

Preschool Parent Handbook



Saint Charles Preschool

2026 -2027



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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Saint Charles Preschool

3299 Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Parents:

Welcome to a new school year. I look forward to working with each of you towards our common goal of inspiring a life-long love of learning in all St. Charles students.

At St. Charles Preschool we recognize that parents, teachers, and students are all partners in the educational process. The faculty and I pledge to remain in communication throughout the school year. It is our goal to continually encourage, assess, and share the progress of your child and our program as a whole with your valuable insights as a guide. We are delighted to be a special part of your extended family and support system. Sharing the wonders of God's creation and Christ's light is our calling and our greatest joy. We are honored that you are entrusting your children to our care. We take this role very seriously and we are always working to ensure that your child is safe, happy, and growing in God's love.

We look forward to supporting you and your child throughout the coming year.

Please call on me at any time if you feel I can be of assistance to you or your child during this exciting time of discovery and growth.

God bless,

Robin Baney
Director

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.

¹ Declaration 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

Our mission is to provide a Christ-centered, nurturing environment in which each child will develop spiritually, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. We recognize each child as a unique gift from God. Diversity is celebrated and welcomed.

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

Each school shall utilize the OCS template to develop and distribute a handbook for students and parents. 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/preschool directors 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-3*). An acknowledgment form will be provided to students upon receipt of the handbook. The form must be signed and returned by the first Friday that school is in session. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies and/or prevent a student from enrolling or continuing to be enrolled at the school.

All parents are required to sign a form stating they have read the rules and regulations outlined in this handbook and they agree to abide by those rules (*Appendix AG-3*). This signature form will be given to students when they receive a copy of the handbook and the form must be signed and returned as soon as possible. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies, but could result in disciplinary action being taken and/or prevent a student from enrolling (or continued enrollment) in the school.

Faculty and staff members shall be given copies of all school handbooks.

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 handbook. 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/students 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.

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

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.

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 Catholics supports this premise. The Catholic school exists to assist parents in the Christian formation 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.

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.

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.

The following, based upon Catholic moral values, will help parents support the school's mission and commitment when interacting with teachers, staff, adult volunteers, and anyone else with whom they come in contact relating to the school:

1. will be honest and committed to integrity.
2. will be respectful and courteous.
3. will refrain from harassment of any kind.
4. will use appropriate language.
5. will not threaten or bully.
6. will speak respectfully to and about others.
7. will respect all school property.
8. will demonstrate good sportsmanship when attending school-sponsored co- and extracurricular activities.
9. will not bring to school or school-sponsored functions/activities any weapon.
10. will not bring alcohol or illegal drugs (including marijuana) to the school or any school-sponsored function/activity, with the exception of alcohol for adult social events where alcohol is served as part of the event.
11. will not overtake the role of the school in resolving school related incidents by, for example, directly contacting another student regarding a behavioral issue involving that student and the parent's child.
12. will not involve parties external to the school on a school issue, with the exception of the exercise of legal rights.

All of the conduct expectations apply to verbal, written, and electronic communication.

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/preschool 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.

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.

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. All students are expected, for testing and discussion purposes, to be knowledgeable of the Catholic Church's positions on scripture, revelation, and moral practices. 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.

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. 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.

St. Charles is a screen-free school.

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 complementary 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.

It is important for parents to send in a seasonal change of clothes to be kept at school in case of spills or accidents. All clothes should be in a gallon-sized ziplock bag, labeled with the child's first and last names.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Play is the most developmentally appropriate and productive avenue for young children's learning. Play has all the characteristics of a complete educational process. It secures concentration for a great length of time. It develops initiative, imagination, and interest. There is complete emotional involvement. Play is inherently individual and has no pre-determined expectations. There can be no "failure" in play. Each child is free to succeed at self-chosen tasks, and this success leads to feelings of competence, self-worth, and the willingness to try new things.

Young children are learning all the time and it is the preschool's responsibility to guide them in the learning process. Learning takes place when children can question, explore, share information and ideas, and try new activities.

WHAT DID YOU DO IN PRESCHOOL TODAY?

It is natural for parents/guardians to wonder what their children are learning in preschool. Children often answer the question, "What did you do in preschool today?" by saying, "I just played." While children are playing, they are learning. Play is the most important way children learn about themselves and their world.

While each preschool day has time for teacher directed and structured activities, play experiences will provide many learning opportunities that will serve as a foundation for more academic

learning later. Young children learn through actions and through exploration in the environment. Though preschool children can be taught to memorize information such as alphabet letters and sight words, this information will not be meaningful if simply learned through rote drill. For a child to fully understand a concept, the information must be meaningful in the context of the child's experiences and development. When learning is relevant to the young child, not only is comprehension improved, but motivation to learn is also increased.

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.

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.

In the event a parent desires to discuss a problem with his/her child's teacher, the parents 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/preschool director may do so after an initial meeting with the classroom teacher. Similarly, parents should discuss matters of concern with the school principal/preschool director, and pastor when necessary, before bringing them to the Office of Catholic Schools.

SCHEDULING AND OTHER CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Parents will be required to attend a mandatory parent/teacher conference in November that will be scheduled by the school. This year conferences will be held on the afternoons of November 9 and 10. Throughout the year, conferences may be requested by a parent or teacher as needed. An optional conference is offered mid-year to any parent who wants to discuss current student progress or recommendations regarding options for the following school year.

PROGRESS REPORTS

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

A progress report of your child's Social and Emotional Development will be presented for discussion at the November conference. A mid-year report at the end of January will update the Social and Emotional learning, as well as identify pre-literacy and pre-math readiness skills. A final report will be distributed on the last day of school in May.

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 particular 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/preschool 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.

ELIGIBILITY

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.

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 fee
- g. A fully executed MCH-213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
 - i. Proof of exact dates of 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 preschool physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical unless it is completed within 12 months prior to kindergarten entry.)
- 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).

CLASS PLACEMENT

The principal/preschool director and faculty reserve the right to place a child in a class to ensure the best interests of the child. Factors to be considered include birth date (as well as developmental age for premature births), a balance of genders and native languages in a class, and the particular needs of each unique student. The Director may solicit input on class placement from the child's parents and staff, but the decision of the Director is final.

