

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK



SACRED HEART SCHOOL

Celebrando fe, cultura, y aprendizaje desde 1905

Revised 08/01/2017

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OUR MISSION



As a part of the Sacred Heart community, our school empowers families to build a more just and compassionate world by providing an innovative, bilingual education in an inclusive Catholic environment.

Sacred Heart is a bilingual Catholic school in the heart of Washington, DC dedicated to educating and empowering our diverse community. Each day, surrounded by our 200 students ranging from PreK3 to 8th grade, we celebrate our faith, culture, and joy of learning. We believe that a strong faith foundation along with an excellent education will equip our students with the tools they need to be successful in our ever-changing, diverse, and global society. *All* are welcome at Sacred Heart School.

OUR HISTORY

On August 8, 1905, eight Sisters from the Dominican Motherhouse at Sinsinawa, Wisconsin were assigned to 1621 Park Road Northwest to begin the Sacred Heart Academy. Since its inception, Sacred Heart has celebrated a history of excellence, growth, and perseverance. Guided by the Sisters, Sacred Heart- was able to survive wars and depressions without losing sight of their mission to always adapt to the needs of the students and families in the immediate community. Sacred Heart Parish purchased the property in 1929 and built the school used today.. In 1931, Sacred Heart reopened its doors to the diverse community and continued the good work of the founding Sisters. Sacred Heart went on to welcome its first African American students in 1951, five years before DC Public Schools desegregated. When the Columbia Heights area saw a large influx of families from El Salvador in the late 1990s, Sacred Heart adopted a bilingual curriculum, becoming the nation's first bilingual Catholic school. Today, Sacred Heart School continues to proudly serve our community and thrive as a part of the Consortium of Catholic Academies and Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.

PHILOSOPHY AND BELIEFS

Faith

The parents are the first teachers in the faith and the family is the domestic Church. Sacramental preparation, celebration of the Eucharist, Catholic history and Bible studies, and the demonstration of values in daily interactions are the core of Catholic education.

Culture

The education of a student is a joint effort among the parents, students, teachers, religious leaders, parish, and community. It is the responsibility of the School to prepare and guide students to become productive and compassionate citizens in a competitive and multicultural society.

Learning

Differentiated instruction is vital to the success of all learners and provides the opportunity for each learner to reach his/her potential. Second language acquisition is critical for students to compete and succeed in a global economy.

OUR PROMISE TO STUDENTS

We believe that the success of our students relies on the balanced collaboration and shared support of parents, students, teachers, religious leaders, parish, and neighborhood community. Sacred Heart promises to honor our responsibility of preparing and guiding each of our students in becoming mindful, responsible, and compassionate citizens who actively contribute to the world around them. We promise to nurture the faith formation of each student through in-depth Sacramental preparation, celebration of the Eucharist, and personalized religious inquiry. We promise to embrace and celebrate all cultures and provide a relevant, integrated, and rigorous dual language learning. We promise to support and empower our students as they develop the dispositions of capable, informed, and engaged global citizens. We promise to see, hear, and value each child's thinking every day so that they may reach their individual potential and inspire our collective learning community.

We promise that with every lesson we teach, we are actively supporting each child in reaching these expectations.

PROFILE OF A GRADUATE

*Sacred Heart students are **faithful role models** who:*

- Use Gospel values to guide decision-making
- Express gratitude to God through active stewardship
- Continue to grow in their love for Christ, self, and others
- Practice empathy and compassion towards all of God's creations
- Exhibit knowledge of and appreciation for Scripture, liturgy, and the teachings of the Church

*Sacred Heart students are **global citizens** who:*

- Listen actively
- Speak and write with clarity and confidence
- Demonstrate a spirit of purposeful collaboration
- Resolve conflicts peacefully
- Consider the good of others when making choices and decisions
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship
- Appreciate the unique gifts and talents of others and approach differences with patience and an open heart
- Respond to those in need with empathy and responsibility
- Take action in the spirit of social justice

*Sacred Heart students are **lifelong learners** who:*

- Manifest intrinsic motivation to set and accomplish personal goals
- Posses a strong foundation and appreciation for all areas of study
- Apply organizational, study, and critical thinking skills
- Reflect upon and assess personal strengths as self-aware learners

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

The School is responsible for upholding all school policies listed here and creating a safe nurturing learning environment. The school is committed to partnering with parents and students to work towards academic success and spiritual formation.

Academic Information

School doors open at 7:30 a.m. Students who arrive at 7:30 a.m. should report to the School Theater. Morning Prayer will begin promptly at 7:50. The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. Students should arrive early enough to have ample time to prepare for Morning Prayer. Students not in the classroom by 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy. Any student arriving after 8:00 a.m. must check in at the office.

Students arriving before 7:30 A.M. without a supervising parent or guardian are considered as participating in Before-Care and will be assessed a fee for this service. After-care is also offered from the end of the school day to six o'clock in the evening. Rates are made available upon request in the School Office.

