- Universal Design for Learning
- Response to Intervention
- Personal Safety (ensuring a safe learning environment)
- Personalized Learning (focus on student engagement in learning and giving students choices – more of a say in what they do and how they learn, through flexible timing and pacing in a range of learning environments, with learning supports and services tailored to meet student needs)
- Developmentally appropriate programs (teacher developed learning plans to build on the student's interests, goals, and learning needs, together with student reflection on their work and setting new goals)
- Social Emotional - Zones of Regulation
- Professional resources such as speech language services, school psychologist services, etc.
- Para-educator support
- Access to support from Provincial Resource Programs
- Parental collaboration through school-based team
- Communication books (home to school)
- Access to technology and programs (Set BC)
- Access to a quiet space or a sensory room (sensory room still at the planning stages)
- Services to support from Provincial Resource Programs (POPARD; Auditory Outreach Provincial Resource Program)

Depending upon the individual situation, a school-based team may deem it appropriate to refer a student on for extended assessments such as psycho-educational testing, speech and language assessments, etc. Parents are to be notified and consulted with throughout the process. When extended assessments are requested, the goal is to better understand the student's strengths and needs in order to plan more effectively for that student.

***Assessment***

The purpose of assessment and evaluation is to plan and implement an educational program to help the student learn. The assessment support may include:

- Criterion-referenced or norm-referenced assessment as appropriate to answer questions about how best to provide instruction or support
- Systematic observation and collection of behavioural data to establish baseline/progress data, or describe functional behaviours;
- Synthesis of information from parents, student records, other service providers, and health-related information to aid the assessment process; and
- In-depth interviews with students to determine their knowledge of the learning process and/or thinking strategies

### ***Informal/formal Assessments and Evaluations***

When the school-based team decides it is necessary to gather additional information in order to provide appropriate instruction, a referral for psycho-educational assessment and pre-referral intervention. *Emphasis on school-based problem solving lessens the number of referrals for testing.* Informal assessment services include systematic observation, file review, consultation, interviews and assessment to determine academic skill development, strengths and weaknesses in learning and assessment to determine academic skill development, strengths and weaknesses in learning processes and social/adaptive functioning.

Formal psycho-educational assessments serve diagnostic and planning functions for students with disabilities or diverse abilities and may include assessment of cognitive functioning. These assessments provide information that assists teachers and parents to better understand the nature of the disability or diverse ability, developmental factors and educational, social, emotional and career implications. Assessment information is used for planning and goal setting, selecting teaching and behavior intervention strategies, and evaluations. Assessment findings are summarized in a written report that is shared with the parent/guardian, the school-based team, and when appropriate, the student.

### ***Classroom Assessments***

Teachers use formative (assessment for learning) and summative assessment (assessment of learning). These results are primarily reported in the student Communicating Student Learning as well as through communication with parents or guardians. These assessments may include curriculum-based assessments, checklists, observations, portfolios, work samples, student reflections, conferences, questioning, discussions, tests, exams, quizzes, etc.

### ***School Wide Assessments***

- Dibels – results used to identify students who need additional assistance, to monitor student progress, the effectiveness of intervention strategies and to guide instruction. (kindergarten-grade 7, three times per year)
- School Wide Write – to identify students who need additional assistance, and to guide instruction. (Grade 1-7, twice a year: beginning and end of year)
- Gates-MacGinitie - results used to identify students who need additional assistance, and to guide instruction. (Grades 4-7)

### ***School Psychologist TBD (Currently no staff)***

The school psychologist supports students, school personnel and parents in enhancing academic, adaptive and social skills for students. Our school psychologist plays a supportive role in the identification, assessment, planning, implementation, reporting and evaluation process.

Developing an Individual Education Plan, the school psychologist may:

- Provide collaborative consultations
- Assist with pre-referral interventions
- Provide psycho-educational assessments for students referred by the school-based team
- Provide ongoing collaborative planning
- Contribute to the design and evaluation of the IEP, and
- May provide inservice training in the area of assessment.