Application to the Junior Kindergarten Class may be made by parents of students who either:

- Do not meet the age requirement for Kindergarten attendance in Virginia, but turn age 5 earlier in the school year, or
- Meet the age requirement for Kindergarten attendance in Virginia, but would benefit developmentally from another year in the preschool setting.

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/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

There is no obligation for compulsory attendance in preschool. However, as you have chosen to enroll and recognize the value of the activities we offer, we are sure that parents share our view that regular attendance is crucial to a child's ability to succeed in our program.

Parents must sign their children in daily. The accuracy of the attendance record is important, and parents are relied on to help ensure their own child's information is correct.

Sign-in sheets are used to determine emergency response as well as charges billed to parents for use of our Lunch Bunch. Before and After Care is guaranteed to students enrolled under the all-inclusive Daycare Rate. Non-Daycare students must reserve a space in Lunch Bunch online.

TARDINESS

A student who is tardy will miss crucial information at the start of our day. Late arrivals are disruptive to the class already in progress. Every effort should be made to arrive on time. Frequent cases of tardiness will be brought to the attention of the principal/director so that the parent may be contacted.

MEDICAL EXCUSES

Please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease such as pink-eye, strep infection, head lice, or Covid-19. Parents of students who may have come in contact with that child will be notified to look for symptoms. Your child's name will not be mentioned in the notice, but such notification helps parents identify early symptoms.

ANTICIPATED ABSENCE

Please inform your teacher well in advance of any planned travel or anticipated absence. This information is particularly crucial to our planning efforts in the busy days just before a long holiday break.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

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

If the parent has designated some other adult to pick up a child from school, the school must receive the name of the designee in writing in advance. The school provides parents with a form on which to record the names of preapproved adults which parents are encouraged to update throughout the school year.

Except in cases of emergency as determined by the principal/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.

A sign-in/out sheet is provided every day to record the time of arrival and departure for all classes. Parents are asked to record arrival and departure times daily and to initial the sheet verifying arrival/departure times. For Lunch Bunch and Drop-in students, these times determine the amount billed to the parents for usage of the optional for drop-in care. For students who are enrolled under the all-inclusive Daycare rate, the sign-in sheets serve as mandatory attendance records.

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

Parking is limited. Parents are asked to enter the parking lot from the Washington Boulevard entrance and exit the parking lot via Fairfax Drive. This will allow for a one-way flow of traffic and make the drop-off and pick-up move safely and quickly for everyone. Please drive slowly in

the parking lot, and when walking to and from the building, hold your child's hand.

Students must be accompanied into the building by a parent or designated adult, who will sign them in, recording the exact time the child was placed in the school's care. This gives the classroom teacher a chance to communicate with the parent and the parent to share relevant information.

The building will open daily at 7:30 AM for students enrolled at the Full-Day/Daycare rate, or for students who have signed up for Drop-In Before Care. Before Care will be conducted in the school Cafeteria for all students.

The academic day begins at 8:30 AM. Parents whose children are not in Before Care are asked to wait until 8:25 AM before entering the school building. Teachers will then be ready to welcome students into their classrooms. Children should never be left in an unsupervised classroom unattended. At 9:00 AM, teachers will secure their classroom doors, and tardy students will be escorted to their classrooms by office staff.

The academic portion of our Preschool morning program ends at 12:00 PM. Individual students being dismissed at noon should be picked up at their classroom door at 12:00. Lunch begins at 12:10 PM for all School Day or Full Day (daycare) students and Lunch Bunch students. Parents who do not intend to have their child participate in the Lunch Bunch program are asked to pick up their student at 12:00 PM. Lunch Bunch ends at 1:30 PM.

The Junior Kindergarten class and students enrolled in the School Day rate will dismiss at 3:00 PM. Our After Care Program ends at 5:30 PM, at which time the building closes and all employees are dismissed. It is essential that parents sign their child out prior to closing time. A child who remains in the school beyond 5:30 PM will be supervised by the Director or Afternoon Supervisor until the parent arrives. This creates a distressing situation for the child, which all efforts should be made to avoid. In the case of an unavoidable emergency which causes the parent to arrive later than 5:30 PM, a fine of \$1 per minute will be assessed. The school reserves the right to deny After Care services to a family that repeatedly incurs such fines.

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.

St. Charles does not participate in any federally funded programs

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/preschool 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, preschool 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."

TRANSFER OF RECORDS

In accordance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools may disclose a student's cumulative record (i.e., Permanent Record Card, Attendance Card, test results) to another school with legitimate educational interest when provided a written request for such records is received, or when those individuals to whom the custodial parent/guardian has given written permission, have requested the child's records to be released. Parent signature is required for release of a student's confidential file (i.e., special education records, psychological reports,

disciplinary records, anecdotal information, or reports by the school counselor).

Only copies of the student's permanent record file may be released. Original health records and MCH-213 transfer with the student.

Parents/guardians may not hand-carry records to another school, except under extraordinary circumstances. The documents must be placed in a securely sealed envelope, which cannot be opened without obvious evidence, and the envelope must also be similarly marked "hand carried."

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.

Regular volunteers, such as Room Parents, who will have significant contact with the children are asked to register for and submit documentation of attendance at a Diocesan Virtus training.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

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

PRINCIPAL/ PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR'S COMMUNICATION

A weekly preschool newsletter will be produced and distributed via email. Paper copies are available by request. Information regarding each class and their activities will be included, as well as upcoming events, issues of importance, and general information. Please be sure to read the newsletter, which includes information about school closures, holidays, etc.

The Director is available for conferences, which can be arranged by email, or by calling the office to make an appointment.

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.

General information issued by the office will be communicated by email.

TELEPHONE USE

Preschool students are not permitted to use the telephone. Parents can contact the school office during the school day at 703-527-0608 with any information or concerns to be passed along to their child or the child's teacher. No student is allowed to bring a cellular phone with them to school.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Saint Charles Preschool follows the inclement weather opening and closing decisions of the Arlington County Public Schools. If the Arlington County Public Schools announce different arrangements for elementary and intermediate students, Saint Charles follows the schedule announced for elementary students. It is the responsibility of parents to listen to our local TV, radio stations and websites that provide school closing information: e.g. WASH, WTOP or APS Emergency Announcements posted on their website.