Curriculum for Three Year Olds through Kindergarten

The program for three year olds through Kindergarten is designed to lead a child from wonder to discovery, developing and mastering a wide range of skills with which to meet future educational challenges. The curriculum for three year olds consists of a basic religion program, beginning language skills development, math readiness, and motor skills development; art and music classes are a regular part of this program as well. At this level of the Early Childhood program, the greatest focus is on personal and social development. Nurturing these skills prepares the child for positive interactions with both family and peers.

The curriculum for four year olds focuses on the spiritual, social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth of each child. The curriculum uses a thematic approach to promote the development of the whole child. All subject areas, including religion, language arts, math, science, social studies, motor development, music, art, technology, Spanish, and physical education are integrated in the curriculum.

The Kindergarten program builds on the learning readiness fostered in the first two years of the Early Childhood Program. Religion, language arts, and math are developed more extensively in order to prepare the child for the primary grades. Enrichment classes include art, technology, library, music, and physical education.

Curriculum for Grades One through Eight

Sacred Heart School offers an excellent course of studies designed to foster the holistic development of the children it serves. The curriculum utilizes the academic guidelines set by the Archdiocese of Washington. Core curricular subjects include Religious Education, Language Arts/English,

Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts/Spanish. Core curricular subjects are taught by two teachers, for English and Spanish curriculum, in grades Kinder through Fifth. Core curricular subjects are departmentalized for students in grades Sixth through Eight. Additional curricular subjects include Art, Music, Physical Education, and Technology.

Learning Labs (grades 5-8)

Designed to tap into students' innate desire and ability to learn, Learning Labs have worked to establish a culture of thinking and student driven learning at Sacred Heart. These labs, while standards based, explore one topic in depth over a nine week period and offer students learning opportunities outside of the traditional classroom model. Learning Labs are not bound by traditional assessments. Instead, teachers rely on student journaling, reflection, and performance assessments as a means for evaluation. Tapping into the authentic interests of learners, providing them access to resources outside of the classroom (through speakers, field trips, and research), and providing opportunities for collaboration with peers have all contributed to increased student engagement and overall success. Sacred Heart's Learning Labs allow students to cultivate their own sense of ownership over their learning as they embark on collaborative journeys of inquiry, exploration, and discovery

Technology in Education

The mission of Sacred Heart Catholic School is to educate students to become self-directed, continuous learners and ethical, responsible citizens prepared to meet the increasing challenges of a global, technological society. Access to telecommunications enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with people throughout the world. The benefits to students from access, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, are critically important for learning. The school acknowledges that technology should be used as a vehicle of communication, analysis, and research in light of Catholic values and moral decision-making. Therefore, the school is committed to the integration and effective use of current and future technology to further the educational mission of the School and the Church's mission of spreading the Gospel to all people. It is expected that all use of technology, at Sacred Heart Catholic School, follows the Technology Standards set by the Archdiocese of Washington.

Grading

Grading is based on a variety of types of assessment such as class work, projects, group activities, presentations, homework, and tests. Sacred Heart Catholic School offers a developmentally appropriate grading system at each of the levels of the School. Grading symbols change as a student progresses through the school. These scales are included below. For example, letter codes, letter grades, or number grades may be used. Individual classroom teachers explain grading scales and report card symbols on Back to School Night. No report cards will be distributed to families of students whose financial commitment is not fulfilled.

Grading Scale

Grading Scales are set by the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Office and used by all Catholic elementary schools under their direction.

Pre-Kindergarten 3- 2nd Grade follow a standards based report card. Progress towards these standards will be marked as:

- EE – Exceeds the grade-level expectations at this time
- ME – Meets the grade-level expectations at this time
- AE – Approaching the grade-level expectations at this time
- NE – Not approaching the grade level-expectations
- X – Not assessed at this time

The grade 3 and specials grading scale is:

- E – Excellent
- G – Good
- S – Satisfactory
- I – Improvement needed
- U – Unsatisfactory

The grades 4-8 grading scale is:

- A = 93-100
- B = 85-92
- C = 77-84
- D = 70-76
- F = Below 70

*- The asterisk (on a progress report/report card) indicates subject was taught with accommodations. Specials include Music, Art, Technology, and PE.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report Cards are important tools for communication. Report Cards will be given four (4) times during the academic school year or every nine (9) weeks.

Progress Reports will be given mid-way between each nine-week grading period.

An awards assembly will be held at the end of each quarter to recognize outstanding effort and achievement.

Student Records

Sacred Heart School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school.

Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to the School Office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents. No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is not met.

Transfer of Students

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the Principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. No student records will be forwarded to another school until Business Office accounts have been settled. (See previous section on Student Records for transcript information.)

Testing

The Performance Series Test is administered in grades 1-8 in the fall, winter, and spring each year in English. This test assesses student achievement and areas of need in reading and mathematics. Fall and winter scores are interpreted carefully by teachers to plan differentiated instruction for students.

