PARENT HANDBOOK

Mission: Guided by the Holy Spirit and supported by our Tri-parish and Christian communities, Sacred Heart Catholic School unites students, families, and staff in their spiritual, social, and academic journeys. We strive to inspire, challenge, and empower one another to impact the world with the knowledge, values, and gifts with which God has blessed us.

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Welcome

Welcome to Sacred Heart School! We are a pre-school through 6th grade Catholic school, committed to partnering with families to educate children academically, socially, and spiritually.

Mission Statement

Guided by the Holy Spirit and supported by our Tri-parish and Christian communities, Sacred Heart Catholic School unites students, families, and staff in their spiritual, social, and academic journeys. We strive to inspire, challenge, and empower one another to impact the world with the knowledge, values, and gifts with which God has blessed us.

Statement of Catholicity

At Sacred Heart School, our Catholic identity is not just an aspect of who we are, but the very essence of our mission and purpose. Rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the rich traditions of the Catholic Church, our educational approach is holistic, nurturing the spiritual, intellectual, and moral development of each student. Every aspect of our curriculum, activities, and community life is infused with Catholic values, guiding our students to grow in faith, knowledge, and love. We are dedicated to fostering an environment where the Gospel message is lived and witnessed daily, creating a foundation for lifelong discipleship.

As Pope Benedict XVI said, "First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth (Benedict XVI, Address to Catholic Educators, 2008). This profound understanding underscores our commitment to excellence in education, while also ensuring that our students experience the love and truth of Christ in every aspect of their school life. At Sacred Heart School, our Catholic faith is the heart of all we do, inspiring us to cultivate a community where each person is valued, and every student is prepared to contribute meaningfully to the world.

Statement of Student Outcomes

A Sacred Heart School graduate is a compassionate, faith-filled individual who demonstrates academic readiness, moral integrity, and a commitment to serving others in the spirit of Christ.

Accreditation

Sacred Heart School has been accredited by WCEA since 2025. Every seven years, Sacred Heart School renews its accreditation by meeting or exceeding accreditation requirements.

Nondiscrimination

At Sacred Heart School, we are committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and supportive environment for all members of our community. Rooted in our Catholic values, we uphold the dignity of every individual and ensure that all students have equal access to the benefits and opportunities provided by our school, without discrimination.

In alignment with Catholic social teaching and applicable federal and state laws, Sacred Heart School prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, disability, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or any other characteristic protected under applicable law in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and tuition assistance and other school-administered programs.

As a Roman Catholic religious institution, the school also has the right and duty to conduct its school, programs, and activities in a manner consistent with the Catholic faith and doctrine. Accordingly, nothing in this handbook precludes the school's ability to act in conformance with its Catholic beliefs and identity, including taking appropriate actions with respect to students, parents, or volunteers, whose actions are inconsistent with the religious teachings of the Catholic faith. This applies to actions on school grounds, at school functions, or off school grounds if such actions interfere with or obstruct the mission or operations of the school.

Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook is designed to help parents, teachers, staff, and students partner together for success, and to provide a general framework for policies and procedures at our school. It is not all-inclusive, and when unique circumstances arise administration will provide direction on a case-by-case basis.

Sacred Heart School retains the right to change, modify, suspend, or interpret any policies whether written or not, without notice, at its discretion. The provisions of this handbook do not, and should not be construed to, constitute a contract between any applicant, student, or parent, and Sacred Heart School.

Application of Policies

School policies are enforced year-round, for the duration of a student's enrollment. Sacred Heart School may impose discipline for student misconduct on school grounds, at school functions or activities, or on school transportation. Discipline may also be imposed on any student whose misconduct or policy violation at any time or in any place interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school or the safety or welfare of the student or other students, or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

General School Information

Arrival and Dismissal

Students may arrive at Sacred Heart School at 7:35. School staff provide supervision in the gym for students from 7:35-8:00. At 8:00 students are allowed into their classroom and teachers provide supervision until the beginning of the school day at 8:15. Students arriving in the morning before it is time to go to their classroom must wait in the gym area. Students needing to arrive before 7:35 may enroll in the school's Before Care program.

Authorized Pickup

Students will only be released to parents or an authorized pick-up person. If you have designated another person to pick up your child on a specific day, please inform the school no later than by 11:00 a.m. that morning.

After School Events

All after school activities are scheduled from 3:10-4:10. We ask that parents be prompt in picking-up their child. If a parent is more than 5 minutes late the child will be sent to After Care, and the parents will be charged the After Care fee.

Attendance

When students are tardy or absent, this causes interruptions and hinders learning for both the individual student and the classroom. The purpose of this policy is to encourage punctuality and regular school attendance.

Families must inform the school office by 8:15 a.m. on or before the day of the absence if a child is to be absent or tardy for any reason. This can be done via email, phone call, or voice message to the main office. Please provide your child's name, grade, and the reason for the absence.

If we are not contacted by 9:00 a.m., families will receive a call from the school. Students arriving before 9:00 a.m. will be counted as present all day but marked tardy.
- Students arriving between 9:00 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. will be marked 0.5 days absent.
- Students leaving between 9:00 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. will be marked 0.5 days absent.
- Students leaving after 2:15 p.m. will be excused.

