

Peace River - Grimshaw - Manning - McLennan - High Prairie - Valleyview

In the event of an emergency, we kindly request that parents respect the following:

- Please **DO NOT** call the school. We understand the concerns you may have, but it is essential that our telephone system is available for emergency communication.
- Please **DO NOT** call or text your child's cellphone. This may impair emergency communication and, in some cases, place your child at risk.
- Please **DO NOT** come to the school unless you're instructed to. Streets and parking lots may need to be clear for emergency vehicles. If an evacuation occurs, students may need to be transported to a new location for dismissal. Parents and guardians will be notified should this happen.
- If you arrive at the school in the midst of an emergency, you will need to **respect the protocol that's in progress**. We will not compromise our students', staffs', or your safety, so your cooperation is imperative.

To stay informed during an emergency, parents and guardians can utilize the following resources:

- The divisional website (www.hfcrd.ab.ca), as well as their school's website. Updates will be provided as quickly as possible during an emergency.
- Divisional and school social media pages. Updates will be made as quickly as possible during an emergency to keep parents, guardians and the public informed and up to date.
 - HFCRD Facebook Page
 - School Facebook Pages

We encourage everyone to talk to their children about how important it is to follow instructions from their teachers and school officials during any type of emergency.

Carefully read all current safety procedures that are provided by your school or Division and inform your child about them.

We appreciate everyone's cooperation when it comes to keeping our schools safe. If you have any questions about this letter and safety procedure information, please contact your local school during school hours, or contact Holy Family Catholic Regional Division at 780-624-3956, or toll free at 1-800-285-8712.

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The Holy Family Catholic Regional Division (HFCRD) would like to provide Parents and Guardians with the following information about our emergency procedures and protocols to help guide you in the event of an emergency. All protocols are reviewed with students throughout each school year.

Drills

Emergency practice drills are conducted in our schools to prepare all students and staff in each building, this ensures that each individual will be able to act appropriately should an emergency occur. On top of these drills, students will also be informed about how to respond in multiple emergency scenarios. These drills and discussions are created to prepare your child to act swiftly and to minimize fear.

Terminology

Below are terms that all students, parents and guardians should be familiar with:

- **Lockdown:** called for when there is a threat of violence or other crisis that occurs inside the building and moving around or evacuation would increase the risk. Students & staff are to move to the closest classroom immediately, lock the door, cover and close any blinds, turn off the lights and any cell phones and find a safe corner to quietly stay in. No one is permitted in or out of classrooms or the building, under any circumstance, until the emergency has been resolved.
- **Hold and Secure:** used when it is necessary to secure the building due to an emergency threat occurring outside the school. All exterior doors are locked and nobody leaves or enters the building. All students and staff will return to their classroom with instruction continuing. Depending upon the outside threat, additional instructions will be given.

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- **Shelter in Place:** used when personal safety is considered to be in danger if anyone leaves the building. This is mainly used for environmental, weather-related events, or wildlife risks. It can also be used in case of a system failure i.e. a Chemical Release. Everyone must remain in the building and may or may not be able to move freely within the building (instruction may continue); all exterior doors and windows should be closed and locked, and the exterior doors should be monitored to ensure no one leaves the building until local/school authorities advise that conditions are safe.
- **Evacuation:** used to safely remove students and staff from the building when there is an internal threat such as a fire. Staff will check all rooms and washrooms and escort students to muster points. Windows and doors will be closed but not locked, and lights will be left on.

Dismissals

Dismissals may occur at the school or an alternate site (Parent-Child Reunion location), depending on the circumstances related to the emergency. If this occurs, parents/guardians will be contacted with updated information on where they may collect their child(ren).

We understand that when emergencies happen, parents will be concerned and want to be reunited with their child(ren) as soon as possible. Our intention is to make this happen, however, we must ensure that specific procedures are followed and the safety of our students and staff are prioritized before releasing students.

Parents are asked to follow the Parent-Child Reunification Procedures during emergencies. These procedures may take some time, and we ask for your patience.

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Parent-Child Reunion Procedures

1. An area for parent-child reunions will first be established. Parents will be notified at the time of the emergency where this location will be. The location may not be at the school and will depend on the specifics of the emergency.
2. Parents and guardians will be required to fill out a Student Release Request Form. This will ensure that all students are accounted for and only released to authorized individuals.
3. Legal guardians and emergency contacts will be the only people that students will be released to. Please ensure that all emergency contacts and parent/guardian information is kept up to date.
4. Valid identification will be required to pick up a student. This is required to protect your child from being picked up by unauthorized individuals. Even if school members know you, you will still be required to show your identification.
5. A signature will be required to release your student, as it ensures that students are accounted for at all times. Please do not just take your child from the school or evacuation location without signing their release.
6. Once you are reunited with your child it is encouraged that you leave the area immediately. This is for your own safety and your child's as well.

If you are unable to pick up your child, they will be kept at the Parent-Child Reunion location until alternative arrangements can be made.