Students will also be assessed in Spanish language and literacy development at the beginning and end of the school year using the PALS Espanol assessment.

All English Language Learners (ELL's) in grades K-8 participate in the ACCESS for ELL's test in May/June. The ACCESS test measures students' in the domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing in each of the content areas.

Homework

Formal homework is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain lessons through various experiences.

Considering each student has different capabilities and interests, it would be difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. If a problem arises, the teacher should be contacted.

Promotion Policy and Retention Policy

Promotion

Advancement to the next grade in Sacred Heart Catholic School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

Retention

Recommendation for retention of students is made by the teacher in consultation with the principal and the parents and, if appropriate, with other advisory staff. This decision is based on the total evaluation of a student's growth in all areas of development. Consideration may be given in special

circumstances, and will be decided upon by principal, parents, and advisory staff. In all cases, the final decision for retention rests with the principal.

Graduation

Sacred Heart Catholic School honors its graduates each year with a Mass and special ceremony. Graduation is a dignified ceremony celebrating the unique value of a Catholic education. Additional graduation festivities are the responsibility of the graduating students' class.

Code of Behavior and Discipline

School-wide Rules:

1. Follow directions the first time
2. Come to school ready to learn
3. Show respect to yourself, others, and the environment

Conduct

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors which the students' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them. The Principal or Assistant Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

Items that distract from the learning situation are not allowed at any time. The School Administration, in accordance with District laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school. Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the last day of school or at the discretion of the administration.

Cheating

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, or more serious consequences as the circumstances require.

Detention

Detention is when a student is detained after school as a consequence for violation of classroom and/or school rules. Teachers assign and monitor students during detention. Parents are notified of the day, date, and time of the detention at the discretion of the teacher. Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, tutoring, ballgames, etc.

Off – Campus Conduct

The Administration of Sacred Heart School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not aligned with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day. This off campus behavior includes, but is not limited to cyber-bullying.

Returning to School after Dismissal

Students are not permitted to return to the school building after the dismissal unless accompanied by a parent.

Drugs and Alcohol

Students who possess drugs and/or alcohol at school or at any school function face suspension and/or expulsion.

Threats

Sacred Heart School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously, in jest, or online) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

In the event of any actual or perceived threat of violence or other inappropriate/illegal behavior, Sacred Heart School reserves its right to take any and all actions it deems necessary for the health and safety of its school community, including the individual(s) making the threat. These actions may include contacting law enforcement offices, mental health professionals and/or any other outside experts as the school official(s) deems necessary. A student who makes a threat of violence may be required to remain off school property until a mental health professional certifies that the student is not a danger to him/herself or others, or may be subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion.

Harassment/Bullying

As a Catholic school, Sacred Heart School believes and teaches that each of us is called to love our neighbor and to treat them with respect. Sacred Heart School is committed to providing a physically safe and emotionally secure learning environment that is free from bullying, harassment, and intimidation in any form, including cyberbullying. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation of any member of the school community is prohibited. All reports of bullying, harassment, and intimidation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

The reprisal or retaliation against anyone who report acts of bullying, harassment, and intimidation is strictly prohibited. All reports of reprisal or retaliation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

Bullying, harassment, and intimidation mean any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including electronic communication (telephone, cellular phone, computer, pager, iPod, etc.), that:

1. Physically harms an individual; damages an individual's property; substantially interferes with an individual's education or learning environment; or places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property; and
2. Occurs on school property; at a school activity or event; on a school transportation vehicle or bus; or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

In the event of an accusation of harassment or bullying, the school will take the following steps:

- a) The Catholic Schools Office requires the principal and/ or principal's designee at Sacred Heart to be responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of bullying.
- b) Members of the School community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that violate the School's Code of Conduct. Students may report bullying to any member of the School staff. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- c) The Catholic Schools Office requires the principal and or/ the principal's designee to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes bullying. In so doing, the principal and /or principal's designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation should be completed immediately, but in no case later than two school days after the report or complaint is made. The investigation must be fully documented. The principal shall speak with every student, teacher, volunteer, or parent involved in the incident, and completes the Bullying Incident Report Form. Based on the discussions, the principal shall:
 1. Make the determination of whether bullying or harassment occurred;
 2. Assess the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act;
 3. Determine and administer the appropriate disciplinary action;
 4. Complete the Bullying Incident Report Form and retain it on file.

Sacred Heart Catholic School continues to explore and implement a preventive bullying program that promotes and develops awareness among staff, faculty and students. The School Program promotes a safe environment in accordance with the Child Protection Policy of the Archdioceses of Washington. Sacred Heart Catholic School continues to update and review frameworks that support the ongoing mission of preventing and eliminating bullying within our school.