Excused and Unexcused Absences/Tardies

There are two types of absences/tardies –excused and unexcused. School administration has the final determination regarding which type of absence applies. Please note that the school is required to report excessive tardies and absences to the county truancy office. It is state law that any student absent from school with more than seven unexcused absences must be reported to the county.

Excused Absences/Tardies include:

Illness, funeral, doctor/dentist/orthodontist appointment, 3 vacation days when the school office and classroom teacher are notified at least three days in advance, family emergency.

Unexcused Absences/Tardies include:

oversleeping, missing the bus, refusing to go to school, attending or participating in a sporting event or activity, shopping, hair or nail appointments, babysitting, staying home to help with work.

Absence due to illness

If a student misses one day due to illness, please do not call for make-up work. The student will receive any missed work the following day. If a student will be absent longer than one day, families should contact the student's teacher regarding make-up work. Teachers will decide which items may be given during the absence and which will be made up after the absence. If a student is absent for an entire day due to illness, they are not allowed to participate in after school activities.

Absence due to vacation

Vacations taken while school is in session are strongly discouraged. If a family takes a vacation while school is in session, the school office must be informed as far in advance as possible, and at least three days before the planned absence. Teachers are not expected to prepare assignments in advance to accommodate vacation plans. When the student returns to school after a vacation, the assignments will be given out together with a deadline for their completion.

Building Use

Any person or group can request to use the school facility during non-school hours.

Requesters will be required to complete an application for use, must certify that their use will not violate our policies or contravene Catholic doctrine, and may require a fee and proof of insurance. Please contact the school office to inquire about building use.

Daily Schedule

1. Student Hours/Daily Schedule
7:30- Staff prayer in the Teachers' Lounge
7:35- Students who arrive will go to the gym
8:00- School Doors and classroom doors will open
8:15- Classes begin
8:15- Breakfast (first line-usually Pre K-4th & 6th) Toddlers are brought breakfast
9:05- Breakfast (second line- 5th--Wed. & Fri.-All)
10:45- Bring Toddlers their lunch   **Teachers who are supervising students
11:00- Pre-K lunch   during their lunch/recess period will be
11:15- K lunch   offered a free lunch.
11:20- 1st lunch
11:25- 2nd lunch
11:45- Scrape Plates
11:50-12:20- Recess for K-2
11:55- 3rd lunch
11:57- 4th lunch
12:00- 5th lunch
12:05- 6th lunch
12:20- Scrape Plates
12:25-12:50 Recess for 3-6
3:00- School Patrol, walkers & bikers and preschool
3:10- Dismissal for all (Last bus leaves at approximately 3:25)

Directory

A family directory is published each year in the fall. The directory includes family information (family names and contact information) unless a parent specifically requests to not have that information included.

Dress Code

The Dress Code Policy is designed to reflect the dignity of the body and the modesty taught by our Catholic tradition. It enhances a sense of school pride and belonging, while encouraging discipline and eliminating unnecessary distractions. Additionally, it creates opportunities to share our mission in the wider community. Because of this, all students are expected to dress in a neat, clean, respectful, and modest manner. Complying with the dress code is a requirement for attending school. The following dress expectations list covers many specific expectations but is not exhaustive, and school administration reserves the right to amend the dress code as needed:

- Hair styles, highlights, braids, and extensions must be modest.
- Simple earrings are allowed for girls only. Facial jewelry (excluding earrings) or visible body piercings and/or tattoos are not allowed. Jewelry should not be distracting.
- Clothing and other items or grooming in a manner that represents and/or promotes politics, political candidates, inappropriate messages, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other illegal substances, violence, threats, gangs, hate groups, or any messages that are immoral or contravene the teachings of the Church, are prohibited.
- Hoods and/or hats may not be worn during the school day.
- Low cut tops, or tops which expose shoulders, back, or midriff are not allowed.
- Shorts, skirts, or dresses must be mid-thigh or longer.
- Leggings/jeggings/yoga pants may only be worn with a top or dress that is mid-thigh or longer.
- No excessively ripped, holey, or torn clothes.
- Bare or stocking/sock feet are not permitted.
- Students should wear clothing that does not require regular adjustment to abide by the dress code expectations.
- Students may not wear shorts to Mass.

If a student violates the dress code policy, they will be informed and the student's parents may be notified. Students will be sent to the school office for violations that are substantial, relate to modesty, or create a distraction to the academic environment. Options to address the violation may include turning clothing articles inside out, being provided replacement clothing (when possible), parents bringing other clothes, or being sent home. Ongoing dress code violations, or individual instances of severe violations, may result in disciplinary action.

Extracurricular Activities

All student programming should direct students to be formed in the virtues. Enrichment and extracurriculars should cultivate in students a strong character so that they can grow into adulthood living responsible, productive and holy lives. Virtues acquired by education are purified and elevated by grace, and with God's help, allow each child to become the person God has made him or her to be. Therefore, it is necessary that all curricula, programs, experiences, athletics, extracurricular, and other school activities be deeply grounded in the Church's virtue tradition, and designed and operated so as to form students in Catholic virtue.