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- **If Arlington County Schools open two hours late, the building will open at 10:00**

AM. On these occasions, there will be no Before Care. All employees should be in their assigned classroom and ready to receive children by 10:00 AM.

- **In the event that Arlington County declares an Emergency Early Closing, St. Charles will close at 3:00 PM for all students. All students must be picked up PRIOR TO 3:00 PM.**

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.

LIBRARY

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 or teachers who object to reading or audio-visual/computer materials must complete an Objection to Content Form (*Appendix K*) and submit it to the school principal/preschool director. 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.

St. Charles is a Screen-Free School.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are privileges 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 child must give to the sponsoring teacher a permission form signed by a child's parent(s) prior to a child participating in each activity (*Appendix R*).

In the event private automobiles/vehicles of children, parents or other authorized adults of at least 21 years of age are to be utilized to transport children 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/director for review and approval prior to the use of such vehicles. *Appendix R-1* must be used for this purpose. The principal/director shall have the right

to prohibit, for any reason, a proposed driver from transporting children 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.

The preschool classes of Saint Charles Preschool do not participate in school-sponsored field trips. The Junior Kindergarten teachers have the option to schedule neighborhood learning experiences with the Preschool Director’s approval.

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 support the principal to advance the school’s mission.

Every school should have an effective Parent-Teacher Organization. It can help mobilize the parent community regarding legislative proposals impacting Catholic education. The work of PTOs and like organizations shall be guided by the PTO Handbook and the direction of the pastor and principal.

All parent organization activities and all materials prepared by parents for release to the Parish or school community must be submitted to the principal or designee 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.

PTOs shall have by-laws which establish, among other things, term limits for officers as well as the organization of committees. Persons nominated to serve as a PTO board member must receive the approval of the pastor and principal.

St. Charles Preschool does not have a PTO, but has Lead Parents.

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

Parking is limited. Parents are asked to enter the parking lot from the Washington Boulevard entrance and exit the parking lot via Fairfax Drive. This will allow for a one-way flow of traffic and make the drop-off and pick-up move safely and quickly for everyone.

Please do not park in the numbered spaces along the fence; these spaces are reserved for teachers and staff and are parking by permit only. Parking is also not permitted in the parish numbered spaces.

Sometimes funerals or other church events are planned during the school day. If these coincide with drop-off or pick-up times, attendees are given priority for parking spaces. We will then ask parents to drive through the parking lot to an appointed pick-up area to be met by teachers and the student that they are picking up from school. Parents will be notified by the teachers or by the Director when such arrangements are necessary.

V. FINANCES

SCHOOL TUITION POLICIES

Saint Charles is primarily funded through tuition. It is essential that parents fulfill their obligation to the school through timely payment of tuition and fees. Any account that is past due may result in a student's removal from the program.

There will be nine monthly tuition payments (July-March) for the 2026-2027 school year:

All tuition payments must be made through FACTS online, which charges fees for service.

A new student application fee of \$160.00 (early bird) or \$220.00 (after January 4th), and a \$300 enrollment fee will be collected through FACTS Tuition Management. A signed Financial Agreement Form must be submitted to the school office. These fees are nonrefundable.

All parties are aware that additional fees incurred for Lunch Bunch will be billed on a monthly basis at the published hourly rate. All fees incurred will be assessed through your FACTS account. Prompt payment for this optional service is required, or future access to this service may be denied.

TUITION AND OTHER FEE SCHEDULES



St. Charles Preschool Tuition 2026-2027

*Tuition is paid via FACTS in 9 monthly payments from July to March and is non-refundable once charged.
If you will be moving mid-year, please let the office know as soon as possible to stop future payments.*

<u>2 Year Old Programs:</u> Classes capped at 12 students			
	2-Day Program Thurs./Fri.	3-Day Program Mon./Tues./Wed.	5-Day Program Monday-Friday
8:30 am-12 pm	\$4,130 (\$459/mo)	\$5,830 (\$648/mo)	\$8,590 (\$954/mo)
8:30 am-3 pm	\$5,300 (\$589/mo)	\$7,950 (\$883/mo)	\$13,250 (\$1,472/mo)
7:30 am-5:30 pm	\$7,630 (\$848/mo)	\$11,450 (\$1,272/mo)	\$19,080 (\$2,120/mo)

<u>3 Year Old & Up Programs:</u> Classes capped at 15 (3's Program), 16 (4's Program), & 18 (Jr. K)			
	2-Day Program Thurs./Fri.	3-Day Program Mon./Tues./Wed.	5-Day Program Monday – Friday
8:30 am-12 pm	\$3,850 (\$428/mo)	\$5,510 (\$612/mo)	\$8,110 (\$901/mo)
8:30 am-3 pm	\$4,990 (\$554/mo)	\$7,380 (\$820/mo)	\$12,380 (\$1,376/mo)
7:30 am-5:30 pm	\$7,280 (\$809/mo)	\$10,920 (\$1,213/mo)	\$18,200 (\$2,022/mo)

Additional Fees:

- Re-registration Fee charged annually for returning preschoolers: \$100
- Application Fee charged for new preschoolers: \$220 (\$160 early bird)
- Enrollment Fee charged annually for new & returning preschoolers: \$300

Drop-In Extensions of Day:

- Lunch Bunch 12pm-1:30 pm \$30/day
- Extended hours (7:30-8:30 am or 1:30-5:30 pm)** \$25/hr

***must register in advance, availability not guaranteed*

VI. CHILD RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR

CODE OF CONDUCT

In all areas of learning, discipline must be considered in the development of the whole person. 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/guardians, faculty, and students work together to create a Catholic school environment. These basic components include:

- a. Teachers have a right to teach. No student will stop the teacher from teaching.
- b. Students have a right to learn. No student will stop another student from learning.