Suspension and Expulsion

Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Students must complete all classwork and tests during the days of suspension. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school without prior permission from the Principal. Students who pose a threat to themselves or others, or keep other students from learning, may be suspended or expelled.

Student Activities and Services

Athletics

The Sacred Heart Athletic Program functions under the same philosophy as Sacred Heart Catholic School. The purpose of this program is to develop physical skill in conjunction with teamwork and positive leadership skills. Participating in a sport is a privilege, and all athletes must exemplify good Christian behavior in order to keep that privilege. All student athletes in every sport must have the appropriate permission document completed, and a current medical certificate completed by a physician must be on file in the office.

Code of Ethics

The coach is expected to conduct him/herself in a sportsman-like manner and lead his/her team not only by words, but also by example. The coach should at all times be a positive role model to his/her players. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that athletics is a rewarding experience for each player by promoting an attitude of support and encouragement among all team members. This Code of Ethics applies to assistant coaches as well.

The athlete is expected to exhibit the highest degree of cooperation, enthusiasm, and sportsmanship at each athletic event. Each athlete is an ambassador of the Sacred Heart Catholic School and is expected to demonstrate moral behavior parallel to that which is expected of them during each school day. Each athlete should always exhibit honorable behavior toward his/her coach, the officials, his/her teammates, and the opposing players and coaches. A Sacred Heart Athlete is expected to accept victory or defeat in a positive, dignified manner.

The parent is expected to support his/her child and the coach in a positive way in order to reinforce the moral values which are taught at Sacred Heart Catholic School. Each parent should refrain from being critical of the officials, and each should understand that his/her child must learn to cope with the situation, no matter how adverse. Each parent should demonstrate to his/her child that success is built through hard work and dedication, not excuses.

Transportation Procedure for After-School Sporting Events

It is the responsibility of the athlete and the parent(s) to arrange transportation for their child to and from practices and after-school sporting events. You are encouraged to make arrangements with other families in advance if you are unable to drive to an event. Sacred Heart Catholic School coaches will not be responsible for arranging car pools and are not allowed to transport athletes to and from games. If you are releasing your child to another parent for transportation to an event, you are required to send a written request to your child's homeroom teacher. In this request please ask the teacher to release

your child to the driver(s) who will be transporting him/her. This request may include more than one driver and may be good for the entire season of the sport.

Clubs/Organizations

Sacred Heart Catholic School offers numerous activities and clubs geared to the varied interests and talents of its students. All after-school activities are completed based on activity times. Students have the option of participating in after-school activities with the understanding that they are picked up immediately after the activity. For the sake of safety, any student not picked up promptly will be escorted to After-Care; there will be a fee charged for this service. No student may be on the school property unsupervised at any time.

School Counselor

Sacred Heart Catholic School has two part-time School Counselors through the Christ Child Society. An appointment with the School Counselor may be initiated by a student, parent, teacher, administrator or other appropriate school personnel.

Archdiocesan Catholic School Counseling Services

In the event of an emergency or crisis, the Archdiocese of Washington may send a team of school counseling professionals to Sacred Heart School. One-time, initial counseling services may be rendered to students by school or archdiocesan counseling staff in the event of a crisis or emergency.

PAL Certified Animals

PAL certified animals are animals that are given a certification to be eligible to work at libraries, nursing homes, schools, and hospitals. Sacred Heart will be working with PAL to provide opportunities for students to interact with dogs in a safe, friendly environment. A waiver will be given to parents to sign for their children to participate at the beginning of the school year.

Students with Special Needs

At the time of admission, parents/guardians must make available to the Principal and Director of Admissions any of the following documents, should they exist: Psycho-Educational testing, Individual Educational Plans (IEP), 504 Plan, Speech and Language Testing, or any other comprehensive testing or documents written to describe the child's specific educational needs. Submitting documentation of a disability in no way obligates Sacred Heart Catholic School to fulfill the student's documented needs. Documentation is requested and required only to enable Sacred Heart School to determine if reasonable accommodations are possible.

If an administrator(s): Principal, Director of Admission and Educational Specialist/Coordinator of Special Education, determines that Sacred Heart Catholic School is able to meet the child needs, the Administrator will provide the parent with a draft of a Catholic Accommodation Plan (CAP form 10) or a draft of an Individual Catholic Education Plan (ICEP form 11) to indicate the type(s) of support that Sacred Heart Catholic School may be able to offer the student. Parents/guardians must review and sign the draft CAP and ICEP. The final CAP or ICEP will be written within six week of the child's admission to Sacred Heart School.

Title I

Title I is a federally funded program that provides English language and Math support for students who reside in Washington D.C. Title I services will be available for all students attending Sacred Heart School who qualify and or already receive services. It is offered during the school day.

Latin American Youth Center

The Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) is a multicultural community-based organization that supports youth and their families in their determination to live, work, and study with dignity, hope, and joy. The LAYC will be facilitating the after-school program, the Sacred Heart Athletic Program, and providing the Physical Education and Technology Teacher.

