



Holy Spirit

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Inspiring Minds | **Igniting Hearts**

PreKindergarten Parent and Student Handbook
2023-2024



This school is accredited by the Virginia Catholic Education Association whose accreditation process has been approved by the Virginia Council for Private Education as authorized by the Virginia State Board of Education.

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Holy Spirit School
Inspiring Minds / Igniting Hearts
2023 / 2024

Welcome to Holy Spirit School! We are pleased that you have chosen to entrust us to be a partner in the education of your children. For over fifty years Holy Spirit School has educated the youth of our parish and community and we continue to strive to inspire our students daily and help them develop into both critical thinkers and compassionate individuals. This year we chose the very simple theme of “Faithfulness”, and we will look to this Fruit of the Holy Spirit as an inspiration for all that we say and do throughout the academic year. As followers of Christ, we rejoice, because in him, we have redemption. As we continue to face challenges of varying magnitude across so many aspects of life, we continue to put our trust in God’s goodness and infinite wisdom. We look forward to providing opportunities over the year to teach our student about our call as people of God to appreciate that ultimately, we have faithfulness because of our eternal hope in Christ.

Blessing Always,

Mrs. Maureen Ashby
Principal

Mrs. Natalie Evans
Assistant Principal

Mrs. Ann Stich
Assistant Principal

I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT

DIOCESAN PHILOSOPHY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...
Teaching them to carry out everything I have commanded you.*

Matthew 28:19-20

These words of Christ addressed to the apostles at the Ascension bestowed on the Church the office of teacher. Obedient to this divine challenge, the Church provides education permeated with the spirit of Christ and dedicated to promoting the full development of the human person.¹ The two-fold goal of Catholic schools is to provide an environment which will foster rich religious training as well as solid academic education in a Catholic, value-oriented manner.

¹Declaration on Christian Education #3

DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Arlington are an essential component in the educational ministry of the Church. Our schools are committed to providing an education rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ where Catholic doctrine and values and academic excellence prepare each student for a life of faith, service, and integrity.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

Holy Spirit School inspires life-long learners and ignites servant leaders through a program of academic excellence grounded in the traditions and values of the Holy Catholic Church.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

We believe our students have families who seek a faith-based, academically challenging education.

We believe our students are diverse, engaged, passionate and morally aware.

We believe our students have varying abilities and gifts.

We believe our students learn best in a spiritual, structured and supportive academic environment.

We believe our students learn best in a physically and emotionally safe setting.

We believe our students learn best and work toward academic mastery through differentiation.

We believe our students learn best through both traditional and technology-based instruction.

We believe our students learn best when actively engaged.

We believe our students will succeed when challenged to be critical thinkers.

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

Each school shall utilize the Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) template to develop and distribute a handbook for students and parents/guardians. All local policies and procedures must be in conformity with the Office of Catholic Schools' policies, guidelines, and regulations.

A committee, representative of the total school community, shall be involved in the development and periodic revision of this handbook. The handbook shall be updated annually to reflect policy and procedural changes. Principals shall establish a process for review and revision of local school policy to ensure changes reflect the input of key stakeholders. All parents, along with students in middle and high school, are required to provide a signature of receipt acknowledging they have read the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook, and they agree to abide by those rules (Appendix AG-1 and AG-2). An acknowledgment form will be provided to students upon receipt of the handbook and the form must be signed and returned by Friday of the first full week of school. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies and or preventing a student from enrolling or continuing to be enrolled at the school.

Faculty and staff members shall be given access to all school handbooks.

Handbooks and all subsequent changes are subject to prior written approval by the Diocese. To the extent any local handbook or policy statement therein may be inconsistent with the policies, guidelines, or regulations of the Office of Catholic Schools, the Office of Catholic Schools' policies, guidelines, or regulations shall be of controlling force and effect.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN ROLE

Since parents have given their children life, the Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. The Catholic parents' promise at baptism to raise their children as Catholic supports this premise. The Catholic school exists to assist parents in the Christian formation of their children.

In this Handbook, the term "parent" refers not only to a child's natural or adopted parent, but to a student's non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of parents.

The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools respects the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. Since the school is a continuation of the education children are receiving at home, Diocesan schools should demonstrate respect and support for the parents in their important and challenging task.

Parents are expected to support the school's mission and commitment to Christian principles and

support the school policies as outlined in school handbooks (i.e., annually sign the school's Handbook Agreement Form). One of the conditions for initial and continued enrollment at the school is receipt of this signed form indicating the parent's support of the school's philosophy, policies, and regulations.

In the event a parent desires to discuss a problem with his/her child's teacher, the parent should make an appointment for a private meeting with the child's teacher. Teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss a matter of concern with parents before it becomes an actual problem. Any parent who wishes to speak with the principal/director may do so, but after an initial meeting with the classroom teacher. Similarly, parents should discuss matters of concern with the school principal, and pastor, when necessary, before bringing them to the Office of Catholic Schools.

If a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students, or displays disrespectful, disruptive, or harassing behavior toward teachers or toward school, parish, or diocesan staff (in verbal, written, or digital form), the school may take corrective action. Such corrective action may include, at the discretion of the principal/director (and, for parish schools, the pastor of the parish) the following: imposition of particular rules or procedures the parent must follow in interacting with the school and its students and staff; restriction or termination of the parent's access to school or parish property; dismissal of the parent's child(ren).

The school may impose other appropriate corrective action, without prior recourse, based upon the nature of the parent's conduct and the surrounding circumstances.

As foundation for a faith-community, parents are invited and encouraged to participate in the school's celebration of prayer and Liturgy.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the programs, which are developed for the education of their children. The wide spectrum of this involvement includes volunteer work, participation in parent-teacher conferences, attendance at meetings and seminars designed to help parents assist their children at home, and active involvement in the school's Parent-Teacher Organization.

TEACHER/PARENT PARTNERSHIP

Holy Spirit School endorses a strong partnership between its faculty and parents with the goal of enhancing the educational experience for each child. When parents and teachers respect each other, children thrive. This partnership requires a commitment to support each other's goals for the child in accordance with the School's mission statement. This partnership:

- affirms that all communication is open, direct, and honest and conveys messages that are respectful, courteous, and constructive. Please note that electronic communications may convey unintended messages and must be used responsibly;
- requires a willingness and expectation on both sides to work on and nurture the relationship;

- is fostered by mutual trust and respect;
- acknowledges that teachers and parents bring different areas of expertise to the relationship. Each teacher contributes a professional expertise about curriculum and child development and each parent brings a personal expertise about his/her child;
- respects the privacy and personal boundaries of parents, teachers, and students.

TEACHER/PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

To achieve the best possible teacher/parent partnership, there are specific responsibilities for both teachers and parents.

Parents:

- will first bring concerns directly to the appropriate staff member in a timely manner and will not engage in discussions with children or other parents that are disrespectful, unkind, or hurtful to another child, parent, family, or staff member;
- will keep the teachers informed of any changes at home or other information about their child that might affect their child’s performance and/or behavior in school;
- will support the teacher at home if a problem occurs so that the child understands that the parents and teachers are working together;
- will respect professional boundaries and not request personal email addresses, private phone numbers, or “friending” requests through social media sites.

Teachers:

- will listen to and elicit information about the child from the parent and will respond appropriately when a parent requests time for a consultation;
- will be as specific as possible in giving information about a child’s performance and/or behavior to a parent in a timely manner;
- will work in concert with the parents to develop specific goals to be worked on at home and at school with regard to behavior and/or performance issues;
- will explain to parents the behavioral and homework expectations for the child and the role of the parents that particular year;
- will describe at the start of the year how best to keep in touch (time and place for calls and communications).

It is imperative that all members of the Holy Spirit School community adhere to the above principles and responsibilities in their electronic and other communications, including blogs, tweets, Facebook, etc. These communications are not to include disparaging or damaging comments about individuals, the community or the school.

The school reserves the right to withhold or terminate an enrollment contract of any student whose family does not participate with the school in the spirit of cooperation and partnership in a manner that the schools deems necessary to support the child and the goals of the school

SEXUAL IDENTITY POLICY

The Diocese of Arlington is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to develop and prosper academically, physically and spiritually, consistent with Catholic teachings and principles affirming that the body reveals each person as male or female and that the harmonious integration of a person's sexual identity with his or her sex is an expression of the inner unity and reality of the human person made body and soul by God and in the image and likeness of God. In fulfillment of these religious truths, our Catholic educational environment shall reflect a relation to persons (including name and pronoun usage, uniforms, access to facilities and overnight accommodations, and eligibility for single-sex curricular and extracurricular activities) that is respectful of and consistent with each person's God-given sexual identity and biological sex at birth.

Recognizing that each person is created in the image and likeness of God ensures that dignity is safeguarded, and safe environments are fostered. When parents send their children to Catholic schools and when persons choose careers in Catholic education, they should expect an environment consistent with the truth that God-created sexual identity speaks to His vision for each person's relationship to Him, oneself and others. Behavior and expressions of a person's sexual identity within the school environment that are inconsistent with these principles and/or which cause disruption or confusion regarding Catholic teachings on human sexuality are prohibited. The full cooperation with this policy of school officials, faculty, parents and students is required and a condition precedent to the continued enrollment of each student and the continued employment of each employee, and the enforcement of this policy by the school is deemed a spiritual mandate.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

Catholic Schools, administered under the authority of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, comply with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to the schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, marital status, disability, national origin, or citizenship in the administration of their educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic, and other school administered programs.