Sacred Heart School is proud to offer a range of extracurricular activities in which students may choose to participate, including athletics, guitar, crafts, games, and sciences. Students who are not present for a school day are not eligible to participate in extracurriculars on that day. Students who are failing classes may be restricted from participating in extracurriculars, at the discretion of the administration, to allow the student to focus on academic success. All school policies and rules apply at extracurricular events (including practices), whether on or off campus.

Field Trips

Field Trips are part of the educational curriculum and are designed to support the curriculum and introduce students to learning opportunities beyond our campus. Since field trips are learning situations, they are counted as a school day and attendance is generally required.

Prior to scheduled trips, an authorization form signed by a parent is required. Students without a signed form are not allowed to go on the field trip and must stay at school. Handwritten notes and phone calls are not accepted in place of a signed authorization form. Certain field trips require an additional fee which must be paid for the student to participate.

Whenever possible, transportation for field trips is by bus. If it is necessary to use transportation provided by vehicles, parents will be notified.

Chaperones may be needed for field trips; all chaperones must comply with all volunteer requirements.

Guiding Principles Concerning Human Sexuality and Sexual Identity

Sacred Heart School is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to flourish academically, physically, and spiritually. Our school provides an education and resources consistent with Catholic teaching. The starting point for Catholic education is a deeply held understanding that affirms the God-given irrevocable dignity of every human person. Sacred Heart School will relate to each student in a way that is respectful and consistent with each student's God-given sexual identity and biological sex.

Lost and Found

The school maintains a lost and found for misplaced items. It is located in the basement hallway by the library.

Please check the lost and found if you are missing an item. Sacred Heart School is not responsible for lost items, and the lost and found is periodically cleaned out. Items that remain in the lost and found for more than one month may be discarded.

Hot Lunch Program

Sacred Heart School offers a hot lunch program. Students may choose to order hot lunch or to bring lunch from home. Lunch brought from home may not be heated in the school kitchen.

Parent Messages for Students

Whenever possible, messages regarding the end of the day should be left with the teacher and in the office by noon.

Messages for students regarding a change in plans for the end of the school day (e.g. bussing, pick-up, etc.) should be sent to the main office and to the classroom teacher. Please limit messages during the school day to urgent matters only, as messages are disruptive to class.

Teachers are available from 7:40 a.m.- 8:15 a.m. and after school from 3:10 p.m.- 3:45 p.m.

Photo Release

Throughout the year, there are many occasions to share photos and details about what is happening at our school, through newspaper articles, social media posts, and school communications. We ask families each year to opt in or out of the photo and academic work release. Families who opt out of the release will be noted and their children's photos/academic work will not be published or displayed on social media.

Prayer and Worship

Formation in the spiritual life leads children to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church. A robust and intentional program of spiritual formation encourages the life of grace through daily personal and communal prayer, regular opportunity for reception of the sacraments, and participation in the liturgical life of the Church. With a strong faith that continues to grow, Catholic school students find in God the ultimate meaning and purpose of their lives. Students participate in daily prayer, seasonal prayer services, retreat experiences, vocational information, and liturgical celebrations. Students also attend Mass weekly. We invite parents to join us for Mass and liturgical celebrations throughout the year.

Sacramental Preparation

In coordination with our parish, Sacred Heart School provides a preparation program for students in second grade for receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. Parental involvement is important in a child's preparation, so we ask parents to work at home with their children and to attend parent meetings relating to sacramental preparation.

Parents are expected to provide proof of Baptism upon enrollment to Sacred Heart School. Parents whose child is not baptized, but whom they wish to have receive Holy Communion, will need to contact the parish office.

School Calendar

The school year generally runs from September to June. The school calendar can be found on the main school webpage, along with a list of non-attendance days, parent transportation days, and holidays.

Smart Device Policy

For the purposes of this policy, "Smart Device" refers to any internet-enabled digital tool with a visual display or screen. Common examples include smart phones, smart TVs, computers, iPads, and Chromebooks. Sacred Heart School discourages students from bringing Smart Devices to school and prohibits it for students PreK-4th grade.
For children in grades 5th-6th we recognize some parents may make the decision to allow their child to bring Smart Devices to school. In this case, the following policies are in place under normal circumstances and exclude emergency situations: Students will turn off their Smart Devices upon entering the building and place them in their backpacks. Students may not access their phones between classes or during lunch. Students are not allowed to use personal Smart Devices during off-campus, school-sponsored field trips that occur during regular school hours. The school will take reasonable measures to protect and secure personal Smart Devices during the school day. However, parents who send their children to school with a Smart Device accept the possibility of loss or damage and will hold the school harmless for any loss or damage.

Transportation to and from School:

Drop-off/Pick-up by Car

Students may be dropped off at the gym doors as early as 7:35 a.m. If a student needs to be dropped off earlier than this the family will need to enroll their child in Before School Care. Students may be picked up at 3:10 p.m. Students being picked up will wait in a separate line. We ask all parents who are picking up their children to enter the back driveway for the pick-up line. Teachers will dismiss the students to walk to the vehicles. They will dismiss to the first three vehicles. We ask that parents not get out of their vehicle and that you stay in the line. Please do not drive around any vehicle in front of you to exit faster as this is dangerous. If you need to come into the school for something, please use the back driveway and park next to the school or along the cemetery wall. Ultimately, our goal is to minimize the traffic between the school and the church for the safety of our students. If someone other than a parent or legal guardian is picking up a student, please notify the school office.