Field Trips

The following rules will be followed with regards to field trips:

1. Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
2. Field trips are re-evaluated each year to determine the trips compatibility with curricular goals.
3. A field trip is a privilege and not a right.
4. There are no “traditional” field trips. Class participation in a particular field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.
5. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience ensure a successful learning opportunity.
6. Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
7. A written official permission slip, completed on both sides and signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. Verbal permission cannot be accepted. Permission slips are due in the office 24 hours prior to the field trip. Note: a fax does not take the place of an original signature.
8. A telephone call will not be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.
9. Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain at home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.
10. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride to and from the field trip with their class.
11. All monies collected for the field trip are non-refundable.
12. Monies for field trips should be sent in a labeled, sealed envelope.
13. Cell phones are not allowed on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.
14. Parents who are official chaperones must be VIRTUS certified through the Archdiocese.
15. Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip.
16. All chaperones must be 25 years of age or older.

Safety Management

Child Abuse Laws

Sacred Heart Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the District of Columbia and the Archdiocese of Washington D.C. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

Crisis Plan

Sacred Heart School has implemented a “crisis plan” in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated and students will be moved to Sacred Heart Church. Once the children are safe, parents will be contacted with the most updated information, and contact information. In some cases, depending upon the severity of emergency, children will be kept safe until local authorities authorize release. Once the children are safe, each parent will be notified via School Messenger.

Emergency Drills

Law requires that fire drills be held monthly. During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds; teacher closes the classroom door.
2. Walk to the designated exit, outside, and to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence;
3. Teacher takes attendance once the class arrives off campus.
4. Return to building when signal is given.

Weather Emergencies

If it should be necessary to close the school because of weather conditions, an announcement will be made over local television stations and a message will be sent to the home phone, cell phone, and e-mail account listed on a student’s file via the School Messenger system. Sacred Heart follows Montgomery County for decisions on closures and weather emergencies. In the event of a weather delay on a previously scheduled half-day, the school day will be cancelled.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Sacred Heart School adheres to the tenets of Title IX: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

Indoor/Outdoor Recess

If it is raining, snowing, or the temperature drops below 32 degrees recess will be moved indoors. Otherwise students will play outside for recess. Students must participate outside with their class during recess unless a doctor’s not specifies that they must stay in for medical reasons. Parents are responsible for assuring that students are prepared for outdoor recess every day. Students should come to school with a coat, winter hat, and gloves or mittens every day during the cold season.

Telephone Use

Permission to use the telephone must be obtained from the school secretary. The phone may be used only in cases of emergency.

Visitors

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure. Visitors who have not been fingerprinted and completed VIRTUS certification through the Archdiocese may not walk unescorted through the school building.

School/Classroom Visits

The School reserves the right to determine if and when a parent can visit a classroom. Parent visits violate the privacy rights of other students. If permission is granted, parents' visits will be limited for periods of time. Parents must schedule an appointment ahead of time, not visiting during testing or not staying longer than a specified time. There may be no more than one or two visitors at a time. Parents who fail to adhere to schools' visitation rules or who repeatedly cause disruptions can be restricted from the classroom.

Volunteers

All individuals who volunteer in the school must complete the Volunteer Sign-Up sheet and will be asked to complete VIRTUS certification. All volunteers are expected to dress appropriately. Clothing should be modest and neat. The main responsibility of a volunteer is to assist the administration or teachers.

Office Hours

The Administration has set aside time from 8:00-9:00 am and 2:30-3:15 pm for designated office hours. The Administration will meet with parents on a first come, first serve basis. Preference will be given to parents who have called ahead and set up an appointment with the Office Secretary.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are to be committed and active members of the school community. Students demonstrate respect and show their commitment to learning by following all of the school policies, including the following.

Uniforms and Dress Code

Uniform components may be purchased through:

All students must be in uniform every day. There will be out-of-uniform days which will be announced during the course of the school year (a dress code for such days is included in this section). If there is a time when the prescribed uniform cannot for some legitimate reason be worn, a note from the parent/guardian must be written to the Principal. Students who are out of uniform without this excuse will be sent to the office and the parent will be called to bring the proper clothing.

Blue Uniform

Polo shirt with Sacred Heart Logo – PreK3-2 wear blue shirts, Grades 3-8 wear white shirts

Dark blue/navy blue pants or shorts

Dark blue skirts/pants for girls

Black shoes (No boots)

Dark blue fleece jacket with SH Logo

Dark belt

P.E. Uniforms – All Grades

White t-shirt with Sacred Heart Logo, short sleeves

Red shorts or sweatpants with Sacred Heart Logo

Red sweatshirt with SH Logo

White socks

Sneakers, gym shoes (No boots)

*Skirts should be no shorter than two inches above the knee.

Modesty and professionalism should guide all uniform decisions and hair styles. Clothing should never detract from the learning environment. All uniform regulations and guidelines are subject to the discretion of the principal and assistant principal.