This policy does not preclude the existence of single sex schools, nor does it conflict with the priority given to Catholics for admission as students. This policy also does not preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who advocate on school property or at school functions, any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious tenets of the Catholic faith.

NON-CATHOLIC CHILDREN

The presence of children from other faiths provides a wonderful diversity to the school. However, the presence of non-Catholic children in the school shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious formation as an integral component of the educational program in the school. As such:

- a. Non-Catholic children are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the school.
- b. Non-Catholic children must participate in liturgies, retreats, and other religious functions incorporated within the program.
- c. Non-Catholic children may not be exempted from the catechesis held during the school day.
- d. While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the children attending the Catholic school, parents must be aware that it is the Catholic position that will be taught.

In light of the unique situations which may arise in the educational process, and because it is impossible to foresee all school issues that arise, the faculty and administration reserve the right to address and to take appropriate action for any such situations not specifically referenced in this manual. In addition, in view of the unique and essential religious mission of the school, it is expressly understood that the school may take action in cases where moral offenses occur which reflect adversely on the school, the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, or the Roman Catholic Church, or which interfere with the ability of the school to perform its religious mission or effectively maintain the intimate working relationship of the school and the Community of Faith.

This handbook may be modified by the school after reasonable notice to the parents of the effective date of any changes. Any section headings are for convenience of use and shall not affect the interpretation of any provisions. If the school should elect not to take action in a particular situation, this shall not be construed or interpreted as a waiver or preclude the school from acting in a subsequent situation of the same or similar kind.

II. CURRICULUM

The curriculum is not just the goals of the program and the planned activities but also the daily schedule, the availability and use of materials, transitions between activities and the way in which routine tasks of living are implemented virtual or in person. Young children are expected to learn through active and positive manipulation of the environment and concrete experiences that contribute to concept development.

Without limiting the rights of the school under section VIII of this handbook, modifications may be made in the environment and staffing patterns for children with special needs.

The daily schedule is intended to provide a balance of activities with attention to the following dimension of scheduling:

- a. Daily outdoor play, weather permitting
- b. Alternating periods of quiet time and active play
- c. A balance of large muscle and small muscle activities is provided.
- d. Various small group or large group activities through most of the day
- e. A balance of child-initiated and staff-initiated activity is provided. The amount of time spent in staff-initiated, large group activity is limited.

Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment that project heterogeneous, racial, gender and age attributes are selected for use.

The school will use media, such as television, films, videotapes and computers, that have been previewed by adults prior to use. Another option for activity is always available. No child is required to view or interact with the program; and the staff discusses what is viewed with children to develop critical viewing skills. Technology is incorporated as an integral part of the day.

The goal of the school is to emphasize concrete experiential learning and to achieve the following goals:

- a. foster positive self-concept;
- b. foster spiritual development;
- c. encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment;
- d. develop social skills;
- e. encourage language development;
- f. enhance physical development and skills;
- g. encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices;

- h. encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts;
- i. respect cultural diversity.

Staff provides materials and time for activities, but children choose from among several activities that the teacher has planned, or the children initiate. Staff respects the child's right to choose not to participate at times.

Children are not always required to move from one activity to another as a group. Unregimented transitions are also used as a vehicle for learning.

Planned or routine activities may be changed according to the needs or interests of children, and/or to cope with changes in weather or other situations that affect routines without unduly alarming children.

Routine tasks such as toileting, eating, dressing, and sleeping are incorporated into the program as a means of furthering children's learning, self-help and social skills. Through complimentary actions at home, parents are expected to assist and cooperate with staff to make feeding and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children. Provision is made for children who are early risers and for children who do not nap.

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

Needed supply lists are posted to the school website. They can be found by clicking on the summer assignments picture on the homepage.

Parents are asked to bring requested supplies to school during the Pre-Kindergarten Orientation Meeting held prior to the start of school. All written correspondence will be sent home via students' folders, so please remember to check your child's backpack each day. Pre-Kindergarten parents will have access to Schoology and should use this tool to receive regular communication from the teachers.

Parents should send in a change of clothes that can be kept in the classroom throughout the school year. This should include top, bottom, underwear, socks and shoes. The change of clothes does not have to be another uniform.

All pre-kindergarten students should bring in a daily snack in a Ziploc separate from their lunch. Parents of full day students may bring in their own lunch in a soft lunchbox or order from the school's hot lunch program. All lunches and snacks must be labeled daily with the child's name and the date. Full day parents must provide linens to be used during scheduled rest time. Linens should consist of the requested blanket-style cover; see information from pre-kindergarten teachers.

ASSESSMENT

The school's program is intended to assist staff and administrators in a systematic evaluation of the program, to diagnose children's strengths and weaknesses and to aid in the revision of the curriculum and planning of instruction.

The teachers do informal assessments all year to make sure the students are meeting their pre-kindergarten benchmarks. The only formal assessment is at the end of the year when the students staying for Kindergarten take the KRT or Kindergarten Readiness Test.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Teachers are available to parents throughout the school year to keep the lines of communication open in the best interest of the children. Parent-teacher conferences can be scheduled throughout the school year if necessary. Parents should first privately contact a teacher with any concerns about a child or class situation before seeking intervention of the director or school administration.

SCHEDULING AND OTHER CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Formal conferences are scheduled for all grades in the fall and on an as needed basis in the spring. If at any time a conference with one of the faculty is desired, the parent should write a note to the teacher requesting an appointment or a return phone call. This will give the teacher time to set aside a specific time for you in a location where you can talk privately. Lunch, recess, and volunteer duty time is not the appropriate time to try to conference with a teacher. Please do not call, text, or email a teacher at home.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Evaluation of the child must be based on teacher judgment, observation, daily performance, class participation and effort.

A standardized Diocesan Progress Report will be provided for each student two times each year, January and at the end of the year.

RETENTION/PROMOTION/PLACEMENT

A major goal of the school is to assist children to complete each year satisfactorily. Retention is recommended only when it is deemed necessary and advantageous to the needs of the child.

- a. The final decision to promote or retain a child is based on the child's developmental performance and best interests, as determined by the principal/director.
- b. Parents will be kept informed about the inability of their child to progress satisfactorily.

- c. Children who would not benefit from being retained may be "placed" in the next level; however, the school may prepare and implement an Intervention Plan for the child as a condition of placement.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

ADMISSIONS

DIOCESAN INITIAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Children who desire an educational experience founded on the Catholic philosophy of education and who fulfill the age, health and behavioral requirements are eligible for admission to the school.

The school sets registration procedures and admission policies. The availability of space and the order of preference for admission are determined by the school according to the following general criteria:

- a. Children from the parish
- b. Children from parishes without schools
- c. Children from parishes with schools (for sufficient reason)
- d. Children from non-Catholic families

If approved by the pastor, and where practicable, siblings may receive special consideration.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESCHOOL ADMISSION

There is no testing for preschool admission. However, readiness assessment may be utilized to determine the developmentally appropriate placement in the preschool program. The following list of documents/information is required:

- a. Presentation of an original birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file)
- b. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c. Proof of custody where applicable
- d. Progress reports (if available)
- e. Completed Diocesan Application Form (*Appendix J*)
- f. A non-refundable application fees
- g. A fully executed MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or other U.S. state equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:

- i. Proof of exact dates of required immunization as required by the Code of Virginia. Immunization records are required to be signed and verified by a licensed healthcare provider.
 - ii. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to entering school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A pre-school physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical even though it was completed within the 12 months prior to kindergarten entry. This is because some aspects required for kindergarten are not included in a pre-school physical – e.g., hearing and vision screening)
- h. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former Diocesan school if previously enrolled in a Diocesan school.

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION

A child is admitted to the school on the premise the child intends to learn the Catholic religion and be educated in a Catholic environment. In certain cases, a child may be admitted on a probationary basis subject to the child successfully completing one or more subsequent interim evaluations. A child with academic or other needs (i.e., behavioral), which cannot be reasonably addressed by the school may be denied admission.

School application forms may request disability-related information. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not prohibit a school from asking questions about a student's disabilities provided that information does not discriminate (automatically prohibit a student from applying).

MINIMUM AGE

Prekindergarten students must be four years of age or older by September 30th of the given school year.

TOILET TRAINING

All Prekindergarten students must be fully toilet trained. That said, we recognize that children have accidents from time to time. If three or more accidents occur within a week, for two weeks in a row, the parents will be asked to keep the child home for a week and to work diligently on toilet training, and to then attempt returning to school. If this does not resolve the problem, the parents may be asked to remove the child from the program and re-enroll for the following year.

CLASS PLACEMENT

The principal/director and faculty reserve the right to place a child in a class to ensure the best interests of the child.

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCE/TARDINESS/LEAVING SCHOOL

Regular attendance in the program is strongly encouraged for setting the groundwork for a successful school experience. Neither the school, the Diocese, the Office of Catholic Schools, nor any of its employees/staff are responsible for ensuring actual attendance; this is the responsibility of the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Except in cases of emergency as determined by the principal/preschool director and/or a staff member (as applicable or necessary), a child may only be released from school to another authorized adult with the prior written or verbal authorization of the child's parent. The adult will be required to produce identification before the child is released.