Bussing

Melrose School District 740 operates buses for our students who live within the district boundaries and reside more than one mile from the school. Information and sign-up forms are sent out annually. Families who intend to use the bus must complete the necessary forms. Parents will be notified when and where the bus will stop for their children. The public school has sole discretion of control and management of scheduling, routes, bus stop locations, and discipline. Riding the bus is considered a privilege. The bus is not a place to be rambunctious, and each student must do his/her part to keep the bus quiet, orderly, and clean. Students should remain seated at all times, except to board or leave the bus. The driver is in complete control and has the authority to enforce all rules of safety and conduct.

Admission/Enrollment Policies

Enrollment for New Students

Sacred Heart School accepts applications for new students year-round. Should more applications for admission be received than spaces are available, applications will be considered in the following priority:
Siblings of students already enrolled at Sacred Heart School
Children of Catholic families who are members of our parish.
Children of non-parish families.
Sacred Heart School may admit students who are not Catholic, provided they understand and accept that participation in Catholic religious instruction and school religious activities are required. Our faith is a part of everything we do at the school.

Enrollment for Current Students

Current students should enroll for the next school year after March 1st and before April 1st. Enrollments received after this date will not receive priority and will be considered alongside applications for new students.

Registration Requirements

To complete registration, each family must have tuition for the current year paid (or must have a plan for completion with EFT's monthly payments), pay all registration fees and submit all required paperwork, including a completed application and tuition contract. Students entering Kindergarten must be 5 years of age prior to the first day of September of the Kindergarten year.

Probationary Period

All new and transfer students will be accepted on a probationary period of 90 days. This period is intended to allow both the family and the school the opportunity to determine whether the school is a good fit for the student. During this time, the student should maintain passing grades, display good behavior, have no disciplinary concerns, and no attendance issues. If there are academic or behavior concerns, the student may be asked to unenroll.

Financial Policies

Tuition and Fees

The school relies on the tuition from families to fulfill our budget obligations. The school sets tuition rates and fees each year and communicates this to families in conjunction with annual enrollment. Tuition payments are handled through the office. Information about how to set up an account and make payments is provided during enrollment. All tuition and fees must be paid on time. A family who has a delinquent tuition account will be contacted, and we will work to resolve the situation with the family. If a resolution has not been achieved, the family may not be allowed to re-enroll for the following year.

Financial Assistance

While we strive to keep tuition at an affordable rate, we understand that private school tuition can be a major expense for families. With this in mind, Sacred Heart School has financial assistance funds available. Distribution of funds is based on financial need and availability of funds.

Families wishing to apply for financial assistance should complete the tuition assistance application. Documentation of income, assets, expenses, and special circumstances is required for the application. Families who experience a change in financial circumstances during the school year which makes fulfilling their tuition obligation difficult; should contact the school office for assistance and set up a meeting with the school's principal.

Academic Policies

Integrated Curriculum

Sacred Heart School is dedicated to providing an integrated curriculum that is academically

excellent and instills strong Catholic moral values. The curriculum is presented with a coherent vision of reality through the lens of the Catholic intellectual tradition. This comprehensive approach encompasses intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual development honoring the truth of what it means to flourish as a human person. The impact of this holistic formation is mature young men and women who are able to engage the civic, spiritual, moral and professional challenges of their society and, assisted by God's grace, use their success to transform our world for the good.

We use the following resources:

Religion- Word of Life (Augustine Institute)
Reading- K-2nd- Super Kids Reading Program (Rowland Reading)
   3rd-6th- Readers Workshop (Benchmark Education)
Math- Saxon Math (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)
Social- Scott Foresman, Harcourt and Northern Lights series
Science- Interactive Science (Scott Foresman Pearson)
Handwriting- Writing Our Catholic Faith (Universal Publishing)
Spelling- K-2- Super Kids (Rowland Reading) Grades 3-6 Connections (Zanor Bloser)

Homework

Homework is a part of the learning process; and generally expands on or reinforces classroom objectives and teaching. Homework can include reading, memorizing, reviewing, studying, researching, and working on long-term projects. Whatever type of homework is assigned, the student must accept responsibility to be prepared for the upcoming class and do their best to complete the assignment. It is the student's responsibility to turn in completed work as assigned.

Homework for children in the primary grades (K, 1, and 2) is limited. Students in 3rd-6th grades generally have homework three to four days per week and will have both long and short term assignments on a daily basis. Students are responsible for all assignments given in class during any absences.

Report Cards and Student Progress

At Sacred Heart School students receive mid-quarter and quarter reports. These are intended to inform parents and students regarding the student's progress. This is an opportunity to assess how a student is progressing and to set goals for the year. Report card grades are final. If a student or parent has questions or concerns about report cards, they should contact their teacher.

Promotion/Retention

Promotion and graduation take place when a student demonstrates satisfactory completion of grade level work. The decision to retain a student at current grade level will be made only after an evaluation has been made which indicates the student would benefit from retention.