Based upon the Catholic moral values and loving respect for others taught by Jesus, students:

1. will be honest and committed to integrity.
2. will be respectful and courteous toward all teachers and adults.
3. will refrain from harassment of any kind.
4. will use appropriate language.
5. will speak respectfully to and about others.
6. will complete all assignments and participate fully in class.
7. will respect all school and personal property (see *Care of School Property*).
8. will refrain from any deliberate disruption in the school.
9. will adhere to the school's cell phone policy.
10. will comply with the Internet Responsible Use Policy.
11. will demonstrate good sportsmanship when engaged in all school-sponsored co- and extracurricular activities.
12. will be present for all required activities unless officially excused by the administration.
13. will adhere to the dress code (see *Dress Code*).
14. will not give or receive unauthorized assistance on tests, quizzes, or assignments.
15. will not leave school grounds during the school day for any reason without permission from the principal/preschool director.
16. will not bring to school or school-sponsored functions/activities, nor possess at school or school-sponsored functions/activities, any real or toy knives, guns (or any facsimile thereof), sharp objects that may be used as a weapon, matches, lighters, sparklers, laser devices, or any facsimile thereof. It is understood if this term is violated, suspension, or expulsion may result (see Substance Abuse/Weapons and Inappropriate Materials).
17. will maintain, and support others who maintain, a safe and drug-free environment at, or near, school and at all school-sponsored functions/activities with the understanding that possession or distribution of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or any other substance that may be harmful or dangerous and forbidden, to include drug paraphernalia, will result in suspension or expulsion from school (see also *Substance Abuse/Weapons*).

18. will not engage in any physical or verbal contact with another student which could be interpreted to be an inappropriate display of affection. Such conduct is prohibited on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
19. will, at all times, whether at school or in the community, conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the Catholic values and principles of the school.

All of the conduct expectations apply to verbal, written, and electronic communications and student use of the internet.

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

DISCIPLINE

An important goal for Catholic Education is for students to learn self-discipline which strengthens and promotes the values incorporated in our Catholic faith community. As the school builds community, it develops in the students the awareness that sensible rules serve to safeguard the individual's freedom and provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. Disciplinary measures should have as an end the development of the human person who respects oneself, other persons, and those in authority.

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which arise, this handbook empowers the faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior (within or outside of the school community) which violates the spirit, philosophy, and code of conduct of the school, even though not specified.

In justice to the other students, circumstances may dictate that a student be removed temporarily or permanently from the particular school setting.

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/preschool 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.

SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

Giving positive verbal rewards encourages acceptable behavior. This reinforces a child's good feeling about her/his behavior. Asking a child to stop and think about her/his unpleasant behavior enables that child to develop self-control. The staff will strive to help the children verbalize their feelings and always use words when solving disagreements and arguments. For a child that is not cooperating in a group listening situation, the child will be seated by a teacher and reminded of acceptable behavior.

Removal from the immediate situation for a period of time is the next tactic used for a child who continually demonstrates unacceptable behavior. This is not a punishment, but rather a time when the child may calm down, remember what behavior the teacher is asking for and decide for her/himself when s/he is ready to rejoin the group with appropriate behavior.

If behavior problems persist, the parent will be asked to attend a conference to discuss what may be helpful in motivating the child to behave in an acceptable way. Parents will be necessary partners in the process of encouraging appropriate behaviors. The school encourages parents to share concerns regarding a child's behavior with the teacher or Director. It is understood that all children need guidance in understanding appropriate behavior, but it is sometimes necessary for all adults involved in the child's life to work together to reinforce appropriate behavior and correct inappropriate behavior.

A child who resorts to hitting or biting will be removed from the situation. Students who bite another person (classmate or adult) may be sent home to reinforce the severity of the offense, but may return to school the following day. Parents will be notified if aggressive behaviors continue.

SUSPENSION

Suspension may be imposed as determined by the principal/preschool director. Once the principal/preschool 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.

EXPULSION

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

1. a serious infraction of school rules occurs;
2. the child has demonstrated continuing disregard of school rules for which other means of

- discipline have proven ineffectual;
3. 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;
 4. 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/preschool director believes it necessary to expel a child, the principal/preschool 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/preschool 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.

STUDENT 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.

SEARCHES OF STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY

The principal/preschool director or his/her designee has the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of school patrons against drugs, weapons, unauthorized publications, and other contraband materials. Search of a student's person and/or personal property on school property or at school activities may be conducted by the school principal/administration or other designated officials. It is only necessary that a search be reasonable and related to the school rights in these regards. The failure of a student to voluntarily submit to a search shall be presumptive evidence of the existence of contraband and grounds for appropriate disciplinary action.

INTERROGATION OF STUDENTS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

Unless provided with a court-issued warrant, the principal or preschool director and the Office of Catholic Schools must first be consulted before law enforcement authorities are allowed to speak to any student for interrogation purposes of alleged illegal activities or threatened illegal activities. This policy does not apply to Child Protective Services (CPS) officers, who are by law

entitled to interview students.

The questioning by police officers of students in school or on school grounds about alleged illegal activities or threatened illegal activities shall meet the following conditions:

1. The principal, the preschool director, or the principal's/preschool director's designee shall be alerted.
2. The police officers shall report to the principal's office.
3. The principal, the preschool director or the principal's/preschool director's designee will learn the purpose of questioning. In the rare instance when CPS is involved, contact Office of Catholic Schools and/or General Counsel for guidance.
4. Permission from the student's parent/guardian must be acquired, either by phone or in person, prior to any questioning.
5. The principal/preschool director or a school representative shall be present.
6. The questioning shall be conducted in a private room where participants cannot be seen or heard by students and/or other school personnel.

The police officers may take legal actions that they deem necessary.

STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY

Students are solely responsible for their own personal property. The school accepts no responsibility for items left unattended in the common areas of the school. Items of personal property or clothing not directly related to academic or athletic events sponsored by the school should not be brought to school.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are to care for school property in a respectful manner. Students who deface or damage school property or the property of others will make financial restitution. If library books are not returned, students will be assessed an amount equal to the value of the book or its replacement, whichever is greater, as determined by the principal/preschool director.

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/preschool director.