ATTENDANCE/REPORTING PROCEDURES

ABSENCE

Holy Spirit School hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am - 3:15 pm for full-time students and 8:00 am – 11:30 a.m. for half day students.

The school defines proper procedures for reporting an absence as:

1. Parents should email the clinic's attendance line at attendance@holyspiritflames.org before 8:20 AM on each day of absence. Please leave student's name and room number and the reason for the absence.
2. If a student is absent and no message has come from the parent, the school nurse will place a call to the parent to ascertain the reason for the student's absence.
3. If a student is absent for a prolonged period of time a doctor's note may be required upon reentrance.
4. Absences and tardies (whether excused or unexcused) are recorded on each Progress Report and for the year on the permanent record card.

TARDINESS

A student who is tardy should report to the principal/preschool director's office or attendance office. A student who arrives late with an excused reason (i.e. director's note) is counted tardy.

Frequent cases of tardiness should be brought to the attention of the principal/preschool director so that the parent may be contacted.

It is very important for the prekindergarten students to arrive to school on time. The classes begin promptly at 8:10 and it is disruptive for both the student and the class when a student arrives late.

MEDICAL EXCUSES

If a student has been absent for three or more days a medical note may be requested from the doctor in order for the student to return to school.

ANTICIPATED ABSENCE

If a student's absence is known in advance, parents are asked to provide notice via the attendance email as well as giving this information to the teacher; parents should include the expected date of the child's return to class.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Parents must sign their children in/out when arriving late or being released outside of regular school hours.

Parents must sign their children in/out when arriving late or being released outside of regular school hours.

In the event that a student needs to leave school at any time other than regular dismissal, the school requires written notification with the specific time that your child will be picked up. Parents must come to the school office to sign the student out. If a person other than the parent is to pick up the student the school requires the parent to notify us and the school may ask to see identification for that person.

Parents should refrain from attempting to pick up students after 2:45 pm as this interferes with the timely release of all students.

TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL

The school must be notified in writing by the parent(s) of a child regarding a decision to transfer a child to another school, including the last day the child will attend classes at school. All school-owned materials must be returned to school and all fees paid before leaving. Scholastic information will be sent to the new school upon a "Release of Student Records Form" from the new school. All fees and tuition **MUST BE PAID** prior to the release of the child's records.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Each school should formulate a policy of traffic, pedestrian, bike, and bus safety for its students and communicate this policy to all school personnel, students, and their parents. Older students in elementary schools and secondary school students may serve as traffic/pedestrian safety patrols at the discretion of the school principal. Within the scope of this designation, the students shall work under the supervision of and in cooperation with the school principal and the local

police liaison for safety issues.

Prekindergarten Arrival

Please see diagrams on following pages

Prekindergarten arrival is at 8:00 a.m. Students may arrive no earlier than 7:40 a.m. Students who arrive earlier than 7:40 will be signed into Morning Care and charges will accrue. Outside supervision is from 7:40 a.m. until 8:10 a.m.

Families who have Prekindergarten students will use the back lane for arrival. Enter from the second entrance on Woodland Way and proceed to the back of the school. All children from the car will get out at the designated spots and be supervised by the teachers. Older children will go through the school to the front of the building to meet their classes.

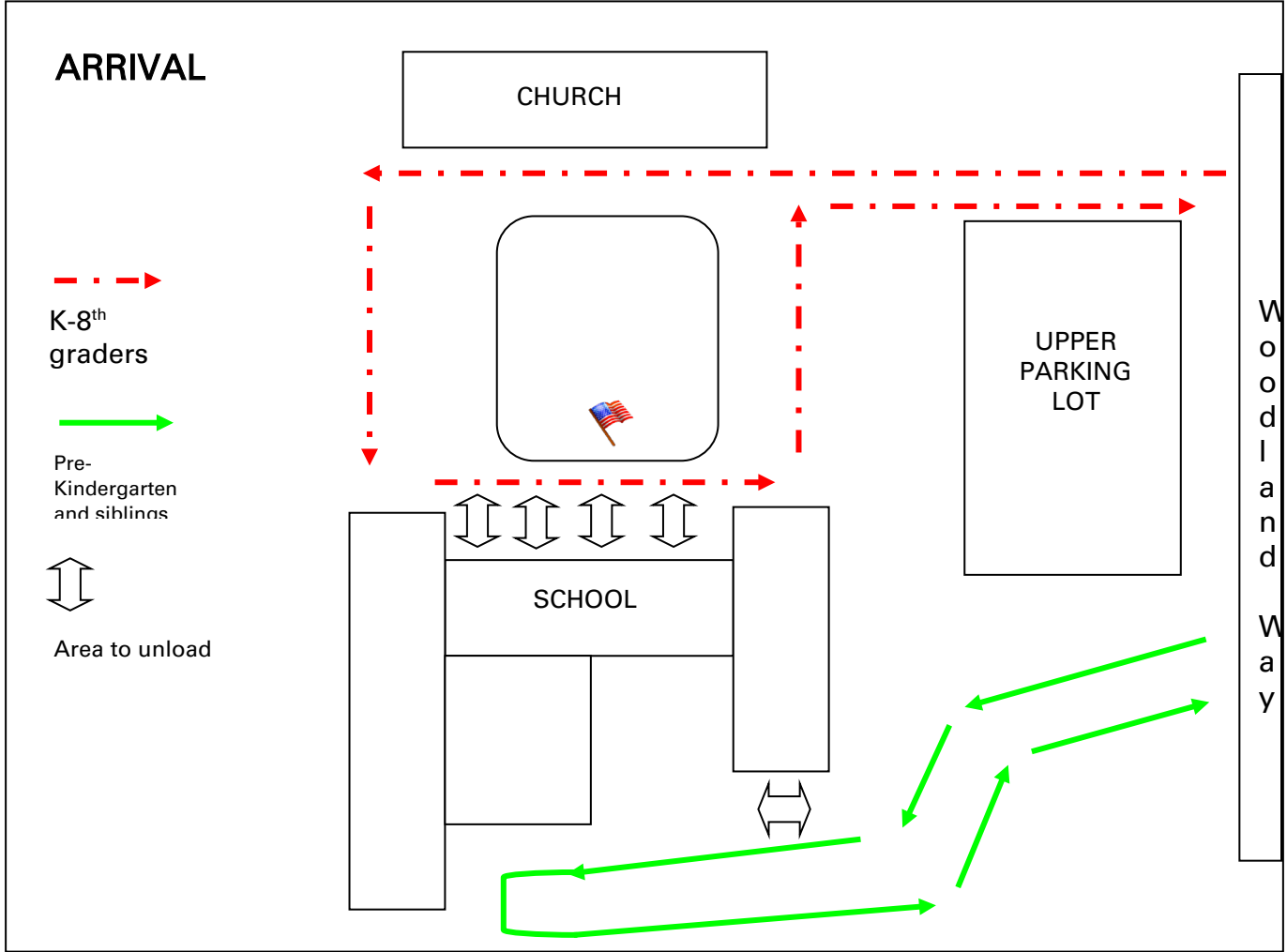
Parents arriving after 8:10 a.m. should walk their children to the front office and sign them in.