Consultation and collaboration services include

- Consultation with teachers, parents, students and community agencies regarding the nature of students' strengths and needs, their educational implications, and ways to enhance learning and interpersonal relations
- Collaboration with school-based and or district personnel to gather classroom-based data, design, or implement instructional strategies, and design and implement behavior management interventions.

### ***Speech-Language Pathologist TBD (Currently no staff)***

The services provided by the Speech-language Pathologist (SLP) are designed to support students whose education is adversely affected by oral communication difficulties. The SLP provides a full range of services encompassing prevention, identification and assessment, direct instruction for students (individually, in classroom settings, or in small groups as appropriate), consultations, collaboration with other educators regarding the student's needs in the classroom and other school environments, in-service training, information sharing with families and other service providers and public education. Any student with delayed, disordered or atypical speech and or language skills is brought to the attention of the SLP.

St. Patrick's Elementary School SLP and school psychologist are consulted on a weekly basis meeting with the Learning Resource Teacher. They are available if needed for school-based team meetings, observations and to make recommendations. They may consult with POPARD and inform parents with the team of any formal assessments.

Providing the school can accommodate space and time, families may be able to bring in from their home team their Speech-Language Pathologist for sessions during school hours.

### ***Teacher for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Teacher for the Visually Impaired***

The services provided by the Hearing Impaired or Visually Impaired Teachers are designed to support students whose education is adversely affected by deaf and or hard of hearing and or visual difficulties. The teacher works with the team (family and school) in the following capacities.

- Consult, advise and collaborate with the school regarding the development and implementation of appropriate support for student(s) with hearing loss.
- Administer assessments to determine auditory training objectives for the student(s).

- Participate in meetings to develop and or review IEP for the student(s).
- Provide individual and or small group instruction.
- In collaboration provide year end reports.
- In-servicing school staff and supporting student(s) on the operation of assistive listening/visual devices recommended by medical professionals.
- Assisting school with the facilitation of repairs and maintenance of assistive listening/viewing device components.
- Liaising and follow-up with the community professionals when necessary.

### ***Considerations for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment***

All learners are entitled to guidance and support as they strive to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies they need for a bright future; and access to opportunities to extend their learning into areas of personal interest and passion.

- Personalized Learning recognizes each student as an individual learning, with his or her own learning style and unique gifts. It also recognizes and values a student's own individual interests and future goals.
- Differentiated Instruction (DI) is a flexible approach to teaching in which a teacher plans and carries out varied approaches to address content, learning processes, learning style, practical procedures, presentation strategies, and assessment tools. It results in a more personal, proactive learning environment, inclusive of a wide variety of learners. When teachers differentiate instruction, they provide students with the structures to maximize strengths, work around weaknesses, and experience timely remediation. This enables students to take advantage of effective learning strategies as they begin to understand their own personal learning styles, interests, needs, and engage with their learning. As a result, student motivation increases.
- Universal Design for Learning (UDI) is a framework of instructional approaches that recognizes and accommodates varied learning styles. It provides learning activities that expand students' opportunities for acquiring information and demonstrating learning, as well as for enhancing social participation and inclusion. The driver for universal design is the philosophy of proactively addressing needs. Universal design for learning is integrated into regular instructional planning as a mechanism to make diversity the norm. It provides support for all students and motivates through the element of choice.
- Response to Intervention (RTI) is a framework for formative assessment that involves collecting data on a regular basis to make instructional decisions in a multi-tier model. RTI is based on the principle of prevention and early intervention. By using ongoing assessment to inform teaching practice and allocate instructional resources, teachers are able to provide appropriate, evidence-based interventions. Central elements of all RTI models include early screening of all students to identify those at risk for academic difficulties, implementing research-based interventions matched to student need and increasing intensity of intervention when needed. RTI also involves continuous monitoring and recording of student progress during interventions to guide decisions for both the student (e.g. further assessment, individualized planning) and the teacher (e.g. using small group or one-to-one learning concepts, topics for professional development). Although RTI originates from special education, it is intended for use with all students in general education.