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS & OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

Children are encouraged to wear comfortable play clothes and soft-soled, closed-toe shoes. Daily activities include active and messy play, and the children should feel comfortable enough to

enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes.

The child's name should be placed on all outdoor clothing and other belongings to help ensure the return of all items. Parents are expected to dress their child for outdoor play every day. Please provide mittens, hats and scarves as appropriate.

Accidents will happen. With that in mind, please send in a complete change of clothes for your child. Please put the clothes inside a Ziploc plastic bag and label it with your child's full name. If an accident does happen the dirty clothes will be sent home in a plastic bag and parents are asked to return a fresh set of extra clothes. Soiled underwear will be disposed of, as it is unsanitary to leave such items until the end of the school day. Parents will be asked to update the clothing as the seasons change to ensure that appropriate clothes are available. Clothes will be returned to parents at the end of the school year.

PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS

While the playground is a place for fun and exercise, it is also necessary to establish playground rules and regulations to ensure safety for all. The same discipline guidelines will apply in the playground as in the classroom. Teachers and the Director reserve the right to restrict use of specific playground equipment.

Outdoor play is an integral part of our wellness program. All students should expect to spend a portion of their day outside. Parents are required to provide their child with clothing and outerwear to facilitate daily outdoor activity. This includes hats, coats and mittens in the winter, as well as appropriate footwear.

We will exercise in the gym on days when weather does not permit safely playing outside. Such conditions might include: temperature below 33 degrees, heavy rainfall, a heat index warning, dangerously high winds or when there is snow/ice on the ground.

LUNCHROOM REGULATIONS

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

The St. Charles Policy is to provide everyday snacks that are safe, simple, small, and healthful. **Saint Charles is a nut-free school.** All students will be offered daily school-provided snacks in their classroom. For any student staying for lunch, parents must provide a lunch brought to school in a lunch box or bag that has the child's name clearly written on it. **Please do not pack items that include any nut products.**

For the safety of the children in our care, it is our priority when purchasing snacks to get those with the fewest allergens as possible. We offer crackers with no nuts, peanuts, dairy products,

eggs, or food coloring. These snacks would include, for example, Ritz crackers, Wheat Thins, graham crackers. The serving is typically about four small crackers or one graham cracker. We also often offer some raw snack in addition to the crackers, such as raisins. Portions are kept to a reasonable limit to maintain a child's appetite for a healthy lunch.

Water is always available to the children in the classroom, though we encourage children to bring in a water bottle each day.

We recognize the importance of celebrations in building a sense of community among our staff, students and families.

For birthdays treats will **not** be allowed in the classroom due to the many allergies in our school and for the safety of all students. Your child will be celebrated in other ways such as wearing a birthday crown, being sung to, and having their favorite book read. Please, no decorations or goody bags.

For most holiday celebrations, parents are invited to participate, both in the foods that are brought and in the event itself. Parents of children with food allergies will be informed in advance so that they may provide an alternate special snack for their children on such days.

SHOW & TELL

Parents are encouraged to help guide their child's choice of item, directing them to an object of personal interest that inspires a story or memory that their child can tell. Souvenirs from special trips or mementos from loved ones who live far away are especially useful. The purpose is for your child to not only bring something interesting to SHOW, but also have something to TELL their classmates. Practicing at home often helps a student overcome shyness when it is their turn to speak in front of the class.

Show and Tell is a valuable learning experience in public speaking as well as active listening. When students are encouraged to share their interests with peers, they build self-confidence and vocabulary skills. As an active listener, classmates learn how to ask each other increasingly complex questions and gain new understanding.

Weapons (whether real or toys) of any kind are not appropriate Show and Tell items, and shall not be brought to school for any reasons. 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.

As a Screen-Time-Free school, no electronic device with a screen may be brought to school for Show and Tell, or any other purpose. Devices found by a staff member will be confiscated and parents will be asked to collect them from the preschool director's office.

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.

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.

School personnel who suspect the abuse or neglect of a student must report the matter directly to Child Protective Services (CPS) and to the school principal/preschool director (who in turn will call the Vicar General). The school principal/preschool director should complete the approved Diocesan Incident Reporting Form designated by the Office of Child Youth Protection and Victim Assistance, which must be sent to the Vicar General. The school principal/preschool director must inform the superintendent as well.

In accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, (Section 63.2 – 1518) “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 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.

STUDENTS WITH SUICIDAL IDEATION

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. When a student has expressed to any adult employee in the school to act immediately in the interest of the safety of the student by alerting an administrator.

The school may require documentation and information from the parents regarding the threat of self-harm in order to evaluate whether accommodations exist that would permit the student to safely remain in school, or if the student should be removed from school until his/her health has improved. The school will require a letter from a licensed health care professional stating that the student is permitted to return to school. In addition, a documented return-to-school plan, coordinated between the school, the mental health professional, and the parents, may be required.

ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

The parents of an injured student will be notified of the accident/injury by the principal/preschool director or the principal/preschool director'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. Accident and incident forms are completed by staff members to inform parents of occurrences.

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/preschool 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.

AIR QUALITY AND PREVENTION OF HEAT/COLD RELATED ILLNESS

When students and activities require time outside, schools will monitor weather related to the "feels like" temperature. To prevent heat and/or cold related illness, outside activities may be restricted based upon a heat index or wind chill factor, which registers in the caution level. Schools will consult local weather reports and *Appendix F-15* for guidance in outdoor activities. Schools that do not have air-conditioned classrooms are permitted to provide early dismissals in accordance with *Appendix F-15*.

GENERAL ILLNESS PROCEDURES

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, vomiting, diarrhea, contagious, or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and excluded from school while in that condition, per Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once a child is determined to need to go home, a parent or guardian must pick up their child from school within a reasonable amount of time to control the spread of illness. If a parent or guardian is not available, the emergency contact will be called. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a healthcare provider or is symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school.