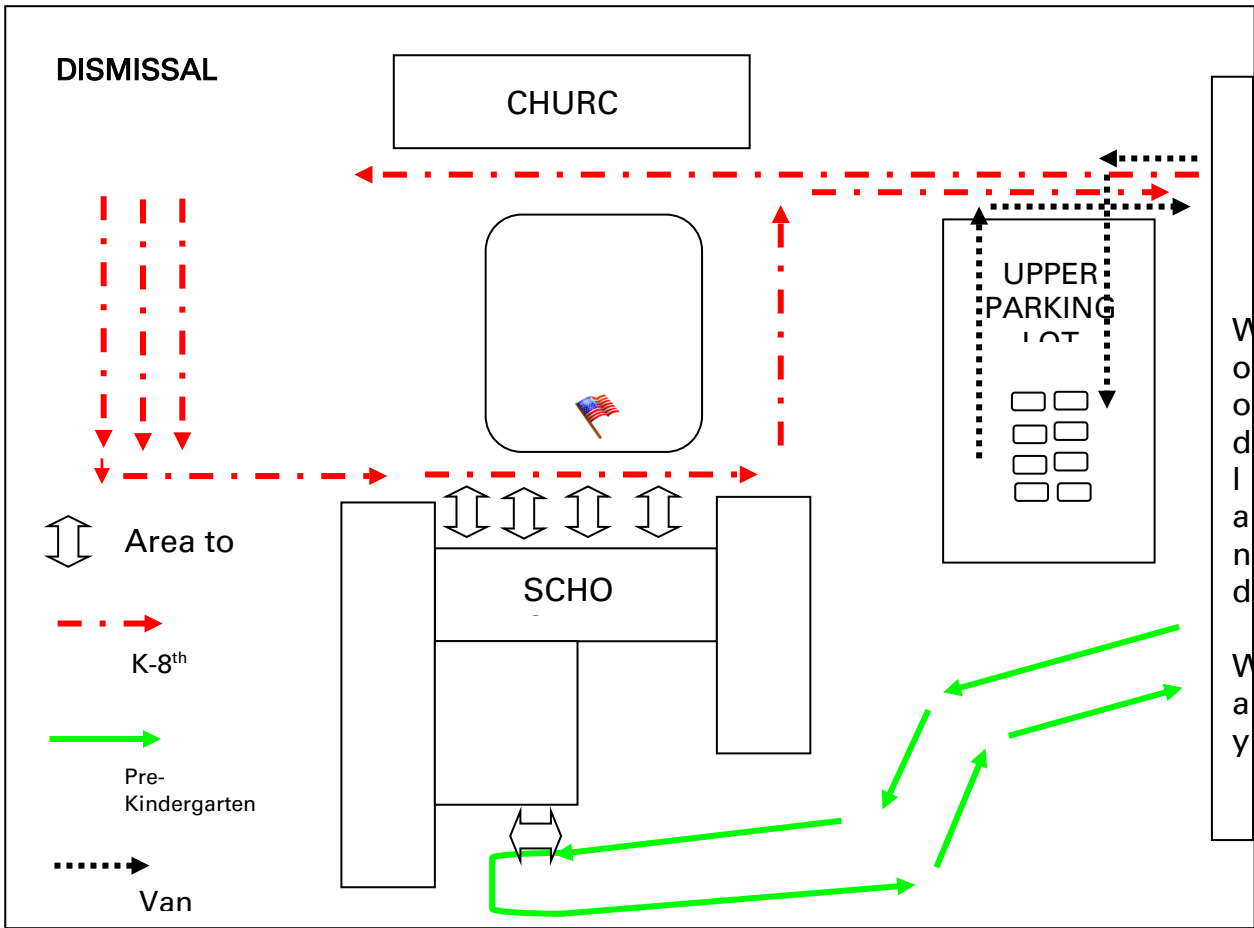
Prekindergarten Dismissal

Dismissal for half day is at 11:30 a.m. Dismissal for full day Prekindergarten is at 3:15 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Teachers dismiss **half day** Prekindergarten students at 11:30 am from exit 11 in the front of the building by their classrooms. Parents park in the circle and the teacher will bring the children outside to the car.

Teachers dismiss **full day** Prekindergarten children *and their siblings* from the rear of the school, exit 9. Parents should use the back lane. Enter from the second entrance on Woodland Way and proceed to the back of the school forming a line. Your children will enter your car at the designated spots.





LUNCH/MILK PROGRAM

Rules for acceptance and participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs are the same for all children without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA related activity should write to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 20250.

Milk and water are available for purchase for a fee for the year.

Prekindergarten students bring a healthy snack from home each day. This should be in a Ziploc bag labeled with the student's name and the date. The snack should not be packed in the same bag as the lunch. All snacks must be nut free. Please do not send soda to school. The best options are milk or water.

Hot lunches for students are ordered and paid for through a third-party vendor. Holy Spirit School is responsible only for the distribution of food orders that are delivered to the school in pre-boxed and labeled containers.

Holy Spirit School is, in no-way, responsible for miscommunication of food orders, or responsible for refunds. All communication regarding food orders must be directed to the third-party vendor.

Student lunches brought from home must be placed in a soft lunchbox or paper bag with the student's name and the current day's date, per licensing requirements. The school is not allowed to reheat food for students. An insulated thermos to keep things hot/cold is suggested.

Prekindergarten students eat in their classrooms so all lunches/snacks must be peanut/nut free. If you are sending sunbutter or another nut substitute, please label it.

IV. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

ADMINISTRATIVE

CHILD CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP

At the time of school entry or at any other time where a change in custody status/arrangements occurs, it is the responsibility of the parent(s) to provide the principal/director with a true and correct copy of the legal document for any child for which there is a legal custody agreement or for any child not residing with his/her parent.

School communication with the appropriate guardian is essential. Accordingly:

- a. Custodial parents should identify, in writing, other adults who may have access to information regarding their child.
- b. Non-custodial parents may receive information (when requested) regarding the child unless specific documentation to the contrary is provided in the legal custody agreement.

ACCESS TO RECORDS

Parents have a right (unless prohibited by the courts in a custody agreement) to the timely inspection of the educational records (cumulative and confidential) of their child during school hours. The school shall respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records.

If the educational records of a child contain information on more than one child, the parents are limited to the specific information about their child only.

Student records shall be open to authorized school personnel only (principal, director, assistant principal, and those to whom they extend access within a given year.)

The school administration may elect to provide, at cost, photocopies of a child's educational records to parents, but documentation is to be stamped "unofficial."

CONFIDENTIAL ACADEMIC RECORDS

Parents are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the school. If a student has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 plan, and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the student's confidential file. The refusal to provide such information is a ground for terminating enrollment in the school.

Confidential records for dis-enrolled students are merged with the students' cumulative files.

RETENTION OF RECORDS

The following student records are to be retained indefinitely:

Permanent record card (to include transcripts, attendance record and standardized test results)

The following student records are to be retained for 25 years:

- a. IEP/ISP or 504 Plan
- b. Student Assistance Plan
- c. Eligibility Minutes
- d. Student Assistance Team minutes

The following student records are to be retained for 7 years, or when the student reaches the age of 25, whichever is greater:

- a. Application
- b. Counselor notes
- c. Discipline notes
- d. Court Documents
- e. Psychological reports

SCHOOL VISITORS

All persons other than school staff and currently registered children must first report to the school office immediately upon entering school grounds, sign in and wear an identification tag when visiting the school.

All volunteers must be fully compliant with all child protection requirements as set out by the Diocese of Arlington.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

PRINCIPAL/PREKINDERGARTEN DIRECTOR'S COMMUNICATION

Information regarding the school and activities can be found in the weekly electronic newsletter from the principal, on the website under the quick links "Family Folders" and via the PTO Highlights electronic letter. Emergency information may be sent via the School Messenger email/voicemail system. The school maintains Facebook, Instagram, and "X" (Twitter) accounts by which certain information is relayed.

TAKE-HOME COMMUNICATION

All materials prepared by parents for release to the parish or school community must be approved by the principal/Preschool director or his/her designee.

The teachers will communicate with families through their Schoology page and email. All parents are asked to check Schoology at least weekly for important information about the class and the school. Information may also be sent home in the child's folder.

If a parent needs to reach a teacher during the day you may email or leave a voice message. The teacher will respond as soon as possible, but it may not be until after the day has ended. If it is an emergency parents should call the front office and speak with the receptionist.

The family/student directory is available via the Connect 1 application sponsored by the School's PTO and in hard copy form. This tool is to be used for and by Holy Spirit School families only and must not be distributed, sold, or shared outside of the school community.

TELEPHONE USE

Prekindergarten students may not have cell phones with them at school nor do they have access to the office or classroom telephone. If a parent needs to be contacted the teacher or administration will reach out.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

If school closes unexpectedly for a single day, there will be no academic requirements for that day. If, however, the school will be closed for an extended period due to weather or public health concern, the school will transition into on-line (virtual instruction) for the required duration and students will meet academic requirements.

When schools are operating in a virtual instruction model and there is a weather-related closure of schools, principals shall determine whether a "snow day" is appropriate for the general health and well-being of the students.

Holy Spirit School follows Fairfax County Public School's announcements for emergency closings, delayed openings, and early closings for school. Announcements regarding closings may be heard on all major radio stations, as well as local cable TV stations. You may also check the Fairfax County website at www.fcps.edu. Please do not call the school to find out if school is closed or opening late.

ONE HOUR DELAYED OPENING: Prekindergarten will begin at 9:00 a.m. with normal closing times.

TWO HOUR DELAYED OPENING: Prekindergarten will begin at 10:00 a.m. with normal dismissal times.

EXTENDED DAY: If school is delayed opening by one hour, Morning Care will begin at 8:00 a.m. If school has a delayed opening of two hours Morning Care will open at 9:00 a.m. If the school closes for any reason, the Extended Day morning and afternoon program will not operate. Please arrange to pick up your child at the announced dismissal time.

IN THE EVENT THERE IS A TWO-HOUR DELAY ON A SCHEDULED 11:30 A.M. DISMISSAL, HOLY SPIRIT WILL CANCEL THE 11:30 A.M. DISMISSAL AND FOLLOW A TWO-HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE WITH DISMISSAL AT 3:15 P.M.

IF FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE SCHEDULED TO BE CLOSED BUT HOLY SPIRIT IS SCHEDULED TO BE OPEN, AN ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING CLOSINGS WILL BE POSTED ON OUR WEBSITE AND OUR PHONE CONTACT SYSTEM WILL BE ACTIVATED.

PHOTOS AND OTHER MEDIA

Parents may opt their children out of participating in videotaping, audio recording, school pictures, other photography or participation involving the Internet. When a parent decides to exercise this right, the school is required to use the *Waiver/Right to Object* form (Appendix N). All student or parental publications are subject to review and approval by the school administration prior to publication.

MEDIA CENTER

All books chosen for classroom reading in Diocesan schools must be appropriate for students, not only in age level and reading ability, but also for the moral development which we are working to foster. All books shall conform with Diocesan policies and guidelines regarding Catholic education.

Parents, guardians, or teachers who object to reading or multi-media/audio-visual/computer materials used in the classroom must complete an Objection to Content Form (Appendix K) after they have read the book or viewed the media and then submit it to the school principal. Those objecting to materials obtained in the school media center should complete Objection to Content Form for Library Materials (Appendix K-1). A review committee (to include an Office of Catholic Schools member) will subsequently discuss the objection and decide the disposition of the challenged material. The parent or teacher initiating the review should be personally notified of the results of the review. The Superintendent of Schools has the final say in any subsequent question of this review.