Uniforms can be purchased at:

Flynn & O'Hara Uniforms

Twinbrook Shopping Center

2208B Veirs Mill Road

Rockville, MD 20851
(301) 838-8958

The following guidelines should also be observed in preparing for the school day:

- Nails should be clean, trimmed, and free of polish (artificial nails are not allowed)
- Girls can wear one pair of small stud earrings only. Students who come to school with hoop or dangling earrings will be required to remove them for their safety
- Uniform shirts must be tucked in at all times
- Only uniform sweaters and fleeces (from Flynn & O'Hara) can be worn in classrooms

- In the case of rain or snow, students may come to school in boots, but must change into uniform shoes and store their boots in the closet as soon as they get to their classroom.

Students who violate the uniform policy can receive a \$5 uniform violation fine. A notice will be sent to the parents and should be paid within 24 hours.

Technology

Blogs and Social Media

Engagement in online blogs and social media such as Facebook®, Instagram®, Twitter®, Snapchat®, KIK® etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish.

Cell Phones

If a student needs a cell phone after school due to walking home from school, entering a house where no one is home, or attending sport practices or games, he/she should must keep their cell phones out of sight, turned off and in their personal backpacks upon entering the school and until 3:30 or they are dismissed. Cell phones may be used for instructional purposes with permission from the teacher starting in fifth grade. Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the last day of the school year or at the discretion of administration

Use of Equipment

Student Responsibilities When using any Technology Equipment, All Students:

§" Shall use all Technology Equipment, including, but not limited to computers, networking systems, Internet, mobile devices, tablets, hosted or cloud-based environments, communication devices, cell phones, email, social networking sites, calculators, DVD players, and cameras ("Technology Equipment") with care and respect, whether at school, at home, or elsewhere.

§" Shall not type, send or otherwise use any inappropriate or offensive words, or display, send, or otherwise use inappropriate or offensive images, sounds or messages from or on Technology Equipment. This includes, but is not limited to, creating, publishing, displaying or in any way disseminating any information or files that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing or damaging to another's reputation.

§" Shall not violate any local, state or federal laws.

- § Shall not engage in cyber-bullying behavior.
- § Shall not use the device to capture photos, video, audio or other media involving other students, faculty or staff without explicit permission from the subjects of the media.
- § Shall never use the technology in bathrooms or locker rooms.
- § Shall not impersonate others or hack or otherwise seek unauthorized access to any restricted information or account.
- § Shall immediately report to a teacher or supervising staff member any inappropriate material or misuse of Technology Equipment of which the student becomes aware.
- § Shall not engage in any behavior otherwise prohibited by school disciplinary standards.

Schools may supply students with Technology Equipment owned or leased by the school for instructional use. Schools may also permit students to use their own Technology Equipment during class as directed by their teachers as part of a "BYOD" (Bring Your Own Device) initiative. When using Technology Equipment supplied by the School, or Technology Equipment permitted under a BYOD initiative, all students:

- § Shall not reconfigure any school hardware, software, or network settings.
- § When on school grounds, shall access only school-supplied wifi or other networks provided by the school. Under no circumstances may students use Technology Equipment to access the Internet through 3G or 4G connections or any other means not specifically provided by the school.
- § Shall not attempt to bypass or otherwise evade any content filters or security measures in place on the Technology Equipment.
- § Shall not intentionally receive or send any viruses, worms, Trojan Horses, or any other kind of malware.
- § Shall not install, download, upload, or otherwise transfer any software, files, or other data onto Technology Equipment supplied by the school without first obtaining the teacher's permission.
- § Shall not use any school Technology Equipment to create, store, transfer or use software or electronic content in a manner which violates the rights of the holder of copyright in the software or the content; and shall not plagiarize works found on the Internet or elsewhere.
- § Shall only use the Internet for school-related projects and shall visit only the sites assigned by the teacher.
- § Shall not take photographs or record audio or video unless as directed by the teacher for instructional purposes.
- § Shall be solely responsible for the physical security and care of their Technology Equipment. The school does not assume responsibility for damages, lost or stolen devices.
- § Shall ensure that their Technology Equipment is fully charged at the beginning of the school day.
- § Shall promptly comply with a teacher's request to shut down, close, put away, or hand over any Technology Equipment.
- § Shall not play any games on Technology Equipment except as directed by the student's teacher for instructional use.
- § Shall not give out, post, or otherwise distribute personal information such as social security numbers, birthdays, credit card or bank account information, photographs, home addresses, telephone numbers, parents' work addresses or telephone numbers or the name and location of the school.