Student Records

Sacred Heart School maintains and manages student records following its policies and practices and in accordance with federal and state law. Student records may include identifying data, academic work completed, level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement test scores), attendance data, scores on standardized tests, health data (maintained as separate records), teacher or counselor ratings and observations, and verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns. Parents can make a request with the school office to review their child's record. Such requests will be responded to in a reasonable amount of time. No one except appropriate school personnel, parents of minors, and students who have reached legal age shall have access to student records without either a subpoena or appropriate written authorization from the parent.

Behavior Policies

Student Conduct Guiding Principles

Each student is responsible for behavior that maintains a respectful, welcoming, and joyful learning environment within the school. Respect for oneself, others, authority, and property is expected from each student. Students are to behave in a manner that is morally responsible and brings credit to themselves, their families, and the school community, and to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment.

As a Christ-centered school, we value learning, respect, and responsibility. Our general school conduct expectations are:

Be respectful
- Speak and act with respect to everyone and all property
- Follow directions in a timely manner and without argument
- Be attentive and respond appropriately when greeted or spoken to

Be responsible
- Be on time, prepared and ready to learn
- Complete work carefully and punctually
- Be in control of your own words and body

Be safe
  ● Follow school rules
  ● Avoid conduct that could hurt someone else
  ● Seek an adult if you see anyone being unsafe
Be like Jesus
  ● Be kind to others
  ● Include others and make everyone feel welcome
  ● Be a peacemaker
  ● Be willing to forgive

Discipline Policy

Minor Misconduct
Consequences for minor misconduct will typically be managed by the classroom teacher.
Generally, minor misconduct or policy violations will result in lighter discipline. This may include,
but is not limited to, a verbal warning, time-out, written warning, call to parents, reparation of
damage, loss of privilege, detention, or being placed on a behavior plan. Continued infractions,
aggravating factors, or more severe behavior may result in more substantial discipline. Because
each child and situation is unique, in determining the appropriate response to a disciplinary
situation the school may consider contextual factors such as the age of the student, the type of
misconduct, the frequency of the student's misconduct, and the severity of the problem.

Examples of minor misconduct include (but are not limited to):
  ● Inappropriate language
  ● Not following directions promptly
  ● Arriving late to class
  ● Dress code violations
  ● Teasing, insulting, or otherwise being unkind to others
  ● Turning in homework late
  ● Any disruptive behavior
  ● Other minor policy violations

Major Misconduct
There are certain behaviors that, due to the severity of the action, are considered major
misconduct, and more substantial and immediate consequences are necessary. Discipline may
include any minor misconduct, disciplinary actions, as well as immediate removal of the student
from the classroom, meeting with parents, in school or out of school suspension, and expulsion.
Disciplinary actions for major misconduct are determined by the principal. If necessary for the
safety of other students or to avoid significant disruption to the school's social or academic
environment, the student may be placed on a temporary out of school suspension pending
appropriate resolution.

Examples of major misconduct include (but are not limited to):

- Continued misconduct
- Violence or threats of violence
- Bullying/Harassment
- Disrespect for authority, refusing to follow directions
- Lying, cheating, plagiarism, or academic dishonesty
- Use or possession of alcohol, drugs, or weapons on school property or at school events
- Abusive behavior (verbal or physical)
- Inappropriate language or actions
- Sexual misconduct
- Theft, property destruction, or vandalism
- Other major policy violations

Students, employees, or volunteers who are aware of major misconduct should report it to the principal as soon as possible.

Guidelines
The disciplinary procedures set forth in this handbook are intended as general guidance policies. Any step in the procedures may be bypassed or modified at the discretion of the teacher or administration. The school has the right to discipline or require student withdrawal for any reason. Failure to comply with expected standards of conduct will subject the student to potential disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or dismissal.

Behavior On & Off Campus

The school may impose discipline for student misconduct on school grounds, at school functions or activities, or on school transportation. Discipline may also be imposed on any student whose misconduct at any time or in any place interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school, or the safety or welfare of the student or other students, or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

Harassment

Sacred Heart School, in partnership with families, strives to create and maintain a positive learning environment where students are treated with dignity and respect so that they can celebrate and grow in their faith, discover their academic potential, and become concerned, respectful, and responsible young people. This philosophy is the foundation of our harassment policy.

Harassment Definition

Harassment is any unwelcome behavior (verbal, physical, written, or electronic) which has the intention or effect of intimidating, degrading, humiliating, or offending another person, or that interferes with another person's academic performance or participation in school activities. Whether an action constitutes harassment is determined by school administration and not by the intentions of the accused.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:
- Bullying: Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and: (1) an actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or (2) materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.
- Cyber-Bullying: Bullying performed using technology or other electronic communication.
- Hazing: Any activity undertaken by a student or group of students towards another student or group of students with the purpose of "initiation" into the school, a student organization, a team, or a social group, including but not limited to, any physical, sexual, verbal or psychological abuse that is demeaning, harming, or embarrassing anyone as a "rite of passage."
- Physical: Unwelcome physical force or unwanted touch that shames, hurts, alienates, threatens, intimidates, or attacks another person, or stealing, damaging, or destroying another's property.
- Psychological: Humiliating or abusive behavior that lowers a person's self-esteem or causes torment or emotional harm.
- Sexual: Includes unwelcome sexual advances, gestures, jokes, comments, actions, or symbols, unwelcome sexual questioning, remarks, or touching, pressuring for sexual activity, displaying sexual images, videos, or sounds, and/or promoting rumors of a sexual nature
- Verbal: Face-to-face or otherwise spoken harassing action, including the use of offensive speech, taunts, name-calling, put-downs, intimidation, slander, and threats of any kind toward another person or group.
- Written: Written statements that taunt, name-call, put down, intimidate, slander, or threaten another person or group.

