

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

We aren't Roman Catholic. Will we feel comfortable at Sacred Heart?

Sacred Heart School of Halifax is an independent Catholic school. More than half of our students are Catholic and while many of the remaining students belong to other religious denominations, some claim no religious affiliation. Many of our families who do not have a Catholic or religious background choose Sacred Heart because they like the personal, moral and spiritual dimension of the school. Our culturally diverse student body tells us the religion curriculum stresses values that are addressed in an inclusive way and they like being encouraged to discuss these issues and share their personal opinions both in and out of the classroom. <http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/about/>

What are the benefits of single sex education in high school?

Research has shown and our experience has told us very clearly that both girls and boys thrive in a single sex academic setting. There are significant differences between boys and girls in learning styles and a single sex classroom means we are able to tailor our teaching in the way they learn best. Both boys and girls are given the room to gain confidence in themselves without the distraction of or comparison to the opposite sex. There are opportunities to interact outside of the classroom during extracurricular activities such as band, choir and our theatrical productions as well as at sports events. <http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/high-school/why-single-sex.php>
<http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/fountain-academy/why-single-sex.php>
<http://www.canadianfamily.ca/article/sexed-education/>

Tell me about the French program at Sacred Heart.

French at Sacred Heart begins right away in Junior Primary. Children in grades 1 and 2 are instructed in a bilingual program with students taught in French for half a day and in English for the other half day. Language skills and strategies as well as science themes, social studies and art are taught in both languages. Math, physical education, music and religion are taught in English. Grade 3 to 6 students have a 40 minute French class daily and children are encouraged to speak only French in class.

<http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/elementary-school/french-language.php>

As students move into high school, we continue to balance the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing French along with introducing students to French and French Canadian culture. Our curriculum is supported by learning techniques that have proven results in helping students acquire real fluency – being able to converse freely and competently. In senior high, the French program is divided into Academic and Advanced. Academic courses have been developed for students with less background

but a keen interest in developing their skills among students at a similar skill level. Students graduating from the Advanced stream have a solid foundation in grammar, presentation and written skills, French literature and spoken fluency.

<http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/high-school/french-language.php>

<http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/fountain-academy/french-language.php>

What is the Advanced Placement (AP) Program and how does it compare to the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program?

Sacred Heart offers the internationally recognized AP program which offers students the opportunity to do university work while in high school. Students at SHSH select from a wide-range of Advanced Placement courses which expand upon our regular high school curriculum in arts, sciences, mathematics and languages. Those who do well on the AP exams earn university credits or advanced standing at many universities and colleges across Canada, the US and around the world. AP differs from IB in a variety of ways. Advanced Placement is the older program and is more widely recognized by universities around the world. One of the most significant differences is that students can choose to take one, some, or all available AP courses whereas the IB program requires that the student's entire course load be IB.

<http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/student-opportunities/app.php>

What is the uniform policy at Sacred Heart?

All students at Sacred Heart wear a uniform to school each day. In the high schools, two days a week are set aside for dress uniforms. Each school will occasionally have a "color" day when students do not have to wear their uniform. Often, these occasions are fundraisers for school trips or social causes.

<http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/uniform-shop/>

What about sports and extra curricular activities at Sacred Heart?

Sacred Heart offers a wide range of sports and extra-curricular activities in elementary and in both high schools.

Physical Education in both elementary and high school is an important component of a Sacred Heart education. In addition to a comprehensive physical education program, both high schools offer a wide range of team sports including hockey, field hockey, basketball, soccer, badminton and volleyball as well as cross-country and tennis. Our teams compete with other independent schools and with city league schools. A broad range of intramurals are also offered throughout the year.

Elementary students can choose from more than 20 clubs as diverse as Reading, Knitting, French, African Dance, Chess, Choir and Mandarin Chinese. In the high schools, students are involved in a variety of activities including Choir, Band, Kids Help Phone, Debating, Drama, the annual Musical, Playground Mentoring, CineClub, Robotics Club, Yearbook, Student Council, Duke of Edinburgh's Award Program and much more.

<http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/elementary-school/extra-curricular.php>

<http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/high-school/extra-curricular.php>

<http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/fountain-academy/extra-curricular.php>

What is the average class size?

This year average class size ranges from 13 – 16 in our three divisions. Class size is usually capped at 20. In Junior Primary the teacher/child ratio is 1 – 8.

Do you have an early childhood education program at Sacred Heart?

Yes, we offer Junior Primary for four-year-olds. It's designed for young, developing minds and provides a solid foundation in reading and math. Our philosophy is to help children learn through play and structured activities with a focus on social development, independence and caring for others. The day begins at 8:30 a.m. with supervised free play until snack time. The day then flows from gym to music, outdoor play to story time, creative arts and crafts and much more.

[Http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/elementary-school/junior-primary.php](http://www.sacredheartschool.ns.ca/elementary-school/junior-primary.php)

What technology does Sacred Heart offer in the classroom?

Each of our three school divisions has a computer lab which is used for instruction and independent research. All Sacred Heart classrooms are equipped with interactive white boards (Smartboards) – large touch-sensitive displays that connect to a computer and projector and allow a user to control a computer from the board. Computers are available in every room and students have access to the school's wireless network. Senior students may use laptops in and outside of class. The school also offers a file sharing program which permits students to have access to class notes and collaboration with teachers and fellow students from anywhere in the world.