FIELD TRIPS

Class visits to places of cultural or educational significance enhance the lessons of the classroom. Field trips, virtual or in person, are planned by teachers and approved by the school administration with educational purposes as the primary objective and in light of financial considerations.

Field trips are considered an extension of the school day and the code of conduct will apply.

A permission form signed by a student's parent(s)/guardian (s) must be obtained prior to a student participating in each activity (Appendix R, available in PowerSchool).

In the event private automobiles/vehicles of students, parents, or other authorized adults of at least 21 years of age are to be utilized to transport students on field trips, the drivers and/or the vehicle owners must have a valid driver's license and sufficient liability, medical, and uninsured motorist insurance coverage as defined by the Diocesan Risk Manager. Evidence to this effect must be presented to the principal/administration for review and approval prior to the use of such vehicles. Appendix R-1 must be used for this purpose. The principal/administration shall have the right to prohibit, for any reason, a proposed driver from transporting students on a field trip.

Youth weighing less than 100 pounds may not be seated in the front seat.
Phone calls and texting are not permitted while driving.

Teachers and other school employees should not drive students in their personal vehicles.

Parents/guardians are to be furnished with detailed written information about the field trip and must be given the opportunity to “opt out” their children from the field trip.

It should also be understood, in light of world conditions and specifically threats of terrorism against Americans, that it may be necessary to cancel school-sponsored trips due to world and national developments at any time.

All medications given on field trips must comply with medication administration policies. For a student with prescription medication and/or medically necessary health related procedures or treatments, a trained individual needs to be present on the field trip such as a school nurse, parent/guardian or designated family member to ensure care in the case of an emergency. If a trained individual of the school is unable to chaperone the student on a field trip, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide a trained individual to accompany the student.

Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.

There are no “traditional” field trips. Class participation in a particular field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.

Siblings may not accompany chaperones on field trips.

Parents not listed as “official” chaperones for class trips are highly discouraged from attending in order to not disrupt the academic agenda or timeline of the trip. Although Holy Spirit School cannot

bar a parent from arriving at a public venue at no time may that parent interfere with the overall trip or remove a child from the supervision of the classroom teacher or designated chaperone. Parents not officially listed as chaperones for the trip may not assume any sort of duties assigned to official chaperones.

The role of the homeroom parents is solely to solicit parent volunteers for class field trips. Once a group of names has been gathered, the information is turned over to the homeroom teacher who will make the final decisions regarding chaperones. The aim of the homeroom teacher is to provide opportunities over the course of the year to as many different parents as possible. All parent chaperones must be fully compliant with Diocesan Child Protection Policy in order to be considered.

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Overnight trips are not permitted for preschool children.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Parent-Teacher Organizations (and like-named entities) support the critical relationship between schools and parents, the primary educators of their children. These organizations help the head of school/principal advance the school's mission.

"...since parents have conferred life on their children they have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence, most parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it. For it devolves on parents to create a family atmosphere so animated with love and reverence for God and men that a well-rounded personal and social development will be fostered among the children. Hence, the family is the first school of those social virtues which every society needs..." (Declaration on Christian Education – Vatican Council II)

All parent organization activities and all materials prepared by parents must be submitted to the principal/administration for approval prior to implementation and/or distribution.

All PTO monies must be deposited in the parish or school account as designated by the pastor. In consultation with the principal, the PTO officers should prepare a budget and submit it to the pastor and principal for approval.

Persons nominated to serve as a PTO board member must receive the approval of the pastor and principal.

Every school should have an effective Parent-Teacher Organization. An effective Parent-Teacher Organization helps the principal advance the school's mission. It can also help mobilize the parent community regarding legislative proposals impacting Catholic education.

HOLY SPIRIT SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board serves as an advisory body to the pastor and the principal. The mission of the Board is to ensure that the philosophy and mission of Holy Spirit School (as reflected in this handbook) are accomplished. The principal appoints the Board members for a three-year term and may extend those terms on a one-year basis following the initial terms.

VOLUNTEERS/ SERVICE COMMITMENT

Holy Spirit School is a wonderful place for your students to grow both academically and spiritually. The school administration and PTO believe that parent involvement and participation in school activities is not only a means to show our support for the faculty and the school, but is absolutely necessary in order to maintain and expand many of the academic and extracurricular services offered by the school to the students. Educational research also demonstrates that students achieve at a higher level if parents are involved in their child's education.

Holy Spirit School has instituted the Parent School Service Commitment (PSSC). Under this program, the parents or legal guardians of each student (s) registered at Holy Spirit School are required to earn a minimum of 20 hours per family or 10 hours for single parent families (single parent families also include families with a deployed spouse) of combined volunteer service during the current school year. (The school year is defined as July 1 through June 30.) This is in addition to required playground duty. Playground Duty substitutes can be used and are to be paid as outlined in the PSSC handbook. Being a Playground Duty substitute does not relieve a family of the school service commitment hours since this is a paid position. Service opportunities are outlined and described in the PSSC Handbook.

All unfulfilled hours will be assessed \$20.00 per hour.

If a family situation makes completing PSSC hours impossible, please make an appointment to discuss this with the Principal, who has the discretion to reduce or excuse the PSSC requirement.

Parent volunteers during the school day that have direct contact with students must complete the required Diocesan background check paperwork. The paperwork can be found at https://secure4.arlingtondiocese.org/OPCYP_Application/Volunteer_Home.aspx. If you have questions the school OPCYP liaison can help.

FUNDRAISING

Any program of generating additional revenue should have the approval of school leadership (pastor, principal, director). These activities should be organized and executed so that the school program is not interrupted.

Students may participate in and cooperate with worthy collections and fundraising projects

conducted by a school or parish, provided such activities have been approved by the school leadership (pastor, principal, director).

TRANSPORTATION/PARKING

Prekindergarten arrival and dismissal procedures are outlined above. Parents should not be on their phones while waiting to drop off or pick up their children.

If you need to pick up your children prior to dismissal, please do so before 2:45 p.m. Let the office know via email/phone call what time early pick up will occur. Upon arrival, please call the front office so the child/children can be brought to the front doors. Parents must come in and sign the child/children out. This should only be used in cases of absolute necessity and not be habitual. Children will not be dismissed from the classrooms after 2:45 p.m.

V. FINANCES

SCHOOL TUITION POLICIES

A family's tuition obligation continues even when the school shifts to a virtual model. The education of each student continues with teachers planning and delivering lessons and assessing student progress. Report cards will be distributed at the end of each grading period. If a parent/guardian cannot make the regular tuition payment, the principal should be notified as soon as possible to create a payment plan.

School tuition and fees are due on a timely basis and the school reserves the right to withhold student end of year grades, transfer records, or other school-related records if a family has any outstanding financial obligations including, but not limited to, tuition.

Activity fees are due in full and are included with the August payment. All activity fees are nonrefundable. Tuition is paid monthly beginning with June and ending in March. Payments are collected by FACTS Tuition Management.

Per Diocesan policy, Prekindergarten students are not eligible for tuition assistance.

TUITION AND OTHER FEE SCHEDULES

Tuition and Fees (including those for Morning Care and Extended Day) for the 2021 - 2022 school year may be found on the school website halfway down the main page admissions tab.

Extended day fees will be billed monthly. Drop-in care will be available.

VI. CHILD RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR

CODE OF CONDUCT

In all areas of learning, discipline must be considered in the development of children. The Code of Conduct is based on the Gospel message of Jesus. Growth in self-discipline, a responsibility for Catholic moral values and a loving respect for the rights of all persons is encouraged and nourished by the Code of Conduct. To achieve these ends, parents, staff and children work together to create a Catholic school environment. Based upon the Catholic moral values and loving respect for others taught by Jesus, children:

- a. will be truthful.
- b. will be respectful and courteous toward all teachers and adults.
- c. will refrain from harassment of any kind.
- d. will use appropriate language.
- e. will speak respectfully to and about others.
- f. will respect all school and personal property.
- g. will play only in assigned playground areas with good sportsmanship and cooperation.
- h. will bring to school only appropriate show & tell items from home.

The school observes this Code of Conduct because it is built on fundamental Catholic social teachings. The role of the principal/director and staff is to work with the children and parents to assist the children in developing a strong Christian attitude toward life.

DISCIPLINE

Classroom rules are designed to protect persons and property and to promote pro-social behaviors, such as sharing and taking turns. If problems arise, the children in question will be reminded of acceptable behaviors and redirected to more positive activities.

USE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In cases where a child is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a single serious disciplinary infraction, the teacher will apprise the principal/director of the situation. They will assist in the development of a course of action to be taken to correct the situation.

Children who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others can expect disciplinary action. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the child, the nature of the infraction and the severity of the case. Repeated infractions can result in more

serious consequences, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, but there is no requirement for progressive discipline.

SUSPENSION

Suspension may be imposed as determined by the principal/director. Once the principal/director suspends a child, parents may be required to sign a behavioral contract in which they signify their understanding of the problem and agree to work with the school in correcting the situation.

The failure of the parents to execute the above referenced agreement shall preclude the child from returning to the regular program.