Procedure

Any student who is a victim or witness of harassment is encouraged to deal with the situation immediately by politely and firmly advising those involved that the behavior is inappropriate and should stop. However, if the individual does not wish to deal with the problem directly, if the harassment is severe, or if a request to stop is not respected, the students should report the incident to the principal, or any teacher or staff member.

Teachers and staff members who witness harassment or receive a report of harassment

should make reasonable efforts to promptly address the harassment and must inform the principal as soon as possible.

The school will promptly initiate an investigation into any reports of harassment. The investigation may include interviews with the complainant, the alleged harasser, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident. The investigation will be conducted in a confidential manner to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

The school may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the victim, complainant, or others pending completion of an investigation of alleged harassment. The school will determine, based on the preponderance of the evidence ("more likely than not"), whether the alleged conduct occurred and was a violation of this policy, and if so will take appropriate disciplinary action. If appropriate, an investigative report documenting interviews, conclusions, and outcomes will be completed. The complainant, victim, alleged harasser, and their parents, will be informed of the outcome of the investigation, to the extent permitted by law. However, the school may not disclose private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school.

No Retaliation
Retaliation of any form against any person making a good faith report of harassment or participating in an investigation regarding harassment will not be tolerated.

Technology and Acceptable Use Policy

Sacred Heart School offers students access to the internet and other technology resources, which are essential learning tools in 21st-century education. Our school is committed to improving students' educational experience using technology. Student use of technology is a privilege and must be consistent with the school's mission and values. Using digital tools correctly and responsibly is very important.   All student policies, including this policy, apply to all students using school technology resources, including computers, tablets, and the internet.

Parents are encouraged to discuss this policy with their children and to monitor their technology use at home. Ensuring that students understand and adhere to these guidelines is a shared responsibility between the school and families.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to loss of technology privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

General Guidelines
- Educational Use: Technology must be used to support learning and adhere to Catholic values. Students must follow all school policies when using technology,

including appropriate language and respectful communication.

- Behavior: Users are expected to act respectfully, responsibly, ethically, morally, and legally. Respect for others is paramount.
- Internet Safety: Filtering software may be installed to block inappropriate content. Users must report access to inappropriate sites immediately.
- Equipment Care: Treat all technology equipment with respect. No food or drink near devices.
- Supervision: When possible, staff will supervise student use of technology to ensure it is appropriate for their age and aligned with educational goals.
- Personal Information: Do not share personal addresses, passwords, or phone numbers.
- Privacy: Users have no expectation of privacy in their use of school technology. The school reserves the right to monitor and review all technology use to ensure compliance with this policy.

Unacceptable Uses

- Illegal or Unethical Behavior: Engaging in activities that are illegal or violate school policies.
- Inappropriate Content: Accessing, downloading, or distributing material that is inappropriate, offensive, or immoral.
- Off-Task Use: Using technology for non-educational purposes during instructional time.
- Inappropriate Communication: Sending or receiving messages that are harassing, threatening, obscene, or that use offensive language.
- Plagiarism and Cheating: Using others' work without proper attribution or engaging in academic dishonesty.
- Unauthorized Access: Attempting to access restricted areas or other users' accounts.
- Tampering Security: Disabling filtering software, altering device settings, or installing unauthorized software. Attempting to bypass or undermine network security measures, including unauthorized access to restricted areas of the network, the introduction of malware, and other activities that could compromise network integrity.
- Privacy and Misuse Violations: Sharing personal information or accessing others' information without permission or using another person's password or device.
- Misuse of Resources: Misusing or damaging technology resources. This includes physical damage to devices and tampering with software or hardware configurations.
- Personalization: Altering school devices without explicit permission from staff.
- Harassment: Using technology to harass, bully, or mistreat others.
- Commercial Use: Using school technology for commercial or political purposes.
- Malware: Introducing or spreading viruses or other malicious software.
- Copyright Infringement: Copying or distributing copyrighted material without

permission.
  - Violations: Engaging in activities that violate laws or school policies.
  - Encouraging Misconduct: Helping others violate these guidelines.

Weapons/Dangerous Items

The school strictly prohibits the unauthorized carrying or possession of weapons on its premises. For the purpose of this policy, the term "weapon" shall include, but not be limited to, firearms, ammunition, knives, explosives, or any device, material, or substance that is used for, or readily capable of, causing death or serious injury or any other objects that can reasonably be considered a weapon (including replicas).

Any student violating this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Local law enforcement may be contacted.

Drug Use Policy

The use, possession, sale, purchase, transfer, or being under the influence of tobacco, nicotine, alcohol, marijuana, mood altering chemicals, or any other illegal or controlled substance by students on school grounds or at any school event is strictly prohibited.

