



# CHRISTIAN HERITAGE SCHOOL

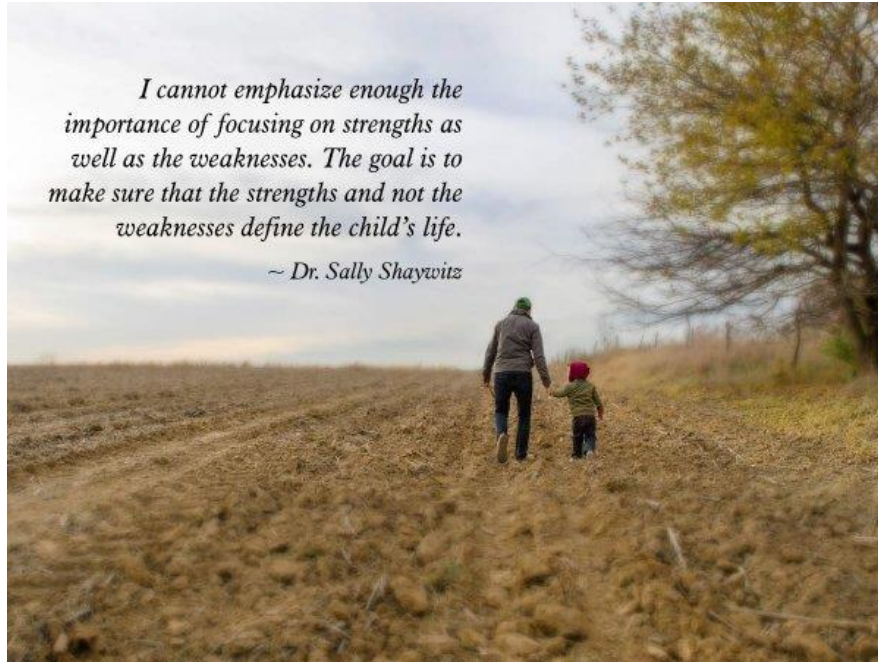
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## Christian Heritage School Resource Department



The greatest resource that the Christian Heritage School (CHS) Resource Department has are the people who are involved with working with the children, developing the programmes to address their individual needs and then delivering the supports.

Our Literacy programme addresses all areas of literacy; reading, writing, speaking and listening. Our goals include helping students become more successful readers by focusing on fluency and comprehension of text. We teach multiple strategies in reading so that students are able to decode an unknown word, so that it looks right, sounds right and makes sense. To help solidify the links between reading and writing we will engage in meaningful writing activities. Discussions on any given topic are also important as this provides an opportunity to expand and enrich vocabulary. Turn taking, listening respectfully, and realizing that others may have a different opinion than ours are valuable life skills. These skills need to be practised both in the classroom and then repeated and reinforced during resource times. We may be able to have small groups based on ability or work one-one with students. It is our goal and prayer that the self-confidence of our students would increase which in turn, will be evident in other areas of their lives. It is during these daily intervention times that relationships are built and students have come to enjoy their time in Resource.

We have a very strong literacy component that Mrs. Araujo facilitates that is called the Barton Reading and Spelling System. This a method of teaching that is designed specifically for



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children with dyslexia or those students who are greatly challenged with the complexities of reading and spelling. It is based on the highly structured Orton-Gillingham approach and is multi-sensory using coloured tiles to help the student recognize vowels and consonants. It is through the use of the senses that children make critical connections between sounds and words. Barton takes the guess work out of reading and spelling by having students memorize spelling rules and practise using them with nonsense as well as real words. A student is individually taught and encouraged by Mrs. Araujo 4 times/cycle for 30 minutes.

Students may also benefit from additional support with Numeracy. Again, this is usually a small group based on similar abilities. Working daily for 15 minutes has proven to be very valuable not only in numeracy skill building, but also in learning to work independently and think before asking a question. Developing and practising a good, independent work ethic is intrinsically built into any small group based learning.

Christian Heritage School's demographic has become very multi-cultural, with growth increasing at a steady rate these past five years in particular. Students who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) has created a need in our school so our Resource team collaborates, discusses and implements strategies to be used in the classroom as well as small groups. The intention is of course to not only increase the students' use and knowledge of English, but also to explain our Canadian customs and traditions. The most effective method for learning English is by immersing the student in the classroom and playground although, being pulled out of the classroom for periods of time is also often necessary, particularly with students in Grades 4-8. We have experienced great success in implementing the Oxford Picture Dictionary curriculum in our small groups.