DISMISSAL

Conduct which is disruptive to the learning atmosphere and/or contrary to the school's Code of Conduct is justification for a principal/director to dismiss a child at the close of the school year.

Children who are dismissed may apply for readmission to any Diocesan school after one full year.

EXPULSION

Expulsion may be resorted to when one or all of the following are present:

- a. a serious infraction of school rules occurs;
- b. the child has demonstrated continuing disregard of school rules for which other means of discipline have proven ineffectual;
- c. the child's continued presence in the school is considered by school officials to be a serious hindrance to the safety or welfare of the school community;
- d. a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students or displays disrespectful, disruptive or harassing behavior toward teachers or toward school, parish or diocesan staff.

If the principal/director believes it necessary to expel a child, the principal/director will notify the child and the child's parents about the child's actions and provide them with an opportunity to respond in accordance with the school's disciplinary hearing process before making any final decision on the matter.

A parent whose child is expelled may appeal this decision in writing to the Superintendent of Schools within five working days from the time of written notification.

During the pendency of any appeal, the expelled child shall be removed from the school community in compliance with the expulsion notice unless otherwise directed in the discretion of the principal/director.

Children who have been expelled from any Diocesan school may not apply for admission to that school or another Diocesan school for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of expulsion.

REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Privacy of individual children must be balanced against the need to protect the health, welfare and safety of other members of the school community.

STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY SEARCHES

The principal/preschool director or his/her designee has the right to protect the health, welfare and safety of school patrons by searching a child's person and/or personal property on school grounds or at school activities. Lockers and desks are school property and are subject to searches by school personnel.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Children are to care for school property in a respectful manner. Children who deface or damage school property or the property of others will make financial restitution.

DRESS CODE

The dress code provides a standard for our children that fosters an environment conducive to learning and respectful behavior.

Final decisions regarding the school uniform rest with the principal/director.

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS & OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

All uniforms should be purchased through Flynn and O'Hara Uniform Company.

FALL/ SPRING (check current school calendar for pertinent dates)

Grades Prekindergarten - Kindergarten

Boys

- Long or short sleeved maroon polo with Holy Spirit logo
- Steel gray shorts or slacks from Flynn and O'Hara
- Solid gray or white dress socks
- Sneakers (**velcro for PreK; no light up shoes**)

Girls

- Maroon drop waist jersey dress with Holy Spirit logo (shorts should be worn underneath)
- OR plaid drop waist, solid front jumper with white peter pan collared blouse.
- Solid maroon or white dress ankle socks
- Sneakers (**velcro for PreK; no light up shoes**)

WINTER UNIFORM (check current school calendar for pertinent dates)

Grades Prekindergarten - Kindergarten

Boys

- Long or short sleeved maroon polo with Holy Spirit logo
- Steel gray pants from Flynn and O'Hara
- Optional: Long sleeve, full OR half zip maroon polar fleece with Holy Spirit logo
- Solid gray or white dress socks
- Sneakers (velcro for Prek; no light up shoes)

Girls

- Long or short sleeved maroon polo with Holy Spirit logo with gray slacks
- OR plaid drop waist, solid front jumper with white peter pan collared short or long sleeved blouse. (The peter pan blouse may only be worn with the jumper – and the polo only with the slacks)
- Optional: Long sleeve, full OR half zip maroon polar fleece with Holy Spirit logo.
- Solid maroon or white dress socks: ankle, knee or tights (leggings should not be worn under the jumper in place of tights)
- Sneakers (velcro for Prek; no light up shoes)

Appearance

Students are expected to be neat. Only white undershirts may be worn under shirts. Slogans and/or pictures should not show through. Girls' skirts/skorts should be no more than 2 inches above the knee in length.

Jewelry and Makeup

Makeup is not appropriate and nail polish is not allowed. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum. One necklace worn under the shirt/blouse of a religious nature may be worn. One pair of post earrings, no larger than a nickel may be worn in the earlobe. Boys may not wear earrings. One watch may be worn (watches may not have internet capabilities) but no rings or bracelets.

Hairstyles

Hair is to be well groomed. Boys' hair is to be kept trimmed above the shirt collar, above the eyebrows and no longer than mid-ear. Boys must be clean shaven. Girls' hair must be kept out of their eyes. Extreme hairstyles, including, but not limited to, dying hair and shaving initials/patterns are not permitted.

Shoes

Prekindergarten students should wear sneakers. Open toed/ open heeled shoes are not allowed. Shoes with Velcro closures are highly recommended.

Guidelines for Dress Down Days

No short shorts or excessively short skirts;
No leggings, yoga pants, biking shorts or pants or similar items unless worn under a skirt or dress;
No pajama tops or pants;
No t-shirt references to inappropriate slogans and pictures;
Nice jeans are encouraged- they should not be patched or torn;
No wide-wide legged or “sagging” pants or shorts;
No sundresses, tank tops, or spaghetti straps;
No bare shoulders or backs;
Shirts must meet pants and stomachs must be covered;
Toes and heels must be covered- no flip flops, sandals, clogs or crocs.

A student coming to school dressed inappropriately on a non- uniform day will be required to call his/her parents for a suitable change of clothing or will be given a uniform to wear for the day. The decision of the principal as to what is appropriate will be final.

PTO Spirit Gear Days

On select days during the school year, the PTO sponsors Spirit Gear Days. On these days, students dress down if wearing Holy Spirit School Spirit Gear purchased via the PTO. This does not include 5K Spirit Run t-shirts or CYO sports gear.

PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS

Children using the playground must always follow the teachers’ (or other adult monitors’) playground rules. Students must go outside if the class goes outside. If they are too sick to go outside, then they need to stay home.

LUNCHROOM REGULATIONS

Given the risk of potential harm, students’ access and use of microwave ovens is prohibited. Student meals provided by parents/guardians must not be heated in microwave ovens by school personnel and/or school volunteers.

Full day Prekindergarten students eat lunch in their classrooms. All snacks and lunch must be nut free. Prekindergarten parents have the option to order lunch through the hot lunch program offered by the school.

Per licensing requirements, snack bags and lunchboxes must be labeled with the child’s name

and the date on the outside of the lunchbox. Soft lunchboxes should be sent, no metal or hard plastic lunchboxes.

SHOW & TELL

Children are allowed to bring toys from home for the purpose of Show and Tell only. Weapons (whether real or toys) of any kind are not appropriate Show and Tell items and shall not be brought to school for any reason. If weapons of any kind are brought to school, the child shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action which may include, but not be limited to, expulsion.

If it is not the student's show & tell day toys from home should not be brought to school. Expensive toys/electronics are highly discouraged from being brought for show & tell.

VII. HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

STUDENT HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

Parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for the health and well-being of their children. School health services supplement, rather than substitute, for parental care and concern for the health of the students.

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND/OR CHILD ABUSE

The Catholic Diocese of Arlington Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse generally applies to all clergy, all employees and all volunteers.

It is the policy of the Diocese that sexual misconduct and/or child abuse while performing any work or activity under the auspices of the Diocese is contrary to Christian principles and outside the scope of any authority, duties, and/or employment of any clergy, employee, or volunteer.

School personnel who suspect the abuse or neglect of a student must report the matter directly to Child Protective Services and to the school principal (who in turn will call the Vicar General). The school principal should complete Attachment B found in Appendix G, which must be sent to the Vicar General. The school principal must inform the superintendent as well. At that point, confidentiality must be respected.

Virginia law imposes upon school personnel the legal responsibility of reporting to the local child protective services agency any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect.

In accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, (Section 63.2-118, "Any person required to make a report or conduct an investigation or family assessment, pursuant to this chapter may talk to any child suspected of being abused or neglected or to any of his siblings without consent of and outside the presence of his parent/guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing in *loco parentis* or school personnel."

WELLNESS POLICY

The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools Wellness Policy (2006) meets minimum federal standards and establishes goals for physical education, nutrition, and healthy environments in schools. All schools must develop, and continue to evaluate, local school wellness policies. The local policies create a framework for increased student activity, staff wellness, safe and healthy environments, and the elimination of foods of minimal nutritional value during the school day. All schools have wellness committees to implement, sustain, and evaluate the local wellness program.

ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

The parents of an injured student will be notified of the accident/injury by the

principal/administration or the principal/administration's designee as soon as reasonably possible, taking into consideration such factors as the apparent severity of the accident/injury and the priority of providing assistance to the student.

If an incident results in a medical condition or injury which can be reasonably known to the appropriate supervisory faculty/staff member and/or the principal/director, the school and/or its staff are authorized to render reasonable basic first aid if such direct medical assistance would, in the opinion of the school, serve to minimize the severity of the injured person's condition. In addition, staff may secure a professional diagnosis and/or treatment if such action, in the opinion of the school, appears to be reasonably warranted. The school and school officials shall be expressly held harmless from any liability costs or expenses associated with the professional diagnosis and/or any treatment or first aid provided (including but not limited to the cost of transportation), such costs or expenses being the responsibility of the injured party or, if a student, the student's parents.

ILLNESS

Each school will provide a health office or comfortable space, apart from the student population, where children who become ill or injured can be cared for following *Virginia School Health Guidelines*.

Children with fevers, contagious, or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and excluded from school while in that condition, per Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a healthcare provider or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school, afterschool, and extracurricular activities.