When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the following actions may be taken:

  - Parents notified
  - Law enforcement officials notified
  - Required drug screening at a facility approved by the school, with results of the screening shared with the school
  - Chemical use evaluation
  - Referral to an outside agency for treatment/counseling options
  - Detention/suspension/expulsion
  - Parent-student conference with the principal required before the student can resume attendance at school

Theft, Vandalism, Destruction of Property

Theft, vandalism, or destruction of school property or the property of others will result in discipline. Students are expected to exercise reasonable care in the use of school property and school provided resources and equipment. Students may be required to pay for damage to desks, lockers, other equipment, or property.

Property Searches

Sacred Heart School is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment. To help ensure the safety of students and compliance with school policies, the school reserves the right to inspect and search student lockers, desks, and any other school property provided for student use (including electronics) at any time, with or without notice, to ensure compliance with school policies. The school reserves the right to search students' personal property, including backpacks, purses, other containers, and electronics, when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of school rules or laws. Students should not expect privacy for personal belongings brought onto school premises.

Safety and Well-Being Policies

Entry Information and Visitors

All entrances to the school are locked during the day.

All visitors (including parents) may enter the building through the doors on the south entrance of the building. You must ring the bell and be buzzed into the building. All visitors must report to the main office and sign in. They will be given a "Visitors Pass" to wear.

Any person in the building or on school grounds without permission will be considered a trespasser. If any student believes a person is in the school building or on school grounds without permission or without having followed visitor procedures, they should immediately inform a teacher or staff member.

Students and staff should not open an exterior school door to anyone, even if they know the visitor. Visitors must ring the bell and be buzzed in by the main office.

Fire, Tornado, Lockdown and Safety Drills

Sacred Heart School participates in fire, tornado, lockdown, and safety drills. When an alarm sounds or other emergency alerts are raised, students are expected to act quickly, quietly, and in an orderly fashion and to follow the directives of teachers and staff.

Emergency Response Plans

Sacred Heart School has an emergency management plan in place should a crisis situation occur. These plans are reviewed annually with all employees. Safety drills are practiced

according to state laws. The school will use alarms or coded signals through the PA system to alert staff of situations. The crisis plan includes procedures for severe weather, fire emergencies, hazardous spills, safety threats and lockdown procedures, and bomb threats.

School Closing

In case of an emergency or severe weather, the school will notify families via FastDirect. We share busing with the public school district, so if the school district closes schools or has a late start or early closing due to weather, our school will act accordingly.

Emergency Contact Information

To ensure that the school can contact families should the need arise, especially in the case of an emergency, families are responsible to keep their contact information current. Each school year, emergency information must be submitted for each child, including parent phone numbers and emergency contact phone numbers. Parents must notify the school office of any changes in address or phone number.

Health Services

The school nurse, administrative assistant, or principal may approve the dismissal of a student who becomes ill or hurt during the school day. Parents will be contacted when a student reports to the office or school nurse with an illness. If a parent is unable to come for the student, arrangements for a relative or other authorized person must be made to pick up the student. No student will be sent home due to illness if no one is at home to be with the student.

Accidents/Injuries

If a student is injured at school, our first concern is to care for the student's comfort and safety, followed by contacting the parents. If it is determined that the injury requires immediate emergency health care, 911 will be called for emergency vehicle transportation to the hospital or to the urgent care center identified by the parents.

Health Records

Health records are required for every student. This includes results of required health exams, screenings, immunizations, and specific health concerns or conditions. Health records are maintained and managed as confidential documents.

Medication During the School Day

Medications, both prescribed and over-the-counter, should be taken at home if at all possible. If medication must be taken during the school day, there must be a current form signed by a licensed physician and a parent regarding the medication. Any such medication must be sent to school in a labeled prescription bottle or in the original over-the-counter container. All medications must be kept in the office.

Administration of the medication during school hours may only be performed by qualified personnel and in a manner consistent with instructions on the label. Students may not self-medicate (other than an inhaler or EpiPen as provided in this policy).

Students who wish to carry and administer their own inhaler or EpiPen must have on file in their health record written consent from the parent, physician, and the school nurse to carry the medication.

Illness and Staying Home

We believe it is important that children are in school as often as possible in order to provide the best opportunity for learning and development. However, it is everyone's responsibility to help stop the spread of contagious conditions and communicable disease. We ask that parents refrain from bringing children to school if they are sick or displaying symptoms of illness such as: fever (100 F degrees or higher), vomiting or diarrhea, rash, eye drainage, uncontrolled coughing, sore throat. If a student develops these symptoms during the school day, parents will be called to pick up their child and bring them home.

Reporting Child Maltreatment

Out of concern for the care of children and to abide by legal requirements, staff and members of the clergy are required to report a suspected case of child maltreatment to the local law enforcement agency or local welfare agency within 24 hours. This must be done if they know or have reason to believe maltreatment is occurring presently or has occurred within the past three years. If the report is made verbally, a written report must be filed within 72 hours of the verbal report.

Maltreatment is defined by Minnesota Statutes Section 260E.03 and includes egregious harm, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, substantial child endangerment, threatened injury, mental injury, and maltreatment of a child in a facility.

Background Check Requirements

School policy requires that all employees and volunteers, as well as any vendor who interacts with students, must successfully undergo a background check, complete safe environment training, and sign a Code of Conduct before beginning employment, volunteering, or providing services. This is also an ongoing requirement which must be completed at least once every five years.