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.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW

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

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

1. When the need for administration of medicines during school hours has been confirmed by the school nurse/health assistant (or the school administration);
2. After the first dose of any medication has been given at home;
3. 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;
4. When there is a 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;
5. 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 physician. 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;

6. When the appropriate medication authorization form (*Appendix F-6*) has been completed, signed and accompanies the medication.
7. 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.
8. Herbal and homeopathic medications/supplements will not be given in Diocesan schools without written authorization by a LHCP that shall include desired and adverse effects. Protein and/or other OTC supplements will not be administered unless directly requested by a physician with a health treatment plan (*Appendix F-6*).
9. Students should not attend school while taking prescribed Schedule II narcotics (e.g. Percocet, oxycodone, hydromorphone) for any legitimate reason. If a student needs a Schedule II narcotic analgesic, they shall remain home until they are able to control pain with OTC medications.
10. Benzodiazepines (e.g. klonopin, Ativan, diazepam) prescribed as needed (prn), should not be administered in any school setting. This does not apply to students diagnosed with a seizure disorder.

Under no circumstances are medications and/or OTC supplements to be shared with other students.

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, not at school.

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

1. the parents advise the staff most directly involved with the student of the situations when an EpiPen may need to be administered (e.g., symptoms indicating that a person is suffering from severe allergic reaction, basic procedures for administering the EpiPen with a suitable demonstration);
2. parents of students requiring such injections provide a licensed health-care provider letter attesting to the life-threatening allergy;
3. parents agree to execute the release of liability/hold harmless agreement regarding the use of the EpiPen.

All diocesan schools will maintain non-student-specific school stock epinephrine. This school

stock epinephrine can be used in an allergy-naïve student when anaphylaxis is suspected. Employees at the school will be informed of the location where the medication will be stored, and they will be appropriately educated on its use.

All diocesan schools will maintain naloxone, an opioid antagonist, to be available for use if opioid overdose is suspected in any individual on school campus. Any student receiving naloxone will be transported via EMS to the local emergency room and cleared to return to school. All staff will be trained in how to recognize opioid overdose and administer naloxone. Stand-alone preschools, such as St. Charles Preschool, do not maintain naloxone.

A student is 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, EpiPen).

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/preschool director 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 indicates in writing that the student cannot do this.

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.

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/preschool director 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.

CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY

A concussion is both a medical and an educational concern. It can affect a student’s health, thinking, learning, and participation in school activities. Because of this, recovery often requires coordination between health care providers, school staff, and families.

When a student is diagnosed with a concussion, the parent/guardian must notify the school and provide written documentation from a licensed health care provider. School staff will work with the family and the health care provider to determine appropriate temporary academic or activity adjustments that support the student’s recovery.

Students recovering from a concussion may need a gradual “return to learn” (academic activities) and “return to play” (physical activity and sports). Adjustments may include changes to workload, rest breaks, reduced screen time, or temporary limits on physical activity.

In most cases, additional medical documentation may be required to confirm that a student is cleared to return to full academic and physical activities without accommodations.

TELEHEALTH

Medical appointments made via telehealth cannot be facilitated in the school building. If a student has been scheduled for a telehealth visit for medical reasons, the parent/guardian will need to check his/her student out of the school building and complete the appointment in the privacy of their vehicle or at home.

If a school is able to adequately support virtual regularly scheduled therapy sessions in the building (e.g., occupational or speech therapy) for students with a documented diagnosis, they can do so on a case-by-case basis after evaluating the specific circumstances.

SPECIALIZED STUDENT CARE NEEDS

The parent of any student on a continuing regimen for a non-episodic condition shall inform the school principal/preschool director 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 preschool 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 preschool director will determine age appropriate protocols for the student population.

USE OF CRUTCHES AND OTHER ORTHOPEDIC DEVICES

An order and/or statement from a licensed healthcare provider is required to use crutches, braces, casts, slings or other orthopedic or assistive devices at school. More importantly, the statement is expected to include activity restrictions and timeframe for the activity restriction. If a clearance to resume full activity is needed based on the initial provider note, a follow up note will be expected to indicate clearance. If a student arrives at school on crutches without a licensed healthcare provider order and/or statement, 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.

CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

DISEASE

Parents 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 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. A certificate of immunization is not required for any student for whom the school has written certification from a licensed doctor of medicine or osteopathy, licensed nurse practitioner, or the local health department, that one or more of the required immunizations may be detrimental to the student's health. The certification must indicate the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstance that contraindicates immunization. The Virginia School Entrance Health Form (MCH-213G) provides a space for such a certification to be made.
 - ii. On a basic level, for the good of society, the Catholic church generally encourages the use of immunizations. The Church teaches that questions of immunization are "left to a matter of conscience" and parents have the right to decide about the health of their children in this matter. 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. Schools may request a statement from their parish priest or affiliate, describing such objection to specific immunizing agents. If an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable illness occurs, the student who is not immunized against that disease, will be excluded from school for an undetermined period of time, as per the instructions of the State Health Commissioner and the public health department.
- b. Students who have traveled or resided in a foreign country for three 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.
- c. Students with fevers, vomiting, diarrhea 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 symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school.
- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. Parents and guardians of students learning in a virtual environment must make the school aware of the student's illness as it may impact the student's ability to learn.

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.

Parents of a child with head lice will be notified immediately to remove the child from school and to follow the Arlington County Health Department letter of information regarding lice. The same letter will be sent home with every child in the class. The child will not be named; the letter serves only to alert other parents to look for symptoms in their own children. Teachers are placed on alert to notify the school office if other cases are suspected. Students will be asked to remain at home until treated, according to Health Department Guidelines, which are included in the Health Department letter of information. If the child returns to school and continues to show signs of infestation, the child will be sent home and a doctor's note will be required to allow the child to return to school.

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 held monthly as indicated by the Arlington County Fire Department and checked by the department at the annual school fire inspection. Other emergency drills will be held randomly throughout the year. They include: shelter in place, lock down procedures, and tornado drills.

HARASSMENT

“Harassment” is threatening, intimidating, demeaning, humiliating or hostile conduct toward an individual because of his/her race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or disability, or that of his/her relatives, friends, or associates, which conduct:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, demeaning, humiliating, hostile, or offensive environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s performance.

Harassment can take place in person or in writing and can be physical, verbal, or electronic.

Regardless of its form, the Diocese of Arlington prohibits it.