All students understand and acknowledge:

- §" Student use of cell phones, tablets, laptops, and any other portable electronic devices during school hours is strictly prohibited, except in the case of a medical emergency or as otherwise directed by the student's teacher for instructional use.*
- §" Schools may require that Technology Equipment used in a BYOD program must meet certain compatibility requirements, use certain security measures, and include certain hardware, software, or applications, which may include applications that grant the school control over the content on the Technology Equipment.*
- §" Use of equipment is a privilege, not a right. As such, any violation of this policy may result in permanent revocation of their technology privileges and other disciplinary action may be taken in the sole discretion of the principal.*
- §" Use of all Technology Equipment may be monitored. There is no expectation of privacy for any information stored on any Technology Equipment used on school grounds, including any information or files stored in students' personal accounts (such as social media or file sharing accounts) that are accessible via such Technology Equipment. The school reserves the right to access a student's computer files or any other Technology Equipment when required for the maintenance of the school's Technology Equipment, in emergencies, in the course of investigation of possible wrongdoing or a disciplinary infraction, or at the discretion of the principal. If a student refuses to grant the school full access to his or her Technology Equipment for such a purpose – for instance, by withholding a password – the school may treat that refusal as an admission of wrongdoing.*

Gum

Students should not chew gum at school at any time. This includes before school, during school, and after school. Disciplinary action will occur for any student chewing gum during the course of the school day.

Library

Students are encouraged to use neighborhood library for curricular enrichment and pleasure reading. Borrowed books are to be returned on time and in the same condition as borrowed in accordance to DCPL policies. Sacred Heart School will not assume responsibility for public library books damaged or lost on school property.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As members of the learning community parents must support and take an active role in their child's academic and faith development. Parents must collaborate respectfully with administration and teachers at all times.

Parents as Partners

We at Sacred Heart School consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life--physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of Sacred Heart School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K to 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority.

As partners in the educational process at Sacred Heart School, we ask parents:

1. To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
 - a. Gets to bed early on school nights;
 - b. Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
 - c. Is dressed according to the school dress code;
 - d. Completes assignments on time; and
2. Send students to school with a healthy snack and lunch every day.
3. To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences;
4. To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
5. To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;
6. To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
7. To meet all financial obligations to the school;
8. To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
9. To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;

10. To check red folder daily for school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
11. To support the religious and educational goals of the school;
12. To attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example;
13. To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;
14. To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

Parent/Guardian Cooperation

Parents/Guardians and students understand and acknowledge the Roman Catholic religious nature of Sacred Heart School. Parents/Guardians and students agree not to publicly repudiate the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and will respect and support the unique identity that Sacred Heart School derives from its Catholic faith. As the primary educators of their children, parents/guardians will not act in ways that contradict the Catholic nature of Sacred Heart School. Parents/Guardians shall cooperate fully with the school and the students shall participate in all required school programming, including instruction in the Catholic faith and attendance at Mass. As the primary educators of the students, parents/guardians agree to act in ways that promote the best interests of the church and school and will comply with the policies of the Archdiocese of Washington and Sacred Heart School.

Technology Usage

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement

§ Parent/guardian shall be responsible for reading and reviewing the terms listed above with their child in regards to student responsibilities and technology usage.

§ Parent/guardian shall be responsible for any damages, claims and expenses resulting from their child's use of the school's Technology Equipment.

§ Parent/guardian shall be responsible for damages, claims (including theft) and expenses of all personally owned Technology Equipment used in any BYOD program.

§ Parent/guardian acknowledges that any failure to honor the terms of this agreement may result in disciplinary action determined at the discretion of the Principal, any or all of the student's technology privileges being revoked, and/or the reporting of such infraction to appropriate authorities.

§ Parent/guardian acknowledges that violation of any provision of this policy may result in confiscation of the equipment until retrieved by such parent/guardian.

Parent/Guardian acknowledges that they have read and reviewed the terms of acceptable technology use with the student listed above, and both parent and student understand and agree to abide by those terms.

Service Hours

All Parents are asked to fulfill at least 15 hours of service. If you are unable to comply, a \$10.00 per hour fee will be assessed. A maximum charge of \$150.00 will be due at the end of the school year. Parents who volunteer to serve lunch or who volunteer in another capacity in the school may not drop into a classroom to see their child during the day. This is an interruption to the teacher and to the educational process.

Tuition

Sacred Heart School, as a member of the Consortium of Catholic Academies, assesses a fee for each student enrolled. Tuition is billed and paid through an outside company called FACTS. This allows parents to break their tuition costs into affordable monthly payments. All payments **MUST** go through FACTS. If you have any questions regarding your tuition or financial aid, please contact Thelma Bland at the Consortium of Catholic Academies at (301) 853-4589.

Home – School Communication

In order to ensure that all communication from school reaches home in a timely manner, Sacred Heart School uses a daily red folder system. Parents are responsible for emptying the contents of their child's folder nightly and return any homework and important documents to homeroom the next day. There is a \$10.00 replacement charge for the folders that are lost. Report Cards and Progress Reports will not be sent home without a red folder. Information is not sent home if the red folder has not been returned.

Official school-wide emergency communications are sent using the School Messenger phone system.