Our Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Tammy Johannson, has been part of our school for 20 years. As our SLP, she has provided us with an article explaining her role in a school setting which discusses how she "assists in screening and identification, and carries out assessment and diagnosis of speech and language delays and disorders for students. This includes articulation, motor speech, fluency, and phonological awareness. Expressive and receptive language as **content**: vocabulary: labelling, categorizing, semantic knowledge; **use**: pragmatics: nonverbal communication, speaking and listening skills, social communication, **form**: grammar), and augmentative and alternative communication. Since no two students are alike, communication delays and disorders are also very individualized, so that programs and recommendations for individual or group intervention, classroom and home, are based on each students' needs, motivation and support." Ms. Johannson works with students and coordinates and collaborates with the Resource Team, Classroom Teachers, Educational Assistants and Parents as needed and when possible. She is invested in our school, highly skilled in her area of expertise and thoroughly enjoys the children. Mrs. Araujo is also our Speech facilitator working under the direction of Ms. Johannson's to ensure that the programming is carried out



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efficiently, and effectively. A student on our Speech caseload may see Mrs. Araujo 3-4 times/cycle for 15 minutes and see Miss Tammy, as she is known to them, multiple times throughout the school year.

Mrs. Heather Keeble, from Brandon Children's Therapy Team at Prairie Mountain Health is our school's Occupational Therapist. O.T. services are based on a consultative therapy model in the same way the services are delivered by Ms. Johannson. An informational handout from Brandon Children's Therapy Team explains that "this means that an assessment is completed then programming recommendations are provided to parents and the school team. An assessment may include: consultation with parents and/or school team to determine developmental history, observation in the classroom, observation of school work, and/or formal assessment (one to one sessions). Following assessment, programming for home and/or school may be provided (based on the child's needs). Interventions are carried out by parents and/or school team under the direction of the O.T. Re-assessments and changes to programming occur as needed. O.T Assessment and recommendations may include strategies to improve fine motor and/or handwriting skills. Recommendations for alternatives to writing / technology in the middle years are also provided. Activities and recommendations to improve visual motor integration and visual perceptual skills, for sensory processing difficulties, environmental and/or equipment modifications, as well as with self-care activities. Occupational Therapists also may help children with autism learn how to interact with others, or might help children with sensory processing disorders learn ways to interact with their environment in a more comfortable and appropriate way".

Also through Prairie Mountain Health we have access to a Physiotherapist. "School-Aged Physiotherapy services through the Brandon Children's Therapy Team are **consultative**. This means the therapist assesses the child, makes recommendations and provides them to the family, student or school and returns periodically to reassess the child and change or progress the program as appropriate." The article goes on to explain how the P.T. assessment and recommendations include strategies to increase balance, flexibility, strength and coordination. Environmental and or equipment recommendations are also stated in any assessment given to the school.

Another professional that we have worked with is psychologist, Dr. Clemente Rohde. He is able to provide a psychological assessment that will guide us in our educational plan for the student thereby taking into account the various areas identified by Dr. Rohde as concerns.

We have referred children over the years to our community's Child and Adolescent Treatment Center. The area of expertise that applies to schools is the social skills programme where 8 children participate in their very structured social skills curriculum. A child typically attends for the mornings (Monday-Thursday, back to school for Fridays) for a period of several months. To have all these community services has been and will continue to be a blessing to our children at CHS.

Roots of Empathy has been delivered to various classrooms since 2016. The mission of this programme "is to build caring, peaceful and civil societies through the development of empathy



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in children and adults". Through raising the levels of empathy in the classroom we are training our students to be more respectful of those around them, and reduce levels of bullying as well as aggression. It is through experiential learning, that a baby becomes the 'tiny teacher'. As the instructor helps the children to identify and reflect on their own feelings and the feelings of others, emotional literacy is built. We will track 'our' baby's physical development, label his/her feelings and intentions monthly for the school year. Founder of the Roots of Empathy programme, Mary Gordon states that we will learn to become 'changer's in our classroom and become kinder to our friends, gain an "ability to challenge what is not fair and help those with problems". Our Roots of Empathy family along with their 3-4 month old baby begin visiting a designated classroom in October. Family visits occur monthly and allow us to not only become invested in 'our' tiny teacher but also it also gives us an opportunity to ask questions and empathize with the parent(s) as they share the joys and challenges of raising their child.

Christian Heritage's Resource Department has evolved over the years to become just that, a department. As you have seen we are a multi-faceted resource to our students, classroom teachers, educational assistants and parents. We celebrate and are thankful for the great asset and blessings that the team members have contributed and will continue to do so for our school in years to come.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jane Dyck  
Resource Teacher  
Roots of Empathy Instructor  
Teacher Librarian