This policy applies to the school site itself, to all school-sponsored and affiliated activities and events, whether in school or out of school, including but not limited to special events, field/service trips, retreats and/or other overnight trips, sporting events and practices, to all forms of transportation used by school personnel and students to come and go to the school and school-affiliated activities, and to all forms/use of technology.

Furthermore, since student behavior, whether inside or outside of school, reflects on our schools and can have a significant impact on life at school, there are times when it is appropriate and important for school administration to respond to incidents that occur outside of school and beyond school hours. Therefore, the schools reserve the right to discipline those in the school

community who engage in harassment of other school community members at any location, including online environments and at any time if such harassment takes the form of obscene, libelous, slanderous language or incites violence, invades the rights of others, or contributes to a substantial disruption of the school community. Therefore, if the school learns of harassment outside of school and is able to verify the harassment has occurred, appropriate action will be taken to maintain a safe and respectful work and academic environment.

As the primary educators of their children, parents have the responsibility to handle harassment issues not involving the school that occur outside of school.

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation against anyone who has reported these behaviors is prohibited. Students engaging in these behaviors are subject to disciplinary and/or legal action. Students, parents, employees, and service providers are responsible for reporting incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation on campus. School principals/preschool directors will ensure that all potentially illegal behaviors and/or threats to engage in illegal behavior are reported to the appropriate local authorities and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools immediately.

STUDENTS REPORTING A CONCERN

If something happens to you or a friend that makes you uncomfortable or worries:

1. Tell a teacher, counselor, nurse, principal/preschool director, or other trusted adult at school.
2. Tell a trusted adult outside of school.

Students will not get in trouble at school for telling an adult about a concern. Speaking up helps keep everyone safe.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS: REPORTING A CONCERN

If a parent or guardian is aware of potentially concerning behavior, they are encourage to share this information with school staff, including their student's teacher counselor, or principal/preschool director.

Our school uses a standardized response system to teach students and adults how to notice problems early and how to help each other in a caring way. This system is also used to review concerns and complaints in a consistent manner

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND/OR SEXUAL ABUSE – STUDENTS

"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.

Sexual abuse/assault is physical contact with a sexual or intimate part of the body without consent. It includes various forms of sexual intercourse as well as lesser forms of sexual touching. Further:

1. Sexual or intimate body parts include, but are not limited to: breasts, buttocks, genitals, the groin area and upper thighs.
2. Lack of Consent: occurs when one is physically forced or verbally intimidated into doing something sexual, or submitting to a sexual act, or when one has explicitly indicated a lack of consent or when the circumstances make it obvious that consent has not been given.
3. Circumstances that make it obvious that consent has not been given include, but are not limited to: (1) being too intoxicated to say “no” or resist, (2) being asleep and therefore unable to consent, or (3) situations in which someone is deemed to be physically or mentally incapable of giving valid consent, whether due to the use of intoxicants or any other reason.

Behaviors which can be considered to be sexual harassment:

1. Unwelcome verbal harassment of sexual nature.
2. Unwelcome pressure to engage in sexual activity.
3. Unwelcome, sexually motivated or inappropriate patting, pinching, or physical contact.
4. Unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual’s educational status.
5. Unwelcome behavior, verbal or written words or symbols directed at an individual because of gender.
6. The use of authority to emphasize the sexuality of a student in a manner that prevents or impairs that student’s full enjoyment of educational benefits, climate or opportunities.
7. The use of photos taken with or without the person’s knowledge and distributing them on social media with or without crude or sexual comments.
8. Sexting, defined as sending or receiving or forwarding sexually explicit or suggestive messages, images or videos, real or digitally generated, via cell phone, social media or other digital platforms. This behavior will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and notification of law enforcement.

No student is to sexually harass or sexually abuse another person. 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, that has been investigated and confirmed, 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 or CPS, if applicable. Schools will cooperate with law enforcement if they have been notified of any illegal or potentially illegal conduct. During the investigation of an alleged crime, the suspected student perpetrator may be asked to remain off campus or be restricted in his/her movements at school.

Any student who believes that he or she has been sexually harassed or abused needs to immediately report such information to a trusted school employee. If a student makes a report, the school employee will report the information to the principal/preschool director. A student who is uncomfortable for any reason with reporting such alleged harassment/abuse to a trusted school employee, or is not satisfied in doing so, may report the matter directly to the Superintendent of Schools. Any information reported shall, to the extent possible, be treated as confidential.

No student will be subject to any retaliation or disciplinary action on the part of the school for reports of sexual harassment/abuse made in good faith.

Children under 17 years of age cannot legally consent under Virginia State Law to having sex or sexual contact with an adult. **Any sexual contact between a student under 17 and an adult is a crime. It must be reported to the police.**

In addition, any sexual or romantic conduct between a school employee or an employee of a contracted service provider and a present student of any age, even if 17 years of age or older, and even if consented to or welcomed by the student, is strictly prohibited by this policy while the student is attending a diocesan school and for one year post-date of graduation and any such scenario will result in dismissal of the adult involved. This policy also prohibits “sexting” between students and employees or employees of contracted service providers as well as the showing of pornography to any student by any such adult. Such activity will result in the dismissal of the adult involved and the reporting of such conduct to the appropriate authorities.

In an effort to prevent/address sexual harassment/abuse, students in grades 6 to 12 must annually receive appropriate age level instruction pertaining to harassment by September 30th of each school year. Schools are encouraged to use the education modules provided by the Office of Catholic Schools.

BULLYING

“Bullying” is intentionally aggressive behavior, repeated over time, that involves an imbalance of power and the ongoing nature of this behavior leaves the victims feeling powerless and fearful.

“Rude” is inadvertently saying or doing something that hurts someone else. In children this takes the form of social errors. Incidents of rudeness are usually spontaneous, unplanned inconsideration, based on thoughtlessness, poor manners or narcissism, but not meant to actually hurt someone.