Leadership and Governance

Head of School

The principal is the head of the school and is responsible for day-to-day operations and management of the school and its activities. The principal has decision-making authority on all matters related to students, staff, facilities, curriculum, textbooks, athletics, discipline, health and safety, and extracurricular activities.

School Structure

Sacred Heart School is a parish school. This means that we are an integrated mission of Sacred Heart Parish, and the school does not have a separate corporate identity.

Pastor

The pastor is responsible for governing the school, providing high level oversight of all school operations and ensuring the Catholic identity of the school now and well into the future. Daily management and decision-making authority are delegated to the principal; however, the pastor remains the final authority on all school matters. The trustees and the school board provide consultative support to the pastor in his role governing the school.

School Board

The Sacred Heart School Board serves in an advisory and consultative capacity to the pastor and the principal. The board consists of six members who are drawn by lot for three-year terms. Board members may serve two consecutive terms.

The board has general oversight of all school operations and is responsible for overseeing the school's Catholic mission and identity, as well as other powers and responsibilities as articulated

in our school's bylaws. The board generally does not involve itself with day-to-day management or operational issues, or student or employee matters. While board members are available to listen to the ideas, questions, and concerns of the community, the board acts as a whole and no board members individually may speak or act on behalf of the school.

Parent Involvement, Roles, and Responsibilities

Parents are the primary educators of their children. Parents possess the right and obligation of educating their children and selecting a school that best matches their vision for their child's flourishing. Parents are invited to cooperate closely with teachers in the growth and maturation of their child's total development.

Parent/Guardian

For the purposes of this handbook, the term parent includes both parents and legal guardians of a child.

Parent Conduct

Our school community is a special place, rich with opportunities for learning, growth, and belonging. It takes all members of our community, working together, to maintain our strong school environment. We expect all parents of our students to commit to support the faith, support the school, be respectful and positive, and follow school policies. If the partnership is no longer viable in the principal's opinion, the school reserves the right to ban the parent from school grounds/events, require the parent to unenroll their child, or to not accept registration for the next school year.

Non-Custodial Parents

It is the school's policy to comply with federal and state laws regarding parental rights. If a court order exists which limits a parent's access to a student or to student or school information, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide a non-custodial parent with access to records and other school-related information regarding the child upon request. If a legal document is on file for a student limiting non-custodial access to the child, but arrangements are made between the custodial and non-custodial parent to pick up or see a child, the custodial parent must inform the school.

Volunteers

Our school keeps going daily through the efforts of many volunteers, and we are so grateful for parents who volunteer their time and talent to help make our school a special place! There are many opportunities throughout the year to volunteer. Please call the main office for volunteer opportunities.

Confidentiality

Volunteers at Sacred Heart School are expected to treat student matters that they happen to observe or be involved in with confidentiality, to refer all discipline matters to school employees, and to follow all applicable employee policies while serving as a volunteer.

Safety Requirements

All volunteers at our school must follow the Diocesan requirements for school volunteers. This includes undergoing a background check, completing safe environment training, and signing a Code of Conduct, every five years. All volunteers are also required to complete the Reporting Suspected Child Abuse training module. Please contact the main office for more information on volunteer safety requirements. Information about scheduled training in the VIRTUS Protecting God's Children program will be provided when sessions are scheduled.

Family Grievance Policy

As we work together in partnership to educate children, difficulties and differences of opinion and approach inevitably arise due to human nature. When concerns or conflicts arise, all members of our community are expected to work together in good faith to find solutions.

Whenever possible, concerns should be raised first with the person with whom you have a concern or complaint, to try to come to an understanding or mutually agreeable resolution. Only after this has been attempted and is unsuccessful, should concerns be brought to the principal. Note: if at any time concerns exist regarding student safety or mistreatment, such concerns should be immediately brought to the principal's attention.

When a concern is brought to the principal in accordance with this policy, the principal will determine appropriate action, which may include but is not limited to mediating a conversation between the parties, proposing a resolution, or investigating the issue. Throughout the process, all parties are expected to remain respectful, professional, and to act in good faith. If discussing the situation at home, parents should remember that their child must still function within the school setting and that these conversations can undermine the administrator's and teacher's authority to do their jobs. Just as the teacher or administrator is responsible to respect the child

and parents even when difficulties arise, the parents are responsible to see that the problems do not affect the child's respect for the position of the teacher or the administrator.

Communication Between Home and School

As parents are the primary educators of their children, we place great importance on open and frequent communication between the school and home. The following are just some of the many ways we communicate with parents: school website, online communication system, student/parent handbook, school newsletter, phone calls, email, and school events.

When parents have questions or concerns about anything happening at the school, they should communicate respectfully and openly at the appropriate level – teacher, staff, or leadership. As a community, we assume the good will of others and work together to address issues with the appropriate parties and refrain from gossip.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the **Sacred Heart School Handbook.** I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies in the handbook.

I understand that the handbook and all other written and oral materials provided to me are intended for informational purposes only.

My signature below indicates that I have read, understood, and accepted the above statements and that I have received a copy of the Sacred Heart School Handbook.

_____
Parent's Name in Print

_____

Signature of Parent

_____

Date Signed by Parent