When a student is requesting a waiver from participating in Physical Education classes and/or recess, parents are required to submit a written statement from their child's physician which states any activity restrictions with regard to participation in Physical Education classes and/or recess. The statement is expected to include a specific time frame for the activity restrictions.

If a parent is called to pick up a sick child, they must respond within a reasonable time, or an emergency contact will be called.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW

All school clinic, administrators, and staff are required to administer medication within the framework of the procedures outlined in Diocesan policy and summarized here.

Parents and guardians must provide and transport medications to and from the school.

All prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications may be administered during the school day under the following conditions:

- a. When the need for administration of medicines during school hours has been confirmed by the school nurse/health assistant (or the school administration);
- b. After the first dose of any medication has been given at home;
- c. When the parent/guardian provides and transports the medication to and from school and the medication is given directly to the school nurse/health assistant or a senior member of the school administration;
- d. When there is a licensed health care provider's written order signed by the parent/guardian requesting the school administer the medication or to permit the student to self-administer the medication;
- e. When the medication is brought to the school in its original container stating the name of the student, the dosage and method of administration prescribed by a licensed health-care provider. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any changes to the original prescription. The new prescription must also be brought to the school in the original container as stated above;
- f. When the appropriate medication authorization form (*Appendix F-6*) has been completed, signed by the parent/guardian and accompanies the medication.
- g. For any medication, parents must document the number of tablets or dosages to be secured for administration by authorized school personnel. If tablets are to be divided, the parent or guardian is responsible for dividing the tablets in order to achieve their child's proper dosage.
- h. Herbal and homeopathic medications will not be given in Diocesan schools without written authorization by a LHCP that shall include desired and adverse effects. Protein supplements will not be administered unless directly requested by a physician with a health treatment plan.
- i. Under no circumstances are medications to be shared with other students.
- j. Picc Lines, Heparin/Saline Locks, and Central Venous Lines may be present in students with specialized health care needs. Dressing changes, heparin flushes, and other medication administration via these lines are to be done at home and should not be done at school.

When the medication is epinephrine, trained school employees are permitted to administer Epi-pen injections when:

- a. the parents advise the staff most directly involved with the student of the situations when an Epi-pen may need to be administered (e.g., symptoms indicating that a person is suffering from severe allergic reaction, basic procedures for administering the Epi-pen with a suitable demonstration);
- b. parents of students requiring such injections provide a licensed health-care provider letter attesting to the life-threatening allergy;

- c. parents agree to execute the release of liability/hold harmless agreement regarding the use of the Epi-pen (*Appendix F-6*).

All OTC and prescription medications are to be kept locked in the clinic/school office and be administered by the school nurse, clinic aide, principal or trained designee. No student is to carry/possess medications, without appropriate medical authorization. No medication will be administered unless the school has received a signed copy of the Medication Authorization Form (*Appendix F-6*). OTC medications do not require a health care provider's signature unless the medication is required for four (4) or more consecutive days.

It shall be the student's responsibility to come to the clinic/school office at the appropriate time for medication unless a health care provider or parent/guardian indicates in writing that the student cannot do this.

Students are NOT permitted to self-medicate. The school does not assume responsibility for medications taken independently by the student. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis for students who demonstrate the capability to carry and self-administer emergency lifesaving medications (e.g. inhaler, Epi-pen).

Within one week after expiration of the effective date on the order, or on the last day of school, the parent/guardian must personally collect any unused portion of the medication. Medications not claimed within that period will be destroyed.

SPECIALIZED STUDENT CARE NEEDS

The parent of any student on a continuing regimen for a non-episodic condition shall inform the school principal/director/administration and identify, in writing, the student's supervising health care provider. If necessary, and with parental written consent, there may be occasions when the school needs to communicate with the health care provider regarding possible effects on the pupil's healthcare management, special emergency procedures, or behavior at school.

TOILETING/INCONTINENCE

Although the vast majority of school staff would assist in an emergency situation, as no child should be left in wet or soiled clothing, it is important to note that there is no expectation that routine and predictable incidents are to be dealt with by school staff.

Parents will always be contacted in incidents of soiling. The exception to this policy is the student with a prescribed health-related treatment or procedure plan obtained in writing from a LHCP, with proper authorizations in writing by the parent or guardian.

For prekindergarten students, it is recognized that continence training is an area of development which is reached at different ages for all children and that every child has individual needs which

are respected. The prekindergarten director will determine age-appropriate protocols for the student population.

All prekindergarten students must be fully potty trained and able to attend to their own needs. Teachers will not assist in wiping. If a student has an accident three times in the same week, for two weeks the parents will be asked to keep them home for a week and keep trying. Full day prekindergarten parents are encouraged to stop using pullups/diapers at naptime at home, so the students do not have accidents during nap. It is recognized that during the first two to three weeks of school students are adjusting to a new environment and may fall off track.

A complete change of clothes must be left at school including socks/shoes. These do not need to be a uniform but adhere to the guidelines of a dress down day.

USE OF CRUTCHES

An order from a Licensed Healthcare Provider (LHP) is required to use crutches at school. If a student arrives at school on crutches without a licensed health-care provider order, the parent will be called to take the student home.

USE OF MICROWAVE OVEN

For preschool, given the risk of potential harm, students' access and use of microwave ovens is prohibited.

LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY

Schools will utilize current resources and reputable materials such as Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) and the CDC's *Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs* to develop allergen management communications for student handbooks, classrooms, and parental publications.

All schools must provide an annual in-service educating school faculty and staff about the policy. Training will include minimizing the risk of exposure to life threatening allergens in the school setting as well as anaphylaxis recognition, medical management, and incident reporting.

Schools will utilize the policy to develop allergen management communications for student handbooks, classrooms, and parental publications. Schools will select and train staff to be utilized as anaphylaxis response teams responsible for managing an allergic crisis.

Parents/guardians of students with a life-threatening allergy must inform the principal and school health personnel of any allergies and provide schools with fully executed Diocesan documents. Parents/guardians are expected to supply schools with any emergency medications as prescribed and may additionally provide the student with "safe" foods for classroom celebrations involving food. Schools will utilize Diocesan documents to formulate an emergency care plan for the student and will share this care plan with those involved with the student including, but not

limited to, teacher(s), food service, bus drivers, and janitorial staff.

CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

DISEASE

Parents/guardians must notify the school within 24 hours if their child or any member of the immediate household has developed a communicable disease. Parents must notify the school immediately if the disease is life threatening. Parents must pick up their sick or injured child in a timely manner when contacted. If the parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called to pick up the child.

The protection and welfare of each individual student is of importance in the schools of the Diocese of Arlington. In an effort to enhance the protection of students:

- a. No daycare/preschool, elementary, middle, or secondary school student may attend class without documentary proof of adequate immunization in accordance with Virginia Department of Health's school entry requirements (or modified schedule as approved by licensed health care provider) on the Virginia School Entrance Health Form MCH-213G (*Appendix F-2*).
 - i. Parents or guardians who object to the administration of immunizing agents for their child on the grounds that this conflicts with their religious tenets or practices must produce a notarized Certificate of Religious Exemption form (*Appendix F-18*), which will be retained in the student health record.
 - ii. Students who have traveled or resided in a foreign country for five months or more, where tuberculosis is common, are required to provide documentation, prior to school entry, of a negative tuberculosis skin test or chest x-ray result. All Diocesan schools are responsible for compliance with local health department regulations pertaining to tuberculosis screening and treatment.
- b. Students with fevers and/or contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and will be excluded from school while in that condition, according to the Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a health care provider or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school.
- c. School health personnel will follow the Virginia Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart, found in the Virginia School Health Guidelines, when referring suspected cases of communicable disease to the local health department for excluding or readmitting a student.
- d. The Diocese of Arlington has comprehensive guidelines for school/parish-based influenza vaccination clinics. The liability associated with the vaccination of children is great. The Diocese of Arlington does not promote school-based vaccination clinics for

children during school hours, and in the absence of the parent, with the exception of a state or federal emergency. Any school wishing to offer an onsite school influenza vaccination program must comply with all aspects of the Memorandum of Agreement. Vendors wishing to serve as vaccinators must be fully vetted by the Office of Risk Management prior to the consummation of any contract for services.

LICE

All students determined to have an active case of lice will be excluded from school until they receive treatment. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide appropriate and adequate treatment for the student and home environment as recommended by their health care professional. Readmission to school is determined by the school nurse/administration based upon re-inspection and the effectiveness of treatment. Follow up treatment is expected and verified by the school nurse/administration. Classroom contacts may be inspected.

BLOODBORNE DISEASE

The Christian community is called to respond to the sick in our midst with compassion and justice. The diocese recognizes its obligation to protect the rights of individual students infected with Hepatitis and HIV and to provide a safe environment for students, staff members, and the public. Students who are infected with bloodborne Hepatitis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), or HIV-related conditions must be provided the opportunity to receive a Catholic school education in a regular classroom unless the student's health interferes significantly with school performance.

Since it is known that bloodborne Hepatitis and HIV are not transmitted through casual contact, any student who is infected will continue education in a regular classroom assignment unless his or her health status requires otherwise. It is the intent of the Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools to follow the recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health which state that most bloodborne Hepatitis and HIV-infected children be allowed to attend school in an unrestricted setting and that decisions regarding school attendance be based on the medical condition of each child and the expected type of interaction with others in that setting.