“Mean” is purposefully saying or doing something to hurt someone once (or maybe twice). Unlike unthinking rudeness, mean behavior very much aims to hurt or depreciate someone. Very often, mean behavior in kids is motivated by angry feelings and/or the misguided goal of propping themselves up in comparison to the person they are putting down. Both rudeness and mean behavior require correction, they are different from bullying in important ways that should

be understood and differentiated when it comes to intervention.

Bullying is defined as any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate another person; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between aggressor or aggressors and the target; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma.

“Bullying” includes cyber bullying. “Bullying” does not include ordinary/developmental teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical intimidation or assault
2. Extortion or blackmail
3. Oral or written threats, including text messaging
4. Malicious teasing
5. Putdowns
6. Name calling
7. Threatening looks
8. Gestures or acts of aggression (overt and covert)
9. Cruel rumors & false accusations
10. Social isolation
11. Cyberbullying

School personnel will not tolerate any bullying on diocesan school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, students and parents/guardians who become aware of an act of bullying are expected to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g., principal/preschool director, teacher, school counselor). Staff members who become aware of an incident of bullying or cyberbullying are expected 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 principal/preschool director for further investigation.

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

Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include (note: this list does not imply that all disciplinary situations will proceed through all of these steps before a student may be suspended, asked to withdraw, or expelled when circumstances warrant):

1. Outside professional counseling
2. Parent/guardian conference

3. Suspension and/or expulsion

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

HAZING

Hazing is defined as the imposition of strenuous, often humiliating, tasks as part of a program of rigorous physical training and initiation and is intended to leave the victim feeling powerless and fearful.

Hazing is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any hazing on diocesan school grounds or in virtual school, or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, students and parents/guardians who become aware of an act of hazing are expected to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g., principal/preschool director, teacher, school counselor). Staff members who become aware of an incidence of hazing are expected to report the hazing to school administration for further investigation.

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

Consequences for students who engage in hazing shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include (note: this list does not imply that all disciplinary situations will proceed through all of these steps before a student may be suspended, asked to withdraw, or expelled when circumstances warrant):

1. Outside professional counseling
2. Parent/guardian conference
3. Suspension and/or Expulsion

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

RACISM

“Racism” is the sin that says some human beings are inherently superior and others essentially inferior because of races. It is the sin that makes racial characteristics the determining factor for the exercise of human rights. It mocks the words of Jesus: "Treat others the way you would have them treat you." (US Catholic Bishops. (1979). Pastoral Letter on Racism. USCCB). Indeed, racism is more than a disregard for the words of Jesus; it is a denial of the truth of the dignity of each human being revealed by the mystery of the Incarnation.

Racism is defined as prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized. . This includes any comments, jokes, gestures or behaviors – whether in person or online – that demean, stereotype, or exclude someone based on race, skin color, ethnicity, or cultural heritage.

Examples include but are not limited to:

1. Discrimination
2. Victimization
3. Oral or written threats, including text messaging
4. Malicious teasing
5. Putdowns
6. Name calling
7. Threatening looks
8. Gestures or acts of aggression (overt and covert)
9. Cruel rumors and false accusations
10. Social isolation
11. Cyber-racism (racism that takes place using digital devices)

Racism is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any racism 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 racism to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g. principal/preschool director, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of any racism incident to take appropriate steps to intervene unless intervention would be a threat to staff members' safety. Every instance of suspected racism should be brought immediately to the attention of school leadership.

In cases of reported racism, the principal/preschool director or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e., the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(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 racist behavior will be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students engaged in racist behavior shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

1. Outside counseling
2. Parent/guardian conference
3. Suspension and/or expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the principal/preschool director may also report

incidents of racism to law enforcement.

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.

1. 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.
2. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse's offices, and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use.
3. 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.

Schools will provide notice to staff, students and parents/guardians, by means of inclusion of this policy in their respective handbooks that video surveillance will occur on school property. In addition, school leadership will install signs at building entrances or other locations deemed appropriate to inform visitors and invitees that video surveillance will occur.

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 confidentiality.

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, and only will be released where permitted by law and consistent with the confidentiality of student records.

VIII. ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

The school recognizes the beauty and potential inherent within each child. In an effort to foster continued growth, the school embraces the challenge to provide assistance and programs to serve children with special needs 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 Support 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 Support 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.

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

IX. PROGRAM INFORMATION

LICENSING INFORMATION

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents/guardians 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. The Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716, allows child day centers operated by religious institutions the opportunity to file for an exemption from licensure by meeting documentation and other requirements specified within the religious exemption law.

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION

In compliance with the Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716, ALL Diocese of Arlington Preschools and extended day programs are religiously exempt from licensure and are classified as a “religiously exempt child day center.”

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:

1. Written parent authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
2. Shall be in the original container labeled with the child’s name;
3. Does not need to be kept locked, but shall be inaccessible to children under five years of age;
4. Any center-kept sunscreen shall be hypo-allergenic and have a minimum SPF of 15;

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 caregivers 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 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).

X. APPENDICES

Diocesan Forms

Permission for Emergency Care Form (*Appendix F-1*)
Confidential Health History Update (*Appendix F-1A*)
Confidential Health History Update (Spanish) (*Appendix F-1B*)
Confidential Health History Update (Vietnamese) (*Appendix F-1C*)
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*)
Policy on the Protection of Children/Young People and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse (*Appendix G*)
Code of Conduct for Personnel and Volunteers in the Diocese of Arlington (English) (*Appendix G-1*)
Codigo de Conducta para el Personal y Voluntarios en la Diocesis de Arlington (Spanish) (Appendix G-2)
Photo, Press, Audio, and Electronic Media Release for Minors (*Appendix N*)
Website and Social Media Policy (*Appendix P-1*)
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*)

PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM

I have received a current copy of the Preschool Parent Handbook. In doing so, I have explained the content of this document to my child(ren). I acknowledge and agree to the policies obtained therein, and will require my child(ren) to comply with the policies which apply to students.

I also realize during my child's enrollment at the school I will be informed from time to time, formally or informally, of various changes in school and/or Diocesan policies. I understand the school and/or Diocese reserves the right to change policies at any time with or without advance notice. I further understand it is required for me to sign this form in order to continue my child's enrollment at the school.

(Parent's Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Date)

(Class Name)

(Student's Name)