Food and Nutrition

Students should come to school each day with a healthy snack and lunch. Unhealthy snacks will not be permitted in classrooms. For the safety of students and staff, staff are not permitted to heat student lunches in an oven or microwave. Parents are encouraged to pack a cold lunch, or pack lunch in a thermos, which can keep food hot until lunch time.

Medication

The Principal/Chief Administrator encourages parents/guardians to administer any required medication to students while at home. Principal/Chief Administrators discourage parents/guardians from requesting over the counter or prescription medication to be administered by school personnel. However, in the event that any medication must be administered during the school day, the parent/guardian must provide the medication to the school and complete a Student Medication Authorization Form (form 8) before the school and personnel can comply with their request.

For any student(s) who has a potentially life threatening allergy, parent/guardian, and physicians must inform the school in writing of the allergy to minimize the incidence of allergic reactions.

Allergies

In order to provide a safe environment for all students, Sacred Heart is a nut free school. Please do not send students with any peanut related food items for snack or lunch.

It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the school of any known allergies and provide the school with all necessary and prescribed medical supplies needed to deal with known allergies, including peanut allergies, bee stings, etc.

School Property

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. Textbooks must have a proper book cover. No writing in textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement for damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

Birthday Policy

Sacred Heart Catholic School recognizes that birthdays are a special day for our students. We must also ensure that party celebrations do not disrupt the learning process. Children's birthdays will be celebrated in class with each teacher acknowledging birthdays in a special way. We also encourage parents to celebrate by arranging play dates or other appropriate social activities off School grounds.

Attendance

Parents must call the school office by 9:00 a.m. if their child will be absent for the day or will be coming in late to school due to doctor's appointment, etc. This requirement is for all students in Pre-Kindergarten three through grade Eight. For each day the child is absent, you must notify the School Office. Absences due to medical conditions require a doctor's note upon the child's return to school. If you do not call us within two days, we are required to call you as we must report daily attendance to the Archdiocese and to the Health Department. Please call us and save our staff that valuable time.

Archdiocesan School Attendance

The following are valid reasons for excused absences from school (if properly documented by the student's parent or guardian upon the student's return to school):

1. Illness of the student (after three days of illness, student must provide medical documentation that indicates that the student is able to return to school);
2. Death in the student's immediate family;
3. Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding;
4. Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by chief administrative officer.
5. Temporary closing of facilities or suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or other conditions requiring closing or suspension of classes; and
6. Other absence(s) approved in advance by the principal upon the written request of a parent or guardian. Sufficient notice should be given to the school in order to provide expected student work to be completed while absent. Failure to provide sufficient time may result in an unexcused absence.

Any absence that does not fall into one of the above categories, or is not properly documented by the student's parent/guardian, is an unexcused absence.

Students arriving to school after 10:00 A.M. or leaving before 12:00 PM are considered ½ day absent.

If a student has three (3) or more unexcused absences, the School Principal shall notify the student's parents/guardians in writing of a mandatory conference to address the issue.

Two (2) days after any student has accumulated ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absences, those absences must be reported to child protective services in the School's jurisdiction. In addition, a School Incident Report (form 16) must be completed and filed with the Catholic Schools Office and the Office of Child Protection.

Homework due to Vacations/Planned Absences

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility. Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations.

Office Records

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

Home School Association

The Sacred Heart School Home School Association works to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. Fund-raising, parent education, and building community are the goals of this organization.

School Committees

There are several committees at Sacred Heart, including but not limited to, the Safety Committee, the Athletic Committee, the Catholic Identity Committee, and the Performing Arts Committee. Parents are invited and encouraged to participate in these committees. Committee Meetings will be listed on the School Calendar. Please contact the Secretary if you are interested in joining a committee and need additional information.

Parking Lot Safety

For the reasons of safety, you are urged to use extreme caution and lots of patience while driving in the school parking lot. Please drive 5MPH and be prepared to stop if necessary. Use of cell phones while driving in our lot is prohibited. Please do not park in a handicapped space unless you are entitled to that spot. We share the lot with the Sacred Heart Academy and with the Spanish Catholic Center and we ask that you be respectful and do not park in their spaces. In addition, please do not park in any designated faculty and staff spots. Never leave your car in the traffic lanes, block other cars, and

PLEASE NEVER leave a car with the motor running or a child unsupervised in a car, even for a moment.

Dismissal

We will not release your child to anyone without parent authorization. Parents must record the names of the individuals authorized to pick up your child on the Student Information Sheet filled out at the beginning of the year. We also ask that you follow the local regulations regarding the use of car seats when transporting all Sacred Heart students.

Right to Amend

Sacred Heart School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Thursday Folder or through e-mail communication.

Parent Acknowledgement

All parents must sign off in TADS that they have read the handbook and are willing to support the school's mission, beliefs, and policies. If there are any questions, please contact Ms. Heil.