Persons involved in the implementation and monitoring of this policy shall maintain confidentiality of records in compliance with federal and state law and diocesan policy. All diocesan schools shall also maintain a program of information and training for school staff members to ensure a consistent and accurate understanding regarding prevention of exposure to bloodborne pathogens. This includes training related to the proper application of universal/standard precautions.

FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted on a regular basis, weekly during the month of September and monthly

thereafter. Students are made aware of, and practice other emergency drills throughout the year, such as tornado, earthquake, and shelter in place. Students are expected to remain silent and follow instructions during all emergency drills.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT - STUDENTS

Sexuality affects all aspects of the person, including in a general way the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others. Until sexuality can be expressed through the acts which are proper and exclusive to spouses, chastity is the successful integration of sexuality within the person. Chastity is expressed notably in friendship with one's neighbor when the equal personal dignity of man and woman is recognized. Offenses against chastity, which include lust and the more serious acts of pornography and immoral sexual conduct, are violations of our Catholic faith and morals.

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Arlington will respond appropriately to allegations of sexual harassment or sexual abuse in its schools. See Part 3, Section 2, Chapter 2, Article 6 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (¶¶ 2331-2400)

No student is to sexually harass or sexually abuse another member of the school community. All reports of harassment or abuse will be thoroughly, and appropriately investigated and disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate, up to and including expulsion. Instances of sexual abuse will result in suspension at a minimum. If it appears that a violation of criminal law may have occurred, the matter will be reported to law enforcement authorities.

“Sexual harassment” is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature, or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. "Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" includes, but is not limited to, the deliberate making of unsolicited gestures or comments, or the deliberate display of sexually graphic materials which are not necessary for school purposes, either in person or via any media source.

BULLYING

Bullying is defined as any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. Bullying includes cyber bullying. Bullying does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Physical intimidation or assault
- b. Extortion
- c. Oral or written threats, including text messaging

- d. Malicious teasing
- e. Putdowns
- f. Name calling
- g. Threatening looks
- h. Gestures or acts of aggression (Overt and Covert)
- i. Cruel rumors & false accusations
- j. Social Isolation
- k. Cyber bullying

School personnel will not tolerate any bullying on Diocesan school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, the Office of Catholic Schools expects students and parents who become aware of an act of bullying to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g. principal/director, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of an incident of bullying or cyberbullying to take appropriate steps to intervene unless intervention would be a threat to staff members' safety. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report the bullying to the school principal/director for further investigation.

In cases of reported bullying, the principal/director or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e. the aggressor(s) and the victim(s)) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

- a. Counseling
- b. Parent conference
- c. Detention
- d. Suspension and/or Expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the principal/director may also report incidents of bullying to law enforcement, if appropriate.

ASBESTOS MANDATORY YEARLY NOTIFICATION

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which

requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos containing building materials.

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be in place. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan at the school during regular business hours.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

School leadership at each individual school must install video surveillance cameras in order to maintain a safe and secure environment.

- a. At the discretion of the principal/director or his/her designee, video surveillance cameras may be placed in public locations deemed appropriate. Such locations may include, without limitation, school entrances/exits, lobby areas, hallways, classrooms, cafeterias, athletic areas, gathering spaces, and outdoor grounds, as well as school buses.
- b. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse's offices, and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use.
- c. It is recognized that it will not be possible to monitor all building areas, rooms, and grounds, or to monitor any location at all times.

To the extent video images may be deemed appropriate to create student records or personnel records, the school shall comply with any applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance, retention, and disclosure.

Video images obtained by the school shall be viewed by authorized school and diocesan personnel as necessary. The school and the diocese may rely on the images obtained by the video surveillance cameras in connection with the enforcement of diocesan or school policies, regulations, codes of conduct, building rules, and other applicable laws or rules, including, but not limited to, use of such images in student and staff disciplinary proceedings and matters referred to local law enforcement agencies in accordance with applicable law. Video images may become part of a student's educational record or a staff member's personnel record in accordance with applicable law.

All video recordings shall be stored in a secure place. Recordings will be saved for no less than 60 days and may be retained longer if deemed appropriate. All video recordings are the sole property of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. Release of such videos will be made only with the permission of the diocesan Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

Recordings for instructional purposes must be retained no less than one year.

VIII. CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Office of Catholic Schools recognizes the beauty and potential inherent within each child. In an effort to foster continued growth, the school embraces the opportunity to provide assistance and services for children with disabilities according to the resources available within/to the school. Parents are considered an integral part of the process.

In order to accommodate a child who has been evaluated for special learning needs, parents are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the school. The refusal to provide such information is a condition for negating enrollment in the school. A child may be admitted on a probationary basis with dates and criteria of evaluation clearly established in writing.

If a child has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 plan, and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the child's confidential file. Children who have a documented disability, but do not qualify for services through the local public school, may be eligible for accommodations through a Student Assistance Plan written at the Catholic school.

When a student qualifies for special education services through the public school and will not receive services, an Individualized Catholic Education Plan can be written following the information in the Guidelines for Serving Students with Disabilities.

Failure of the parent to sign the Student Assistance Plan or Individualized Catholic Education Plan does not prevent the implementation of the plan.

Children with disabilities are expected to follow the school's policies and honor code.

If a prekindergarten parent has concerns about their child's speech or other developmental delays the teacher will assist them in contacting the correct agencies to perform testing. The teacher may also bring any concerns to the parent after consulting with the administration.

IX. PROGRAM INFORMATION

LICENSING INFORMATION

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents that child day programs that assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. Title 22.1, Chapter 14 of the Code of Virginia gives the Virginia Department of Education authority to license these programs. While there are some legislative exemptions to licensure, licensed programs include child day centers, family day homes, child day center systems, and family day systems. The state may also voluntarily register family day homes which are not required to be licensed.

Standards for licensed child day centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, a ratio of children per staff member, equipment, program and record keeping. Criminal record checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with children are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health, and building codes.

Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Department of Education. In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program which will be investigated if it violates a standard.

Three types of licensing may be issued to programs. Conditional licenses may be issued to a new program to allow up to six months for the program to demonstrate compliance with the standards. A regular license is issued when the program substantially meets the standards for licensure. A provisional license, which cannot exceed six months, is issued when the program is temporarily unable to comply with the standards. Operating without a license when required constitutes a misdemeanor which, upon conviction, can be punishable by a fine of up to \$100 or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for each day's violation.

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please call the Office of Child Care Licensing toll-free at 833-778-0204.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

A Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan has been developed and approved. All employees have been trained accordingly.

OVER-THE-COUNTER SKIN PRODUCTS

All non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall not be kept or used beyond the expiration date of the product.

For all over-the-counter skin products:

- a. written parent authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
- b. shall be in the original container labeled with the child's name;
- c. does not need to be kept locked, but shall be inaccessible to children under five years of age;
- d. any center-kept sunscreen shall be hypo-allergenic and have a minimum SPF of 15;
- e. children nine years of age and older may administer their own sunscreen, if supervised.

When insect repellent is used, a record shall be kept that includes the child's name, date of use, frequency of application, and any adverse reaction. Manufacturer's instructions for age, duration, and dosage shall be followed.

INSURANCE

The program is covered by public liability insurance through the Diocese of Arlington and the Catholic Mutual Relief Society of America. Student insurance must be provided by the family through their own policy or purchased through an independent school insurance provider.

TAX INFORMATION

Because the Internal Revenue Service requires identification of care givers in order to claim a credit for child and dependent care expenses, the school will complete and return to the parent any W-10 that is sent in, provided Part II is already completed by the parent.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

In compliance with state regulations for state licensed programs, a custodial parent shall be admitted to any child day program. Such right of admission shall apply only while the child is in the child day program (63.2-1813 of Code of Virginia).

RIGHT TO AMEND

Holy Spirit School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the weekly electronic newsletter and/or through e-mail communication from the principal.

X. APPENDICES

Contact the school office for assistance accessing any of the below forms.

Diocesan Forms

- Permission for Emergency Care Form (Appendix F-1)
- Confidential Student Health History Update (Appendix F-1A)
- Virginia School Entrance Health Form (Appendix F-2)
- Virginia School Entrance Health Form Instructions (Appendix F-2A)
- Asthma Action Plan with Indemnification (Appendix F-3)
- Nebulizer Treatment Log and Procedure (Appendix F-3A)
- Anaphylaxis Action Plan with Indemnification (Appendix F-4)
- Diabetes Quick Reference and Indemnification (Appendix F-5)
- Virginia Diabetes Medical Management Plan (Appendix F-5A)
- Diocese Medication Authorization Form (Appendix F-6)
- Student Injury Accident Report (Appendix F-7)
- Wind Chill Factors/Heat Stress Index (Appendix 15)
- Certificate of Religious Exemption (Appendix F-18)
- Seizure Action Plan (Appendix F-20)
- Photo, Press, Audio, and Electronic Media Release for Minors (Appendix N)
- Parent Permission for School Sponsored Trip Participation.English (Appendix R)
- Permiso De Los Padres Para Excursiones Patrocinados Por La Escuela.Spanish (Appendix R-A)
- Use of Personal Vehicle (Appendix R-1)
- Preschool Handbook Agreement Form (Appendix AG-3)