### ***Social Emotional Room***

Our Social Emotional Room is an inviting, inclusive, flexible and safe space for students who need a calming environment to regulate, take a deep breath, a quick brain break or check-in with a staff member. The equipment covers a wide range of skills, approaches and sensory needs.

### ***Social Group/Playgroups***

Students in the lunch recess social/play groups are supported in learning to make friends and to further develop their social skills in smaller groups. They work on goals needed when playing games i.e. turn taking, negotiating and resolving conflicts. At times the groups are taken into the gym and introduced then practice the skills needed in physical activities/games (i.e. tag, ball skills etc. )so that these skills can be transitioned into outdoor recess games. The students are given opportunities to strengthen their friendships and to further build their confidence.

### ***Resources***

Open Parachute: An on-line program to teach mental health skills so as to increase resilience in students. This program is created by clinical psychologists and educators.

Religious Adaptive Curriculum (VANSPEC; Sacramental Kits): Sacramental and religious programs designed for students with special needs.

### **Identification of Disabilities or Diverse Abilities**

Every effort will be made to identify and support those students experiencing difficulties as early as possible. We request that parents, guardians or legal representatives who are aware or have a diagnosis that a new child has a disability or diverse ability inform the school prior to or upon acceptance so that appropriate resources and funding are in place prior to the start of school. Classroom-based assessments will be used to determine students' strengths and areas of difficulty. Once a difficulty is recognized or the school is informed or made aware that a child has disability or diverse abilities, a systematic, targeted in-class intervention will be put in place. If the student continues to struggle, a referral will be made to the school-based team and the intensity and frequency of intervention and support will increase, aided by members of the Learning Resource Team. Once a referral has been made, the school-based team will discuss the needs of students experiencing persistent academic or behaviour difficulties and examine educational intervention options (i.e. through interviews, file-review, observations, and assessment). If deemed necessary, the school-based team will recommend further assessment.

Upon receipt of psycho-educational or other assessment results indicating the need for specialized services, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed unless the student with a disability or diverse abilities requires little or no adaptations to materials, instruction or assessment methods; nor requires modification of the expected learning outcomes; nor does the student require 25 or fewer hours of remedial instruction by



someone other than the classroom teacher, in a school year. Once documentation has been received, the learning resource teacher(s) will determine if students' needs are such that they meet criteria for an inclusive education category, in which case they will designate the students in the appropriate category and report the designation, as per BC Ministry of Education requirements, on the 1701 form in October and February.

### **Individual Education Plans (IEPs)**

The learning resource teacher(s), in collaboration with the classroom teacher(s) and parents, will be responsible for developing an IEP for students who have been formally identified as having a disability or diverse abilities, and who require specialized support in order to access curricula and participate in the life of the school. The IEP will be treated as a working document and will be reviewed three times a year. Parents/guardians will be invited to attend and participate in all formal IEP review meetings.

### **The IEP will contain the following information**

- \* Demographic information including: full name, date of birth, grade or classroom placement, name of parents/guardian, any relevant medical/social information, inclusive education categories and funding, percentage FTE personal care attendant (where applicable);
- \* Recent assessment information;
- \* Summary of the student's strengths and needs;
- \* Goals or outcomes set for that student for that school year where they are different from the learning outcomes set out in an applicable educational program guide (when applicable);
- \* List of the inclusive education supports and services required to achieve goals established for the student (when applicable);
- \* List of the adaptations to educational materials, instructional strategies or assessment methods (when applicable);
- \* Names of all personnel who will be providing the educational program and the inclusive education supports and services for the student during the school year;
- \* Present levels of educational performance of the student;
- \* Methods for measuring the student's progress.

### **Inclusive Education Funding**

Our financial commitment to ensuring the provision of special education services, over and above what we receive in government funding, is significant but it is also reasonably and justifiably limited due to the fact that we operate our school with a finite amount of funds and in accordance with appropriate principles of sound financial management. We are obligated to ensure that we carefully and prudently manage our resources in order to ensure that our entire school is adequately funded in all areas. We will continue to strive to improve our school in all areas, including inclusive education services and supports.