



Island Catholic Schools Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria

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DIOCESE OF VICTORIA ANNOUNCES CONSTRUCTION OF NEW EARLY LEARNING CENTRE AT ST. JOSEPH'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Victoria, BC — The Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria and the Catholic Independent Schools of the Diocese of Victoria are pleased to announce the commencement of construction on a state-of-the-art early learning centre at St. Joseph's Elementary School in Victoria.

In **February 2025**, construction began on a **new, two-story daycare facility** located in front of the school gymnasium. This transformative project is made possible through generous contributions, including almost **\$3.45 million** in federal and provincial funding through the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund, **\$1.5 million** from St. Joseph the Worker Parish, and **\$1.57 million** from St. Joseph's School.

Over a **15-month construction period**, this project will replace the aging portable classrooms with a modern, purpose-built space designed to enhance early childhood education and care. The facility will include:

- **Daycare and Preschool Spaces:** Expanded capacity with 28 additional licensed childcare spaces for children aged 3–5 and 30 additional school-age care spaces on school grounds, while maintaining current capacity.
- **Purpose-Built Upper Floor:** A thoughtfully designed space featuring a dedicated conference area for parish and school gatherings, alongside high-quality daycare facilities.
- **Modern Features:** New kitchen facilities, solar panels for sustainability, and an elevator for improved accessibility.
- **Enhanced Outdoor Play Area:** A 300 m² outdoor recreation space designed to encourage physical activity and social engagement. This includes a dedicated early learning playground tailored to support the development of young children.
- **Improved Infrastructure:** The removal of outdated portable classrooms to create a cohesive, modern learning environment.

Spanning **639 m² (approximately 6,880 square feet)**, the new Early Learning Centre is thoughtfully designed to optimize space efficiency while strengthening the connection between the church and school communities. The facility will be strategically located near the existing gymnasium entrance and adjacent to a steep bank, ensuring accessibility through key design elements, including a shared meeting room for school and parish use.

“We’re excited to see our strong partnerships within the community result in building 58 more high-quality and affordable child care spaces in Victoria,” said Rohini Arora, B.C. Parliamentary Secretary for Child Care. “This project will create more access to seamless child care on school grounds, helping women and working families in this community with a one-stop drop off where their kids are safe and cared for in child care and in school.”



Temporary Adjustments During Construction

While construction is underway, some temporary adjustments will be implemented to ensure safety and minimize disruptions:

- **Front Area Fencing:** A portion of the front area will be fenced off, and end-of-day student pick-up will be reorganized to ensure smooth traffic flow and grade-level coordination.
- **Gym Entrance Closure:** The front gym entrance will be unavailable for **15 months**. Side entrances will be used instead.
- **Temporary Relocations:** The **hot lunch distribution** and **uniform room** will be relocated to the lower floor of the school.

The Diocese and St. Joseph's School remain committed to maintaining clear communication with students, parents, and parishioners throughout the construction process. Regular updates will be provided to ensure a seamless transition as the project progresses.

For media inquiries, please contact:

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About the Diocese of Victoria

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria serves communities across Vancouver Island and the surrounding region. Committed to faith, education, and community service, the Diocese supports schools, parishes, and outreach initiatives to enrich the lives of individuals and families.

About the Catholic Independent Schools of the Diocese of Victoria

The Catholic Independent Schools of the Diocese of Victoria are committed to providing a faith-based education rooted in Gospel values and the rich teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church. Committed to fostering love, hope, and excellence, these schools continue to shape a future that strengthens both the Diocesan community and the broader global society.

About St. Joseph's Elementary School

St. Joseph's Elementary School provides a nurturing, faith-filled environment where students thrive academically and spiritually. Committed to excellence and community engagement, the school continues to grow and evolve to meet the needs of families in Victoria. The St. Joseph's Early Learning Centre currently offers a range of programs—including St. Joseph's Daycare, St. Joseph's Preschool, and Out of School Care—and is excited to expand its support for children in their early years of development.